

# State of Nebraska Five-Year Integrated Workforce Plan

---

*For Title I of the Workforce Investment Act  
of 1998 and the Wagner-Peyser Act, for the  
period of July 1, 2012 – June 30, 2017*





# Contents

<b>Message from Governor Dave Heineman.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Section I – State Workforce Strategic Plan .....</b>	<b>7</b>
A. Governor’s Vision.....	9
B. Economic and Workforce Information Analysis .....	16
C. State Strategies Based on Economic Development Analysis to Achieve Governor’s Vision and Goals.....	35
D. Desired Outcomes.....	38
<b>Section II – State Operational Plan .....</b>	<b>41</b>
E. Overview of the Workforce System.....	43
• Organization.....	43
• State Board .....	46
• Local Workforce Investment Areas.....	51
F. Operating Systems and Policies Supporting the State’s Strategies.....	56
G. Service to State Target Populations.....	72
H. Wagner-Peyser Agricultural Outreach.....	86
I. Services to Employers .....	92
J. WIA Single-Area States Only – Not Applicable .....	93
K. WIA Waiver Requests .....	94
L. Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) .....	98
M. SCSEP (Optional) .....	101
<b>Section III – Integrated Workforce Plan Assurances and Attachments.....</b>	<b>103</b>
N. Assurances and Attachments .....	105
O. Statement of Assurances Certification .....	119
P. Program Administration Designees and Plan Signature.....	121
Q. Public Comments.....	123



## Message from Governor Dave Heineman

Nebraska is a great place to live, work, and raise a family. According to the Gallup Organization, Nebraska ranks fourth in the top 10 viable states for the future, the 2012 *Business Facilities* magazine rated Nebraska second as a state employment leader, and Nebraska ranks sixth in the Pollina Corporate Top 10 Pro-Business States.

I am proud of these accomplishments, but there is still work to be done. Growing our state's economy and creating great job opportunities is a priority. Nebraska's workforce must be ready to compete in an age of technological advances, in an international market place, and capitalize on entrepreneurial opportunity.

Nebraska's Five-Year Integrated Workforce Plan identifies my economic and workforce priorities. I have established a workforce model that is employer driven and supported by education and workforce partner agencies. The strategies identified throughout the Plan are fundamentally based on a high level of collaboration to ensure Nebraska has a well-trained, work-ready labor force while providing efficient and effective program services.

I look forward to the success this Integrated Workforce Plan will create. Thank you for taking the time to review our efforts.





## **Section I**

# **State Workforce Strategic Plan**



# Section I. State Workforce Strategic Plan

## A. Governor’s Vision for Nebraska’s Economy and Overarching Goals for the State Workforce System

***These instructions are from the “State Integrated Workforce Plan Requirements for Workforce Investment Act Title I/Wagner-Peyser Act and Department of Labor Workforce Programs” and a part of Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) 21-11.***

*Governor’s Vision: This portion of the Integrated Workforce Plan must describe the governor’s strategic vision for the state’s economy and overarching goals for the state’s workforce system. This vision should provide the strategic direction for the state workforce system and guide investments in workforce preparation, skill development, education and training, and major initiatives supporting the governor’s vision. The plan also must specifically address the governor’s vision for aligning efforts among workforce development partners to achieve accessible, seamless, integrated, and comprehensive service, and how programs and activities described in the plan will support the state’s economic development needs and the employment and training needs of all working-age youth and adults in the state. The plan must include a description of the methods used for joint planning, and coordination of the programs and activities included in the plan. (WIA Sections 111(d)(2), 112(a)-(b), W-P Section 8(c).)*

### Strategic Vision for Economic Development

Governor Dave Heineman believes the economy and jobs are the most important issues facing Americans today. As Chair of the National Governors’ Association in 2011-12, he recently completed a year-long effort creating policy and practices focused on economic growth and job creation. Governor Heineman’s policy initiative, *Growing State Economies*, developed strategies that impact entrepreneurs and start-up companies, helping them become fast growing firms. According to Governor Heineman, “We owe it to our citizens to focus on policies and practices that allow small businesses to grow and individuals to thrive.”

The policy paper *Growing State Economies* identifies six drivers and 12 actions for growth.

**The six drivers are:**

<b>1.</b>	Entrepreneurs	individuals who seed, grow and renew business
<b>2.</b>	Education and Skills	the concentration of highly educated, skilled individuals within economies
<b>3.</b>	Innovation and Technology	new ideas and technologies that enter the economy and change what is produced, how it is produced, and the way production itself is organized
<b>4.</b>	Private Capital	the sufficiency and availability of debt and equity financing at all states of company formation
<b>5.</b>	Global Markets and Linkages	businesses competing successfully in global markets
<b>6.</b>	Industry Clusters	firms embedded in regional clusters supported by institutions providing education, training, finance, and marketing services

**The 12 actions include:**

1.	Create a competitive tax and regulatory environment
2.	Put entrepreneurial activity at the top of the state’s economic goals
3.	Distinguish among different kinds of entrepreneurs and businesses and target policies and resources accordingly
4.	Cast a wide net to find entrepreneurs
5.	Teach entrepreneurship skills and attitudes at all education levels
6.	Build a startup environment and culture
7.	Find the potential high-growth companies and help them grow
8.	Get your entrepreneurs to give back
9.	Help companies open doors to new customer – globally and locally
10.	Reward strong ties among universities, companies, and entrepreneurs
11.	Encourage entrepreneurs and companies, small and large, to build innovation clusters
12.	Build ecosystems, not programs

In addition to the policy work done on *Growing State Economies*, in 2010 Governor Heineman commissioned the study *Nebraska’s Competitive Advantage*. This was a joint effort between the Nebraska Department of Labor (NDOL) and the Nebraska Department of Economic Development. The study, conducted by the Battelle Technology Partnership Practice, addressed the terms of competition of today’s global knowledge-based economy. *Nebraska’s Competitive Advantage* focused on three highly interrelated building blocks:

1. the underlying performance of specific industry clusters in Nebraska based on employment trends, economic output, and geographic patterns of development,
2. the position of Nebraska in innovation and high-growth entrepreneurial development, and
3. the talent position of Nebraska overall and within its leading industry clusters.

Initiatives currently underway to support the Governor’s vision and goals include:

- **Entrepreneur Acceleration Program** is a joint project with the Nebraska Department of Economic Development, the University of Nebraska – Lincoln Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources, the Greater Omaha Chamber of Commerce, and the Gallup Organization, and is a highly targeted, strategic intervention for entrepreneurs that is helping create a new generation of homegrown business success stories in Nebraska. Volunteer small business and economic development leaders, selected and trained by Gallup, work closely with individual entrepreneurs and offer advice as they confront challenges in growing their enterprises.
- **Forging Nebraska’s Future** is an initiative spearheaded by the Nebraska State Chamber of Commerce that utilizes a business-like model to develop strategies to stimulate long-term economic opportunity and increase good jobs and population in Nebraska.

- **Intern Nebraska (InternNE)** (accessible at [internne.com](http://internne.com)) connects college students to workplace opportunities by exchanging “externships.” Interns gain valuable business experience to help them in future careers, while successful internships help businesses develop tomorrow’s leaders.
- **Industry Councils** are being formed in the six emerging areas of:
  - 1) Transportation Distribution
  - 2) Manufacturing
  - 3) Technology
  - 4) Bio-Science
  - 5) Finance/Insurance
  - 6) Health Services

### **Goals for Nebraska’s Workforce System**

The Governor’s overarching goal for Nebraska’s Workforce System is to create an “ecosystem” that enriches our workforce and addresses the distinctive challenges facing today’s worker. One of the Governor’s 12 actions to grow Nebraska’s economy is to build systems rather than programs. Nebraska’s Workforce System creates and encourages interaction between workforce partners and stakeholders in preparing students and job seekers to meet the needs of Nebraska’s employers. He sees this as essential to the economic health of the state. Nebraska’s Workforce System is employer centric and is dependent on a system of communication and collaboration among partners and programs. The creation of programs to address specific workforce issues may be an outcome of the Workforce System, but the system is not a program.

The structure of Nebraska’s Workforce System is employer focused with strong lines of communication between the “employer voice” and those stakeholders who are developing the talent pipeline. The “employer voice” is represented by employers, industry councils, chambers of commerce, and economic development professionals. As the largest contributor to a trained workforce, the primary stakeholders in Nebraska’s Workforce System is Nebraska’s education system including the universities, state colleges, community colleges, and K-12 system.

Other important stakeholders in Nebraska’s Workforce System are state and local employment and training programs. A Partner Council will be created; this council will consist of state level leadership representing employment and training programs and interests. The Partner Council will help insure a high degree of coordination and collaboration between agencies, as well as insuring the needs of subpopulations are well represented. Council membership will include, but is not limited to:

- |   |                                     |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| • Career and Technical Education            | • Migrant and Seasonal Farm Workers |
| • Adult and Basic Education                 | • Economic Development              |
| • Job Corps                                 | • Wagner-Peyser                     |
| • Unemployment Insurance                    | • Trade Adjustment Assistance       |
| • Temporary Assistance for Needy Families   | • Community Colleges                |
| • Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program | • Native Americans                  |

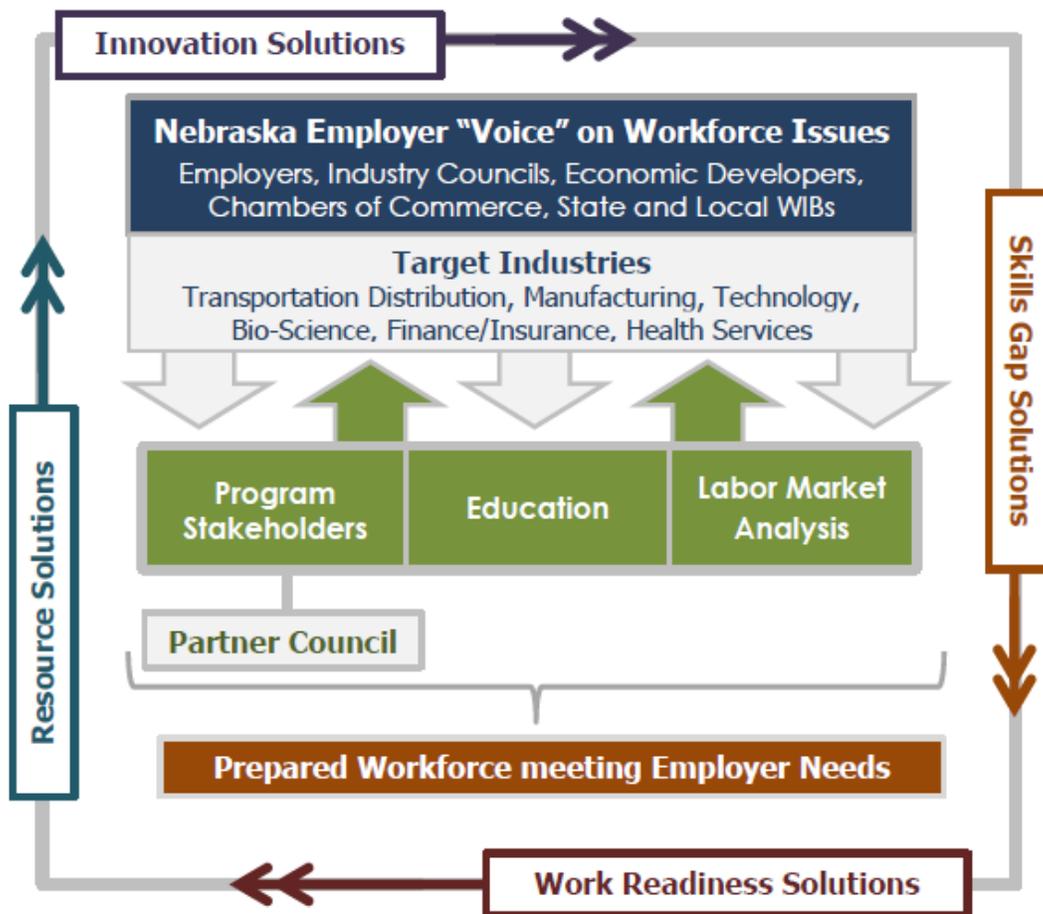
- Vocational Rehabilitation
- Senior Community Services Employment Program
- Veterans
- Workforce Investment Act (WIA)

Labor Market Analysis is key to the success of Nebraska’s Workforce System. Current and future occupational trends are essential intelligence in preparing our workforce. This component of the system will be based on “real time” labor market information as well as utilizing employer survey results and occupational projections.

Nebraska’s Workforce System is driven to find skill gap solutions, resource solutions, innovation solutions, and work readiness solutions that create a skilled and ready workforce for Nebraska employers.

The following diagram represents the structure of Nebraska’s Workforce System Model.

Nebraska’s Workforce System Model:



In June 2012, the Assistant Secretary of Labor issued Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 33-11 which outlined program and policy priorities for WIA Adult, Youth, and Dislocated

Worker Programs and Wagner-Peyser. Throughout this Plan, current and future efforts are identified that support these priorities and create new approaches for increased awareness and greater efficiencies of Nebraska's Workforce System. They include:

- The utilization of a single application and case management system for WIA, Wagner-Peyser, and Trade Adjustment Assistance. This system interfaces with real time labor market information and supports electronic case files, utilization of social media, i.e. Facebook, and the sharing of data between programs.
- Recent receipt of a USDOL Workforce Data Quality grant to expand data sharing with Nebraska's education partners to evaluate programs and program effectiveness.
- Seven waivers are included in this Plan.
- Implementation of a Partner Council comprised of state leadership which will provide a more formal structure of communication to improve program coordination and implementation, planning processes, and the leveraging of resources.
- The implementation of Industry Councils to expand the engagement of employers in an efficient, effective, and meaningful way.
- Adoption of the Nebraska Career Pathway Model in NDOL programs and jointly implementing with the Nebraska Department of Education, the Career Readiness Standards.
- The Rapid Response Unit is currently working with the Manufacturing Extension Partnership program through the University of Nebraska-Omaha to create a rapid response aversion system.
- Integration and promotion of veteran service initiatives like Gold Card, Hire Our Heros, and Veteran Retraining Assistance Program (VRAP) in the Workforce System efforts.
- Nebraska is currently piloting two initiatives. One is with the Library Commission which utilizes libraries as a virtual point of access to expand services to the more remote areas of the state. The other pilot involves partnering with a community college to use Nebraska's single technology system, NWorks, for career planning and placement services for their students.

Specific goals for Nebraska's Workforce System include:

1. build strong, effective relationships with employers
2. create opportunities for stakeholders in Nebraska's Workforce System to collaborate and find solutions to workforce issues
3. expand the use of technology as a way to communicate, collaborate, and streamline services
4. implement innovative approaches to deliver employment and training services to Nebraskans in all 93 counties
5. build Nebraska's reputation as one of great job opportunities for all members of the workforce
6. collaborate with statewide initiatives such as Forging Nebraska's Future, the Entrepreneur Acceleration Program, InternNE, and the Industry Councils, to be a part of innovative workforce solutions

### Joint Planning and Coordination:

**Nebraska Workforce Investment Board Strategic Planning** – In August of 2011, the Nebraska Workforce Investment Board (NWIB) began efforts to re-engineer its purpose and focus. The Board held a “Kick off” strategic planning session via video conferencing at eight sites across the state. The theme for the “Kick off” session was *Nebraska’s Skilled Workforce. . .Are We Ready for 2015?* Attendees included employers, state and local WIB members, state agency leadership, and representatives from the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) One-Stop partner organizations. This planning session set the stage for the implementation of four strategies. The four strategies were: (1) continue to “Grow Nebraska’s Economy” through increased outreach to employers by joining or initiating Industry Councils based on the recommendations outlined in *Nebraska’s Competitive Advantage* study, (2) increase efforts to connect young people with career opportunities to be better prepared for work by connecting and promoting current and future initiatives implemented through economic development, education, and workforce development, (3) strengthen the role of the NWIB by reviewing the board structure and board development activities, and (4) conduct a study that reviews the efficacy and boundaries of the WIA local areas as currently designated by the Governor. These strategies were formulated and adopted by the NWIB Executive Committee on October 14, 2011. Ad hoc committees were formed to work on each of the strategies. Committee work began in November of 2011 and concluded in June of 2012. These planning efforts laid the groundwork to align the efforts of Nebraska’s Workforce System with the Governor’s vision as well as providing structure and critical input on key components throughout this Plan. Results of the four strategies can be found in Section II; “Overview of the Workforce System-*State Board.*”

**Senior Community Service Employment Program** – On June 11, 2012, the state met with an official from the Nebraska Health and Human Services Systems who heads up the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) to extend the invitation to be part of Nebraska’s Five-Year Integrated Workforce Plan. It was determined by the SCSEP program official that they would continue to submit a “stand alone” SCSEP Plan.

**Program Partner Planning Sessions** – On June 15, 2012, NDOL program partners met to review current program delivery coordination efforts and identify new efforts. Results of this discussion were incorporated in this plan.

On July 12, 2012, NDOL’s Office of Employment and Training hosted an interactive planning session with state level WIA partner agencies in preparation of the WIA Five-Year Integrated Workforce Plan. The Partner Planning Session was attended by 18 individuals representing employment programs, partner agencies, education, apprenticeship program, and NWIB members. The day-long planning session focused on identifying skill and education gaps for subpopulations, how to meet the skill needs of employers, Nebraska’s current workforce system and the design of Nebraska’s future Workforce System.

On July 26, a follow-up Partner Planning Session was held to solidify the ideas and actions identified at the July 12 session. Many of the ideas and actions are reflected throughout this

Plan, in particular, the Nebraska Workforce System model found on page 5 of this Plan and the formation of a state level Partner Council.

**Public Review and Comment Period** – The initial “draft” plan was posted on the internet for public review and comment on August 6, 2012. Notification that the plan was available on NDOL’s website ([www.dol.nebraska.gov](http://www.dol.nebraska.gov)) was also sent on August 6, 2012 to the following entities: all mandated One Stop partners, Nebraska Department of Economic Development, Nebraska State Chamber of Commerce, local WIB chairs, local WIA service providers, state Workforce Investment Board members, and Governor’s Office. The public notice was published on August 7, 2012 in the following newspapers: Omaha World Herald, Scottsbluff Star-Herald, North Platte Telegraph, Grand Island Independent, Norfolk Daily News, Beatrice Sun, and Lincoln Journal Star. The public notice announced that the “draft” plan was available at NDOL’s website for a 30 day review and comment period.

**Performance Committee Review** – On August 22, 2012, the Performance Committee of the Nebraska Workforce Investment Board met to review the plan and any public comment that had been received to date. Local WIB representatives, as well as all partners included in this plan, were invited to attend and participate in this plan review process.

**Final Review and Comment** – On August 31, 2012, the final “draft” Plan was re-posted on NDOL’s website ([www.dol.nebraska.gov](http://www.dol.nebraska.gov)) as well as re-sent to individuals representing employment programs, partner agencies, education, apprenticeship program, and NWIB members. On September 7, 2012, the NWIB met to review the final Plan. It was recommended by the Performance Committee that the Board provide approval. The Board unanimously approved the Plan.

## B. Economic and Workforce Information Analysis

*Economic and Workforce Information Analysis: The Integrated Workforce Plan must describe: the labor market and economic context in which the state's workforce system (including all the programs in the Integrated Workforce Plan) is operating, based on accurate and timely labor-market, demographic, and economic information, with particular attention given to high-need, under-served, under-employed, and/or low-skilled subpopulations. (WIA Sections 112(b)(4), 112(b)(17)(A)(iv), 112(b)(18), W-P Sections 8(b) and 15.) This description should include an assessment of the needs of constituents within the state who will become, or currently comprise, the state's workforce, particularly those needs which can be addressed by the programs included in the Integrated Workforce Plan.*

*The state's analysis of the current economy and future trends of the economy forms the foundation for strategic planning. For its analysis, the state may use the workforce information produced by the state workforce agency as well as other data available from Federal, state, and private sector sources, and informed by the business representatives of the state workforce investment board (SWIB). The Integrated Workforce Plan must include the following specific information, consistent with Section 112(b)(4) of the Act:*

- An assessment of the current situation and projected trends of the state's economy, industries and occupations, including major economic regions and industrial and occupational sectors*
- An assessment of the workforce skills and knowledge individuals need to find current and future employment in the state, particularly those skills and knowledge identified by employers as necessary for economic growth in the state*
- A description of the characteristics and employment-related needs of the state's population, and diverse subpopulations, including those from racial, ethnic, linguistic groups, older persons, and individuals with disabilities*
- Based on the assessments above, an analysis of the skill and education gaps for all individuals within the state, particularly for those individuals targeted by the programs included in the Integrated Workforce Plan*
- An analysis of the challenges associated with the state's population attaining the education, skills, and training needed to obtain employment*
- A discussion of the ability of Integrated Workforce Plan programs to meet the skill needs of employers in the state and close any skill gaps.*

### Assessment of the Current Situation and Projected Trends for Nebraska's Economy, Industries and Occupations, Including Major Economic Regions and Sectors within the State and Across State Lines

#### GDP and Personal Income and Inflation

Gross domestic product (GDP) for Nebraska has been on the rise for the past four years, while Real GDP for Nebraska saw a decline from 2008 to 2009, but has been rising since then. GDP for the metropolitan areas in Nebraska has also been rising, but at a slower pace. Real GDP for the Lincoln Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) saw a slight dip in 2008 as did the Omaha MSA while the Sioux City MSA saw a slight dip in 2009. Similarly, Personal Income in Nebraska has increased steadily from 2006 until 2008. Then in 2009 it dropped by 5.1%, and has been growing slowly, only adding 1.4% in 2010. Compared with national indicators, this data illustrates how Nebraska was hit by the recession late, and not nearly as hard as some other parts of the country. The Consumer Price Index (CPI) for the Midwest Urban region closely matches the CPI for the country as a whole.

### *Industry Projections and Trends*

Nebraska is expected to expand its workforce by 10.04% over the next 10 years, with a projected increase of 99,452 jobs. In the state as a whole, Natural Resources and Mining is the only supersector which is expected to decline. Education and Health Services, the largest industry in the state in 2010, is expected to have the largest increase over the next 10 years, adding 30,618 jobs. Construction is expected to be the fastest growing at 2.05% compound annual growth rate. Of the industries projected to expand, Government is expected to experience the slowest growth, at 0.17% compound annual rate. The Goods-Producing sector is expected to grow at nearly the same pace as the Service-Providing sector, but Services are still expected to make up over 80% of the entire employment base.

The Natural Resources and Mining industry employment in Nebraska has been increasing slowly but steadily since 2008. Conversely, the Construction industry has been in a slow but steady decline for about the same amount of time. The Manufacturing industry began a sharp decline in late 2008 and has started to recover, but remains well below its pre-recession employment levels. The Trade, Transportation and Utilities industry peaked in late 2008 and dropped throughout 2009. It began rising again in 2010, but has yet to recover to its pre-recession. Information industry employment was also hard hit by the recession, and is still below its pre-recession levels. The Finance industry remained fairly level throughout 2008, but has been in decline ever since. Professional and Business Services employment peaked in late 2008 and hit a low in 2010, but has since started to recover. Education and Health Services continue to increase at a steady rate. Leisure and Hospitality employment saw a slight drop in early 2010, but has since begun to increase again.

### *Occupational Projections and Trends*

Of the state's top 10 occupations with the most openings between 2010 and 2020, only Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers and Registered Nurses require education beyond high school. The remainder of the top 10 occupations require a high school diploma or less and include occupations such as Cashiers, Retail Salespersons, and Waiters and Waitresses.

The postsecondary non-degree award category tends to require less than two years of training for entry and to gain employment and encompasses a variety of occupations. Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers top the most openings list with an average of 1,115 annual openings. Truck driving also usually requires one to five years of work experience in addition to short-term on the job training. Nursing Aides, Orderlies and Attendants; Licensed Practical Nurses; and Welders, Cutters, Solderers and Brazers have the second, third and fourth most openings in this category.

Industry groups in the state have expressed concern over a shortage of skilled workers in some occupations such as welding. The Nebraska Departments of Labor, Economic Development, Education and postsecondary education institutions are working to alleviate the shortages.

**2010 – 2020 Occupational Projections Top 10 Most Annual Openings for Postsecondary Non-degree Award Education Level with Entry Wages from the Occupational Employment Statistics Survey**

<b>SOC Code</b>	<b>Standard Occupation Classification (SOC) Title</b>	<b>Average Annual Openings</b>	<b>Entry Wage</b>
53-3032	Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	1,115	\$ 12.40
31-1012	Nursing Aides, Orderlies, and Attendants	380	\$ 9.80
29-2061	Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	248	\$ 15.50
51-4121	Welders, Cutters, Solderers, and Brazers	158	\$ 11.75
53-3033	Light Truck or Delivery Services Drivers	138	\$ 9.20
39-5012	Hairdressers, Hairstylists, and Cosmetologists	132	\$ 8.20
51-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers	91	\$ 17.95
49-9021	Heating, Air Conditioning, and Refrigeration Mechanics and Installers	86	\$ 15.00
29-2071	Medical Records and Health Information Technicians	50	\$ 12.20
51-4011	Computer-Controlled Machine Tool Operators, Metal and Plastic	42	\$ 12.45

Nebraska Department of Labor, Office of Labor Market Information 2010 – 2020 Long Term Occupational Projections and the Occupational Employment Statistics Survey updated to first quarter 2012

For occupations that require an associate’s degree, six of the top 10 are in medical fields. Registered Nurses top the list with 667 average annual openings. Other medical occupations with large numbers of openings include Radiologic Technologists, Dental Hygienists, Medical and Clinical Laboratory Technicians, Veterinary Technologists, and Respiratory Therapists. Construction Managers and Civil Engineering Technicians are also included in the top 10 most openings.

One challenge in fulfilling Nebraska’s need for Registered Nurses continues to be a shortage of locations at the Community Colleges for students to complete their clinical practicums. Many colleges have extended waiting lists for entry into a Registered Nursing program after all prerequisites have been completed. An additional concern is that many of the larger hospitals aren’t hiring Registered Nurses that have only an associate’s degree and graduates may find the need to enter a Registered Nursing program and obtain a bachelor’s degree.

**2010 – 2020 Occupational Projections Top 10 Most Annual Openings for Associate’s Degree with Entry Wages from the Occupational Employment Statistics Survey**

SOC Code	Standard Occupation Classification (SOC) Title	Average Annual Openings	Entry Wage
29-1111	Registered Nurses	667	\$ 20.95
11-1021	General and Operations Managers	159	\$ 26.45
25-2011	Preschool Teachers, Except Special Education	72	\$ 8.60
11-9021	Construction Managers	57	\$ 24.35
29-2037	Radiologic Technologists and Technicians	46	\$ 18.52
29-2021	Dental Hygienists	43	\$ 26.70
29-2012	Medical and Clinical Laboratory Technicians	41	\$ 19.55
29-2056	Veterinary Technologists and Technicians	36	\$ 9.60
29-1126	Respiratory Therapists	31	\$ 20.15
17-3022	Civil Engineering Technicians	30	\$ 14.60

Nebraska Department of Labor, Office of Labor Market Information 2010 – 2020 Long Term Occupational Projections and the Occupational Employment Statistics Survey updated to first quarter 2012

The top 10 most openings for bachelor’s degrees include four teaching occupations and three computer-related occupations in addition to Accountants and Auditors, Market Research Analysts, and Public Relations Specialists.

**Compensation**

While overall wages in Nebraska have continued to increase since 2001, they have been increasing at a slower pace since 2007. Nebraska median hourly wages across all occupations have increased faster than the Consumer Price Index in 5 out of the last 10 years, and 3 of those 5 years were pre-recession.

Nebraska occupational wages as reported by the Occupational Employment Statistics survey tend to be lower than for the same occupation nationally. The entry wage for all occupations in the state is \$9.20 per hour in the first quarter of 2012. It is a challenge for training partners to assist participants in obtaining a self-sufficient wage for their family type.

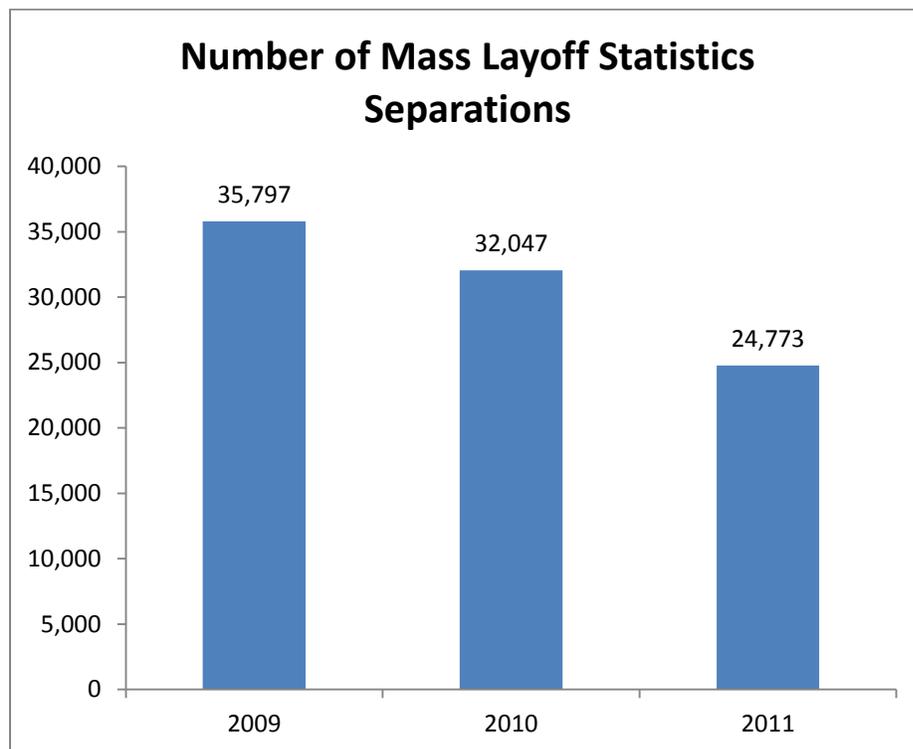
**Employment and Unemployment**

The civilian labor force peaked in July 2008 and reached its lowest level in December 2009, but has since been on the rise, and has been over one million workers since April 2011. The unemployment rate in Nebraska peaked at 4.9% in July of 2009. Since then it has dropped at a fairly steady rate, down to 3.9% in May of 2012.

### Dislocated Workers

The Mass Layoff Statistics (MLS) program defines employee separation as the number of individuals who have become permanently displaced during a particular layoff event, as provided by the employer during the employer contact. The MLS defines a permanent layoff event as a particular minimum number (five in Nebraska) of employees having been out of work for 30 or more days. A layoff event could involve employee separations in which the employee will be called back to work at a later date, as well as layoff events in which the employer does not expect to recall the employees they laid off.

MLS separations have been declining as the economic recovery continues. In 2009, the MLS program collected information on 35,797 separations due to a layoff event, with the majority of the separations occurring in the manufacturing, construction, and retail trade industries. In 2010, the MLS program collected information on 32,047 separations due to a layoff event, with the majority of separations occurring in the construction, manufacturing and administrative and waste services industries. Finally, 2011 saw 24,773 separations due to a MLS layoff event, with the majority of separations occurring in the construction, manufacturing, wholesale trade, and administrative and waste services industries. Occupation data is not available from the Mass Layoff Statistics program.



Demographic information is available for initial unemployment claims. Claimants may have been dislocated workers, may still be attached to an employer and will go back to work or may have quit their jobs so come from a different set of information than MLS. Males accounted for 59% of unemployment insurance claimants and females 41%. Whites comprised the largest

racial group of claimants with 61% followed by race unknown with 29% and Black with 8%. One-third of claims were filed by individuals in the 30-44 age category followed by under 30 with 26% of initial claims. Individuals in the 55 and over category were the smallest age group with 18% of initial claims.

In 2011, the top five occupations with the most initial claims were Construction Laborers, Office Clerks, General, Helpers-Production Workers, Truck Drivers, Heavy and Tractor Trailer Truck Drivers, and Customer Service Representatives. Heavy and Tractor Trailer Truck Drivers, Office Clerks, General and Customer Service Representatives are in the top 13 occupations with the most employment in the state. Of the top five occupations with the most claims, all have projected growth rates higher than all occupations in the state. This is a sign that these individuals should be able to become re-employed relatively quickly.

### **Rural and Urban Data**

Seventy percent of Nebraska's counties are not included in a Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) or a Micropolitan Statistical Area (MC). According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service, in 2007, there were 47,712 farms covering 92.5% of Nebraska. Yet only 4.8% of Nebraskans were employed in the Agriculture industry. Of this 4.8%, almost all of them (92%) had 5 or more years of experience in agriculture.

Twenty-seven of Nebraska's 93 counties are either part of the Omaha or Lincoln MSA, or are part of a MC. 10.9% of Nebraska employees worked in Manufacturing, while the majority worked in the service sector, and almost 4% worked in government. The top employing industries in Nebraska are Health Care and Social Assistance, Retail Trade, Manufacturing, Education Services, Accommodation and Food Services, Finance and Insurance and Public Administration. The top industries with the highest number of job openings are very similar, with Health Care and Social Assistance, Retail Trade, and Manufacturing topping the list.

## **Assessment of Workforce Skills and Knowledge Individuals Need to Find Current and Future Employment in the State, Particularly those Skills and Knowledge Identified by Employers as Necessary for Economic Growth in the State**

### **Current and Projected Trends**

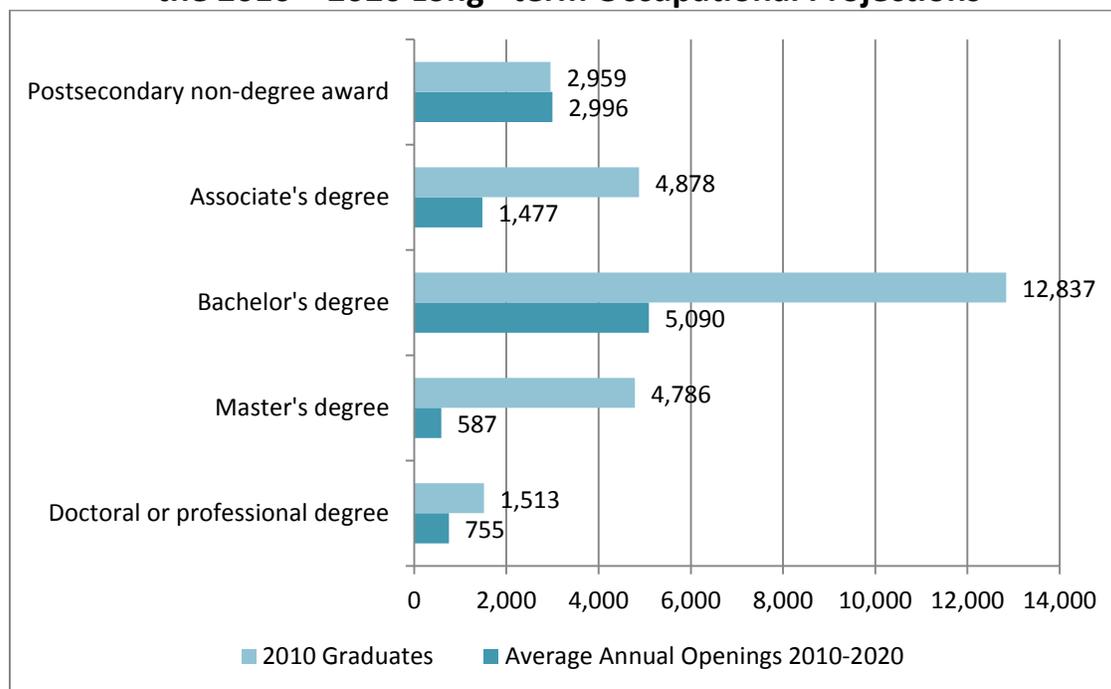
Nebraska is focusing on industries that promote the wealth-creating sectors of the state's economy, or what is often referred to as economic base or primary industries. Utilizing industry clustering from the *Nebraska's Competitive Advantage* study, staffing patterns were developed for occupations within these clusters which are particularly large within the state. This information is included in the new H3 (High Wage, High Demand, High Skill) website that may be accessed at [nelearn.nebraska.gov](http://nelearn.nebraska.gov). The H3 website is designed to provide career information including real time job opportunities and degree attainment. This will enable

Nebraskans to make informed career choices that will meet the needs of employers in the state by creating a better match between job openings and degree attainment.

Between 2010 and 2020 about one-third of the state’s projected annual openings will require education beyond high school. Nebraska’s occupational employment is projected to increase by 9.61% in the 10-year time period. All of the education categories beyond high school have a higher percent change than the statewide average and range from 10.29% for associate’s degrees to 14.00% for some college, no degree. The highest number of annual openings is for occupations requiring a bachelor’s degree with 5,090, followed by postsecondary non-degree award with 2,996.

When the 2010 – 2020 occupational projections average annual openings were compared to the number of 2010 graduates reported in the Integrated Postsecondary Educational Data System, the number of graduates completing degrees outpaced expected demand. Yet, employers may have difficulty recruiting for specific occupations due to a mismatch of degree attainment and employer vacancies. A person with a bachelor’s degree in philosophy may not have the educational background required to fill a mechanical engineering position. Additionally, the labor market demand for graduates above the associate degree level is more national and graduates may leave the state for employment opportunities requiring higher degrees.

### Nebraska Postsecondary Graduates by Degree Level vs. Expected Demand from the 2010 – 2020 Long - term Occupational Projections



Sources: Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education Integrated Postsecondary Educational Data System and Nebraska Department of Labor, Office of Labor Market Information 2010 – 2020 Long Term Occupational Projections

In addition to job-specific skills, employers have expressed a need for newly hired individuals to have soft skills. The Office of Labor Market Information surveyed businesses to determine the top O\*NET skills needed by employers in the 2010 New Hires Survey. Required job skills were compared to the skills of newly hired employees. Within the top 10 skills, the top 6 matched on the new employee and required job skills rankings in order of importance. The next four skills matched but were ranked differently in priority.

## **Description of the Characteristics and Needs of the State’s Population, and Diverse Subpopulations, Including those from Racial, Ethnic, Linguistic groups, Older Persons, and Individuals with Disabilities**

### **Unemployment Insurance Claimants**

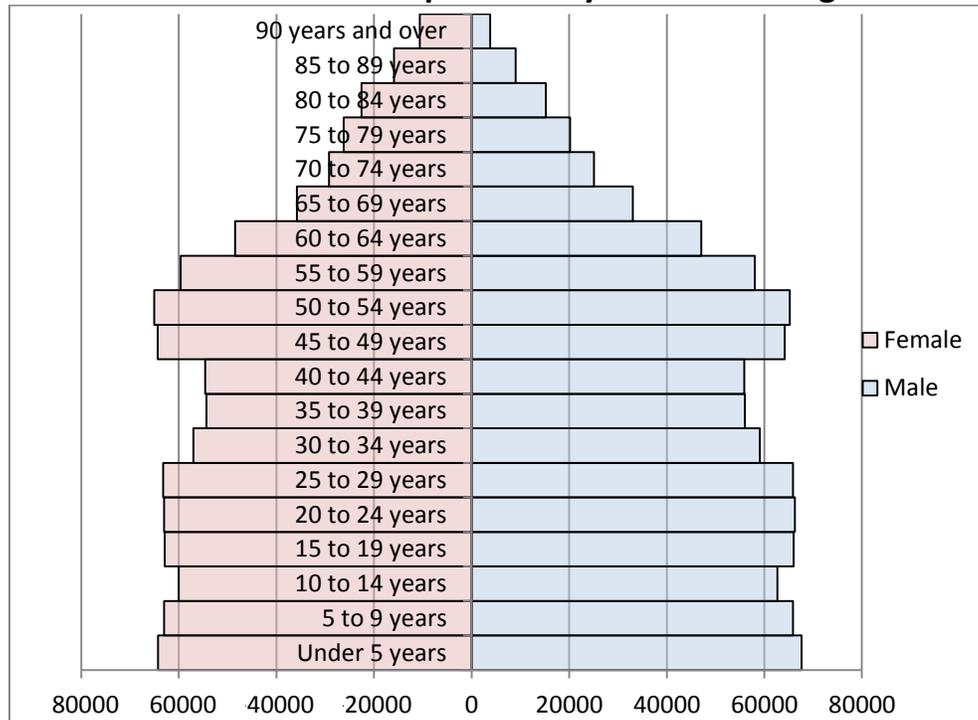
In Nebraska, in 2011, 59% of individuals initially applying for unemployment insurance were male and 41% female. The largest percentage of claimants were white with 61.1%, race unknown made up the second largest category with 28.6% followed by Black with 7.9%, American Indian with 1.3% and Asian with 1%. Nebraskans in the 30-34 age group comprised one-third of initial claims followed by individuals under 30 with 26% and 23% in the 45-54 age category. Eighteen percent of people 55 and older had initial claims. The top 5 occupations in initial claims were Construction Laborers, General Office Clerks, Production Worker Helpers, Truck Drivers and Customer Service Representatives.

Nearly half (49%) of individuals filing initial claims had a high school diploma or a GED. The second highest education category was less than a high school diploma with 17%. The third highest education category was for individuals with two years of college or an Associate Degree/Technical College with 11%. The categories with the lowest percentage of initial claims were for one year of post graduate school (1%) and Doctorate (1%).

### **Population and Age**

Unlike the rest of the country, Nebraska has a smaller proportion of older individuals caused by the aging baby boomers. The baby boom bubble is not nearly as large compared to other age groups of the population.

## 2010 Nebraska Population by Gender and Age



Source: 2010 Census Summary File 1

For Program Year 2011, a profile of re-employment services participants is as follows:

Education	Total	% of Total
Less than High School	161	8.34%
High School	736	38.11%
More than HS	160	8.20%
Associates	382	20.00%
Bachelors	319	16.50%
Masters	95	5.00%
Doctorate	4	0.2100%
Vocational Credential	26	1.14%
Non-disclosed	48	2.50%

Registration Age	Total	% of Total
Under 19	3	0.20%
19-21	44	2.30%
22-32	535	27.70%
33-44	493	25.50%
45-54	448	23.20%
55-64	327	17.00%
65 and Older	81	4.20%

Gender	Total	% of Total
Male	999	51.73%
Female	932	48.27%

Race	Total	% of Total
Caucasian	1490	77.20%
African American/Black	199	10.30%
I do not wish to answer	190	9.84%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	32	1.66%
Asian	19	1.00%

### Disability

Estimates from the 2010 American Community Survey show that 5.8% of Nebraskans in the labor force have a disability. People with a disability comprise 12.8% of the unemployed while

people with no disability comprise 87.2% of the unemployed. The American Community Survey estimates that the 2010 unemployment rate for Nebraska was 6.3%.

### Homeless

There were approximately 3,800 homeless people in Nebraska in 2010, representing 0.2% of the population according to the 2010 Annual Homeless Assessment Report to Congress, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Office of Community Planning and Development.

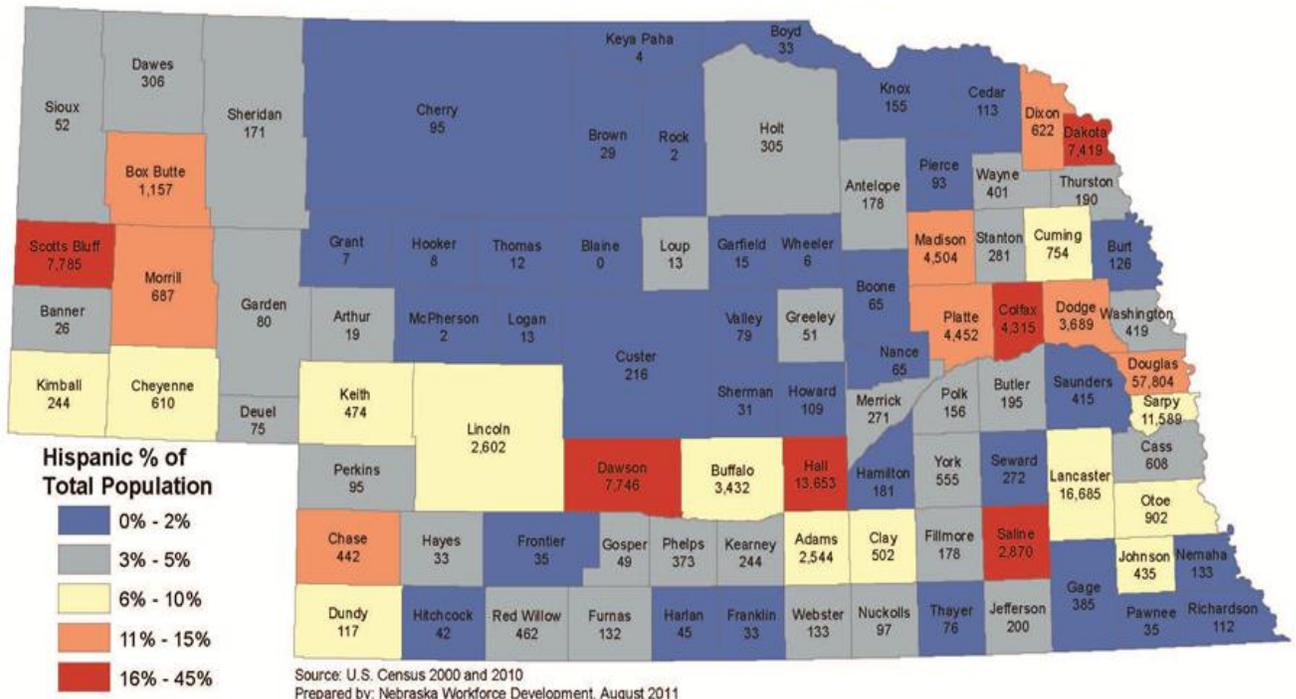
### Race, Ethnicity, Immigration, and Language

According to the 2010 Census, there were about 18,000 Native Americans living in Nebraska. Population totals for other races, according to the 2010 census were: White: 1.5 million, Black: 82,000, Asian: 32,000, Native Hawaiian: 1,200, and Two or more Races: 39,000. There were 167,000 Hispanics or Latinos living in Nebraska. 30.9% of Whites living in Nebraska who were foreign born had become naturalized citizens. This compares with 28.9% of Blacks, 49.5% of Asians, and 23.3% of Hispanics. Hispanics were the largest category of foreign born population, at 59,000, and had the lowest rate of becoming naturalized US citizens.

The U. S. Census American Community Survey 2005-2009 estimates show that in 2009 there were 70,175 or 4.3% Nebraskans age 5 years and older who speak a language other than English at home and speak English less than “very well.” A majority (75%) of the people who speak English less than “very well” speak Spanish.

In Nebraska, the number of African language speakers who speak English less than “very well” has increased 178% since 2000. The 6 languages/language groups listed below have more than 1,000 speakers in the state who speak English less than “very well.” The estimated number of people in 2009 that speak another language and speak English less than “very well:” Spanish, 52,371; Vietnamese, 3,917; Chinese, 1,905; African languages, 1,570; Arabic, 1,366; and German 1,212. These 6 languages/language groups account for 89% of all the state’s population who speak English less than “very well.”

## Nebraska Hispanic Population Hispanic Population and Hispanic Percent of Total Population



### Veterans

According to the 2010 American Community Survey (ACS), there are approximately 149,594 veterans currently living in the state. When comparing educational attainment levels between veterans and non-veterans, on average, Nebraska veterans have a higher educational attainment than non-veterans. Overall, 92.2% of veterans have at least a high school diploma (or equivalency), compared to 89.6% of non-veterans. Of Nebraska veterans, 34.0% are high school graduates while 34.4% have some college or an associate's degree. This compares with non-veterans who are high school graduates (29.1%), or have some college or an associate's degree (32.4%). The only educational attainment category in which non-veterans lead veterans is Bachelor's degree or higher, where 28.2% of non-veterans have a Bachelor's degree or higher, compared to veterans at 23.8%.

As with Nebraska as a whole, the employment situation for veterans in Nebraska appears to be considerably better than it is nationally. While 8.7% of veterans were unemployed nationally in 2010, only 5.3% of Nebraska veterans were unemployed. Over the last four years (2007-2010), veterans age 35-64 saw slightly higher unemployment rates than their non-veteran counterparts. In 2010, veterans between the ages of 35 to 54 had a 4.7% unemployment rate, compared to 4.1% for non-veterans. Similarly, veterans between the ages of 55-64 had an unemployment rate of 3.6%, compared to non-veterans rate of 3.4%. Only veterans age 18 to 34 fared better than their non-veteran counterparts, with an unemployment rate of 6.1% versus 7.4% for non-veterans. However, veterans in Nebraska tend to have a slightly higher

unemployment rate than non-veterans. Per the 9002B report for Program Year 2011, 8,893 veterans received services through Nebraska’s labor exchange services and 3,808 received specific intensive services through One-Stop Career Center staff.

### Women

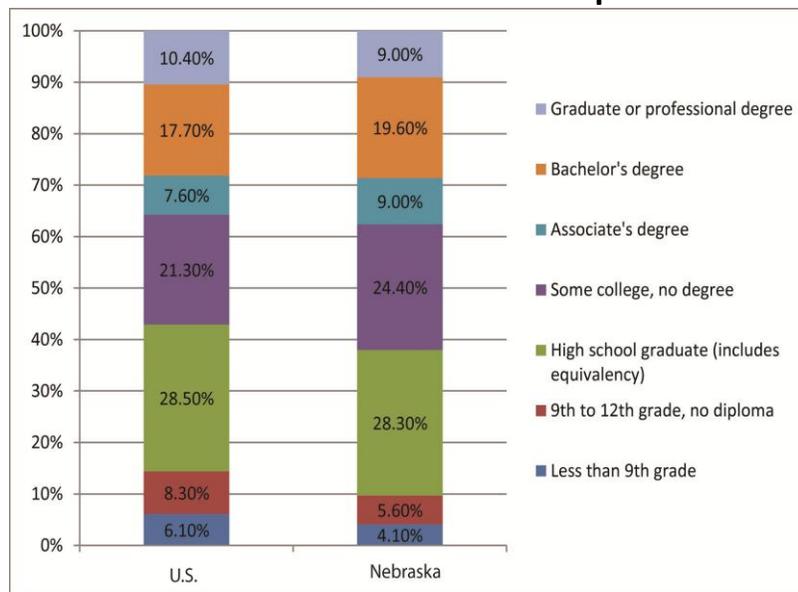
Nebraska’s population is 50.4% female. In 5 year age brackets, women outnumbered men in the state in every age grouping from 55 to 60 and up, the brackets younger than 55 had males leading women in every grouping except for 45 to 49. Women in Nebraska had a lower labor force participation rate than men, but were much more likely than women in the U.S. as a whole to be in the labor force. Nebraska women also had an unemployment rate that was nearly half that of the national average, 5.5% versus 10.0%, respectively.

## **Assessment of the Skill and Education Gaps for All Individuals within the State, Particularly for those Individuals Targeted by the Programs in the Integrated Workforce Plan**

### Educational Attainment

Nebraska’s population compares favorably with the nation in educational attainment. Nebraska has 62% of the population age 25 and older with post high school education compared to 57% nationally. In the Lincoln MSA 68% have an education beyond high school and in the Omaha MSA the figure is 66%. Nebraska has a larger proportion of individuals with some college and no degree than the nation. This is a missed opportunity to provide the state’s employers with a more highly trained workforce.

**Educational Attainment of Nebraskans Compared to the Nation**



Source: 2010 American Community Survey

According to the 2010 ACS, 47% of Hispanics aged 25-64 years do not have a high school diploma or equivalent, which is higher than the national rate of 36%. This is also the case for 18% of American Indians (17% nationally), and 14% of Black or African Americans (15% nationally). One of the primary steps to gainful employment in today's economy is not only a high school education, but at least some postsecondary education. This demonstrates a high need, especially for Hispanics, for outreach programs and the availability of affordable adult basic education courses.

### Educational Attainment in Nebraska by Age, Race/Ethnicity, and Education Level

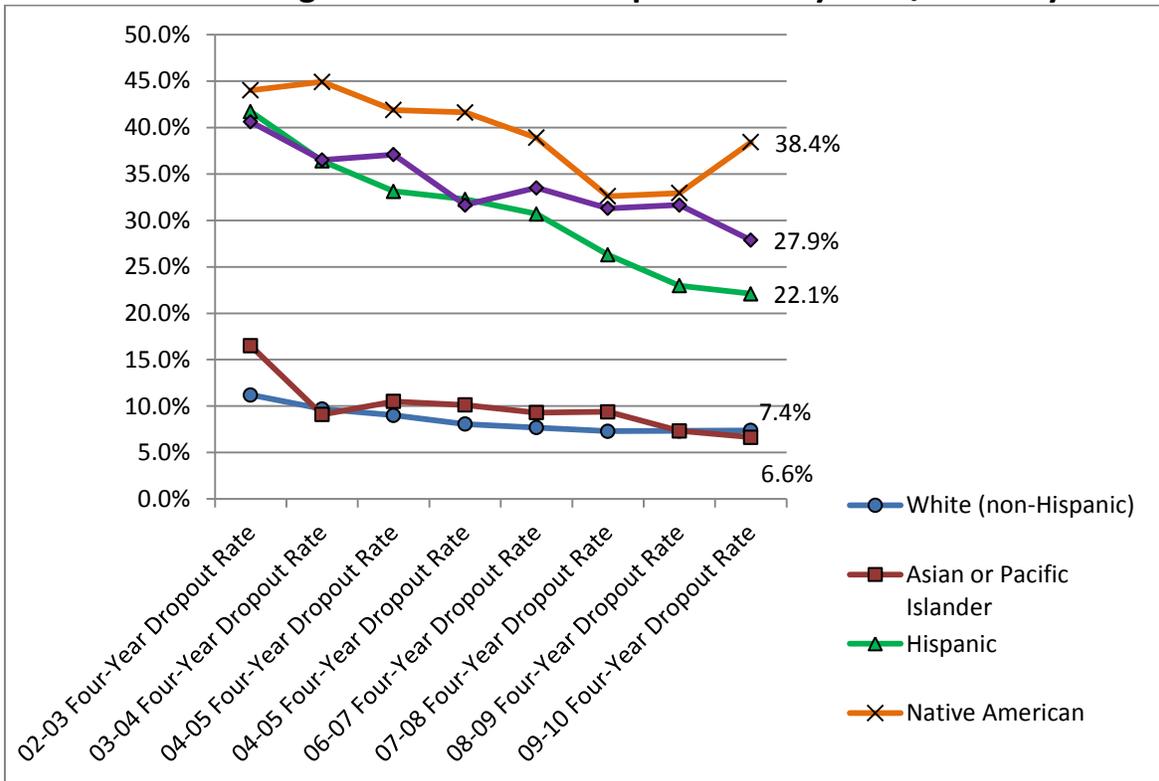
Age 25-64 Years	Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	White, not Hispanic or Latino	Black or African American, not Hispanic or Latino	American Indian and Alaska Native, not Hispanic or Latino	Asian, not Hispanic or Latino	Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, not Hispanic or Latino	Two or more races, not Hispanic or Latino
Non HS Graduate	47%	4%	14%	18%	14%	13%	11%
HS Graduate or Equivalent	24%	26%	30%	31%	16%	11%	24%
Some College, No Degree	14%	25%	32%	28%	11%	42%	31%
Associate's Degree	4%	11%	7%	12%	6%	11%	11%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	10%	33%	17%	11%	53%	22%	23%

Source: 2006-10 American Community Survey

### Dropout and Graduation Rates

The dropout rates for Black and Hispanic students have been steadily dropping since the 2002-03 academic year. Unfortunately, the dropout rates for Black, Hispanic, and Native American students in Nebraska continue to be significantly higher than those of Whites and Asians. The dropout rate of Hispanic students is especially concerning because Hispanic students are projected to increase to almost 20% of the student population in Nebraska by the 2020-21 academic year.

### NE Public High Schools 4 Year Dropout Rate by Race/Ethnicity



Source: Nebraska’s Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education

Due to the Nebraska Department of Education changing the way it calculates graduation rates, and thereby eliminating the ability to calculate a dropout rate, we will instead focus on graduation rates, and college continuation rates, which are closely related. High school graduation rates have been increasing steadily for the past 8 years among all races/ethnicities with the exception of Native Americans. There was a drop in all graduation rates however, due to the methodological change in the way graduation rates are calculated for the most recent academic year. We will continue to monitor public high school graduation rates using the 2010-11 academic year as the new baseline. Out of all the students who graduated from Nebraska public high schools during the 2010-11 academic year, 71.1% continued on to college sometime between June 2011 and April 2012.

#### Literacy and Tested Skills

According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), demand by policymakers and educators for state and county estimates of literacy prompted NCES to use statistical modeling approaches to produce estimates of adults at the lowest literacy level for individual states and counties. These model-based estimates are called "indirect" estimates to distinguish them from the direct survey estimates. These estimates were based on a 2003 study, and based on a sample taken from only 12 states, of which Nebraska was not a part. The statewide illiteracy rate for Nebraska is estimated at 7% or 127,844 people based on the 2010 Census.

Nebraska continues to track along the national average for 4th grade math and writing scores, and continues to exceed the national average in reading scores. Nebraska also continues to exceed the national average in all 8th grade tested skill scores, but the gap in mathematics is shrinking. This indicates that Nebraska K-12 educators need to find innovative ways to keep students interested in math between the 4th and 8th grades. Data is not available for 12th grade students.

## **Analysis of the Challenges Associated with the State's Population Attaining the Education, Skills and Training Needed to Obtain Employment**

### **Wage Rates**

Nebraska occupational wages as reported by the Occupational Employment Statistics survey tend to be lower than for the same occupations nationally. The calculated average entry wage for all occupations in the state is \$9.20 per hour. According to the Center for Women's Welfare at the University of Washington, a single parent in Douglas County with two preschool age children would need to earn \$22.47 per hour in order to be self-sufficient from government assistance. Very few occupations in Nebraska requiring two years or less of education and training provide entry wages at that level.

### **Public Assistance**

According to the American Community Survey 2010 estimates, Nebraska has a lower percentage of its population on cash public assistance income compared to the rest of the nation, 2.2% compared to 2.9% respectively. Beneficiaries of public assistance may have many barriers to attaining the education and skills needed to obtain employment including lack of basic education and the soft skills needed in the workplace, limited English, lack of transportation to work and many others.

### **Health Insurance Coverage**

The Census Small Area Health Insurance Estimates also shows that 13.3% of all Nebraskan's are uninsured, an estimated 202,325 individuals. The Metropolitan area (Omaha, Lincoln, and Sioux City MSA counties within Nebraska) has a lower estimated uninsured rate than the nonmetropolitan counties of the state, at 12.5% and 14.6% respectively. The metropolitan counties accounted for a larger share of the estimated uninsured population within the state with, 112,885 uninsured individuals, compared to the nonmetropolitan counties with 89,440 uninsured.

## **Ability of Integrated Workforce Plan Programs to Meet the Skill Needs of Employers in the State and Close Any Skill Gaps**

### **All Business Types**

The primary skills needed for jobs today tend to align into basic categories regardless of the type or size of employer. As technology has changed, so have the lifestyles and experiences of students and employees. An individual is likely to have already used a computer to job search, receive training, or simply communicate with friends and family. These computing skills, whether basic or advanced, could be utilized in the same manner at a small local plumbing repair shop as they would be in the office of a large elementary school. The technical skills necessary for starting a home-based welding and metal working shop are the same ones needed in a hydroelectric utility maintenance shop.

Whether for a government office or small business looking to grow, or large business hanging on to a lead position in a community, the skills desired by these employers will have commonalities such as: strong communication skills both spoken and written, some computer and office technology related experience, technical skills and training pertinent to the position and above all, an openness and willingness to learn and follow instruction.

In recent years, the educational sector of Nebraska has worked diligently with communities and employers to develop a consensus of what employers are looking for in graduates and new employees. This resulted in standardizing career readiness skills. In addition to the adoption of career readiness standards, educational strategies and practical experience opportunities between students and local employers have been developed in order to meet these expectations and to create an active learning environment. This active learning allows learned skills to become experience and then inherent skills transferrable between employers.

Organizations serving their local labor market must grow and change to fit the demands of the community they serve. If the staff is not addressing the development of skills necessary for local job placement, their organization will falter. Staff should be able to direct applicants to suitable resources to address any gaps in necessary skills that employers desire. Ongoing communication and partnerships between educational institutions, local employers, workforce partners and community assistance entities will continue to produce competent and skilled workers.

### **Emphasis on Target Industry Clusters and High Wage, High Demand, High Skill Occupational Training**

Nebraska is focusing on industries that promise the wealth-creating sectors of the state's economy on what is often referred to as "economic base" or "primary industries."

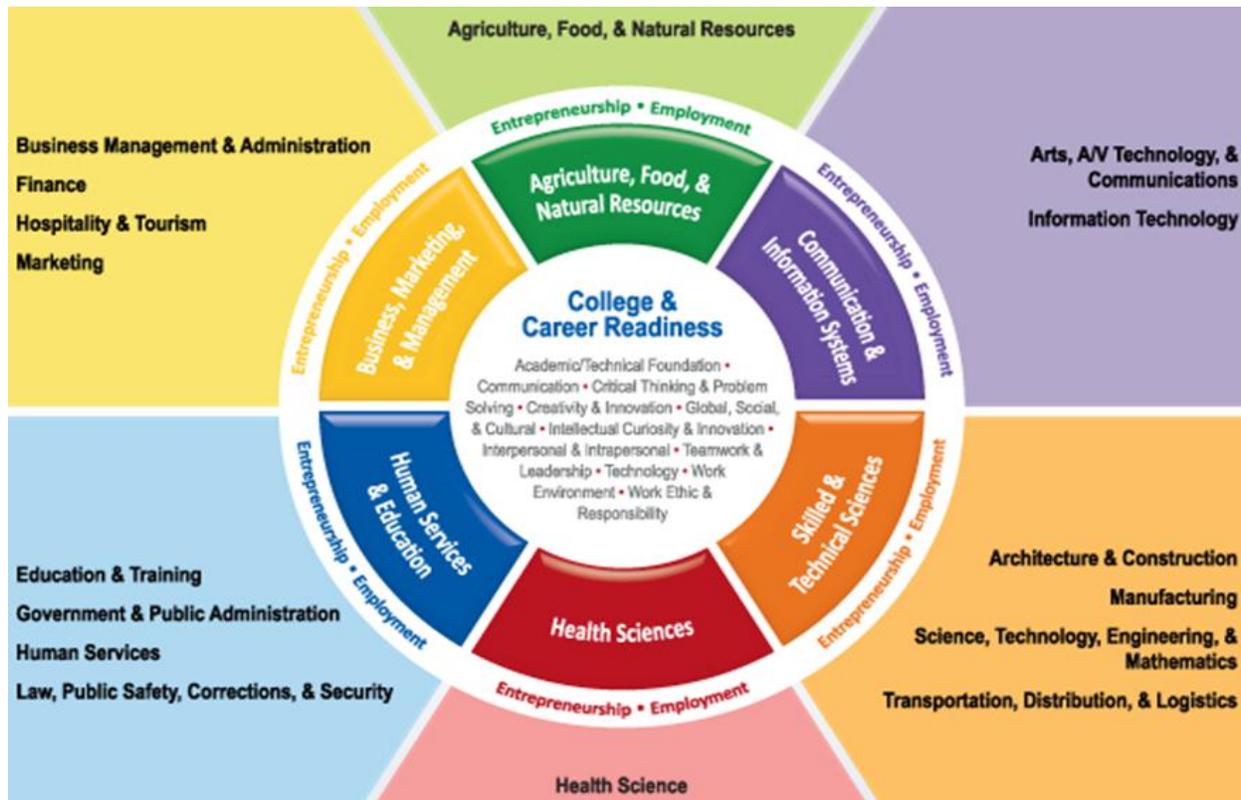
Over the past five years, a number of efforts have taken place to emphasize target industry clusters and High Wage, High Demand, and High Skills (H3) occupations. In the state's

economic study, *Nebraska's Competitive Advantage*, industry clustering was done to develop staffing patterns for occupations which are particularly large in the state. To determine target industry clusters, we looked at the top occupations in terms of annual growth (i.e., openings) requiring some amount of training but not formal or long-term education. This work has helped shape and identify the H3 occupations.

In 2008, NDOL first established a *Demand Occupations Policy* which provides the methodology that establishes H3 occupations. The policy also sets a 50% annual enrollment benchmark for the local areas to meet when enrolling adults and dislocated workers in the WIA occupational skill training activity.

Also in 2008, the Nebraska Department of Education/Career Technical Education adopted and began implementing the National Career Pathway Model developed by the Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE). The Nebraska Career Education Model shown below will be a key tool in cross walking emerging occupations of targeted industry with the established career pathways. In the model, Nebraska's careers are organized in 6 career fields. The 6 fields include 16 career clusters which group careers that involve similar work.

### Nebraska Career Education Model



To assist end users in understanding and identifying target industries and H3 occupations, the Departments of Labor, Education, and Economic Development launched an H3 website in June

2012. This website is designed to provide “user friendly” data to economic developers, students and their parents, community leaders and career seekers information on the state’s high skill, high wage and high demand occupations. The new High Wage, High Demand, High Skill (H3) website may be accessed at [nelearn.nebraska.gov](http://nelearn.nebraska.gov). Users have access to current job postings, career information by career cluster, H3 and typical occupations by Nebraska Economic Industry Cluster.

*Nebraska Career Connections* is another tool that provides education and career planning resources to bring Nebraskans together – students, parents, educators, adults, and employers. The system provides the tools needed for planning for life after high school, exploring career options, or creating a portfolio of materials for a job search and is accessible at [www.nebraskacareerconnections.org/careerClusters](http://www.nebraskacareerconnections.org/careerClusters).

### Soft Skills

Soft skills continue to be a priority issue with Nebraska employers. The New Hires Business Survey conducted by NDOL’s Office of Labor Market Information pointed to the need to expand occupational specific skills and soft skills. The top required job skills needed by employers identified in the survey included: job specific skills or knowledge, teamwork/coordination, service oriented/customer service, license or certification, basic computer proficient, social person/good attitude/well rounded personality, accurate/detail oriented, communication/verbal/presentation, and prior work experience. The encouraging observations from the survey results are the career ready opportunities being implemented by the Department of Education.

In December 2011, the Nebraska Board of Education adopted the Nebraska Standards for Career Ready Practice. These Career Ready Standards were derived from extensive input from business and industry representatives expressing the most critical skills needed for employee and/or entrepreneur success. The Career Ready standards are supported by NDOL’s programs and are being infused in program materials that provide guidance to consumers of services provided by the partners in this Plan.

The following table demonstrates the top required job skills, identified by employers through the New Hire Survey, are also included in Nebraska’s Career Ready Standards. The goal of both the Department of Education and the Department of Labor in adopting the Career Ready Standards will be to have a unified common approach to the definition of a career ready individual. So, whether an individual is a student at an alternative school, a career seeker at a One-Stop, an employer, a parent, or someone accessing information off the web, the definition and standard for career ready is the same. Over the next 24 months, the following efforts will be implemented to strengthen this initiative: the NWIB will endorse Career Ready Standards; joint professional development will be held with career counselors, workforce professionals and Department of Economic Development staff; and messaging materials will follow on providing and integrating the Career Ready standards.

Top Required Job Skills Needed by Employers	Nebraska's Standards for Career Ready Practice
Job-Specific Skills or Knowledge	Applies Appropriate Academic & Technical Skills
Teamwork/Coordination	Works Productively In Teams & Demonstrates Cultural Competency
Service Oriented/Customer Service	Communicates Effectively & Appropriately
License or Certification (Any)	Applies Appropriate Academic & Technical Skills
Basic Computer Proficiency	Utilizes Technology
Social Person/Good Attitude/Well Rounded Personality	Works Productively In Teams & Demonstrates Cultural Competency; Contributes To Employer & Community Success
Accurate/Detail Oriented	
Speaking/Verbal/Presentation/Communication	Communicates Effectively & Appropriately
Prior Work Experience	Manages Personal Career Development

Source: Nebraska Department of Labor Office of Labor Market Information, New Hires Survey Report and Nebraska Department of Education /NCE Career Ready Practice publication

Another effort to address the need to improve workplace soft skills is a recently completed project called “Career Readiness Modules.” This was a joint project between NDOL and the Nebraska Department of Education contracted with Nebraska Educational Telecommunications to produce interactive career readiness on-line learning tools designed to assist employers, job seekers, parents, students and professionals with career preparation, professional development and preparation for the GED. The electronic learning tools may be accessed at [nelearn.nebraska.gov](http://nelearn.nebraska.gov).

### **Career Education Bridge Programs**

Career education bridge programs received funding approval for the next three years from the Nebraska legislature in 2012. The legislation defined a bridge program as a structured career pathway program, developed in partnership between the provider of the adult education program and a nonprofit social services organization, which assists students in obtaining academic, employability and technical skills needed to enter and succeed in postsecondary education and training and the labor market. The model has been a bridge program in Omaha between the WIA service provider, industry sector and Metropolitan Community College. This new legislation will enable new partnerships and co-enrollment opportunities with WIA. The legislation requires bridge programs to:

- provide the English reading and writing and math skills required to succeed in a postsecondary credentialing or degree program
- lead to the attainment of college credit and a recognized postsecondary educational credential or an industry-recognized credential
- be open only to low-income participants who are co-enrolled in adult education, developmental education or English as a second language

- target the specific workforce needs of an occupational sector within the state and provide services aimed at improving education, skills and employment prospects for low-income adults
- use educational best practices, including contextualized instructional strategies, team teaching, modularized learning or reduced student-teacher ratios
- provide for supportive services needed for student educational and employment success, including job coaching and personal needs.

This pilot program is administered through Adult Education. Once pilot programs are established, participants may be co-enrolled with WIA.

### [Nebraska Longitudinal Database](#)

In 2012, NDOL's Office of Labor Market Information received a U.S. Department of Labor Workforce Data Quality Initiative grant to develop an education and training data warehouse. This longitudinal database will include NDOL employment and training records, all community college, all state college and one university campus, Adult Basic Education, Carl Perkins and Vocational Rehabilitation records to begin building the database. The purpose for the data warehouse is to provide the tools to analyze program data for evaluation program performance over time and to define successful strategies to improve program performance in order to meet employer needs.

## **C. State Strategies: Key Strategies Nebraska Intends to Implement Based On Its Economic Analysis**

*State Strategies: The Integrated Workforce Plan must describe the key strategies the state intends to implement, based on its economic analysis, to achieve the governor's vision and goals.*

State Strategies include:

- Implementation of Industry Councils for targeted growth industries and demand occupations to assist in the development of a skilled and ready workforce
- Align private sector membership on Workforce Investment Boards to state or local target industries
- Integrate the Department of Education 16 Career Clusters with target industry clusters efforts
- Educate workforce and education professionals on High Demand, High Skill, and High Wage opportunities in Nebraska
- Promote Nebraska's career/job opportunities to students K-12 and beyond
- Identify a wide spectrum of demand and growing occupations for diverse populations
- Through the Partner Council, identify initiatives that create solutions for overcoming employment barriers of target populations

## Cross-Program Strategies

*Cross-Program Strategies – The plan must discuss integrated cross-program strategies for specific populations and subpopulations identified in the state’s economic analysis, strategies for meeting the workforce needs of the state’s employers, and regional and sector strategies tailored to the state’s economy.*

A number of cross-program strategies have been identified by partner agencies representing the subpopulations identified in the economic analysis of this Plan. The implementation of these cross- program strategies would greatly aid in preparing workers to meet the needs of Nebraska employers as well as increasing the communication and collaboration of agencies who serve the subpopulations. The following strategies will be explored for implementation.

- Cross-training at the state and local agency level on program services, employer needs, and workforce initiatives
- Externships for teachers (K-20) and workforce professionals. Externships would provide on-site experiences with employers.
- Co-enrollment tracking system among all WIA system partners
- Add questions to Nebraska’s Economic Development Employer Survey to assess and meet needs
- Work with Eligible Training Providers to establish more short term training certificates to meet the needs of subpopulations
- Adoption of Nebraska’s Career Readiness standards by all employment and training programs as a baseline of work readiness across all populations
- Utilize the 16 Career Clusters and Pathways as the foundation to communicate career opportunities and to build and impact career guidance
- Create a solid grant partnership committee to respond to discretionary funding opportunities
- Utilize a single “go to” point for job seekers and employers to facilitate the labor exchange

## Partnerships

*Partnerships – The plan must include a discussion of key strategic partnerships that are necessary to successfully implement the strategies, specify roles of specific state entities and programs, and discuss how the strategies will meet the needs of employers and of each subpopulation. (WIA Sections 111(d)(2), 112(b)(8), W-P Section 8(c).)*

In order to successfully implement the state strategies, regular communication and planning will need to be robust among the partners. To facilitate this process, a Partner Council will be created. The Partner Council is represented under Program Stakeholders in Nebraska’s Workforce System. The mission of the Partner Council is to convene cross agency partnerships that focus on workforce solutions. The Partner Council membership is state level officials from: Nebraska Department of Labor (Wagner Peyser, WIA, Veterans, TAA, UI, Worker Training, Rapid Response, and LMI), Nebraska Department of Education (Career Technical Education, Adult Basic Education, and Vocational Rehabilitation), Nebraska Department of Economic Development (HUD, NE Advantage Training), US DOL Apprenticeship Program, Migrant Seasonal Farmworker Program (i.e. Proteus Inc.), Community Colleges, Nebraska Health and

Human Services (TANF, SNAP, and SCSEP), Native American Program, Housing Programs, Juvenile Justice system, and Nebraska Department of Corrections.

The Partner Council will work together to find skill gap solutions, resource solutions, work readiness solutions and other innovative workforce solutions. The Partner Council will receive timely and valuable information from the Industry Councils and local and regional employer representatives on work and skill readiness needs. Depending on labor market demands and skill sets needed, any one or all of the partners may participate in a work readiness initiative. The Partner Council will work collaboratively to address some of Nebraska’s most challenging workforce issues identified by subpopulations. Participation on the Partner Council by agencies who represent the subpopulations identified in this Plan will help insure subpopulations are being afforded good work opportunities and employers have a diverse and ready workforce.

NDOL and its programs will play a lead role in facilitating the activity of the Partner Council. Key partnerships already established include:

- NDOL and Vocational Rehabilitation have adopted the Nebraska Career Readiness Standards and the Career Pathways models established by Nebraska Department of Education/ Career Technical Education Program.
- Collaboration and participation in Nebraska’s Industry Councils between Department of Economic Development, NDOL and Career Technical Education.
- Conference on “Pathways to Prosperity” jointly hosted by Nebraska Department of Education, Nebraska Department of Economic Development, and the Nebraska Department of Labor.
- A newly funded partnership is the Workforce Data Quality Initiative Grant. This grant will create a Nebraska education and training data warehouse which will include NDOL employment and training records, all community college, all state college and one university campus, Adult Basic Education, Carl Perkins and Vocational Rehabilitation records to begin building the database. The purpose for the data warehouse is to provide the tools to analyze program data for evaluation of program performance over time and to define successful strategies to improve program performance in order to meet employer needs. Additional training providers, Registered Apprenticeship and Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) will also be invited to participate in the data warehouse.

## Leveraging Resources

*Leveraging Resources – The plan must discuss how the state will coordinate discretionary and formula-based investments across programs and in support of the governor’s vision. The state’s planned commitment of Federal and non-Federal funds to these investments must be included. The plan must also describe how the state will use program funds to leverage other Federal, state, local, and private resources, in order to effectively and efficiently provide services. (WIA Section 112(b)(10).)*

The Partner Council will play a significant role in coordinating any discretionary and formula based funds to support the Governor’s vision. Partnering will occur with outside entities such

as, the Nebraska Library Commission’s “Library Broadband Builds Nebraska Communities” initiative on a statewide outreach of training library staff on using NEworks; expanding the labor exchange and offering workshops and employer outreach meetings; working with the Nebraska Department of Corrections to provide guidance for workforce reentry; and exploring leveraging with the Senior Community Services Employment Program.

## Policy Alignment

*Policy Alignment – The plan must discuss how the state will align policies, operations, administrative systems, and other procedures to assure coordination and avoid duplication of workforce programs and activities outlined in WIA Section 121(b). (WIA Sections 111(d)(2)(A), 112(b)(8)(A), 121(b), 20 CFR 661.205(b)(1).)*

Currently in Nebraska, all of the partners represented in this plan are located in NDOL’s Office of Employment and Training. Therefore the operations, administrative systems, and policies are coordinated through a centralized policy distribution process and single Management Information System. This allows for a high level of coordination and avoids the duplication of services. At the Partner Planning Session held July 26, 2012, future policy alignment topics were identified by partners represented in this Plan as well as WIA system partners. Topics included: performance measures, resource training among partner agencies, connecting employers with the workforce (particularly subpopulations), and utilization of an Industry/Career Cluster focus in the design and delivery of services. To align processes and procedures for data collection, utilization of NEworks will be coordinated across all programs regarding case management, electronic case management systems and record entry.

## D.Desired Outcomes: Quantitative Targets and Results for Programs

*Desired Outcomes: The Integrated Workforce Plan must describe and provide specific quantitative targets for the desired outcomes and results for the programs included in the plan. Table 1 may be used for WIA/W-P programs. The plan should also describe any additional established indicators and system measures, beyond those required by programs’ authorizing statutes. (WIA Sections 112(b)(3), 136(b)(1)(A)(ii), (b)(2)(C), 20 CFR 666.110, 666.120(g), 666.300.) In addition to the state’s program performance goals, the state may also discuss the other goals it intends to achieve. Does the state examine broader economic and social indicators? For example, is the state attempting to increase the percentage of workers employed in family wage jobs; increase earnings to support a better quality of life; increase the number of employers with job opportunities; or increase high school and college graduation rates as metrics? In sum, the state should describe its desired results for the state workforce investment system and the metrics it is using to measure those results.*

PY12 State Performance Goals reflected on the following page are “proposed” only. Negotiations have **not** occurred with the Regional ETA Office, and are scheduled for September 24, 2012 at which time supporting documentation for the performance will be presented.

## STATE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS AND GOALS

<b>WIA Requirement at Section 136(b)</b>	<b>Previous year Performance (PY11)</b>	<b>Performance Goals PY12</b>
<b>Adults:</b>		
Entered Employment Rate	67.3%	74.0%
Employment Retention Rate	87.4%	87.0%
Average Six-Months Earnings	\$10,768	\$10,500
Certificate Rate		
<b>Dislocated Workers:</b>		
Entered Employment Rate	86.6%	89.0%
Employment Retention Rate	94.4%	94.0%
Average Six-Months Earnings	\$15,276	\$14,600
Certificate Rate		
<b>Youth Aged 19-21:</b>		
Entered Employment Rate		
Employment Retention Rate		
Average Six-Months Earnings		
Certificate Rate		
<b>Youth 14-18:</b>		
Skill Attainment Rate		
Diploma or Equivalent Attainment Rate		
Retention Rate		
<b>Youth Common Measures*:</b>		
Placement in Employment or Education	68.0%	76.0%
Attainment of a Degree or Certificate	59.6%	62.9%
Literacy and Numeracy Gains	52.4%	52.0%
Additional State-Established Measures		
<b>W-P Requirement at Section 13(a)</b>		
Entered Employment Rate	63.0%	69.0%
Employment Retention Rate	83.0%	84.0%
Average Six-Months Earnings	\$12,483	\$12,000

\*Goals are negotiated for these measures by states reporting common performance measure outcomes only.

[Note: This table reflects final ETA Form 9090 data and was revised after Nebraska's WIA Five-Year Integrated State Plan was originally posted (August 3, 2012) at [www.dol.nebraska.gov](http://www.dol.nebraska.gov).]





## **Section II**

# **State Operational Plan**



## **Section II. State Operational Plan**

### **E. Overview of the Workforce System**

*Overview of the Workforce System: The State Operational Plan must present an overview of the workforce system in the state.*

- *Organization – The overview must describe organization and delivery systems at the state and local levels for the programs covered in the plan, particularly how this organization effectively supports the coordination and alignment of the state’s workforce programs and supports integrated service delivery. The overview must include a description of the key state administrative personnel of the programs described in Section I of the Integrated Workforce Plan, and the organizational structure and membership roster of SWIB members and their organizational affiliation.*

### **Organization**

#### **State and Local Delivery Structure**

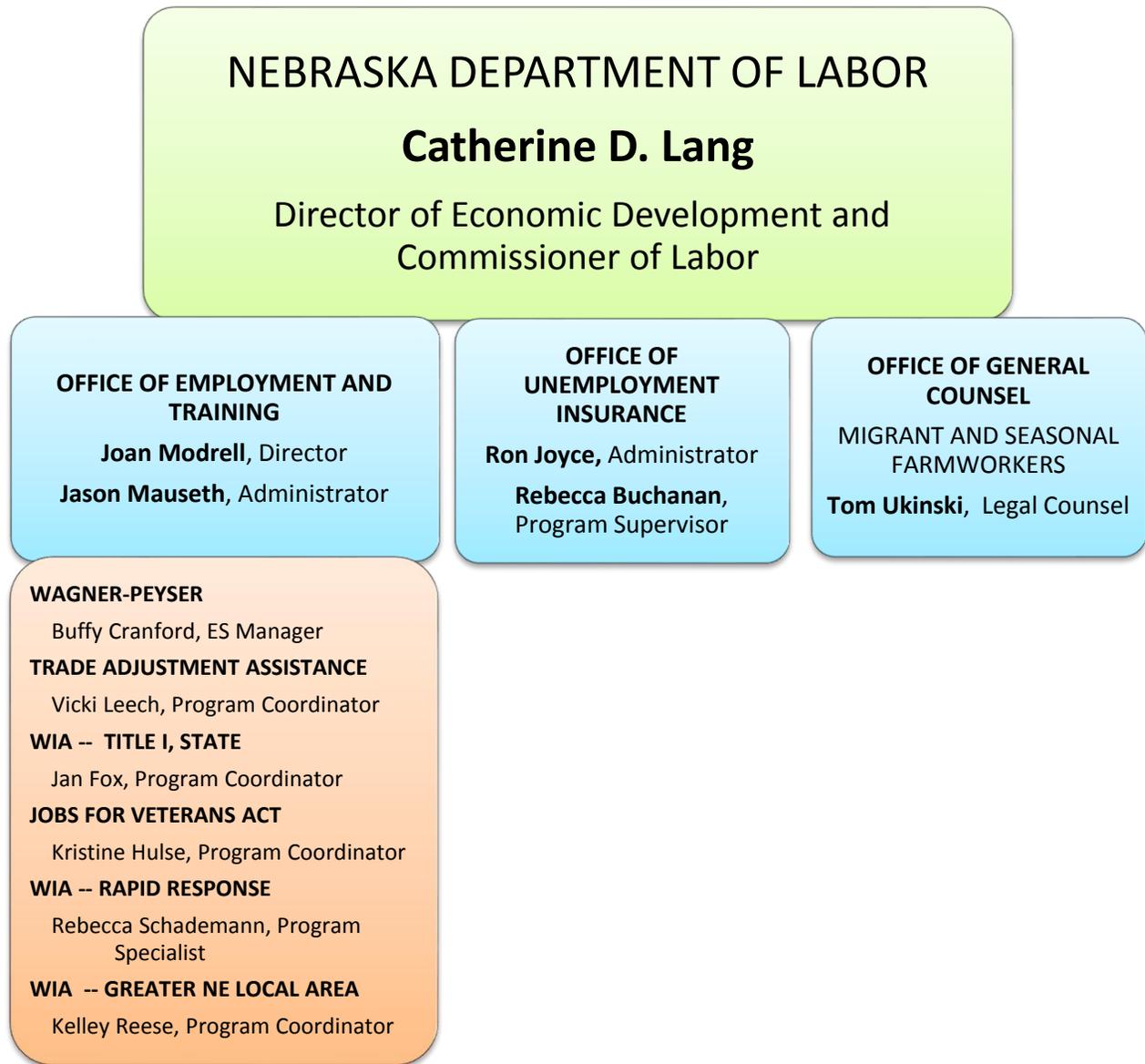
The partners included in this Plan are housed at NDOL. Within NDOL, Wagner-Peyser, Trade Adjustment Assistance Program (TAA), Rapid Response Program, Jobs for Veterans Act, and WIA Title I (Adult, Youth, and Dislocated Worker programs) are located in the Office of Employment and Training and Joan Modrell is the Director. The Unemployment Insurance Benefit Program is located in the Office of Unemployment Insurance and Ron Joyce is the administrator. The Wagner-Peyser Agricultural Outreach Program is located in the Office of Legal Counsel and Tom Ukinski is responsible for its coordination, implementation and reporting.

To effectively support the coordination of programs and continue to integrate services as much as possible, the Office of Employment and Training holds regular Program Management meetings with personnel from each partner program. The purpose of these meetings is to share program updates, discuss new initiatives, resolve issues, and review performance. The Office of Employment and Training also hosts Local Area Administrator meetings. These meetings are designed specifically for WIA program and WIB leadership staff from each of the three local areas.

Additionally, in October of 2012, Governor Heineman named Catherine D. Lang to the positions of Director of Economic Development and Commissioner of Labor. This strategic action will continue to align economic and workforce solutions and brings the coordination of economic development and workforce programs much closer together. A study conducted by Battelle Memorial Institute is currently underway to identify options for a merger between the two agencies. Depending on the results of this study, additional action may be taken by the Nebraska legislature during the 2012 Legislative Session.

The following chart illustrates the organization of the partners included in this Plan.

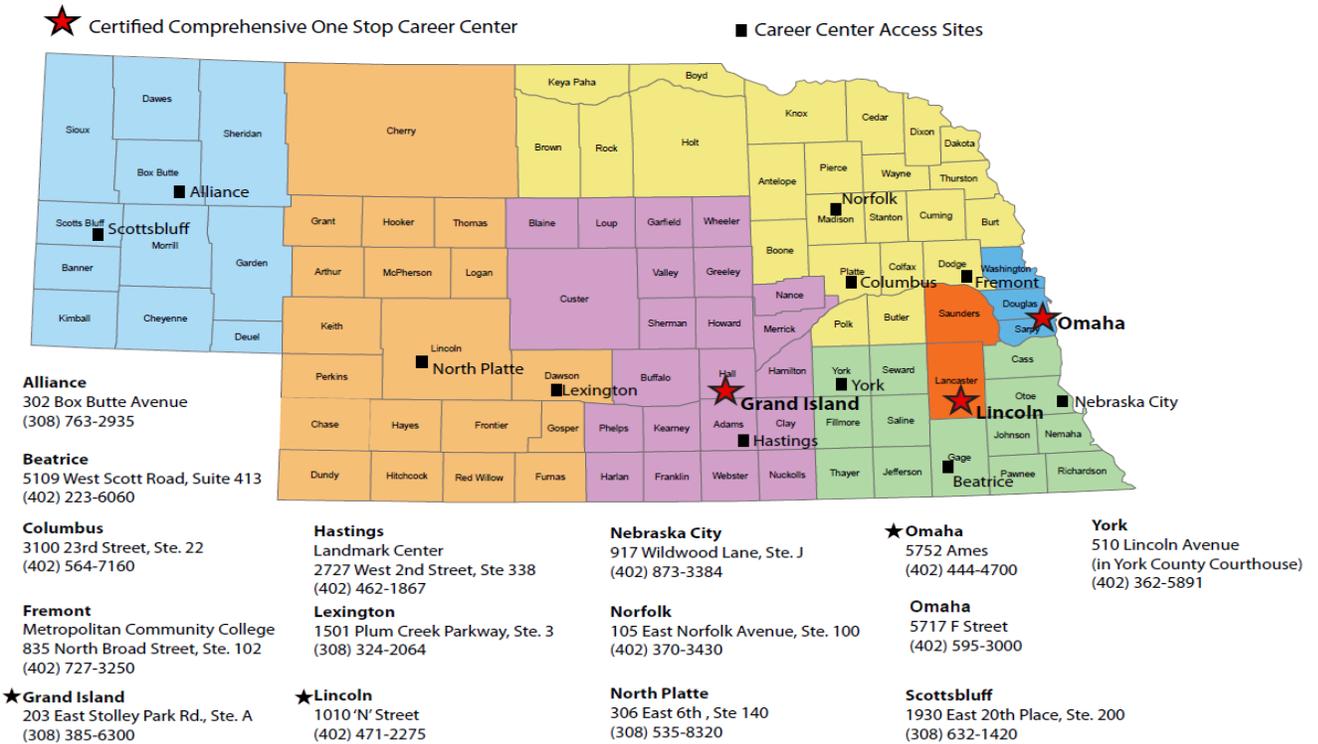
### Key Administrative Personnel



The current local delivery system for Wagner-Peyser, WIA (adult, youth, and dislocated worker), TAA, and Veteran services are primarily provided through the One-Stop Career Centers. Nebraska has three local areas: **Greater Omaha** serving Douglas, Sarpy, and Washington counties, **Greater Lincoln** serving Lancaster and Saunders counties, and **Greater Nebraska** serving the 88 remain rural counties. Currently there are 14 Career Centers in Nebraska which are identified in the following map.

## Nebraska Career Centers

Includes Comprehensive and Access Sites



In each of the One-Stop locations, Wagner-Peyser, TAA, and Veteran services are provided by merit based NDOL staff. The WIA (adult, youth, and dislocated worker) services in Omaha are delivered by Goodwill Inc., in Lincoln the WIA programs are provided by City of Lincoln staff, and in Greater Nebraska the WIA programs are delivered by NDOL staff.

Nebraska is a vast geographic state expanding 76,358 square miles. Technology is absolutely critical in coordinating services among programs and in providing services to employers and job seekers. To enhance coordination and communication the Partners covered in this Plan utilize a single case management and Management Information System. This technology is called NEworks. NEworks is a powerful online labor exchange system that integrates workforce services with job seeker and employer candidate recruitment; the site is also a valuable resource for policy makers, researchers, and others seeking to explore and analyze local labor markets.

NEworks has the following features that insure improved communication and coordination for partner staff across the state:

- Community Resources
- Senior, Youth, and Veteran Services
- Education and Training Resources
- Labor Market Information

- Staff Resources
- E-Alerts, Messaging and Appointment Center
- Electronic Case Files for Program Administration
- Job Search
- Employer Research
- Online Job Application Services
- Wizards for Creating Resumes, Cover Letters and Correspondence
- Special Media, current and future (Facebook, Twitter, etc.)

Throughout the State Operational section of this Plan, a variety of technology initiatives are described and underway. These efforts clearly align with the Governor’s goal to expand the use of technology to serve more Nebraskans more efficiently.

## State Board

*State Board – The State Operational Plan must describe how the SWIB effectively coordinates and aligns the resources and policies of all the programs included in the plan, and specifically, must include the following items related to the SWIB:*

- *How the board collaborated in the development of the plan, and how it will collaborate in carrying out the functions described in WIA Section 111(d). (WIA Sections 111(a), (b), (d), 112(b)(1); 20 CFR 661.205.)*
- *How the SWIB member who represents Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) will effectively represent the interests, needs, and priorities of the VR program and how the employment needs of individuals with disabilities in the state will be addressed. (Only applicable to states which: (1) do not have the state VR agency director on its SWIB; or (2) in cases where the state uses an alternative entity as its SWIB, that entity does not provide for representative membership by individuals in these categories as required by WIA sec. 111(b), (WIA Sections 111(b)(1), 111 (e), 112(b)(8)(A)(iii), W-P Section 8(b), Rehabilitation Act Section 101(a)(2)(B), 20 CFR 661.200(i)(3), 661.205(b)(1), 661.210(c).)*

## Nebraska Workforce Investment Board

The Nebraska Workforce Investment Board (NWIB) is currently comprised of 34 members who reside throughout the state and represent business, labor, community-based organizations, education, higher education, human services, economic development, government and other critical groups. The board rethinks and restructures the way that workforce development services are planned and delivered so they meet the needs of both the employer and job seeker customer. The NWIB focuses on strategic planning, policy development and oversight of the local Workforce Investment systems. The NDOL Office of Employment and Training serves as staff support to the NWIB and its committees.

The NWIB is well equipped to develop the Governor’s vision for a Workforce System. Led by a business majority reflecting the varied business opportunities within the state, the NWIB has immediate access to the information required to make the workforce responsive to the changing needs of business. Board membership has an appropriate distribution of members from metro and non-metro areas of the state. It has the diverse partner expertise necessary to insure the inclusion of all segments of the population. In addition, the board has the policymakers needed to achieve those changes in a timely, meaningful manner.

<b>Nebraska Workforce Investment Board Arranged by Industry Cluster</b>		
<b>Agriculture &amp; Food Processing</b>	<b>M.L. Martin</b>	<i>Coyote Lake Ranch, Inc., North Platte</i>
<b>Construction</b>	<b>Michael Geary</b>	<i>Kiewit Company, Omaha</i>
<b>Financial/Insurance</b>	<b>Tammie Beck</b> <b>Mathew (Bud) Fleischer</b> <b>Becky Stitt</b> <b>Liz Mazzotta</b> <b>Bradley Schroeder</b>	<i>Cabela's, Kearney</i> <i>Columbus Bank, Columbus</i> <i>Nationstar Mortgage, Scottsbluff</i> <i>Mutual of Omaha, Omaha</i> <i>Blue Cross Blue Shield, Omaha</i>
<b>Health Services</b>	<b>Bruce Cutright</b> <b>Terri Ridder</b>	<i>Mary Lanning Memorial Hospital, Hastings</i> <i>Franciscan Care Services, Inc., West Point</i>
<b>Manufacturing</b>	<b>Vanessa K. Brown</b> <b>Gale McClure, Chair</b> <b>Mark J. Moravec</b>	<i>Valmont Industries, Inc., Omaha</i> <i>Dutton-Lainson Company, Hastings</i> <i>Chief Industries, Inc., Grand Island</i>
<b>Renewable Energy</b>	<b>Don Nordell</b>	<i>Black Hills Energy, Lincoln</i>
<b>Research, Development &amp; Engineering Services</b>	<b>James Linderholm</b> <b>Mitchell Arnold</b>	<i>Alfred Benesch &amp; Co., Lincoln</i> <i>Preferred Partners, LLC, Omaha</i>
<b>Technology</b>	<b>James R. Hanson</b> <b>Julie Younkin</b>	<i>InTouch Communications</i> <i>Technologent, Ainsworth</i>
<b>Transportation, Warehousing, &amp; Distribution Logistics</b>	<b>Jennifer Sedlacek</b>	<i>Union Pacific Railroad, Omaha</i>
<b>Local Government</b>	<b>Robert Mueller</b> <b>Vern Powers</b>	<i>Filmore County Board of Supervisors, A&amp;M Inc./Underwood Realty, Exeter</i> <i>Mayor of Hastings</i>
<b>Partner Agencies</b>	<b>Dennis Baack</b> <b>Patricia (Sue) Hartwell</b> <b>Mindy Hansen</b> <b>Marshall Hill</b>  <b>Ronald Johns</b> <b>Ken Mass</b> <b>Mark McColley</b> <b>Michelle Olson</b> <b>Clyde Tyndall</b>	<i>Nebraska Community College Association</i> <i>Experience Works, Inc.</i> <i>Migrant Seasonal Farm Workers</i> <i>Nebraska Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education</i>  <i>Scotts Bluff County Detention Center</i> <i>Nebraska State AFL-CIO</i> <i>Steamfitters &amp; Plumbers Local Union 464</i> <i>American Business Corporation/Job Corps</i> <i>Indian Center, Inc.</i>
<b>State Government</b>	<b>Governor Dave Heineman</b> <b>Lt. Governor Rick Sheehy</b> <b>Senator Abbie Cornett</b> <b>Senator Tony Fulton</b> <b>Dr. Roger Breed</b> <b>John McNally</b> <b>Catherine D. Lang</b>  <b>Kerry Winterer</b>	<i>State of Nebraska</i> <i>State of Nebraska</i> <i>State Legislature, District 45</i> <i>State Legislature, District 29</i> <i>Nebraska Department of Education</i> <i>Nebraska Department of Veterans Affairs</i> <i>Nebraska Department of Labor and Nebraska Department of Economic Development</i> <i>Nebraska Department of Health &amp; Human Services Systems</i>

The bylaws of the Nebraska Workforce Investment Board establish the structure of the Board. There are two standing committees; the Executive Committee and the Performance Committee. Additionally, the Chair can appoint special or ad hoc committees to address a particular issue or initiative. Role and responsibility of each committee is outlined below.

- **Executive Committee:** Each member is appointed by the Governor. The committee is chaired by the NWIB Chair and has the power to act for the entire board between regular meetings of the NWIB. The Executive Committee consists of fifteen NWIB members. Eight (the majority) come from business and industry (the chair, the vice-chair, chairs of each of the committees, and five at large selections made by the Governor). The remainder of the committee has one member representing youth, one representing labor, one representing community-based organizations (all selected by the Governor), and the three state agency heads representing the §121(b) programs. As a result, the Executive Committee mirrors the NWIB in its composition. By implementing the committee system and giving the Executive Committee power to act for the board between regular meetings, it streamlines the process for timely action and NWIB approval. Meetings of the Executive Committee are public meetings.
  
- **Performance Committee:** The Standing Committee on Compliance was renamed to the “Performance Committee” by the NWIB at their June 2012 meeting. The Performance committee has the authority to investigate and make recommendations on any issues relating to §111(d) and §129 of the Act. The committee chair is a business representative, and members of the Performance Committee are selected by the NWIB. Changes in the NWIB Bylaws made in 2012 now allow a representative from each board representing Nebraska’s three local areas, to serve in a non-voting capacity on the Performance Committee.
  
- **Special Committees:** The NWIB appoints ad-hoc committees to focus on the board’s strategic plan goals, which are:
  - continue to grow Nebraska’s economy through increased outreach to employers
  - increase efforts to connect young people with career opportunities and to be better prepared for work by connecting and promoting current and future initiatives implemented through economic development, education, and workforce development
  - strengthen the role of the NWIB in addressing workforce issues through board structure and board development
  - conduct a study that reviews the efficacy and boundaries of the Nebraska WIA local areas as currently designated by the Governor

Representatives of business and industry serve on and chair the committees. Chairs of the standing and ad hoc committees update the NWIB at Executive and full Board meetings. A recent example is the NWIB Structure and Development Initiative, which analyzed the current committee structure of the NWIB and made the following recommendations:

- change the name of the Compliance Committee to the “Performance Committee”
- increase review of local plans and local financial information as part of the work of the Performance Committee
- each local WIB should recommend both a primary and alternate non-voting member to serve on the Performance Committee
- newly appointed NWIB members must serve on a board committee or task force as part of their responsibility of being a board member
- annually, the Performance Committee will coordinate the solicitation of private sector board nominations

## **NWIB Collaboration in State Plan Development**

In August of 2011, the Nebraska Workforce Investment Board (NWIB) first began its collaborative development of the Five Year Integrated Workforce Plan through a strategic planning session facilitated by Silverstone Consulting. With the theme “*Nebraska’s Skilled Workforce...Are We Ready for 2015,*” the strategic planning “kick off” session was held via downlink at eight sites across Nebraska and included employers, state and local WIB members, state agency leadership, and representatives from One-Stop partner organizations. Ideas and feedback were documented from the “kick off” session and, as a result, the NWIB held three planning sessions to discuss:

- ideas and strategies to “Grow Nebraska’s Economy”
- current NWIB structure
- Nebraska’s designated WIA structure

On October 14, 2011, the NWIB Executive Committee formulated four strategies to align the Board’s efforts with the Governor’s vision and the Five Year Integrated Workforce Plan.

Refer to the following page for a list of the four strategies.

## NWIB Executive Committee's Strategies to Align Board's Efforts with Governor's Vision

<b>Strategy No. 1</b>	<p>Continue to Grow Nebraska's Economy through increased outreach to employers by joining or potentially initiating Industry Councils as recommended in the September 2010 economic development/workforce study titled: <i>A Competitive Advantage Assessment and Strategy for Nebraska</i>. The Industry Councils will assist business in discovering and assessing current and future workforce needs. Participation by the NWIB membership on the Industry Councils will enhance the partnership with business, economic development, education, and workforce development entities providing a single point of participation when addressing workforce needs.</p> <p><b>Emerging Industry areas include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bioscience</li> <li>• Financial Services</li> <li>• Precision Metals MFG</li> <li>• Transportation, Warehousing, Distribution Logistic</li> <li>• Renewable Energy (Biofuels)</li> </ul> <p><b>Strength areas include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health Services</li> <li>• Hospitality and Tourism</li> <li>• Research Development and Engineering</li> </ul> <p><b>Retention areas include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agricultural Machinery</li> <li>• Agriculture and Food Processing</li> <li>• Business Management and Administrative Services</li> <li>• Software and Computer</li> </ul>
<b>Strategy No. 2</b>	<p>Increase efforts to connect young people with career opportunities and to be better prepared for work by connecting and promoting current and future initiatives implemented through economic development, education, and workforce development.</p>
<b>Strategy No. 3</b>	<p>Strengthen the role of the NWIB in addressing workforce issues by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Board Structure:</b> Implement a robust task force structure that includes members and non-members, recruit board membership who can help us with our strategies, and rethink the purpose and effectiveness of the Compliance Committee.</li> <li>• <b>Board Development:</b> Provide informational sessions prior to each NWIB meeting; provide programmatic information via video or on line and shift board agenda to more strategic discussions rather than program updates.</li> </ul>
<b>Strategy No. 4</b>	<p>Conduct a study that reviews the efficacy and boundaries of the Nebraska WIA local areas as currently designated by the Governor.</p>

In addition to the strategic planning process and analysis of its results, the Performance Committee of the NWIB takes the lead role in reviewing and contributing to the Five-Year Integrated Plan. Specific activities the membership representatives were invited to, and participated in, include the July 12, 2012 and July 26, 2012 Partner Planning sessions. These planning sessions included the WIA mandated partners to review Nebraska's current workforce system and determine system changes needed to improve and enhance coordination and the delivery of services. In early August, the Performance Committee members and the full Board membership were sent each section of the Integrated Plan for review and comment. On August 22, the Performance Committee met to review the "draft" plan as well as to address any public comment received to date. On August 31 the final "draft" plan was sent to all NWIB

members for review and comment. The full Board will meet on September 7, 2012 to review and approve. Upon approval, the Plan will be sent to the Governor for his approval and submission.

In the future, the NWIB will assist in aligning resources and policy in the following way:

- NWIB membership will participate in Nebraska’s Industry Councils
- Performance Committee of the NWIB will participate on the Partner Council
- Performance Committee of the NWIB reviews and full Board approves local plans and modifications
- State policies and issuances are publicly posted at [www.dol.nebraska.gov](http://www.dol.nebraska.gov) for a 10 day review period. Members of the Performance Committee as well as other stake holders are notified of the policy posting and welcomed to comment. Policies are effective at the time of final posting.

## Vocational Rehabilitation Representation on NWIB

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation is located in the Nebraska Department of Education. Dr. Roger Breed is the Commissioner of Education and serves on the Nebraska Workforce Investment Board. The director of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Mr. Mark Schulz, reports directly to Dr. Breed. They are in regular communication on workforce issues affecting individuals with disabilities as well as Vocational Rehabilitation’s role and participation in Nebraska’s Workforce System.

## Local Workforce Investment Areas Designated in the State and Process Used for Designation

*Local Areas – The State Operational Plan must also describe the WIA title I local workforce investment areas in the state, including:*

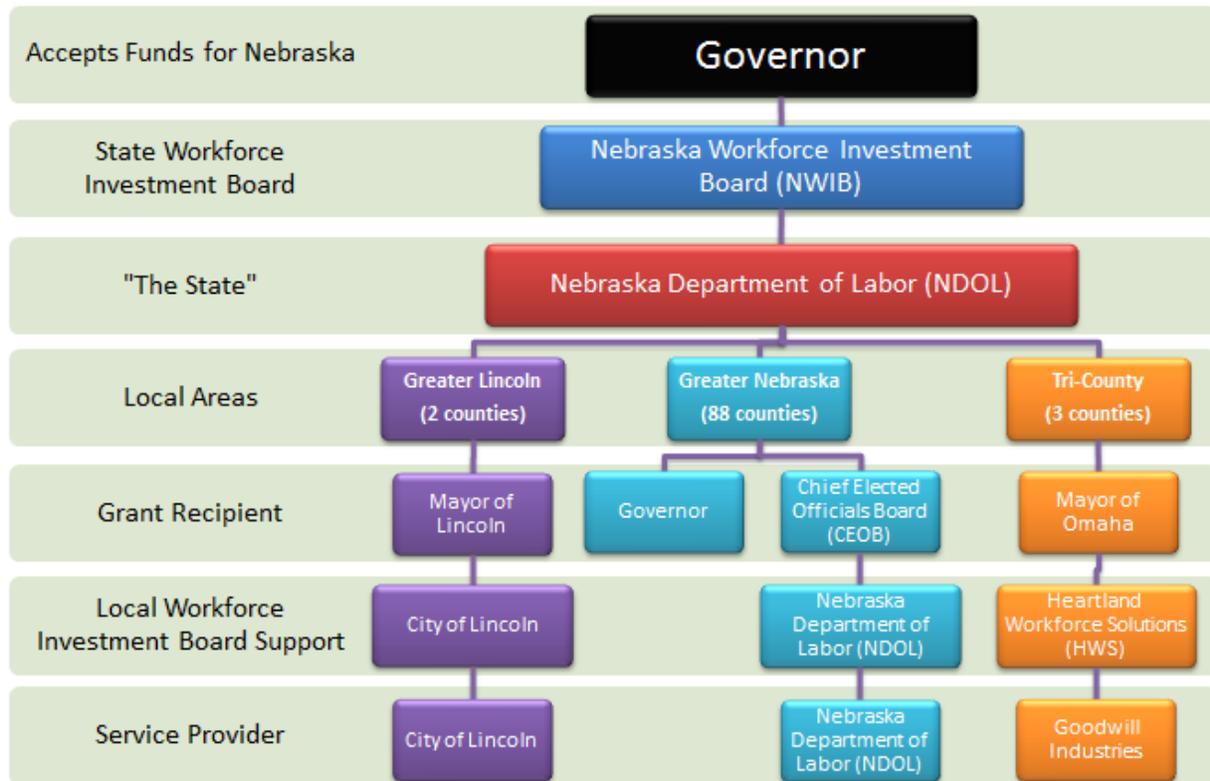
- *An identification of local workforce investment areas designated in the state, and the process used for designating local areas. (WIA Sections 111(d)(4), 112(b)(5), and 116(a), 20 CFR 661.205(d), 661.250-.270.)*
- *The designation of intrastate regions and interstate regions, as defined in 20 CFR 661.290, and their corresponding performance measures. For interstate regions, describe the roles of the respective governors, and state and local workforce investment boards. (WIA Section 116(c).) States may also discuss other types of regional structures here.*

The Governor has designated three local Workforce Investment Areas in Nebraska.

- **Greater Omaha** – serving Douglas, Sarpy, and Washington Counties;
- **Greater Lincoln** – serving Lancaster and Saunders Counties; and
- **Greater Nebraska** – serving the remaining 88 counties in Nebraska.

The WIA governance structure in Nebraska is as follows:

### WIA Governance Structure in Nebraska



Originally, in July of 1999, the Governor proposed to the NWIB the temporary designation of Nebraska’s three Workforce Investment Areas after receiving written requests for designation from the Chief Elected Officials of those areas. The Commissioner of Labor, acting as the Governor’s Workforce Investment liaison, conducted public hearings in three locations, Grand Island, Lincoln and Omaha. Over 950 elected officials received a mailing insuring their opportunity for input. The public responded favorably to the Governor’s proposal and the NWIB approved the Governor’s proposal. In 2001 the NWIB recommended the designation be extended until the end of the period covered by the State Plan for each of the three areas. In 2005, 2007, 2009 and 2011, the Governor extended the designations for each of the local areas upon recommendations by the NWIB.

The most current designation process took place as part of the NWIB strategic planning process in 2011. One of the identified strategies was for the Board to review current local area efficacy alignment, and borders. An ad hoc board member committee was created in response, and information on economics, Labor Market, program performance, and Regional Innovation Grant results were reviewed. It was decided that through the Local Plan Instruction process issued in January 2012 the three local areas would be given the opportunity to propose up to three potential local area designations: the existing local area and up to two additional local areas based on the voluntary agreement of all local areas affected by the possible realignment.

Realignment proposals could have been effective July 1, 2012 or July 1, 2013 at the option of the proposing local area, and did not need to be negotiated prior to the request for designation without the agreement of all Local Areas affected by the realignment. However, none of Nebraska's three Local Areas exercised their option to redefine their existing boundary configurations. Both the Compliance Committee (now "Performance" Committee) and the Executive Committee of the NWIB discussed the possible realignment of the geographic areas served by Nebraska's three local areas but did not take action to realign the boundaries because none of the local areas expressed interest in realignment.

In May 2012, upon the NWIB's recommendation, the Governor re-designated the local area structure to remain the same for a three year period from July 1, 2012, to June 30, 2015.

Additionally, the state has a policy *Designation as a Local Area under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998* which describes the local area designation process. The full policy is posted at [www.ndol.nebraska.gov](http://www.ndol.nebraska.gov). The policy states:

### Designation

The Governor may designate or re-designate a local area when:

- a local area, specifically the chief elected official, voluntarily agrees to redesignation. The local area, the state workforce investment board, or the Governor may propose a local area re-designation.
- the local area was not automatically designated under WIA Section 116(a)(2). The Governor has the authority to re-designate such areas as long as the new designations are made in accordance with the general designation requirements of WIA Section 116(a)(1), and the state submits a modification to its State Plan.
- the local area was not designated as such under the "temporary and subsequent" designation provisions at WIA Section 116(a)(3). The Governor has the authority to re-designate such areas as long as the new designations are made in accordance with the general designation requirements of WIA Section 116(a)(1), and the state requests a modification to its State Plan.
- the Governor determines a local area has substantially violated any provision of Title I of WIA [Section 184(b)].
- the Governor determines that a local area designated as such under the "temporary and subsequent" designation provisions at WIA Section 116(a)(3) did not substantially meet the local performance measures for the local area, or did not sustain the fiscal integrity of funds used by the area to carry out activities under WIA Title I.

### Temporary and Subsequent Designation

The Governor will also approve any request, if made not later than the date of submission of the initial State Plan, for temporary designation as a local area from any unit (or combination of units) of general local government with a population of 200,000 or more that was a service delivery area under the Job Training Partnership Act on the day before the date the Act was enacted if the Governor determines the area:

- performed successfully, in each of the last two years prior to the request for which data are available, in the delivery of services to participants under Part A of Title II and Title III of the Job Training Partnership Act
- has sustained the fiscal integrity of the funds used by the area to carry out activities under such part and title

### Duration and Subsequent Designation

A temporary designation is made for a two year period and will be extended until the end of the period covered by the State Plan if the Governor determines the area substantially met the local performance measures for the local area and “sustained the fiscal integrity” of the funds used to carry out WIA activities.

“Sustained the fiscal integrity” means the Secretary has not made a final determination during any of the last three years for which data are available prior to the date of the designation request involved, that either the grant recipient or the administrative entity of the area misexpended the funds due to willful disregard of the requirements of the Act involved gross negligence or failure to observe accepted standards of administration.”

Exemptions to temporary and subsequent designations are:

- designated local areas may agree to re-designation
- the Governor may disapprove a request for a temporary and subsequent designation if it is determined the local area did not substantially meet the performance measures for the local area or sustain the fiscal integrity of the funds used by the area to carry out WIA activities
- the Governor may disapprove a request for a temporary and subsequent designation if it is determined the local area has substantially violated any provision of WIA Title I

### Automatic Designation

The Governor will approve a request for designation as a local area:

- from any unit of general local government with a population of 500,000 or more
- of the area served by a rural concentrated employment program grant recipient of demonstrated effectiveness that served as a service delivery area or substate area under the Job Training Partnership Act
- of an area that served as a service delivery area under the Job Training Partnership Act in a state that has a population of not more than 1,100,000 and a population density greater than 900 persons per square mile

Exceptions to automatic designation are:

- local areas may voluntarily agree to re-designation
- the Governor may choose not to approve an area’s request for automatic designation if the Governor determines a local area has substantially violated any provision of WIA Title I

In determining which local areas qualify for automatic designation as local governments with a population of 500,000 or more, the Governor has authority to determine the source of population data to use.

### *Process for Designation*

New designations must be made in accordance with the general designation requirements provided in WIA Section 116(a)(1), and the process for designation must include:

- consultation with the state board
- consultation with chief elected officials
- consideration of comments received through the required public comment process, which includes an opportunity for public comment and comment by businesses and representatives of labor organizations
- consideration by the Governor of geographic areas served by local education agencies, intermediate education agencies, postsecondary and vocational institutions or schools, and alignment with labor market areas (which could be defined as regional economies)
- consideration by the Governor of the distance individuals must travel to receive services in such local areas and the resources available to effectively administer the activities carried out under WIA Title IB

When a change is made in the local area designation, it is considered a substantial change and the State Strategic Plan will be modified. The Plan will identify the state's designated local workforce investment areas and provide a description of the process used to designate such areas. Modifications are subject to the same public review and comment requirements that apply to the development of the original State Plan.

### *Regional Planning*

In cases where the state cannot or prefers not to re-designate local areas, the state will encourage cooperation among local areas that are within the same regional economy through requiring:

- planning by local boards for a designated region (a combination of local areas partly or completely in a single labor market area) in the state, as part of the process for developing the State Plan
- local boards for a designated region to share labor market data of the regional economy
- local boards for a designated region to coordinate the provision of workforce investment activities authorized under WIA title I, including the provision of supportive services

The state may also encourage local areas to operate in relation to regional economies that cross state boundaries where an interstate regional economy area may be named a designated region and the state functions for planning, information sharing, and coordination of services may be jointly exercised.

### Appeals Process

A unit (or combination of units) of general local government or grant recipient that requests but is not granted designation as a local area may submit an appeal to the NWIB by filing a written appeal in the office of the Commissioner of Labor within 30 days of the mailing of the notice that the appealing party was not granted designation as a local area. The appeal will state all issues that are the basis for the appeal. The Commissioner of Labor will conduct the appeal hearing on behalf of the NWIB and the hearing procedures will be governed by the Administrative Procedure Act. The appealing party will be notified by certified mail, return receipt requested, of the NWIB's decision within 90 days of the date the appeal is filed. The decision of the NWIB is final unless an appeal is filed with the United States Secretary of Labor within 30 days of the mailing of the NWIB's decision to all interested parties. Appeals from the decision of the NWIB may be made to the United States Secretary of Labor as required under §116(a)(5) of the Act. To date, no appeals have been filed.

## **Intrastate Regions, Interstate Regions, or Other Types of Regional Structures and Their Performance Measures**

**Not applicable.** Nebraska currently does not have any designated intrastate or interstate regions.

## **F. Operating Systems and Policies Supporting the State's Strategies**

*Operating Systems and Policies Supporting the State's Strategies: The State Operational Plan must describe:*

- *State operating systems that support coordinated implementation of state strategies (e.g. labor market information systems, data systems, communication systems, etc.). (WIA Section 112(b)(8)(A).)*
- *State policies that support the coordinated implementation of the state's strategies. (WIA Section 112(b)(8)(A).)*
- *How the delivery of services to jobseeker customers and employer customers, including Registered Apprenticeship sponsors, will be aligned across programs. (WIA Sections 111(d)(2), 112(b)(8).)*
- *How the state will provide WIA rapid response activities to dislocated workers from funds reserved under Section 133(a)(2), including designating a state rapid response unit. (WIA Sections 112(b)(17)(A)(ii), 133(a)(2), 134(a)(2)(A).)*
- *Common data-collection and reporting processes used for all programs and activities present in One-Stop Career Centers. (WIA Section 112(b)(8).)*
- *State performance accountability system developed for workforce investment activities to be carried out through the statewide workforce investment system. (WIA Sections 111(d)(2), (d)(6)-(8), 112(b)(3), 136; W-P Section 15; 20 CFR 666.205(f)-(h), 661.220(c), and 20 CRF part 666.)*
- *State strategies for using quarterly wage record information to measure the progress on state and local performance measures, including identification of which entities may have access to wage record information. (WIA Section 136(f)(2), 20 CFR 666.150)*

## State Operating Systems

### Data System

In October of 2010 Nebraska modernized its technology from four separate legacy systems that previously managed information and reported data to a single integrated system that supports Wagner-Peyser, Workforce Investment Act, Trade Assistance Act, Jobs for Veterans Act, and Labor Market Information. The new, web based technology called NEworks, is an integrated system that provides:

- direct services virtually to job seekers and employers
- electronic case management for workforce staff
- federal, state, and local reports
- staff and community resources
- social media capabilities to communicate with job seekers, program participants, and professionals
- posting of LMI Workforce Information for the public.

NEworks is used by all program and administrative staff and provides for a common registration for all program applicants, electronic case management of participants, communication capabilities with the job seeker and employer customers, and direct access to Labor Market Information. NEworks includes a self-service web-based labor exchange system available to job seekers and employers alike. NEworks is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week and allows for access and use without having the need to interface with Career Center staff. The utilization of NEworks by all partners included in this plan supports the Governor's vision to utilize technology to deliver services as well as to communicate, collaborate, and streamline services across program lines.



### Labor Market Information System

The Nebraska's Labor Market Information System is also a part of NEworks. NEworks hosts a robust menu for gathering and analyzing labor market and economic information. The site hosts a variety of tools for the job seeker, employer, economic development professional, and general public. While the web is used to deliver the majority of data and Labor Market Information (LMI) staff also provide on-site workshops, training, conferences and presentations across the state on LMI. Nebraska's Core Products and Services Workforce Information Grant staff assist State and Local Workforce Investment Board members in reviewing projections to ensure understanding of the data. This training provides information on trends, needs and issues on a local, regional and statewide basis. In addition, there is a regional analyst position that meets statewide with One-Stop management and staffs about their LMI needs, and hosts training on how to use LMI in their local areas. This analyst meets with local Chambers of Commerce, economic development committees, and businesses to determine the needs of local businesses, and assist them in understanding the availability and use of labor market information.

Recently, a website called H3 was launched, accessible at [nelearn.nebraska.gov/](http://nelearn.nebraska.gov/). The H3 website utilizes “real time” job posting and job seeker information from NEworks as well as statistical projections to educate end users on labor market trends. This website was built to be “user” friendly for educators, workforce professionals, economic developers, parents, students, job seekers, and other interested parties. This was a collaborative effort between NDOL employment and training programs, Career Technical Education and the Department of Economic Development.



### [Eligible Training Provider System -TrainingLink](#)

For those wishing to investigate training options and approved training providers, NDOL’s website at [www.ndol.nebraska.gov](http://www.ndol.nebraska.gov), Quick Links provide TrainingLink, a self-service web-based tool that displays WIA approved programs. Through TrainingLink, users can access information on education and training providers by city, course of study or by occupational title. Providers also use TrainingLink to submit their Eligible Training Provider applications.

Customers are able to access the statewide list of eligible training providers and their performance information through NDOL’s TrainingLink located at [traininglink.dol.state.ne.us/](http://traininglink.dol.state.ne.us/). The list of eligible providers contains the following information:

- program and provider name and address
- program completion rates for all individuals participating in the applicable programs
- percentage of all individuals participating in the applicable programs who obtain unsubsidized employment (available by request)
- wages at placement
- rates of licensure or certification, attainment of academic degrees or equivalents (available by request)
- program costs

### [Electronic Case File System](#)

One of Nebraska’s most current system initiatives is the implementation of electronic case files for all partner programs included in this Plan. This is our continual effort to promote efficiency, achieve quality case files, increase consistent file documentation, and achieve complete program verification and accuracy in federal reporting. Effective July 1, 2012 program partners transitioned to electronic case files for all new program enrollments. NEworks uses an electronic document imaging and storage system called Enterprise Content Management (ECM). To capitalize on the increased efficiency of data storage and retrieval, NDOL revised the documentation process for determining eligibility and the maintenance of pertinent records. For new enrollments, NDOL is no longer dependent on hard copy documentation and uses electronic verification of eligibility requirements. The ECM system includes both internal and external access allowing all servicing partners the means to efficiently provide services for their clients. The NEworks electronic application is now the application of record.

The goal of the ECM project is to:

- reduce staff time accessing hard copy documentation
- increase the consistency of file documentation
- provide easily accessible single point access for file review
- ensure complete verification for program eligibility

Other benefits include: one source of data for case management; easing storage requirements; federal reporting accuracy; timeliness of input; comprehensive view of participant's record; and data validation. The electronic information referenced will be made available to any USDOL or state auditor, or monitor who needs access in order to carry out their official duties.

### **American Job Center Brand**

In an effort to help increase jobseeker and employer awareness of workforce development resources available across the state, NDOL will implement the American Job Center network as a unifying name and brand that identifies virtual and in-person publicly-funded workforce development services as part of a single network.

Immediate efforts to adopt the brand are evidenced in the Inclusion of the "Proud Partner of American Job Center Network" logo on the front cover of this Five-year Integrated State Plan. Efforts are also underway to begin using the logo on the NDOL website so it will be evident any time NDOL's Labor Market Information, NEworks, TrainingLink or other web based services are accessed.



An awareness initiative of the American Job Center network branding effort began at the July 17, 2012 Local Area WIA Administrators' meeting and was reinforced through a follow-up email summary of the meeting.

Part of the longer term planning of implementing this branding effort will involve discussions with the Performance Committee to determine any recommendations made to the NWIB; inclusion of the logo in the WIA 2011 Annual Report and other publications; development of a state policy as well as modifying existing policies.

The state's timeline for issuing a policy addressing the use of the American Job Center brand at the state and local levels is January 2013, with full implementation no later than July 1, 2013.

Estimated costs of this branding effort for PY 2012 and PY 2013 are \$50,000.

## Policies That Support Coordinated Implementation of the State's Strategies

The state supports the coordinated implementation of the state's strategies in various ways, including the establishment and implementation of the following policies, which are all available on the NDOL website at [www.dol.nebraska.gov/](http://www.dol.nebraska.gov/):

- **Accessibility** – directed toward ensuring that the programs, services and facilities of each One-Stop delivery system are accessible to all; prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, religion, political affiliation or belief, participant status, and against certain non-citizens
- **Allocation Planning** – determines the local area WIA allocation method and the incentive and capacity building formulas for the WIA Five-Year State Workforce Plan
- **American Job Center Network** -- will be developed and posted on the NDOL website in draft form for public comment before being finalized; a finalized policy will be issued no later than January 2013
- **Apprenticeship** – provides information on how apprenticeship programs can assist in developing a skilled, competitive workforce by combining immediate employment with a structured program of skill attainment, combining on-the-job-learning with related instruction, providing for wage increases as skills increase, includes mentoring and clearly established career pathways
- **Continuous Improvement** – supports the three phase continuous improvement process founded on the principles underlying the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award Criteria for certification and assessment of One-Stop Career Centers
- **Criteria for Local Workforce Investment Boards** – establishes membership, composition, and other criteria for the operation of the local workforce investment boards
- **Demand Occupations** – provides the definition of “demand occupations” and its impact on services provided at the local level; clarifies the expectations for funding WIA Adult and Dislocated Worker training in Nebraska regarding high-demand, high wage and high-skill occupations at either the state or regional level
- **Designation as a Local Area Under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998** – provides clarification on designation issues to Nebraska's three Local Workforce Investment Areas
- **Economic Development and WIA Funds** – provides guidance, clarifies allowable activities and prohibitions on using WIA funds in support of economic development
- **Eligible Training Provider** – prescribes eligibility criteria and general conditions that training providers must meet in order to become certified as an eligible provider to receive adult and dislocated worker funds through Individual Training Accounts
- **Entrepreneurial and Self-Employment Training** – establishes workforce system parameters for investing in entrepreneurship training

- **Green Jobs** – establishes a workforce system framework for promoting the development of new and existing green jobs and hastening widespread employment in green careers across several industry sectors
- **Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Title VI Prohibition Against National Origin Discrimination** – establishes procedures for providing reasonable steps to ensure LEP persons receive, free of charge, the language assistance necessary to afford them meaningful access to their programs, services and information
- **Local Plan Instructions** – provides guidance to local workforce investment boards and chief elected officials in the submission of their local strategic plan for WIA and Wagner-Peyser
- **Monitoring** – establishes the state’s process for monitoring program and fiscal performance at the state and local area levels on a yearly basis to ensure proper systems are in place, being followed, and meet the requirements of the law
- **Memorandum of Understanding** – provides instructions to the local Workforce Investment Boards for developing and entering into a memorandum of understanding with all One-Stop partners in the operation of the one-stop delivery system in the local area
- **Nebraska’s One-Stop Delivery System** – establishes criteria for the design and implementation of the local area’s One-Stop delivery system
- **NEworks, Electronic Case Management and Enterprise Content Management** – establishes requirements regarding electronic file storage and documentation imaging standards in the administration of WIA, Wagner Peyser, Trade Adjustment Assistance and related assistance programs, National Emergency Grant, and Work Opportunity Tax Credit under the State’s integrated Management Information System, NEworks and Enterprise Content Management system
- **On-The-Job Training** – establishes minimal requirements for on-the-job training contracts to ensure participants are provided a structured training opportunity in which to gain the knowledge and competencies necessary to be successful in the occupation in which they receive training, and that training services are provided in a manner that maximizes consumer choice in the selection of an eligible provider of such services
- **Senior Community Service Employment Program** – provides regulatory guidance on implementing the program
- **State Dislocated Worker Unit Rapid Response Procedures** – defines the Rapid Response early intervention procedures for workers who have been dislocated due to a layoff or plant closure
- **Trade Adjustment Assistance Program under Trade Act of 2002** – provides guidance and establishes criteria for administering benefits and services under the act
- **Trade Adjustment Assistance Program Under Trade Act of 2011** -- provides guidance and establishes criteria for administering benefits and services under the act
- **Trade Adjustment Assistance under the Trade and Globalization Adjustment Assistance Act of 2009** – provides guidance and establishes criteria for administering benefits and services under the act

- **Youth Councils** – directs that a subgroup within each local board is to be established as a youth council, and provides criteria for membership, responsibilities and eligible providers of youth activities
- **Youth Goal Setting** – provides for consistency statewide in measuring and documenting the goal attainment for younger youth
- **Youth Program Design** – defines criteria for the design, elements, and parameters of youth programs
- **YouthBuild** – establishes criteria for the YouthBuild program that provides job training and educational activities to at-risk youth who , as part of their training, help construct re rehabilitate housing for communities
- **Veterans’ Priority Provisions** – guides local areas in prioritizing service for veterans (and some spouses) who otherwise meet the eligibility requirements for participation in USDOL training programs

## Delivery of Services to Job Seeker and Employer Customers (Including Registered Apprenticeship Sponsors)

Nebraska’s service delivery system of employment and training programs to job seekers and employers is a combination of on-site, face-to-face staff assisted services, and online technology, providing self -service and staff assisted services through a virtual environment. Nebraska’s locally-driven service delivery system currently supports 14 physical locations where partner program services can be accessed through staff-assisted services. The One-Stop Career Centers and Access Sites include multiple funding sources that serve diverse populations. Each physical site location provides a Resource Room with access to technology, Labor Market Information, job search information, and on-line job opportunities. All Wagner-Peyser labor exchange services at the One-Stop Career Centers and Access Sites are provided by merit based public employees.

The alignment of services across programs at the local level is accomplished through Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs). MOUs have been developed and signed between each program partner and the Local Workforce Investment Board, with the agreement of the Chief Elected Official. The MOUs include: a.) methods for referral, description of core services, b.) intensive, and training services and how these services will be provided through the One-Stop delivery system, c.) funding arrangements for services and operating costs of the One-Stop delivery system; and d.) how access to the other activities and programs carried out under the partner’s authorizing laws will be achieved.

In addition, the state’s *Nebraska’s One-Stop Delivery System* policy requires: “Services will be integrated, to the extent possible, which will ensure a seamless system of service delivery, enhancing access to all programs.” The policy also addresses the required criteria for Nebraska’s comprehensive full-service and affiliate One-Stops and it states that “the design of the local area’s One-Stop delivery system, including the number of comprehensive centers and

the supplementary arrangements, must be described in the local plan and be consistent with the Memorandum of Understanding executed with the One-Stop partners.”

Beyond the One-Stop Career Center service delivery system, the Wagner-Peyser program is piloting a Virtual Service Unit. The purpose of this pilot is to establish a Virtual Unit for labor exchange and intensive job placement services. The Virtual Service Unit provides professional, job matching service regardless of the location of the job seeker or employer.

The duties of this unit include contacting self-registered job seekers on NEworks and offering resume and job seeking assistance. The unit offers services such as resume and cover letter creation, providing guidance for filling out job applications, interviewing recommendations, and setting up an automatic, online work search within the NEworks program called a virtual recruiter.

Additionally, the unit contacts self-registered employers and provides recommendations for job listings, resume search assistance of potential applications, and a quality, professional referral system. The Virtual Service Unit also assists new employers through the NEworks registration process, designing of job orders, and job placement services such as job assessments for determining hiring needs, and quality applicant referrals. The unit also provides technical assistance to job seekers and employers using NEworks via phone and email.

The Virtual Service Unit is also analyzing and developing strategies for concentrating on the leading industry clusters revealed in the *Nebraska's Competitive Advantage* study. By studying employment trends, geographic patterns of development, and economic output, the unit focuses on the talent positioning for industry clusters such as biosciences, financial and health services, hospitality and tourism, manufacturing, and transportation. It is anticipated that the Virtual Service model currently being piloted will be fully implemented in Program Year 2013.

Another initiative to ensure all Nebraskans have access to labor exchange services is a joint project with the Nebraska Library Commission called “Nebraska Broadband Builds Nebraska Communities.” The broadband project was originally funded with ARRA funds and Bill and Linda Gates Foundation funds, and has increased broadband capabilities and computer equipment to 147 libraries across the state. Currently, 16 libraries are participating in a pilot where libraries serve as virtual access sites. Wagner-Peyser staff train library staff on NEworks as well as routinely schedule employer and jobseeker workshops onsite at the library. This initiative through technology expands physical service locations from 14 career center sites to 30 sites where consumers can access services, leveraging resources including staff time and equipment, and is a great partnership with a community organization. Depending on the results of the pilot, it is the intent to expand the number of libraries offering this service.



The Wagner-Peyser program is also in the process of establishing a pilot with Metropolitan Community College. This pilot would test the idea of utilizing the labor exchange and Labor Market Information portions of NEworks as the college placement service. By combining the college placement service with the public labor exchange, employers and post-secondary students will have a single point of service. This collaborative effort will result in leveraged resources, as well as providing students with direct, real time job opportunities and labor market information.

### Apprenticeship

In December 2008, a team of NDOL and union representatives attended the Action Clinic hosted by U.S.DOL Employment and Training in Chicago. As a result, the following initiatives were implemented:

- NDOL added an “Apprenticeship” button on the home page of the NDOL website. When clicked, this button takes you to information about apprenticeship programs and Nebraska sponsors.
- NDOL and the Steamfitters & Plumbers Local 464 entered into a Memorandum of Understanding to conduct annual recruitment and assessment activities through the local One-Stop Career Center.
- NDOL and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) 22 began a partnership where workers can gain entry into the IBEW Apprenticeship Program. The local One-Stop Career Center screens job seekers for specific qualifications and has developed a list of interested candidates to call upon when Local 22 contacts the Center to send candidates to them for a job assignment.

The relationships built with union representatives as a result of the Action Plan created at the 2008 Action Clinic proved invaluable in establishing relationships with local union leadership. These relationships were critical in implementing training programs through the State Energy Section Partnership Grant.

NDOL plans to expand apprenticeship and work based learning opportunities through:

- continuing a strong, committed working relationship with state and local union officials
- continue to explore with secondary education and the community colleges a more robust utilization of work place learning and/or apprenticeship programs
- continue to network with the U.S.DOL Apprenticeship Program director on educating appropriate entities about apprenticeship opportunities

To ensure the resources available through the Federal and/or state apprenticeship programs are integrated with the state’s One-Stop delivery system, the state’s *Apprenticeship* policy was developed in coordination with the State Director for the U.S. Department of Labor’s Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training. This policy recognizes apprenticeship programs as an effective and time-honored way to build a skilled, knowledgeable and loyal workforce. In accordance with this policy, “entities that carry out programs under the National Apprenticeship Act must meet the requirements specified in WIA Section 122, the final implementing regulations, and

the state's *Eligible Training Provider Policy* to be certified as an eligible provider to receive WIA Adult and Dislocated Worker funds through Individual Training Accounts." Many apprenticeship programs have chosen to be certified as eligible providers. The state's PYs 2012-2013 *Local Plan Instructions* policy states that the U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration's "Vision for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Apprenticeship (TEN 17-06)" is a useful resource and should be addressed as part of the Local Vision, Goals, and Priorities.

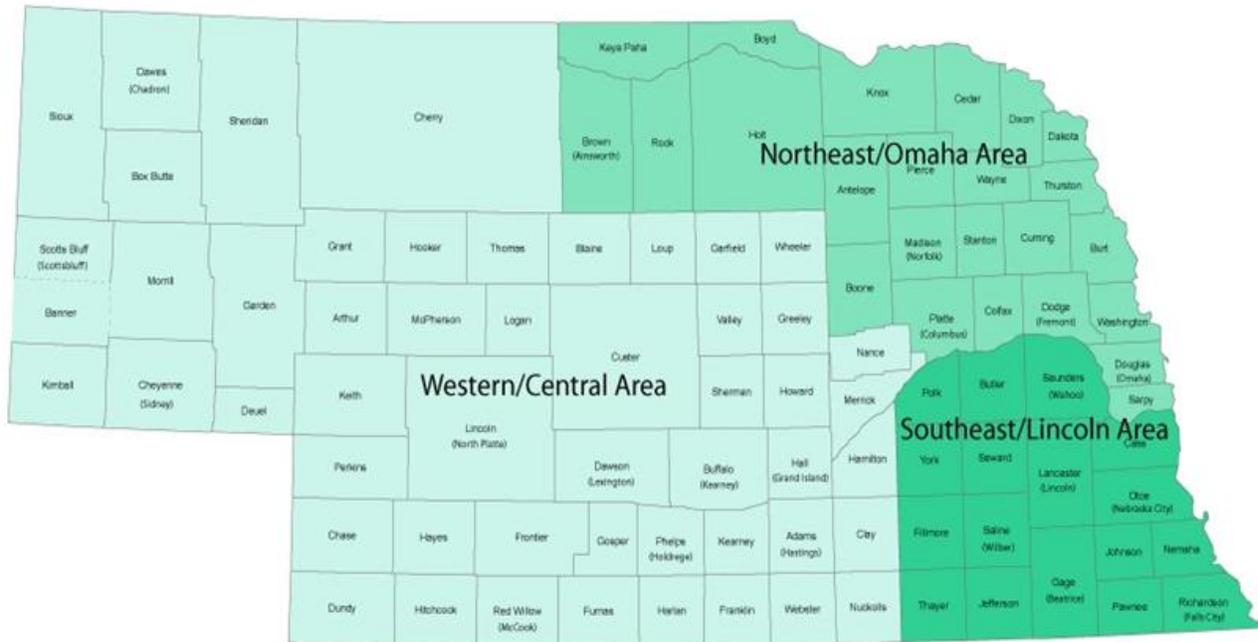
Additionally, the home page of the NDOL website (accessible at this location [www.dol.nebraska.gov](http://www.dol.nebraska.gov)) hosts a "go to" button titled Registered Apprenticeships. At this site you can access a wide variety of information on apprenticeship programs. Information includes; list of current occupational titles for apprenticeships, how to set up a registered apprenticeship program, funding opportunities, and current apprenticeship sponsors. Also, the list of eligible training providers who offer apprenticeship programs is accessible through NDOL's TrainingLink located at [traininglink.dol.state.ne.us](http://traininglink.dol.state.ne.us).

## **Rapid Response Activities Provided to Dislocated Workers**

Rapid Response is a required activity under WIA, to be carried out in local areas by the state in conjunction with the local board and Chief Elected Officials. NDOL's Office of Employment and Training, manages the Rapid Response activities through the Rapid Response Unit. The Rapid Response Unit is constructed through a partnership between the state, the local boards, and the chief elected officials. This Unit is responsible for the planning and delivery of services to enable dislocated workers to transition to new employment as quickly as possible in the event of a permanent closure, mass layoff, or natural or other disasters resulting in mass job dislocation. The unit is composed of a state coordinator and three regional workforce coordinators. The three regional coordinators represent the Western /Central Area, the Northeast/Omaha Area and the Southeast/Lincoln Area.

Refer to the map on the following page for identification of the Rapid Response Areas.

## Rapid Response Areas



In order for the Rapid Response Unit to provide accurate and timely information on all programs available to dislocated workers, the unit collaborates extensively with the following agencies:

- Local One-Stop Career Center & Operator
- Local Workforce Investment Board & CEO
- Employment Services
- Economic Development
- Education
- Local Community Organizations
- Workforce Investment Act – Job Training
- Unemployment Insurance
- Health and Human Services
- Veterans Services
- Consumer Credit Counseling
- Chamber of Commerce
- TAA Program
- Labor Market Information

The collaboration between the agencies, the local boards, and the chief elected officials enables the Rapid Response Unit to offer early intervention and core services at the work site, many facets of the Workforce System are brought to employees before their dislocation and they can take steps to enter new employment prior to visiting their local Career Center. Components of the local Career Center are brought to the work site, allowing employees access to information regarding early intervention and core services of the Workforce Development system. For example, Employment Services staff provides information regarding NEworks and how to search for positions; Labor Market Information staff provides demonstrations of on-line tools, and information regarding assessment tools is provided in order for participants to utilize. These early efforts enable the local Career Center staff to begin identifying barriers to employment and training and to determine re-employment strategies immediately.

Ongoing conversations with employers further determine special needs/barriers employees may have. Local Career Center staff are informed and consulted on a regular basis as to the need and applicability for early intervention services and the appropriate action to take.

### Notification

The Rapid Response Unit becomes active when communication of a layoff or closure occurring within the state is received. Examples of notification that warrants contact with an employer include:

- telephone contact from a worker facing a potential layoff
- communication from NDOL staff and Workforce Development partners
- news articles or public announcements
- Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification letters (WARN)

### Initial Contact

When the state is notified of a current or projected permanent closure or mass layoff, the Rapid Response Unit immediately (within 48 hours) attempts to make contact with employers and employee representatives. This initial contact verifies the layoff, provides information about Rapid Response services, and invites the employer to meet with the Rapid Response coordinator to establish a plan to provide such services. Also, within 48 hours the Dislocated Worker Unit contacts the appropriate labor organization, if employees are represented, and the local Career Center to advise them of the layoff. The local labor representative and local workforce staff may also attend the initial contact meeting with the employer. When Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) notices are received, the Rapid Response State Coordinator makes contact with the employer within 48 hours.

This initial contact provides the employer with the following information:

- available programs, service providers, and resources in the local area such as Unemployment Insurance, reemployment services, job training programs, Trade Adjustment Assistance, and financial counseling to meet the short and long-term assistance needs of the affected workers
- Rapid Response format, content, and benefits to the employer and employees
- an assessment of the employer's layoff plans and schedule
- identification of the employees affected by the layoff, their current wage scale, occupations, skill levels, and length of service
- company benefits available to employees, i.e. severance pay, job development / job search activities, relocation or reemployment opportunities, etc.
- probable assistance needs of the affected workers
- reemployment prospects for workers in the local community
- potential for averting the layoff or closure may be discussed in consultation with state or local economic development agencies, including private sector entities such as the local Chamber of Commerce

### [Notification Alert](#)

Once the State Rapid Response Coordinator receives verification from the employer that a layoff will be occurring and the information is considered public, the coordinator will initiate the notification alert system. This system communicates public notices of layoff/closures/WARN to the following representatives:

- Regional Rapid Response team members
- Director & Administrator of NDOL's Office of Employment & Training
- Director of State Administrative Services
- Unemployment Insurance representative
- Department of Economic Development representative
- Department of Education representative
- Nebraska Community College Association
- Chairperson, State WIB
- Veterans Program Coordinator
- TAA Program Coordinator
- Director of NDOL's Office of Labor Market Information

The following are also notified based on the Local Area of the affected employer:

- CEO and Chairperson, Local Workforce Investment Board
- NDOL Regional Manager
- Lincoln Local Area One-Stop Operator (if within Greater Lincoln Local Area)
- Chamber of Commerce representative (Metropolitan areas)(if within Greater Nebraska Local Area)
- Heartland Workforce Solutions (if within Greater Omaha Local Area)

### [Coordinating the Rapid Response](#)

After the initial contact is established, Rapid Response assistance will be provided by the Regional Rapid Response team members to affected employees in accordance with state and federal policy.

The Regional Rapid Response Team members will coordinate the following:

- notification of the local Workforce Investment Board and the Chief Elected Official (CEO), to determine further services necessary to include in local Rapid Response meetings
- work with the employer to determine the Rapid Response meeting dates and times, making provisions as needed for interpreters, room accommodation, specialized equipment, and demonstrations
- determine workshops and/or demonstrations appropriate for each situation, such as Labor Market Information and Internet demonstrations, resume preparation and interviewing workshops, etc.
- coordinate with the local One-Stop Career Center to arrange for program representatives to provide employment and training information, including the TAA

program if a certification for Trade assistance has been certified

- coordinate with other local program providers, to bring information to dislocated workers about emergency services and human service programs within their area
- create and issue agendas to the employer and participating members
- establish a Rapid Response event number (pending Federal guidance)
- maintain communications with the state contact and request any assistance beyond the capability of the regional team member

### **Rapid Response On-Site Meeting**

The Rapid Response meeting(s) feature presentations from appropriate agencies in the local area. Workers attending the Rapid Response may receive information and access to:

- One-Stop Career Center services
- Employment services
- WIA Training activities
- Service providers
- Labor Market Information
- Financial counseling programs
- Resume and interview guidance
- Federal financial assistance for students
- Veterans Program assistance
- Unemployment Insurance benefits
- Local Health and Human Services programs
- Trade Adjustment Assistance, if Trade certified
- Internet websites that provide job search and preparation guidelines

The Rapid Response provides emergency assistance adapted to the particular closing, layoff, or disaster.

Whenever possible, employees are surveyed to provide demographics of the group and to identify areas of concern and need. Surveys are used as a preliminary assessment tool to identify barriers to employment and to determine which program's services would be most beneficial to a particular workforce. Examples of survey demographics that will affect the Rapid Response presentations and early intervention efforts are: older workforce, educational levels, physically challenged, veterans, non-English speaking employees, interest in starting one's own business, etc. Survey results are shared with Rapid Response team members and local Workforce Development staff.

### **State Policies Associated With Rapid Response**

Local areas may request a portion of the Rapid Response funds retained at the state level if there is a justified need for additional dislocated worker funds to support case management and training services to dislocated workers. The funds are also used to provide support to Workforce Development activities for infrastructure needs, such as equipment. Finally, the

funds are used to produce publications for Rapid Response presentations and public educational purposes.

### *Delivery of Services Aligned Across Programs*

The State Management Information System, NEworks, provides an indicator if an individual attended a Rapid Response meeting. The state also maintains a Rapid Response database that tracks Rapid Response events by Local Area/Region, employer, and the number of individuals affected by the layoff or closure.

### *Future Delivery of Rapid Response Services*

During this five-year plan, the Rapid Response Unit will focus on the following items of concern:

**1. Streamlining Information:**

The state has multiple areas where information concerning Rapid Response can be found. The Rapid Response Unit intends to consolidate this information into one area to eliminate duplication and ensure it is up-to-date and current. The consolidation of information will allow other agencies, the local boards, and the chief elected officials to be notified earlier of public layoffs/closures/WARNs.

**2. Developing a Layoff Aversion System:**

Based upon the self-assessment tool provided through the Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 32-11, the state found that one way to enhance its Rapid Response Program is to develop a Layoff Aversion System. Currently, the Rapid Response program focuses on assisting employers who are in the final stages of closing or laying off individuals. With the development of the layoff aversion system, the Rapid Response Program will be able to assist employers who are in the early stages of possibly either laying off individuals or closing. The layoff aversion system will be similar to how the Rapid Response program is currently organized, but instead of presenting the employees with available programs that may assist them, it will focus on connecting employers with other programs or organizations that may assist in keeping their doors open and not laying off workers. The Rapid Response Unit will build up a local and state contact list of agencies and organizations that are able to assist employers who are struggling. The Unit will also outreach and educate local community chambers of commerce, financial institutions, and industry associations to encourage employers to connect with the Rapid Response Unit. The initial steps to create this system are currently being done. It is the goal to begin this system by targeting specific industries, and then expand to include all industries. Manufacturing is the first industry to receive focus. Representatives from the Rapid Response Program and the Nebraska Manufacturing Extension Partnership have been reviewing other state systems and identifying Nebraska resources to be utilized.

**3. Rapid Response Common Region V Dislocated Worker Survey:**

The Nebraska Rapid Response Coordinator and Labor Market Information staff are participating in the development of a Region V common dislocated worker survey. One

of the goals for this common survey is to be able to exchange dislocated worker information across state lines to enable economic developers to have a more complete understanding of an area's labor supply. Labor Market Information will supply analysis of the data as needed but, since Nebraska has a lower unemployment rate and fewer layoffs than many states in the region, there has not been a lot of data that could be shared.

## **Common Data and Reporting Processes Used in One-Stop Career Centers**

Nebraska's service delivery system uses a single data and reporting system. The common data and reporting system is part of NEworks. All partner programs included in this Plan utilize NEworks as the management information and reporting system. Data entry in NEworks takes place at the local level by program staff or directly by the employer or job seeker customer through self-service. NEworks collects the demographic and partner/program information required for federal reporting purposes. NEworks is hosted by NDOL which has responsibility for federal reporting and system support to the field. NDOL provides regular training to field staff as well as on-line "How to Guides," System Notices, etc. Field staff trainings are offered on-site and through "live meeting" technology so that staff from all across the staff can participate. Along with onsite workshops, these trainings are recorded and available for staff "refreshers." Utilizing a common data and reporting system allows for a single point of entry for applicants receiving services from one or more partner programs. Services to partnering programs are streamlined, no longer duplicated, and referrals are far more timely, accurate and recorded for follow-up results.

## **State Performance Accountability System**

Nebraska is a common measure state. All partners included in this Plan utilize NEworks as the source for federal reporting. The data used for the 9002 A-E, Vets 200 A-C, WIA 9090 and 9091, and TAPR is collected in NEworks. Federal reporting information is provided to the local program staff and local WIB chairs on a quarterly basis in both detail and summary format. In addition to federal reporting, NEworks makes available to local program management staff a number of report options including: program enrollment, staff provided and self-service activities, case management, staff activity, referrals and results, EEO, and participant profiles. Data can be produced and evaluated in a variety of categories for each report depending upon the desired characteristics for review.

## **Strategies for Using Quarterly Wage Record Information to Measure Progress**

Nebraska participates in Wage Record Information System (WRIS). Currently, WRIS information is used on a quarterly basis to monitor meeting the performance goals of program partners.

Due to the changes in FERPA, NDOL and Central Community College are piloting using WRIS and FEDES for ETP Consumer Reports. Nebraska hopes to expand this effort to additional institutions that will enable the provision of more complete information in ETP Consumer Reports.

Consumer Reports publications are produced for all the state's community colleges, all of the State Colleges, and for one campus of the University of Nebraska. Publications contain aggregated Nebraska wages by institution, by major, and by degree. The percent found working in the state and wages are used by economic developers in recruitment and retention efforts in addition to the intended purpose of helping education and training participants make informed choices when selecting a training program.

Nebraska also performs wage matching for Carl Perkins postsecondary employment and Adult Basic Education federal reporting.

In 2012, Nebraska received a Workforce Data Quality Initiative Grant to establish the Nebraska Longitudinal Data System that will house education and workforce data. This database will allow for more thorough analysis of partner outcomes over time and provide opportunities for program improvement strategies.

## G. Services to State Target Populations

*Services to State Target Populations: The State Operational Plan must describe how all the programs described in the plan will work together to ensure that customers who need a broad range of services receive them. This is an opportunity for the state to describe how One-Stop Career Center services will address more specific needs of targeted subpopulations identified in the economic analysis. The State Operational Plan must describe how the state will:*

- *Serve employment, re-employment, and training needs of unemployment compensation claimants; the long-term unemployed; the under-employed; dislocated workers (including trade-impacted dislocated workers and displaced homemakers); low-income individuals (including recipients of public assistance); migrant and seasonal farmworkers; veterans; individuals with limited English proficiency; homeless individuals; ex-offenders; older workers; individuals training for nontraditional employment; and individuals with multiple challenges to employment. (WIA Sections 112(b)(17)(A), (b)(17)(B), (b)(8)(A), 20 CFR 652.207, 663.600-.640, 29 CFR part 37.)*
- *Serve the employment and training needs of individuals with disabilities. The discussion must include the state's long-term strategy to improve services to and employment outcomes of individuals with disabilities, including plans for the promotion and development of employment opportunities, job counseling, and placement for individuals with disabilities. (W-P Section 8(b); WIA Section 112(b)(17)(A)(iv), 20 CFR 663.230, 663.640, 667.275(a).)*
- *Deliver comprehensive services for eligible youth, particularly youth with significant barriers to employment. (WIA Section 112(b)(18)(A).) The discussion must include how the state coordinates youth activities, including coordination of WIA Youth activities with the services provided by the Job Corps program in the state. Job Corps services include outreach and admissions, center operations, and career placement and transition services. (WIA Sections 112(b)(18)(C), 129.)*

## **Serving Employment, Re-employment and Training Needs of Targeted Populations**

The local service delivery system is the primary way the partners in this plan work together to insure subpopulations are served. Nebraska, being a small population state, has a delivery structure that relies heavily on coordinating the delivery of services and leveraging resources to best serve subpopulations. Conducting consistent outreach efforts and building on-going relationships with community organizations that provide tailored services to the subpopulations is a key strategy to ensure subpopulations are receiving employment and training services. Locally, partner staff work together on community recruitment events, targeted initiatives to meet the needs of subpopulations, as well as referral and co-enrollment strategies. Another key strategy is the utilization of the common case management system (NEworks) by all partners in this plan. Utilizing the same case management system greatly improves the communication, enrollment and referral process and allows management staff to review populations being served with an EEO summary report which details participant profiles including: gender, age, household location, ethnicity, education level, and employment status. In addition, locally, partner staff participate in partner meetings, training and in-service events, and professional development activities offered through the One-Stop.

At the state level, representatives on the Partner Council will strategize and find solutions that will increase subpopulations' access to workforce initiatives and employment. The state has established a number of policies that provide the framework for how the local service delivery system will provide employment, re-employment, and training services to meet the needs of target subpopulations. Listed below are policies and strategies for subpopulations.

### **Unemployment Insurance Claimants**

Unemployment Insurance claimants are provided reemployment services by Career Center Employment Service staff and by the self-service NEworks online labor exchange. Services begin with Employment Service registration. Claimants are required to have an active resume on NEworks. Claimants can set up an interview with One-Stop Career Center staff to help define current work search preferences and requirements. Additional services include assistance with the initial NEworks registration, providing local labor market/employment information, searching available job openings, local training options, referrals of resumes, online applications to employers, education opportunities, training on how to job search, and matching and/or information and referral to other supportive services as appropriate. As part of the "work search" requirement, all Unemployment Insurance claimants are to register and have an active resume on NEworks for the purpose of automated job matching as well as tracking for state and Federal reporting.

Unemployment Insurance claimants who are most likely to exhaust their benefits are identified by the Unemployment Insurance Worker Profiling system. Through coordination with the Career Center closest to the claimant's home address, the claimant is invited to participate in intensive reemployment services, referred to as RES. Failure to participate may lead to a delay or cancellation of benefits. Each invited claimant receives an orientation workshop presented

by a Wagner-Peyser staff member who assists the claimant by identifying and defining unique reemployment services. The workshop features an introduction to the online labor exchange, NEworks, assessments, job-finding strategies, instructions for completing job applications, a resume workshop for customizing resumes, an interview workshop that prepares individuals for a variety of interview environments. Following the orientation workshop, these claimants meet one-on-one with reemployment services staff. An individual employment plan (IEP) is created that details employment goals and next steps. This outline of needed or preferred actions requires mutual agreement between Wagner-Peyser staff and the claimant and acts as a reference point with regard to the claimant's work search or training. A training assessment is then administered that allows the claimant an opportunity to explore comprehensive career options based on interest and skill requirements. Additional services include, but are not limited to, case management, counseling, resume assistance, cover letter assistance, referral to training, referral to employment and referral to supportive or partnering agencies as deemed appropriate.

Long-term Unemployment Insurance claimants receiving Emergency Unemployment Compensation (EUC) First Tier or transitioning from First Tier to Second Tier benefits are identified by the Unemployment Insurance Worker Profiling system. In accordance with the Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012 outlined in the Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 20-11, Wagner-Peyser staff, in collaboration with Unemployment Insurance, provides in-person reemployment services. Claimants are required to attend a career orientation workshop consisting of NEworks training, labor market information, job search tools, and resume and interview recommendations, or their benefits are suspended. Following the orientation, claimants are required to complete a skills assessment, conduct online weekly job searches, and meet with reemployment services staff one time to review their job search activities, assessment results, and review their resume. Claimants receiving EUC receive a comprehensive overview of services for engaging in an active search for work.

For the past year, NDOL has been identifying strategies that improve the connection between workforce partners and Unemployment Insurance (UI). These efforts have focused on both electronic and programmatic ideas. Nebraska is very interested in changing the UI claimant culture to one that views the claimant as a job seeker first. We believe this aligns well with ETA's national vision for serving UI claimants as a key customer of the Workforce Investment System.

### *Dislocated Workers*

Dislocated worker services are provided by WIA staff at the Career Centers. The *Eligibility for Dislocated Worker* policy further describes those individuals who are considered eligible dislocated workers. The *Local Plan Instructions* policy requires the local areas to address how services will meet the needs of the displaced worker. Strategies identified in the local plans include providing core, intensive, and training services to eligible dislocated worker through the One-Stop delivery system as deemed appropriate. These services may include initial and objective assessment, individual service strategies, supportive services job referral, career

counseling, classroom training, on-the-job training, work experience activities, job development activities, individual case management and referral to other agencies/organizations for both supportive and other services not provided through the local One-Stop Career Center.

The Local Areas also participate in the rapid response efforts, and provide information on employment and training services available to both the dislocated employee and the employer. By participating in the rapid response effort, the local areas are able to identify populations of dislocated workers and provide services to them quickly and more effectively.

Three state policies relate to meeting the needs of dislocated workers:

- *Eligibility for Dislocated Workers*
- *state Dislocated Worker Unit Rapid Response Procedures*
- *Integrating Services under Trade Adjustment Assistance and the Workforce Investment Act*

Nebraska's integrated Case Management and Reporting System (NEworks) allows for Trade participants to receive all of the Trade Act of 1974, as amended, Sec. 235 employment and case management services that suit their individual needs at a particular time. The state has implemented the *Integrating Services under Trade Adjustment Assistance and the Workforce Investment Act* policy. With the new MIS, one record is established for each participant and multiple program services (including Wagner-Peyser, WIA Rapid Response, WIA Dislocated Worker, and Trade Adjustment Assistance) are attached to that record in an integrated manner.

### [Displaced Homemakers](#)

The state's *Eligibility for Dislocated Workers* policy addresses the eligibility of displaced homemakers to ensure their consideration for services. The *Local Plan Instructions* policy requires the local plans to address how their services will meet the needs of displaced homemakers. Strategies identified in the local plans include providing these individuals core, intensive, and training services as appropriate. These services may include initial and objective assessment, individual service strategies, job referral, classroom training, work experience activities, job development activities, individual case management and referral to other agencies/organizations for both supportive and other services not provided through the local One-Stop Career Center. With these services available, displaced homemakers will be able to gain the skills required to attain employment and become self-sufficient.

### [Low-Income Individuals, such as, Migrants and Seasonal Farmworkers](#)

The State Monitor Advocate has assisted with the development and review of Nebraska's WIA plan and made recommendations that have been incorporated. The Monitor Advocate oversees the Wagner-Peyser Migrant Seasonal Farmworker program outreach and regularly evaluates and submits performance reports to ensure the required equity ratio indicators are being met or exceeded.

The state's *Eligibility for Adult Populations* policy states: "In the event that funds allocated to a local area for adult employment and training activities are limited, priority for intensive and training services funded with Title I adults funds must be given to recipients of public assistance and other low income individuals in the local area."

### *Women and Minorities*

The state will ensure nondiscrimination and equal opportunity through issuance of policies, required assurances in state and local plans, monitoring, and has developed and implemented a Methods of Administration which is posted on NDOL's website.

The state's *Equal Opportunity and Nondiscrimination* policy requires that recipients are obligated to ensure nondiscrimination and equal opportunity. It requires that every recipient must designate an Equal Opportunity Officer (EO Officer), except small recipients and service providers. Every application for financial assistance under Title I of WIA must include an assurance prohibiting "discrimination against all individuals in the United States on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, political affiliation or belief, and against beneficiaries on the basis of either citizenship/status as a lawfully admitted immigrant authorized to work in the United States or participation in any WIA Title I-financially assisted program or activity."

### *Individuals Training for Non-Traditional Employment*

The *Local Plan Instructions* policy requires the local areas to address in their local plans how their services will meet the needs of individuals training for non-traditional employment. Strategies cited in the local plans include, providing career guidance to all individuals, based upon the individuals' identified skills, interests, aptitudes, and abilities. This career guidance includes information on non-traditional occupations. The local areas also make it a priority to provide information concerning in demand occupations and the qualifications needed to perform these occupations.

### *Veterans*

Veterans are provided priority of service at all Nebraska Career Centers as outlined in the *Veterans' Priority Provisions* policy posted at [www.dol.nebraska.gov](http://www.dol.nebraska.gov) (click on "Workforce Investment Act," then click on "Policies.") All veteran job seekers are registered and provided staff assisted services through the Career Center delivery system.

Priority of services to veterans is further supported through the use of NEworks, the State Management Information System. NEworks automatically matches qualified applicants to available jobs through job registration and the creation of an online resume. When a job search is run against any job opening, a list of qualified job seekers is created. All eligible veterans are placed at the top of the list. Career Center staff members then have three available options to notify eligible veterans of available job openings:

- call the veteran individually
- email the veteran

- notify him/her through the “My Workspace” Message Board within NEworks, if the individual is registered on NEworks

All veterans are strongly encouraged to register in NEworks so they can be provided staff-assisted services. This, combined with the NEworks self-service labor exchange system, ensures veterans priority of services in the Wagner-Peyser public labor exchange system.

The “Nebraska Disabled Veterans’ Outreach Program (DVOP) and Local Veterans’ Employment Representative (LVER) Grant Modification Plan” provides information on how all of the Career Centers have fully integrated the Veterans program into their local service delivery system.

The main focus for LVER is outreach to employers. Representatives promote the advantages of hiring veterans to employers and employer groups. After veterans are determined to be job ready following the receipt of intensive services from a DVOP specialist, it is the role of the LVER staff to then focus on individualized job development. This may be facilitated through the use of employer-focused seminars or, in conjunction with employers, may involve veteran-focused job search workshops, Transition Assistance Program (TAP) workshops, and/or the establishment of job search groups. LVERs advocate for employment and training opportunities for veterans with business and industry and community-based organizations. Responsibilities may include planning and participation in job fairs to promote veterans, working with unions and apprenticeship programs and promoting credentialing and training opportunities for veterans, monitoring job listings from federal contractors, and ensuring veterans receive priority in referrals to these jobs.

DVOP specialists provide intensive services including comprehensive assessment of education, skills, and abilities; in-depth interviewing and evaluation to identify employment barriers and appropriate employment goals; group and individual career coaching; short-term, pre-vocational services; and development of an individual employment plan that identifies employment goals, interim objectives, and appropriate services that will enable the veteran to meet his or her employment goals. They conduct outreach activities at a variety of sites. DVOPs also serve as case managers for veterans with serious disadvantages for the job market and for veterans enrolled in federally-funded training programs, such as the Department of Veterans Affairs’ Vocational Rehabilitation program.

As the state’s primary source of staff-assisted and self-service labor exchange services, all One-Stop Career Centers have fully integrated the Veterans program into their local service delivery system. At least one fully qualified DVOP and/ LVER staff member is located in 9 of the 14 Career Centers, and at least one Employment Service staff member [trained and certified in Veterans programs by the National Veterans Training Institute (NVTI)] is located in the remaining 6 Career Centers. In addition, 5 of the 14 Career Centers have been identified as Regional Career Centers with program oversight responsibilities for the Career Centers within their regional boundaries. All 5 Regional Career Centers have fully qualified DVOP and/or LVER staff available to provide program support to Career Centers in their region without full-time

Veterans staff. The guidelines for the integration, provision, priority, training, placement, and coordination of staff-assisted core and intensive services as well as referral to other partner training programs for the veteran population is provided through the State Veterans' Plan and local Career Center Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) and Business Plans.

Nebraska will be seeking further grant opportunities to provide additional employment and training services to eligible veterans. Additionally, the Veterans Retraining Assistance Program (VRAP) and the Gold Card initiative have been implemented during FY12, and the DVOPs located within the Career Centers are actively promoting these programs to eligible veterans.

As part of a provision of the Veterans Opportunity to Work to Hire Heroes Act of 2011 (known as VOW), the Veteran Retraining Assistance Program allows qualifying veterans to receive up to 12 months of assistance equal to the full-time Montgomery GI Bill at the Active Duty rate, which is currently \$1,473 per month. Veterans can apply on a first-come, first-serve basis for VRAP for programs that begin on or after July 1, 2012. Assistance under this benefit program ends on March 31, 2014.

The Gold Card provides unemployed post-9/11 era veterans with the intensive and follow-up services they need to succeed in today's job market. The Gold Card initiative is a joint effort of the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration (ETA) and the Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS). An eligible veteran can present the Gold Card at his or her local One-Stop Career Center to receive enhanced intensive services including up to six months of follow-up. The enhanced in-person services available for Gold Card holders at local One-Stop Career Centers may include: job readiness assessment, including interviews and testing; development of an Individual Development Plan (IDP); career guidance through group or individual counseling that helps veterans in making training and career decisions; provision of labor market, occupational, and skills transferability information that inform educational, training, and occupational decisions; referral to job banks, job portals, and job openings; referral to employers and registered apprenticeship sponsors; referral to training by WIA-funded or third party service providers; and monthly follow-up by an assigned case manager for up to six months.

The state's *Veterans' Priority Provisions* policy incorporates the December 19, 2008 final rule and provides local areas with general guidance on the Jobs for Veterans Act and its scope, as well as an understanding of how the veterans' priority provisions affect the eligibility of veterans for WIA-funded programs. It clarifies that with respect to any qualified job training program, a covered person shall be given priority over non-veterans for the receipt of employment, training, and placement services provided under that program, notwithstanding any other provision of law. [§4215(a)(3)] Following the issuance of TEGl 22-04, this policy and the *Eligibility for Dislocated Workers* policy were revised to incorporate language clarifying the eligibility of military service members (non-retirees) and military spouses for services under the WIA Dislocated Worker formula grant program. Due to guidance in TEGl 10-09, the *Veterans'*

*Priority Provisions* policy was further updated, particularly in the application procedures section.

Over the past year, Nebraska partnered with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce’s initiative to promote “Hiring our Hero’s” Career Fairs throughout the state. These events will continue throughout the state as the U.S. troop draw down from Afghanistan continues. Additionally, Nebraska will continue to partner with the Omaha Nebraska Offutt Air Force Base, Family Readiness Unit staff to promote veterans hiring fairs that are conducted semi-annually.

### **Public Assistance Recipients**

The state’s *Eligibility for Adult Programs* policy states: “In the event that funds allocated to a local area for adult employment and training activities are limited, priority for intensive and training services funded with Title I adults funds must be given to recipients of public assistance and other low income individuals in the local area.”

The policy also states, “Local areas must give priority for adult intensive and training services to recipients of public assistance and other low-income individuals, unless the local area has determined that funds are not limited under the criteria established.”

### **Older Individuals**

The state’s *Senior Community Service Employment Program* policy identifies issues that may be addressed in the Memorandum of Understanding between the Local Workforce Investment Board and the local SCSEP sponsors.

Older individuals are also ensured nondiscrimination and equal opportunity by the *Equal Opportunity and Nondiscrimination* policy.

### **People with Limited English-Speaking Proficiency**

The state has established a *Limited English Proficiency Plan* which provides that individuals with limited English proficiency are able to access programs and services provided by the One-Stop Career Centers and One-Stop Partners on an equitable basis. The Plan also addresses the entities that receive Federal financial assistance under Title I of the Workforce Investment Act and programs and activities that are part of the One-Stop delivery system operated by One-Stop partners identified in the Act. The plan is a statewide plan which covers NDOL’s Office of Employment and Training plus its five regional and two metro centers, and is accessible at [www.dol.nebraska.gov](http://www.dol.nebraska.gov).

The Office of Employment and Training has a Limited English Proficiency committee comprised of career center staff throughout the state. The planning committee is responsible for identifying major concentrations of ethnic groups with limited English proficiency in each region, staff training needs, inventorying and identifying language assistance aids such as posters, handbooks, forms, handouts, etc., and making recommendations to the Office of

Employment and Training for development of other language assistance aids to assist with service delivery.

The Office of Employment and Training utilizes web-based translation applications that are available for no charge, the free Language Line and services from the International Communications, Inc. Access to the Language Line or the International Communications, Inc. resource allows for guaranteed translation services if other, on-site resources are not available. The Office of Employment and Training has obtained interpreter services for clients with English as a Second Language (ESL) through the Nebraska Division of Communications Language Line Services. This service is available in over 100 different languages to staff working with clients who have limited English speaking abilities and may need interpreter services. International Communications Inc. provides fee-based translation and interpretation services including phone support for over 240 languages, print translation, on-site services and desktop publishing and HTML translations. In addition, the Office of Employment and Training maintains a contractor for interpretation and translation services available as needed for Rapid Response presentations, public notices, and written materials. The state's *Limited English Proficiency Plan* provides that individuals with Limited English proficiency are able to access programs and services provided by the One-Stop Career Centers and One-Stop partners on an equitable basis.

The description of how the state will ensure meaningful access to individuals with Limited English Proficiency is provided in the state's *Limited English Proficiency Plan*. The state's *Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Title VI Prohibition Against National Origin Discrimination* policy states that "recipients of federal financial assistance must ensure meaningful access to their programs and activities by persons with limited English proficiency (LEP)." The policy addresses entities that receive financial assistance under Title I of WIA and programs and activities that are part of the One-Stop delivery system and are operated by One-Stop partners listed in Section 121(b) of the WIA. It addresses the four-factor analysis for assessing the reasonable steps that must be taken to ensure LEP persons receive, free of charge, the language assistance necessary to afford them meaningful access to their programs, services, and information. This policy states: "After the assessment process is complete and after determining what language assistance services are appropriate, a recipient should develop an implementation plan to address the identified needs of the LEP populations they serve."

### Ex-offenders

State policies and strategies ensure the full range of employment and training programs and services are accessible and meet the needs of multiple populations. The state Wagner-Peyser staff assists ex-offenders with referrals to employers who hire ex-offenders, and referrals to partnering programs such as Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) for re-entry assistance.

Career Center and Administrative staff serve incarcerated persons by providing job search, resume preparation and interviewing workshops. Delivery of vital pre-employment skills helps individuals in the re-entry process with an emphasis in acquiring gainful employment upon their release.

## Serving Employment and Training Needs of Individuals With Disabilities

### Ensuring Comprehensive One-Stop Services Are Available to Individuals With Disabilities

The state's *Accessibility* policy ensures the full array of One-Stop services are available to individuals with disabilities. It states that to afford individuals with disabilities an equal opportunity to participate in and enjoy the benefits of the WIA Title I program or activity, a recipient must furnish appropriate auxiliary aids or services where necessary. In determining what type of auxiliary aid or service is appropriate and necessary, such recipient must give primary consideration to the requests of the individual with a disability. Primary consideration means honoring the choice unless it can be demonstrated that another equally effective means of communication is available, or that using the means chosen would result in a fundamental alteration in the service, program, or activity, or undue financial and administrative burdens.

Career Center staff and/or state program staff continue to serve persons with disabilities in the following ways:

- respond to issues and requests for information on the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA)
- provide information regarding services for persons with disabilities and programs that support successful entry or re-entry into the workforce for persons with disabilities through partnerships with Vocational Rehabilitation, Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired, and SSA employment support programs, Medicaid and Medicare provision
- conduct accessibility assessments and recommend updates in One-Stop facilities, services and accessibility equipment
- conduct outreach to disability community, public and private agencies and businesses on One-Stop services for persons with disabilities
- coordinate the referral of One-Stop Career Center customers with disabilities to applicable agencies

The state's *Eligibility for Adult Programs* policy states: "If the family of a disabled individual does not meet the income eligibility criteria, the disabled individual is to be considered a low-income individual if the individual's own income; (a) meets the income criteria established in WIA Section 101(25)(B); or (b) meets the income eligibility criteria for cash payments under any federal, state or local public assistance program.

## Delivering Services to Eligible Youth

The state provides for comprehensive, integrated services to eligible youth, particularly those most in need such as out of school youth and those at risk, youth in foster care, youth aging out of foster care, youth offenders, children of incarcerated parents, homeless youth, and migrant and seasonal farmworker youth. A comprehensive approach is taken to serve these youth,

including basic skills remediation, helping youth stay in or return to school, employment, internships, help with attaining a high school diploma or GED, post-secondary vocational training, apprenticeships and enrollment in community and four-year colleges

The state's *Local Plan Instructions* policy requires that each local area describe their priority system for providing youth services including "narrative on how the local area shall invest in youth who are most at-risk and in need." Membership on the NWIB includes experts from education, human services, juvenile justice, Job Corps, and community based organizations that provide insights into the coordination of youth funding and services. Each year the NWIB reviews information on the Carl Perkins Career Technical Education (CTE) Act of 2007 coordination and addresses it in the Annual Report.

NDOL's Office of Employment and Training has created a "Youth Performance" Work Group. The group is comprised of state and local WIA agencies and staff who have direct responsibility for the WIA Youth Program. The work group is scheduled to meet bimonthly in PY12. The purpose of the work group is to develop youth service delivery strategies that result in successful youth participation and performance outcomes.

Per TEG 5-12, *WIA Youth Program Guidance for Program Year 2012*, the work group will dedicate time and effort on key legislative language and program components, in particular, the 10 program elements, participant assessments, ISS development, engagement and retention of youth participants, quality follow-up activities, leadership development, and adult mentoring. The work group will spend time understanding the tools and resources available for youth programming and service delivery, as well as Nebraska initiatives that center around the Career Pathways Model spearheaded by Career Technical Education and school guidance counselors.

The state coordinates Job Corp services and other youth programs in a number of ways. A representative of Job Corps is a member of the NWIB. Additional coordination with Job Corps and other youth programs occurs at the local level. The state's *Youth Councils* policy requires that membership of each youth council includes "members who represent the Job Corps, if a Job Corps Center is located in the local area represented by the council" and "members who represent youth service agencies, such as juvenile justice and local law enforcement agencies."

### **Youth Program Design**

Nebraska's three local areas ensure the 10 required program elements are provided to youth through their youth service providers. The *Local Plan Instructions* require the local areas to identify how each of the 10 program elements would be provided and by when (i.e., youth contract, community partner, etc.). The state monitors to ensure these elements are available. Linking youth programs to employers occurs through the participation of business representatives on the local Workforce Investment boards and youth councils. Local programs have the discretion to determine the specific program services that will be provided to a youth participant, based on each participant's objective assessment and Individual Service Strategy.

**Local youth programs must make the following services available to youth participants:**

1. **tutoring, study skills training, and instruction**, leading to completion of secondary school, including dropout prevention strategies
2. **alternative secondary school services**, as appropriate
3. **summer employment opportunities** that are directly linked to academic and occupational learning

Local boards are required to offer summer employment opportunities in the local youth program. The summer youth employment must provide direct linkages to academic and occupational learning, and may provide other elements and strategies as appropriate to serve the needs and goals of the participants. The local board determine how much of available youth funds will be used for summer and for year-round youth activities. The summer youth employment opportunities element is not intended to be a stand-alone program. Local programs should integrate a youth's participation in that element into a comprehensive strategy for addressing the youth's employment and training needs. Youths who participate in summer employment opportunities must be provided with a minimum of 12 months of follow-up services.

The Chief Elected Officials are the grant recipients for local youth funds, unless another entity is chosen to be grant recipient or fiscal agent under WIA Section 117(d)(3)(B). If, in the administration of the summer employment opportunities element of the local youth program, providers other than the grant recipient/fiscal agent are used to provide summer youth employment opportunities, these providers must be selected by awarding a grant or contract on a competitive basis based on the recommendation of the youth council and on criteria contained in this plan. The law provides specific core indicators of performance for youth, and requires that all participating youth be included in the determination of whether the local levels of performance are met. Program operators can help ensure positive outcomes for youth participants by providing them with continuity of services.

4. **Paid and unpaid work experiences, including internships and job shadowing** – Work experiences are planned, structured learning experiences that take place in a workplace for a limited period of time. Work experiences may be paid or unpaid and may be in the private, for-profit sector, the non-profit sector, or the public sector. Work experiences are designed to enable youth to gain exposure to the working world and its requirements. Work experiences should help youth acquire the personal attributes, knowledge, and skills needed to obtain a job and advance in employment. The purpose is to provide the youth participant with the opportunities for career exploration and skill development and is not to benefit the employer, although the employer may, in fact, benefit from the activities performed by the youth. Work experiences may be subsidized or unsubsidized and may include the following elements: instruction in employability skills or generic workplace skills; exposure to various aspects of an

industry; progressively more complex tasks; internships and job shadowing; the integration of basic academic skills into work activities; supported work, work adjustment, and other transition activities; entrepreneurship; and other elements designed to achieve the goals of work experience.

In most cases, on-the-job training is not an appropriate work experience activity for youth participants under age 18. Local program operators may choose, however, to use this service strategy for eligible youth when it is appropriate based on the needs identified by the objective assessment of an individual youth participant. Funds under the Act may be used to pay wages and related benefits for work experiences in the public; private; for-profit; or non-profit sectors where the objective assessment and individual service strategy indicate that work experiences are appropriate.

5. **Occupational skill training, as appropriate** – Individual Training Accounts are not allowed for youth participants. However, individuals age 18 and above, who are eligible for training services under the adult and dislocated worker program, may receive Individual Training Accounts through that program. To the extent possible, in order to enhance youth participant choice, youth participants should be involved in the selection of educational and training activities.

Leadership development opportunities for youth may include community service and peer-centered activities encouraging responsibility and other positive social behaviors during non-school hours, as appropriate. Leadership development opportunities may also include the following: exposure to postsecondary educational opportunities; community and service learning projects; peer-centered activities, including peer mentoring and tutoring; organizational and team work training, including team leadership training; training in decision-making, including determining priorities; citizenship training, including life skills training such as parenting, work behavior training, and budgeting of resources; employability; and positive social behaviors.

6. **Leadership Development Opportunities** – Activities that include community service and peer centered activities encouraging responsibility and other positive social behaviors.
7. **Supportive services** – Supportive services may include the following: linkages to community services, assistance with transportation costs, assistance with childcare and dependent care costs, assistance with housing costs, referrals to medical services; and assistance with uniforms or other appropriate work attire and work-related tool costs, including such items as eye glasses and protective eye gear.
8. **Adult mentoring** – For the period of participation and a subsequent period for a total of not less than 12 months.

9. **Follow-up services** – All youth participants must receive some form of follow-up services for a minimum duration of 12 months and they may be provided beyond 12 months at the local board's discretion. The types of services provided and the duration of services must be determined based on the needs of the individual. Follow-up services for youth may include: Leadership development and supportive service activities, regular contact with a youth participant's employer, including assistance in addressing work-related problems that arise, assistance in securing better paying jobs, career development and further education, work-related peer support groups, adult mentoring; and tracking the progress of youth in employment after training.
10. **Comprehensive guidance and counseling** – May include drug and alcohol abuse counseling and referral, as appropriate.

**The design framework of the local youth programs must:**

- Provide an objective assessment of the academic levels, skill levels, and service needs of each participant. The assessment includes a review of basic skills, occupational skills, prior work experience, employability, interests, aptitudes (including interests and aptitudes for nontraditional jobs), supportive service needs, and developmental needs of such participant. A new assessment of a participant is not required if the provider carrying out such a program determines it is appropriate to use a recent assessment of the participant conducted pursuant to another education or training program;
- Develop individual service strategies for each participant that identifies an employment goal (including, in appropriate circumstances, nontraditional employment), appropriate achievement objectives, and appropriate services for the participant taking into account the results of the objective assessment. A new service strategy for a participant is not required if the provider carrying out such a program determines it is appropriate to use a recent service strategy developed for the participant under another education or training program; and
- Provide:
  - preparation for postsecondary educational opportunities, in appropriate cases
  - strong linkages between academic and occupational learning
  - preparation for unsubsidized employment opportunities, in appropriate cases
  - effective connections to intermediaries with strong links to the job market; and local and regional employers

**Linkages**

In coordinating the programs authorized under this section, youth councils will establish linkages with educational agencies responsible for services to participants as appropriate.

## H. Wagner-Peyser Agricultural Outreach

*Wagner-Peyser Agricultural Outreach: Each state workforce agency shall operate an outreach program in order to locate and to contact migrant and seasonal farmworkers (MSFWs) who are not being reached by the normal intake activities conducted by the local offices. To this end, each state agency must include in its State Operational Plan an annual agricultural outreach plan, setting forth numerical goals, policies, and objectives. Regulations at 20 CFR 653.107 require that the outreach plan include the following elements:*

- *Assessment of need*
- *Proposed outreach activities*
- *Services provided to agricultural employers and MSFWs through the One-Stop delivery system*
- *Numerical goals*
- *Data analysis*

### Assessment of Need, Numerical Goals, and Data Analysis

Agriculture data from prior and current program years continue to be the foundation of this program plan to provide Wagner-Peyser funded services and activities to the agricultural community under the One-Stop Delivery System. Other key sources of information are the Nebraska Agriculture Statistical Services (NASS), United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Proteus Inc. (Proteus). Proteus is the WIA 167 National Farmworker Jobs Program grantee.

Nebraska has six major crops, which employ seasonal and migrant agricultural workers. These crops include sugar beets, edible dry beans, potatoes, sorghum, and apples. In previous years, soybeans were included on this list but changes in planting techniques and weed control have virtually eliminated the need for migrant and seasonal farm workers. Row planting of the soy bean crop has been replaced by the drilling method of planting which provides closer spacing of the plants and makes the application of chemicals to control weeds more effective thereby reducing the need for hand weeding and hoeing efforts. The most recent data on Nebraska crops is found in the NASS “2010 State Agricultural Overview” for Nebraska.

### Nebraska’s Six Major Crops

1. **Sugar Beets:** Sugar beet planting is the Nebraska crop most historically dependent on migrant and seasonal farm workers. In 2010, the crop in Nebraska included approximately 47,500 acres. This is a decrease of 5,100 acres from 2009, when 52,600 acres were harvested. Sugar beets constitute less than 1% of the total crop acres. The acreage is determined in large measure by the processing capabilities at the three Western Sugar Company plants in Nebraska (down from seven processing plants in operation in the 1940's) and the Holly Sugar Company Plant at Torrington, Wyoming, which processes some contracted Nebraska acreage. Sugar beets are grown in the Far Western Nebraska counties of Box Butte, the southern half of Sioux, Morrill, and Scottsbluff, with limited acreage in Cheyenne and Banner counties. Several factors have produced a long-term decline in the need for migrant and seasonal farm workers for sugar beets. These factors include the introduction of new farming technology that provided for “planting to stand” which eliminated the demand for much of the hand labor previously required in the thinning process of sugar beets. Two plant diseases have also had a major negative impact on the

industry in the 1990's: rhizomania is a stubborn virus that infects the root system and cercospora leaf spot that is a leaf-killing fungus. All these factors have produced a long-term decline in the need for migrant and seasonal farm workers for sugar beets.

2. **Dry Edible Beans:** More recent data on dry edible beans is available from USDA's "Nebraska Agri-Facts" (December 22, 2011). Approximately 105,000 acres were harvested in 2011 and this represents a 32% decrease from 2010 (155,000 acres). Dry edible beans make up approximately 1% of the state's cropland and this crop maintains a need for migrant seasonal farm workers to perform the thinning, weeding, and limited harvesting tasks.
3. **Potatoes:** The number of acres harvested for potatoes has declined slightly from the 19,900 acres in 2009, to 18,600 acres in 2010. This is also below the 19,400 acres harvested in 2008. In spite of the decline in the acreage planted since the late 1990s, there still remains a need for hand labor that is required in the cultivation and processing of this crop including sorting, cutting, planting, and grading.
4. **Corn for Grain:** This is the most planted crop in the state, and ranked second (after cattle and calves) as the leading commodity for cash receipts in 2010. The Department of Agriculture reported 8,850,000 acres of corn were harvested in 2010, which mirrors the harvests for 2008 and 2009. The primary growing region is the eastern two-thirds of the state, with some acres on irrigated lands in the Panhandle. The vast majority of corn acres go to grain and silage production, which requires virtually no migrant and seasonal workforce. The exception to this is the over 100,000 irrigated acres in the Platte Valley used to produce certified seed. These fields require a large seasonal workforce for about three weeks in midsummer for detasseling. Local high school and college students have traditionally made up the primary workforce, but it may also include migrant seasonal farm workers.
5. **Sorghum for Grain:** This crop requires some hand labor and involves migrant seasonal farm workers for hoeing and rogue weeding. Acres harvested for sorghum for grain plantings totaled 210,000 acres in 2008, 140,000 in 2009, and 75,000 in 2010 (down 46% from 2009). This is a 64% decrease from the harvest in 2008. Sorghum is grown primarily in the southern half of the state.
6. **Apples:** Otoe and Cass Counties on the eastern edge of Nebraska have several large, commercial apple orchards. Census data for 2007 was withheld by USDA, in order to avoid disclosing information for individual farms. In 2002, however, USDA reported that 107 orchards produced 439 acres of apples. The workforce and harvest during September and October may include migrant seasonal farm workers.

### [Outreach Activities](#)

The Monitor Advocate oversees the Wagner-Peyser program outreach to agricultural employers and migrant and seasonal farm workers. The State's Monitor Advocate (SMA)

position is currently held in NDOL's Office of General Counsel. The Monitor Advocate coordinates responsibilities with the H2A Coordinator in NDOL's Foreign Labor Certification (FLC) program, and this coordination will remain critical as the state continues to transition to the new H2A rule that re-engineers the process by which employers obtain an H2A labor certification. The change from an attestation-based application process to one requiring more investigations and findings by the SWA has warranted enhanced outreach and referral services to migrant workers through the Interstate Clearance System. Migrant seasonal farm workers outreach activities are primarily coordinated through Nebraska's One-Stop Delivery System. The manager of each local One-Stop Career Center has been assigned the responsibility to conduct outreach to employers and to migrant and seasonal farm workers in their surrounding areas of service.

The SMA will partner with the H2A Coordinator to provide training, as needed, to One-Stop Career Center staff on activities such as Housing Inspections and the Employment Services (ES) Complaint System, in order to improve delivery of services to the migrant population. The SMA's duties include the conducting of annual field visits to significant One-Stop Career Centers in the state, and reporting any findings resulting from those visits. Concentrated outreach is undertaken, as our increasingly constricted annual budget permits, during the peak periods of migrant and seasonal farm workers activity, traditionally April through June. The One-Stop Career Center outreach workers, in coordination with Proteus Inc., the WIA 167 National Farmworker Jobs Program grantee, maintain a record of daily outreach activities that includes the names of individuals. These records are especially utilized when an application is taken, referral to a job is made, or a complaint is documented. This data is retained and preserved through the NEworks data system. This data system allows the Agency to track the number of migrant and seasonal agricultural workers contacted, any follow-up contacts that are made, and the types of services provided. This information is provided to USDOL's Employment and Training Administration (ETA) in the quarterly "Services to Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker Reports" (Form 5148, LEARS Reporting System).

Outreach efforts will include an explanation of the full menu of services available from the local One-Stop Career Center as well as specific employment opportunities that are currently available. Outreach also involves the provision of information on the ES Complaint System and a summary of farm worker rights with respect to employment. Outreach workers encourage migrant and seasonal farm workers to go to the nearest One-Stop Career Center to receive required services. If the migrant and seasonal farm workers cannot or do not wish to access services at the Center, the outreach worker provides onsite aid in the preparation of applications, assistance in obtaining referral to specific employment opportunities, guidance in the preparation of complaints, referral to supportive services, and help in making appointments and arranging transportation. In all instances where appropriate, bilingual staff is available to conduct outreach activities.

To assist in outreach, NDOL has developed a brochure showing the services that are available and other services that are most needed by migrant and seasonal farm workers. The brochure

has been produced in Spanish and English. A web page on the MSFW program has also been developed in Spanish and English on the Official Nebraska Government Website at [www.dol.nebraska.gov](http://www.dol.nebraska.gov), (click on “Safety & Labor Standards” and “Migrant/Seasonal Farmworkers”). The brochure and the web page will continue to be important resources, both for direct outreach and for connecting to other agencies within or without the One-Stop Career Center area involved in serving the migrant and seasonal population through outreach activities. The three most important resource partners for migrant and seasonal farm workers in Nebraska are the Department of Education migrant program, the migrant health programs, and Proteus Inc., which is the State's Workforce Investment Act Section 167 agency. Coordination among these partners will continue to be of special importance to the Wagner-Peyser funded programs. Under the One-Stop Delivery system, the effective working relationship between Wagner-Peyser programs and Proteus has been formalized in the written Memoranda of Understanding. The cooperation implicit in this MOU applies not only to the full-service One-Stop Career Centers, but to the affiliate centers and access points as well.

During PY2012, the program expects to make substantial contacts with migrant and seasonal farm workers.

### ***Agricultural Employer Services through the One-Stop Delivery System***

Services will be offered and coordinated through Nebraska's Career Centers and Access sites.

NDOL will promote its full menu of services to agricultural employers through the use of handouts distributed by the migrant and seasonal farm worker outreach staff to both employers and workers. Outreach to agricultural employers is part of the daily responsibilities of every One-Stop Career Center manager. Local radio programs are used to air agricultural job openings. Employers may use the web-based, integrated system of NEworks to post their job openings, either through employer-direct entry or through any One-Stop Career Center or Department of Labor office. NDOL offers employers and job seekers NEworks ([www.neworks.nebraska.gov](http://www.neworks.nebraska.gov)), which is made available to state workforce agencies to list job openings on a nationwide basis. The H2A Coordinator follows the directives issued by the Chicago National Processing Center (for labor certification) in clearing H2A job orders in neighboring states and labor supply states, in coordination with the State Monitor Advocate.

Even before the establishment of the One-Stop Career Centers, Nebraska had a long record of success in serving the agricultural community and in meeting the federal requirements for providing equitable services to migrant and seasonal farm workers. The definition of “equitable service” focuses on such services as referral to jobs and to supportive services, counseling, and special job development. The minimum requirement is that the percentage of migrant and seasonal farm workers receiving these services be at least equal to the level received by non-migrant and seasonal farm workers. The State Monitor Advocate will regularly evaluate the Wagner-Peyser performance to insure that the required equity ratio indicators are being met or exceeded. The One-Stop Delivery system continues to enhance the level of service that has traditionally been provided. With the high level of service integration with the One-Stop

Partners, migrant and seasonal farm workers and agricultural employers are able to access readily an even greater range of employment and training services.

### Staffing and Service Levels

NDOL will hire outreach workers for the migrant and seasonal farm worker community as need dictates and budget permits.

Wagner-Peyser has identified offices which contain staff that will serve in person, or by phone, as language interpreters for all offices.

Refer to the table on the following page for a list of available language interpretation services.

### Language Interpretation Services

<i>Region</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Language</i>	<i>Telephone Number</i>
<b>Region 1</b>	Scottsbluff	Spanish	308-632-1420
<b>Region 2</b>	North Platte	Spanish	308-535-8320
<b>Region 3</b>	Grand Island	Spanish	308-865-5405
<b>Region 5</b>	Columbus	Spanish	402-564-7160
	Norfolk	Spanish	402-370-3430
	Fremont	Spanish	402-727-3250
<b>Lincoln</b>	Spanish		402-471-2275
	Sign Language		
	German		
	Russian		
	Serbo-Croatian		
<b>Omaha</b>	Bosnian		
	F Street	Spanish	402-595-3000
	Ames Avenue	Spanish	402-444-4700
		French	

### Monitor Advocate Function

1. Nebraska is neither among the five states with the highest estimated year-round MSFW activities, nor among the top twenty significant MSFW states. The duties of the State Monitor Advocate, as established by federal and state policy, include:
2. File “Services to Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers Reports” (LEARS Reporting System, Form 5148) with USDOL on a quarterly basis.
3. File an annual summary of services to Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers (“Annual Report”).
4. Incorporate an “Agricultural Services Plan” within the “State Integrated Workforce Plan for Workforce Investment Act Title I/Wagner-Peyser Act and Department of Labor

Workforce Programs” (formerly identified as the “WIA State Plan”).

5. Incorporate an “Agricultural Outreach Plan” within the “State Integrated Workforce Plan,” described above.
6. File annual modifications to the “State Integrated Workforce Plan,” described above.
7. Conduct annual field visits to significant offices in the state and to the offices of Proteus Inc. (the WIA 167 National Farmworker Jobs Program grantee); and prepare a summary of the visits.
8. Conduct prearranged “field visits” with employers as part of employer assurances when a job order is placed.
9. Conduct random unannounced field checks when workers have been placed on clearance job orders.
10. Investigate and/or track, as needed, Employment Services (ES) complaints in four categories: MSFW, ES-related; MSFW, non-ES-related; non-MSFW, ES-related; and non-MSFW, non-ES related complaints.
11. Report ES-related and non-ES-related apparent violations to the ETA, the Office of Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and other enforcement agencies, as required.
12. Conduct “Prevailing Wage and Prevailing Practices Survey” (this may be done by NDOL’s Foreign Labor Certification Program).
13. Attend annual MAFO Agricultural Worker Conference.
14. Attend roundtable discussions at Region V offices in Chicago, when requested.
15. Participate in monthly national conference calls for State Workforce Agencies.
16. Participate in monthly conference calls for SMAs in Region V.
17. Other duties, as assigned.

The State Monitor Advocate in Nebraska is also the Legal Counsel for NDOL. The Monitor Advocate function can be performed with one staff member on a part-time basis when the functions are performed by a coordinated effort of the State Monitor Advocate (SMA), Proteus Inc. (WIA 167 National Farmworker Jobs Program grantee), and local One-Stop Centers and local offices of NDOL as set forth below:

1. SMA prepares monthly and annual reports required by USDOL, including 5148 LEARS report, agricultural services plans, agricultural outreach plans, annual modifications to state integrated workforce plans, based upon data gathered by NDOL’s Office of Workforce Services (including NEworks and the FLC program).
2. SMA coordinates activities, receives data and compiles reports of outreach efforts of Proteus, local Career Centers and access sites, and NDOL’s local offices.
3. SMA coordinates activities and compiles reports of enforcement efforts of local One-Stop Centers and NDOL’s local offices, in areas such as field visits and field checks of employers.
4. SMA gathers information prepares reports based on information from local One-Stop Centers and NDOL’s local offices, in areas of ES complaints and apparent violations,
5. SMA initiates procedures for discontinuance of services of employers and represents NDOL in appeals hearings under the Employment Service complaint system.
6. SMA forwards apparent violations to appropriate federal enforcement agencies.

7. FLC conducts Prevailing Wage and Prevailing Practices Survey.
8. SMA attends mandated conferences and roundtable discussions and participates in monthly conference calls.
9. SMA performs other duties, as assigned.

## I. Services to Employers

*Services to Employers: The State Operational Plan must describe how the state will coordinate efforts of the multiple programs included in the plan to meet the needs of business customers of the One-Stop system in an integrated fashion, such as hiring plans, training needs, skill development, or other identified needs. The State Operational Plan should also describe how the state will use program funds to expand the participation of business in the statewide workforce investment system. (WIA Sections 111(d)(2), 112(a), 112(b)(8), 112(b)(10), W-P Section 8, 20 CFR 661.205(b)(1).)*

### Coordination of Programs to Meet Employers' Identified Needs and Expanding the Participation of Businesses

Two critical and valuable methods to assess employers' needs statewide and locally are through the use of surveys and a strong relationship with the employer communities. Both surveying to assess and measure progress on meeting the expectations of the employer community and networking with employers have significantly increased.

The Employer Satisfaction Survey is conducted on a quarterly basis in order to evaluate the satisfaction employers have with Labor Exchange services across the state. Employers who have placed a job order with the Career Center in the previous quarter are asked five standard questions related to the services they received and are asked to rate their level of satisfaction by indicating "exceeded, met, below expectations, or no response". A section for "general comments" is also made available to employers for additional information. The results are internally evaluated by state administrative staff as well as Career Center managers to ensure a high level of customer satisfaction is being met in each of the 14 Career Centers.

Statewide Job Fair participation occurs throughout the year across the state in each of the local areas. NDOL's Career Centers are major contributors or sponsors at the majority of these job fairs. Additionally, a list of upcoming job fair and career events is available on the NDOL website, with events listed by region and by date.

Business Services Representatives have been established in each of the Career Centers across the state. Their primary responsibilities are to conduct outreach services with the employers in their community. Additionally, Workforce Coordinators in the Virtual Service Unit based in the Administrative office, provide employer outreach and follow-up, offering assistance in site navigation of the NEworks online labor exchange, job postings, and recruitment of applicants. The Virtual Service Unit contacts employers by phone and email to confirm employer information is correct, and to offer personalized placement services. This enables the state to provide a broader outreach of employer services while utilizing the online labor exchange for increasing job placement and retention.

Marketing tools have been created and made available to staff and managers conducting employer outreach. Employer portfolios that include a full listing of services available to employers have been developed and are available either in hard copy or CD format.

Marketing materials, brochures, and packets of information including forms and procedures, are provided to promote the Work Opportunity Tax Credits and Welfare-to-Work Tax Credits Program. While marketing of the programs involves all facets of Workforce Development, efficiency in administration will continue to be at the state level through centralized operation. State program administrative staff create presentations to various groups of employers, partner agencies and especially, the pre-release classes of the State Correctional System. Other forms of marketing include exhibit booths at conferences and symposiums across the state. One-Stop Centers, including partners such as Vocational Rehabilitation Services, provide information for job seekers and employers. Program information is available on the NDOL's website at [www.dol.nebraska.gov](http://www.dol.nebraska.gov).

Cost reimbursable services are also available to employers at each of the Career Centers. These services extend beyond the basic core Wagner-Peyser services offered to employers and the cost is based on an established fee structure approved by the Commissioner of Labor. This menu of services, as well as the fee structure is reviewed and updated on an annual basis, or as the need arises.

## **J. WIA Single-Area States Only – Additional WIA Title I Requirements**

**Not Applicable** – Nebraska is not a single area state.

## K. WIA Waiver Requests (Optional)

*(Optional) WIA Waiver Requests: States wanting to request waivers as part of their Operational Plan submission must attach a waiver plan, as required by 20 CFR 661.420(c), that includes the following information for each waiver requested:*

- *Statutory and/or regulatory requirements for which a waiver is requested.*
- *A description of the actions the state or local area has undertaken to remove state or local statutory or regulatory barriers.*
- *A description of the goals of the waiver, how those goals relate to Integrated Workforce Plan goals, and expected programmatic outcomes if the waiver is granted.*
- *A description of individuals impacted by the waiver.*
- *A description of the processes used to monitor implementation, provide notice to any local workforce investment board affected by the waiver, provide affected local workforce investment boards an opportunity to comment on the waiver request, and ensure meaningful public comment, including comment from business and labor.*

Nebraska intends to request one new waiver. The waiver will ask for permission to implement a sliding scale employer reimbursement amount based on the size of the employer.

### [Waiver Request – Waiver of the Required Maximum 50% OJT Employer Reimbursement](#)

#### **Waiver Request**

The Nebraska Department of Labor, the administrative entity of Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Title I program for the three local workforce areas within Nebraska, requests a waiver of WIA Section 663.710 (b) related to the statutory exclusion and regulatory prohibition of the maximum On-the-Job Training (OJT) reimbursement. This waiver will allow a change to the maximum employer reimbursement of OJT training from the current 50% of the wage rate. The waiver request seeks to allow Nebraska to reimburse the employer on a graduated scale based on the size of the business. Under the waiver, the following reimbursement amounts will be permitted: 1) for employers with 50 or fewer employees up to 90% of the trainee's wages, and 2) for employers with 51 to 250 employees up to 75% of the trainee wages. For employers with 250 or more employees, the current statutory requirements (50% reimbursement) for trainee's wages will continue to apply. The statutory maximum reimbursement has been determined to be a deterrent for small employers in Nebraska that had considered OJT as a means to develop workforce skills necessary for growth in their respective industries. A graduated scale of reimbursement will create more incentive for small employers to participate in OJT that achieves high-skill, high demand and/or high wage attainment and family sustaining jobs.

As required by 20 CFR 663.700, the length of an OJT will still be determined by the skill requirements of the occupation, the academic and occupation skill level of the participant, prior work experience, and the participant's individual employment plan.

Approval of this waiver will be especially beneficial to small businesses that provide most of the new jobs being created in Nebraska.

This waiver request follows guidelines identified in WIA 189(i)(4)(B) and 20 CFR Section 661.420(c).

### **Statutory Regulations to be Waived**

The WIA Section 101(31)(B) and 20 CFR 663.710(b) dealing with the OJT reimbursements.

### **Waiver Duration**

July 1, 2012 through the reauthorization of the Workforce Investment Act.

On the Job Training must serve WIA eligible individuals utilizing the appropriate program funds for the appropriate WIA eligible population. Priority will be given to low-income individuals when funds are limited.

### **Goals and Expected Programmatic Outcomes if Waiver is Granted**

- Increased percentages of employers using OJT as a means of hiring and retaining a skilled workforce
- Increased number and percentages of workers trained and hired through OJT programs
- Elevated skill proficiencies for workers that will result in increased worker viability
- Increased responsiveness to labor market issues in the private sector
- Increased flexibility at the local level to offer businesses training solutions tailored to respond to the specific needs of the business

### **State or Local Statutory or Regulatory Barriers**

There are no state or local statutory or regulatory barriers to implementing the waiver.

### **Individuals Impacted by the Waiver**

Employers, particularly small employers, will benefit from this waiver allowing OJT at a reduced cost. It will allow businesses to more rapidly adapt to changes in technology and the marketplace. Businesses will be capable of expanding and remaining competitive with affordable OJT options uniquely designed to achieve their specific developmental goals. This waiver will make OJT a much more viable option, especially for small businesses looking to get started or expand.

The waiver will also benefit Adults, Dislocated Workers and Out-of-School Youth who are eligible for services under WIA by the availability of OJT options as a more direct path to employment.

### **Process to Provide Notice to any Local Board Affected by the Waiver**

Should this waiver be granted, the Nebraska Department of Labor, Office of Employment and Training, will issue a state policy that will be disseminated to Local Workforce Investment Areas. The policy will also be posted on the NDOL website at [www.dol.nebraska.gov](http://www.dol.nebraska.gov)

### **Process used to Monitor Progress in Implementing the Waiver**

The Nebraska Department of Labor will monitor the implementation and impact of the waiver through the program and administrative monitoring system.

### **Process for Notice to Local Boards and Opportunity to Comment**

Notice regarding this waiver request is currently on the website at [www.dol.nebraska.gov](http://www.dol.nebraska.gov) for review and comment. Comments are due by September 30, 2012 to Jan Fox at the following email address: [jan.fox@nebraska.gov](mailto:jan.fox@nebraska.gov). The State will forward any comments to U.S. Department of Labor upon receipt.

### **Current Waiver Requests Extended to September 14, 2012**

In order to provide the opportunity to involve multiple partners in the Strategic Planning Process required for submission of this Plan, on April 13, 2012, the State requested temporary extension of the currently approved waivers through September 14, 2012. Following are descriptions of the waivers as set out in the letter from Jane Oates, Assistant Secretary for Employment and Training, U.S. Department of Labor, received by NDOL on June 14, 2012.

#### **Extension of Waivers**

“As part of the State’s extension of the WIA/W-P Act State Plan, and as described in TEGP No. 21-11, the State requested temporary extensions of Nebraska’s PY 2011 waivers of statutory and regulatory requirements under WIA for PY 2012. The disposition of the State’s waiver extensions is outlined below. This action is taken under the Secretary’s authority at WIA Section 189(i) to waive certain requirements of WIA Title I, Subtitles B and E, and Sections 8-10 of the Wagner-Peyser Act.”

#### **Waiver of WIA Section 133(b)(4) To Increase the Allowable Transfer Amount Between Adult and Dislocated Worker Funding Streams Allocated to a Local Area**

“The State was previously granted a waiver to permit an increase in the amount a State is allowed to transfer between the Adult and Dislocated Worker funding streams. The State is granted an extension of this waiver through December 31, 2012. Under the waiver, transfer authority is limited to 50 percent. This limitation provides States flexibility while ensuring consistency with Congressional intent regarding the level of funding appropriated for WIA Adult and Dislocated Worker programs.”

#### **Waiver of the Provision at 20 CFR 663.530 that Prescribes a Time Limit On the Period of Initial Eligibility for Training Providers.**

“The State was previously granted a waiver of the time limit on the period of initial eligibility of training providers provided at 20 CFR 663.530. The State is granted an extension of this waiver through December 31, 2012. Under the waiver, the State is allowed to postpone the determination of subsequent eligibility of training providers. The waiver also allows the State

to provide an opportunity for training providers to re-enroll and be considered enrolled as initially eligible providers.”

**[Waiver to Permit the State to Replace the Performance Measures at WIA Section 136\(b\) with the Common Measures](#)**

“The State was previously granted a waiver that allows the State to replace the 17 performance measures under WIA Section 136(b) with the common measures. The State is granted an extension of this waiver through December 31, 2012.

This waiver permits the State to negotiate and report WIA outcomes against the common performance measures only, rather than the performance measures described at WIA Section 136(b). The State will no longer negotiate and report to ETA on the following WIA measures; WIA adult and dislocated worker credential rates; participant and customer satisfaction; older youth measures; and younger youth measures. The State will use the three adult common performance measures to negotiate goals and report outcomes for the WIA Adult and WIA Dislocated Worker programs. The State will use the three youth common performance measures to negotiate goals and report outcomes for the WIA Youth program. Workforce Investment Act Standardized Record Data system (WIASRD) item 619, Type of Recognized Credential, should be completed for each individual as appropriate, regardless of this waiver to report on common performance measure outcomes only.”

**[Waiver of WIA Section 134\(a\)\(2\)\(B\)\(ii\) and 20 CFR 665.200\(d\) to Exempt the State From the Requirement to Conduct Evaluations](#)**

“The State was previously granted a waiver of the requirement to conduct evaluations of workforce investment activities for adults, dislocated workers, and youth in order to establish and promote continuous improvement of the statewide workforce investment system. The State is granted an extension of this waiver through December 31, 2012.”

**[Waive the Requirement to Provide Incentive Grants to Local Areas \[WIA §134\(a\)\(2\)\(B\)\(iii\) and 20 CFR 665.200\(e\)\]](#)**

“The State was previously granted a waiver of the requirement to provide local workforce investment areas incentive grants to reward regional cooperation, local coordination of activities, and exemplary performance. The State is granted an extension of this waiver through December 31, 2012.”

**[Waiver of 20 CFR 665.200\(b\)\(3\) to Exempt the State from the Requirement to Disseminate Training Provider Performance and Cost Information](#)**

“The State was previously granted a waiver of the requirement to disseminate training provider performance and cost information. The State is granted an extension of this waiver through December 31, 2012.”

## L. Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA)

*Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA): States must describe how TAA will coordinate with WIA/W-P to provide seamless services to participants and address how the state:*

- *Provides early intervention (e.g. rapid response) to worker groups on whose behalf a TAA petition has been filed. (WIA Sections 112(b)(17)(A)(ii), 134(a)(2)(A), 20 CFR 665.300-.340.)*
- *Provides core and intensive services to TAA participants, as indicated in the encouragement of co-enrollment policies provided in TEGL 21-00. The description should provide detailed information on how assessments are utilized to identify participants' service needs, including whether participants need training according to the six criteria for TAA-approved training. (20 CFR 617.21(c), 617.22(a))*
- *Has developed and managed resources (including electronic case management systems) to integrate data provided through different agencies administering benefits and services (TAA, Trade Readjustment Allowances, Unemployment Insurance, Employment Security, WIA, etc.) in order to ensure consistent program administration and fiscal integrity, as well as reliable fiscal and performance reporting. (May alternatively be discussed in "operating systems and policies" section of Operating Plan.) (WIA Sections 112(b)(8)(A), (B).)*

The Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program is currently operating and serving participants in Nebraska under three Federal Acts, Trade Act of 2002, Trade Adjustment Assistance under the Trade and Globalization Adjustment Assistance Act of 2009, and Trade Adjustment Assistance Program under Trade Act of 2011. As a required partner in the One-Stop service delivery system, all participants being served under these three Trade Acts currently have access to a broad range of partners and programs offered through the One-Stop Career Center system. These services will continue to broaden as providers from outside the four walls of the Career Center are brought into the system. As adversely affected workers are identified when they enter the system and their current skill levels, aptitudes and interests are assessed, it will make the decision of where they fall in the scope of TAA services much easier for the TAA case manager which, in the case of TAA, is critical since in the TAA environment deadlines rule. The initial contact with the Wagner-Peyser (WP) or Workforce Investment Act (WIA) staff for an adversely affected individual who is seeking services either prior to a TAA petition getting certified or after a petition has been certified can start the process of participation, thereby decreasing the amount of time it will take to get the individual re-employed. Wagner-Peyser, with its knowledge of the needs of businesses in the area, can be a formidable partner when it comes to matching the skills a TAA individual currently possesses with openings that need to be filled. While awaiting a determination on a TAA petition, the individual who is already classified as a Dislocated Worker can seek services from the WIA partner. Even after an individual has been classified as TAA, it is imperative that coordination with the WIA program continues in instances where supportive services not available from TAA, can be provided from WIA to ensure positive outcomes and re-employment. Once a participant is determined eligible for more than one program, the TAA case manager will become the "lead" case manager. All conversations, communications and meetings are led by the TAA case manager with staff from the other participating programs involved and present. The participant knows there is one person they go to, thereby ensuring seamless service to the participant to improve services and enhance outcomes.

## Early Intervention To Worker Groups On Whose Behalf A Petition Has Been Filed

The state has implemented three policies that cover trade adjustment assistance:

- *Trade Adjustment Assistance Program under Trade Act of 2002*
- *Trade Adjustment Assistance Program Under Trade Act of 2011*
- *Trade Adjustment Assistance under the Trade and Globalization Adjustment Assistance Act of 2009*

These policies provide for “Early Intervention Services,” including Rapid Response assistance and core and intensive services as described in Section 134 of WIA. The services are to be made available to workers covered by a petition filed for TAA benefits to the extent authorized under the WIA and other Federal laws. Early intervention services that will be beneficial to potential trade-affected workers may include, but are not limited to, orientation, surveying the workers, initial assessment of skill levels, aptitudes and abilities, the provision of labor market information, job search assistance, stress management, and financial management workshops. The staff providing these services may come from a variety of funding sources, particularly Wagner-Peyser or WIA Title I. In most instances, the Rapid Response informational meeting(s) will be held in the city where the affected workers worked. These meetings outline the TAA services available.

During a Rapid Response or in conversations with the employer, if a Regional Rapid Response/Trade Coordinator finds the layoff could be trade related, a trade petition will be submitted. If the trade petition is certified by USDOL, the trade unit will send notifications to affected workers and schedule a trade orientation to disseminate information on Trade, WIA, WP and Unemployment Insurance. A Rapid Response event in a local area that covers employees displaced from a mass layoff, plant closing or other event that produced any number of unemployed individuals may turn into a Trade covered layoff. Once the petition has been filed the Rapid Response staff work closely with the Trade staff to ensure all information is shared so that the Trade staff can immediately start triage efforts to contact all affected employees. The earlier the Trade staff can make contact with the employees, the better the chance the affected employees can begin receiving re-employment services.

In February 2012 a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between NDOL and Heartland Workforce Solutions, INC. for TAA/WIA Co-Enrolled Participants was signed. The MOU covered roles and responsibilities for participants initially enrolled in WIA, and roles and responsibilities for participants initially enrolled in TAA. This MOU covers individuals covered under TAA 2002 petitions which did not allow for case management. Since TAA training remains a lifelong benefit until it is used, individuals covered under TAA 2002 petitions may appear at any time. Provisions need to be in place to provide case management from the WIA partner. The MOU also covers individuals in TAA who may need supportive services not covered by Trade. This MOU originally covered the time period January 1, 2012 to June 30, 2012. An extension was signed that extends the MOU through June 30, 2014.

## **Core and Intensive Services to TAA Participants**

Guidance from USDOL/ETA encourages multiple enrollment resources in order to produce successful outcomes for trade-impacted workers. Providing timely core and intensive services to trade impacted workers will improve both the efficiency and effectiveness of the Trade Act programs. Under the three TAA policies listed above, it is recommended all dislocated workers go to their local One-Stop Center, even if they are awaiting a decision on TAA certification. At a One-Stop Center, core services are available and will be tracked on NEworks. These services include, but are not limited to, orientation, surveying the workers, initial assessment of skill levels, aptitudes and abilities, the provision of labor market information, job search assistance, stress management, and financial management workshops. Staff providing these services may come from a variety of funding sources, particularly Wagner-Peyser or WIA Title I. Eligibility may be determined for the WIA Title I Dislocated Worker program, and when participants begin receiving WIA-funded intensive and training services, it will also be tracked on NEworks. Results from assessments administered will help to determine if the six criteria for Trade training services are met. Immediately beginning the process of needs assessment improves participation rates and allows individuals more time to consider all of the options available to them. This is particularly critical due to the time lapse that could occur while awaiting TAA petition determinations. Once Trade eligibility is established and individuals are notified of the TAA petition being certified, partner staff will continue to work together to ensure the services are delivered in tandem in order to avoid duplication, maximize funding, and improve the quality of service.

## **Developing and Managing Resources to Integrate Data from Different Agencies**

Development and management of resources that integrates data is discussed in the “Operating Systems and Policies” area of the State Plan.

During PY2010, Nebraska implemented an integrated Case Management and Reporting System (NEworks) that allows for Trade participants to receive all of the Trade Act of 1974, as amended, Sec. 235 employment and case management services that suit their individual needs at a particular time. With the Management Information System, one record is established for each participant and applications for multiple program services (including Wagner-Peyser, WIA Rapid Response, WIA Dislocated Worker, and Trade Adjustment Assistance) are created as needed. As the files are created for the federal reports, applicable data is pulled from each program if the individual is enrolled in multiple programs. Operating instructions for the Federal Trade Activity Participant Report (TAPR) require that outcomes for training and receipt of certifications funded by WIA be reported in the TAPR if the individual is co-enrolled. The

ability of NEworks to track and report on co-enrolled individuals improves participant outcomes while minimizing the funding of costly Management Information Systems for each program.

## **M. Senior Community Services Employment Program (Optional)**

### **Senior Community Services Employment Program**

Nebraska's Senior Community Services Employment Program (SCSEP) is administered by the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Service's State Unit on Aging. NDOL's Office of Employment and Training met in June and July of 2012 with the representative of the State Unit on Aging to discuss the possibility of collaborating on the SCSEP plan under the SCSEP requirements of TEGL 21-11. The Department of Health and Human Services ultimately decided to prepare and submit their own "stand alone" State Plan for SCSEP.

Because SCSEP is a required partner under the WIA Act and is part of the One-Stop Delivery System, the state has a *Senior Community Services Employment Program* policy which is posted on the NDOL website at this location

[www.dol.nebraska.gov/center.cfm?PRICAT=3&SUBCAT=8C](http://www.dol.nebraska.gov/center.cfm?PRICAT=3&SUBCAT=8C).





## **Section III**

# **Integrated Workforce Plan Assurances and Attachments**



## **Section III. Integrated Workforce Plan Assurances and Attachments**

### **N. Assurances and Attachments**

This section provides a "check-the-box" table of assurance statements and a single signature sheet to certify that the information provided by the state, and submitted to the Department, in the following table is accurate, complete, and meets all legal and guidance requirements. The table below contains the assurances, the legal reference that corresponds to each assurance, and a column for the state to provide a reference to the document(s) that it believes meets the stated assurance or where the statute requires documentation of a policy or procedure. Such a reference may be a hyperlink to an on-line document or it may be an attachment. Not all assurances require documents to be attached or referenced. Where an approved special exemption, waiver, or an approved alternate structure makes an assurance not applicable to your state, please insert the words "Not Applicable" in the reference column.

By checking each assurance, attaching the proper documentation or links, and signing the certification at the end of the document, the state is certifying it has met each of the legal planning requirements outlined in WIA law and regulations and in corresponding Departmental guidance. By checking each box and signing the certification, the state is also indicating that its supporting documentation meets all applicable Federal and state laws and regulations and is available for review. Any deficiencies in the documentation attached to each assurance identified during the state plan review process may result in additional technical assistance and a written corrective action as part of the Department's conditional approval of the state's Integrated Workforce Plan. Assurances that are part of the state's grant agreement are not duplicated here.

### ASSURANCES AND ATTACHMENTS – PLANNING PROCESS AND PUBLIC COMMENT

		STATEMENT	REFERENCE	DOCUMENTATION and COMMENTS
1.	☒	The state <b>established processes and timelines</b> , consistent with WIA Section 111(g) – and, where appropriate, 20 CFR 641.325 (g) – to obtain input into the development of the Integrated Workforce Plan and to give opportunity for comment by representatives of local elected officials, local workforce investment boards, businesses, labor organizations, other primary stakeholders, and the general public.	WIA Sections 112(b)(9), 111(g) 20 CFR 661.207 20 CFR 661.220(d) 20 CFR 641.325(f), (g), (h), 20 CFR 641.335	<p><i>Include a link or copy of a summary of the public comments received.</i></p> <p><b>Processes and Timelines are described in Nebraska’s WIA Five-Year State Plan. No Public Comments were received.</b> <a href="http://www.dol.nebraska.gov">www.dol.nebraska.gov</a></p>
2.	☒	The state afforded <b>opportunities</b> to those responsible for planning or administering programs and activities covered in the Integrated Workforce Plan <b>to review and comment</b> on the draft plan.	WIA Sections 112(b)(9), 111(g) 20 CFR 661.207 20 CFR 661.220(d)	<p><b>Nebraska’s WIA Five-Year State Plan:</b> <a href="http://www.dol.nebraska.gov">www.dol.nebraska.gov</a></p>
3.	☒	The final Integrated Workforce Plan and State Operational Plan are <b>available and accessible</b> to the general public.		<p><b>Nebraska’s WIA Five-Year State Plan:</b> <a href="http://www.dol.nebraska.gov">www.dol.nebraska.gov</a></p> <p><b>Accessibility Policy:</b> <a href="http://www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/dspresource.cfm?id=421">www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/dspresource.cfm?id=421</a></p>

4. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>The state afforded the State Monitor Advocate an opportunity to approve and comment on the <b>Agricultural Outreach Plan</b>. The state solicited information and suggestions from WIA 167 National Farmworker Jobs Program grantees, other appropriate MSFW groups, public agencies, agricultural employer organizations, and other interested organizations. At least <b>45 days before submitting its final outreach, the state provided a proposed plan to the organizations listed above and allowed at least 30 days for review and comment.</b> The state considered any comments received in formulating its final proposed plan, informed all commenting parties in writing whether their comments have been incorporated and, if not, the reasons therefore, and included the comments and recommendations received and its responses with the submission of the plan.</p>	<p>WIA Sections 112(b)(9), 111(g) 20 CFR 661.207 20CFR 661.220(d) 20 CFR 653.107 (d) 20 CFR 653.108(f)</p>	<p><i>Include a link or copy of comments received</i> <b>Nebraska’s Outreach Plan was included in the posting and notification process of this WIA Five-Year State Plan. No comments to this Plan were received.</b></p>
5. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>In the development of the plan, the state considered the recommendations submitted by the State Monitor Advocate in the annual summary of services to Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers.</p>	<p>20 CFR 653.108(t)</p>	<p><b>The state worked in consideration with the State Monitor Advocate in the Annual Summary of Services to Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers.</b></p>
6. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>The state established a written policy and procedure to <b>ensure public access</b> (including people with disabilities) to board meetings and information regarding board activities, such as board membership and minutes.</p>	<p>WIA Sections 111(g), 112(b)(9), 117(e) 20 CFR 661.207</p>	<p><i>Include a link or copy of the policy.</i> <b>Nebraska Statutes: Neb. Rev. Stat. §§84-1408 to 84-1414</b> <a href="http://www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/statutes/open%20meetings%20law.pdf">www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/statutes/open%20meetings%20law.pdf</a> <b>Local Area Plan Instructions Policy</b>, page 23, “Nondiscrimination” <a href="http://www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/dspresource.cfm?id=88">www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/dspresource.cfm?id=88</a></p>

7. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Where SCSEP is included in the Integrated Workforce Plan, the state established a written policy and procedure to obtain advice and recommendations on the State Plan from representatives of the state and area agencies on aging; state and local boards under the WIA; public and private nonprofit agencies and organizations providing employment services, including each grantee operating a SCSEP project within the state, except as provided under section 506 (a)(3) of OAA and 20 CFR 641.320(b); Social service organizations providing services to older individuals; Grantees under Title III of OAA, Affected Communities, Unemployed older individuals, Community-based organizations serving older individuals; business organizations and labor organizations	20 CFR 641.315(a)(1-10), 641.325 (f), (g), (h)	<p><i>Include a link or copy of a summary of the public comments received.</i></p> <p><b>Senior Community Services Employment Program Policy:</b>  <a href="http://www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/dspresource.cfm?id=133">www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/dspresource.cfm?id=133</a></p>
--	--	--	---

**ASSURANCES AND ATTACHMENTS - REQUIRED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

	STATEMENT	REFERENCE	DOCUMENTATION or COMMENTS
8. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The state made available to the public state-imposed requirements, such as state-wide policies or guidance, for the statewide public workforce system, including policy for the use of WIA title I statewide funds.	WIA Sections 112(b)(2), 129, 134 20 CFR 665.100	<p><i>Include links or copies of the policies.</i></p> <p><b>Allocation Planning Policy</b>, page 2:  <a href="http://www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/dspresource.cfm?id=606">www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/dspresource.cfm?id=606</a></p>
9. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The state established a written policy and procedure that identifies circumstances that might present a conflict of interest for any state or local workforce investment board member or the entity that s/he represents, and provides for the resolution of conflicts. The policy meets the requirements of WIA Sections 111(f) and 117(g).	WIA Sections 112(b)(13), 111(f), 117(g)	<p><i>Include a link or copy of the policy.</i></p> <p><b>Procurement Standards Policy:</b>  <a href="http://www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/dspresource.cfm?id=126">www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/dspresource.cfm?id=126</a></p>

10.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The state has established a written policy and procedure that describes the state's appeals process available to units of local government or grant recipients that request, but are not granted, designation of an area as a local area under WIA Section 116.	WIA Sections 112(b)(15), 116(a)(5) 20 CFR 661.280 20 CFR 667.700	<p><i>Include a link or copy of the policy.</i></p> <p><b>Designation as a Local Area Under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 Policy</b>, page 5: <a href="http://www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/dspresource.cfm?id=130">www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/dspresource.cfm?id=130</a></p>
11.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The state established written policy and procedures that describe the state's appeal process for requests not granted for automatic or temporary and subsequent designation as a local workforce investment area.	20 CFR 667.640 20 CFR 662.280	<p><i>Include a link or copy of the policy.</i></p> <p><b>Designation as a Local Area Under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 Policy</b>, page 5: <a href="http://www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/dspresource.cfm?id=130">www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/dspresource.cfm?id=130</a></p>
12.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The state established a written policy and procedure that set forth criteria to be used by chief elected officials for the appointment of local workforce investment board members.	WIA Sections 112(b)(6), 117(b) 20 CFR 661.300(a), 20 CFR 661.325	<p><i>Include a link or copy of the policy.</i></p> <p><b>Criteria for Local Workforce Investment Boards Policy:</b> <a href="http://www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/dspresource.cfm?id=111">www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/dspresource.cfm?id=111</a></p>
13.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The state established written policy and procedures to ensure local workforce investment boards are certified by the governor every two years.	WIA Sec 117(c) 20 CFR 661.325	<p><i>Include a link or copy of the policy.</i></p> <p><b>Criteria for Local Workforce Investment Boards Policy</b>, page 4: <a href="http://www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/dspresource.cfm?id=111">www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/dspresource.cfm?id=111</a></p>
14.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Where an alternative entity takes the place of an SWIB, the state has written policy and procedures to ensure the alternative entity meets the definition under section 111(e) and the legal requirements for membership.	WIA Sections 111(e), (b) 20 CFR 661.210	<p><i>Include a link or copy of the policy.</i></p> <p><b>Not Applicable</b></p>

15.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Where the alternative entity does not provide representative membership of the categories of required SWIB membership, the state has a written policy or procedure to ensure an ongoing role for any unrepresented membership group in the workforce investment system. (Only applicable in cases where a state uses an alternative entity as its SWIB, and that entity does not provide for representative membership by individuals in the categories required by WIA sec. 111(b).)	WIA Sections 111(b), (e) 20 CFR 661.210(c)	<i>Include a link or copy of the policy.</i>  <b>Not Applicable</b>
16.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	When applicable, the state takes any action necessary to assist local areas in developing and implementing the One-Stop system.	WIA Sections 112(b)(14), 134(c) W-P Section 8(c)	<i>Include link or copy of the policy.</i>  <b>Nebraska's One-Stop Delivery System Policy:</b> <a href="http://www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/dspresource.cfm?id=121">www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/dspresource.cfm?id=121</a>
17.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The state established procedures for determining initial and subsequent eligibility of training providers.	WIA Sections 112(b)(17)(A)(iii), 122, 134(d)(4) 20 CFR 663.515, 663.535	<i>Include a link or copy of the policy.</i>  <b>Eligible Training Provider Policy:</b> <a href="http://www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/dspresource.cfm?id=114">www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/dspresource.cfm?id=114</a>
18.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	All partners in the workforce and education system described in this plan will ensure the physical, programmatic, and communications accessibility of facilities, programs, services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities in One-Stop Career Centers.	WIA Section 188 W-P Section 8(b) 29 CFR part 37 20 CFR 652.8(j)	<i>Include a link or copy of the policy.</i>  <b>Accessibility Policy:</b> <a href="http://www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/dspresource.cfm?id=421">www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/dspresource.cfm?id=421</a>
19.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The state ensures that outreach is provided to populations and sub-populations who can benefit from One-Stop Career Center services.	WIA Section 188 29 CFR 37	<b>Nebraska's One-Stop Delivery System Policy:</b> <a href="http://www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/dspresource.cfm?id=121">www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/dspresource.cfm?id=121</a>

20. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The state implements universal access to programs and activities to all individuals through reasonable recruitment targeting, outreach efforts, assessments, services delivery, partnership development, and numeric goals.	WIA Section 188 29 CFR 37.42	<p><b>Nebraska's Equal Opportunity Nondiscrimination Methods of Administration</b>, revision dated September 2011, has been submitted and is posted on Nebraska Department of Labor's Intranet.</p> <p><b>Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Title VI Prohibition Against National Origin Discrimination Policy:</b> <a href="http://www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/dspresource.cfm?id=118">www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/dspresource.cfm?id=118</a></p> <p><b>Nebraska's One-Stop Delivery System Policy:</b> <a href="http://www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/dspresource.cfm?id=121">www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/dspresource.cfm?id=121</a></p> <p><b>Equal Opportunity and Nondiscrimination Policy:</b> <a href="http://www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/dspresource.cfm?id=297">www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/dspresource.cfm?id=297</a></p>
21. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The state complies with the nondiscrimination provisions of section 188, including that Methods of Administration were developed and implemented.	WIA Section 188 29 CFR 37.20	<p><b>Nebraska's Equal Opportunity Nondiscrimination Methods of Administration</b>, revision dated September 2011, has been submitted and is posted on Nebraska Department of Labor's Intranet.</p> <p><b>Equal Opportunity and Nondiscrimination Policy:</b> <a href="http://www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/dspresource.cfm?id=297">www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/dspresource.cfm?id=297</a></p>
22. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The state collects and maintains data necessary to show compliance with nondiscrimination provisions of section 188.	WIA Section 185	<p><b>NEworks is Nebraska's integrated Management Information System</b> where all One-Stops and information from multiple system partners is collected allowing integrated access to all authorized shared information and cross-referencing between programs. NDOL regularly submits required reports that detail data showing compliance with nondiscrimination provisions.</p> <p><b>Nebraska Department of Labor NEworks, Electronic Case Management and Enterprise Content Management Policy:</b> <a href="http://www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/dspresource.cfm?id=676">www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/dspresource.cfm?id=676</a></p>

23. <input type="checkbox"/>	For <b>WIA Single-Area States only</b> , the state has memorandums of understanding between the local workforce investment board and each of the One-Stop partners concerning the operation of the One-Stop delivery system in the local area.	WIA Sections 112(b)(5), 116(b), 118(b)(2)(B), 20 CFR 661.350(a)(3)(ii)	<i>Include a link or copy of the MOUs.</i>  <b>Not Applicable</b> – Nebraska is not a single-area state.
------------------------------	--	--	--

**ASSURANCES AND ATTACHMENTS - ADMINISTRATION OF FUNDS**

	<b>STATEMENT</b>	<b>REFERENCE</b>	<b>DOCUMENTATION and COMMENTS</b>
24 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The state established written policy and procedures that outline the methods and factors used in distributing funds, including WIA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth formula and rapid response funds. The policy establishes a process for funds distribution to local areas for youth activities under WIA Section 128(b)(3)(B), and for adult and training activities under WIA Section 133(b), to the level of detail required by Section 112(b)(12)(a). In addition, the policy establishes a formula, prescribed by the governor under Section 133(b)(2)(B), for the allocation of funds to local areas for dislocated worker employment and training activities.	WIA Sections 111(d)(5), 112(b)(12)(A), (C), 128 (b)(3)(B), 133(b)(2)(B), 133(b)(3)(B) 20 CFR 661.205(e)	<i>Include a link or copy of the policy.</i>  <b>Allocation Planning Policy:</b> <a href="http://www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/dspresource.cfm?id=606">www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/dspresource.cfm?id=606</a>
24a. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	For <b>Dislocated Worker</b> funding formulas, the state’s policy and procedure includes the <b>data used and weights assigned</b> . If the state uses other information or chooses to omit any of the information sources set forth in WIA when determining the Dislocated Worker formula, the state assures that written rationale exists to explain the decision.	WIA Section 133(b)(2)(B) 20 CFR 667.130(e)(2)(i)-(ii)	<b>Allocation Planning Policy:</b> <a href="http://www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/dspresource.cfm?id=606">www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/dspresource.cfm?id=606</a>

25.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The state established a written policy and procedure for how the individuals and entities represented on the SWIB help to determine the methods and factors of <b>distribution</b> , and how the state consults with chief elected officials in local workforce investment areas throughout the state in determining the distributions.	WIA Sections 111(d)(5), 112(b)(12)(A), 128(b)(3)(B), 133(b)(3)(B), 20 CFR 661.205(e)	<p><i>Include a link or copy of the policy.</i></p> <p><b>Allocation Planning Policy:</b>  <a href="http://www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/dspresource.cfm?id=606">www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/dspresource.cfm?id=606</a></p>
26.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The state established written policy and procedures for any <b>distribution of funds</b> to local workforce investment areas reserved for rapid response activities, including the timing and process for determining whether a distribution will take place.	WIA Sections 133(a)(2), 134(a)(2)(A) 20 CFR 667.130(b)(2), (e)(4), 665.340	<p><i>Include a link or copy of the policy.</i></p> <p><b>Allocation Planning Policy:</b>  <a href="http://www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/dspresource.cfm?id=606">www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/dspresource.cfm?id=606</a></p>
27.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The state established written policy and procedures to <b>competitively award grants and contracts</b> for WIA Title I activities.	WIA Section 112(b)(16)	<p><i>Include a link or copy of the policy.</i></p> <p><b>Procurement Standards Policy:</b>  <a href="http://www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/dspresource.cfm?id=126">www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/dspresource.cfm?id=126</a></p>
28.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The state established written criteria to be used by local workforce investment boards in <b>awarding grants for youth activities</b> , including criteria that the governor and local workforce investment boards will use to identify effective and ineffective youth activities and providers of such activities.	WIA Sections 112(b)(18)(B), 123, 129	<p><i>Include a link or copy of the policy.</i></p> <p><b>Procurement Standards Policy</b>, pages 18-20:  <a href="http://www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/dspresource.cfm?id=126">www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/dspresource.cfm?id=126</a></p>
29.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The state established written criteria for a process to <b>award a grant or contract on a competitive basis for Summer Youth Employment Opportunities</b> element of the local youth program, where a provider is other than the grant recipient/fiscal agent.	WIA Sections 123, 129(c)(2)(C) 20 CFR 664.610.	<p><i>Include a link or copy of the policy:</i></p> <p><b>Procurement Standards Policy</b>, pages 18-20:  <a href="http://www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/dspresource.cfm?id=126">www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/dspresource.cfm?id=126</a></p>
30.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The state <b>distributes adult and youth funds</b> received under WIA equitably throughout the state, and no local areas suffer significant shifts in	WIA Section 112(b)(12)(B)	<p><b>Allocation Planning Policy:</b>  <a href="http://www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/dspresource.cfm?id=606">www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/dspresource.cfm?id=606</a></p>

	funding from year-to-year during the period covered by this plan.		
31.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The state established <b>written fiscal-controls and fund-accounting procedures</b> and ensures such procedures are followed to ensure the proper disbursement and accounting of funds paid to the state through funding allotments made for WIA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs, and the Wagner-Peyser Act.	WIA Sections 112(b)(11), 127, 132, 184 W-P Sections 9(a), (c) 20 CFR 652.8(b), (c)	<b>Allocation Planning Policy:</b> <a href="http://www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/dspresource.cfm?id=606">www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/dspresource.cfm?id=606</a>  <b>Cash Management Policy:</b> <a href="http://www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/dspresource.cfm?id=107">www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/dspresource.cfm?id=107</a>  <b>Administrative Cost Limitations Policy:</b> <a href="http://www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/dspresource.cfm?id=102">www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/dspresource.cfm?id=102</a>
32.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The state ensures compliance with the <b>uniform administrative requirements</b> in WIA through annual, onsite monitoring of each local area.	WIA Sections 184(a)(3), (4) 20 CFR 667.200, .400(c)(2), 667.410	<i>Include a link or copy of the policy.</i>  <b>Procurement Policy:</b> <a href="http://www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/dspresource.cfm?id=126">www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/dspresource.cfm?id=126</a>
33.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The state follows confidentiality requirements for wage and education records as required by the <b>Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA)</b> , as amended, WIA, and applicable Departmental regulations.	WIA Sections 136(f)(2), (f)(3), 122, 185(a)(4)(B) 20 USC 1232g 20 CFR 666.150 20 CFR part 603	<i>Include a link or copy of the policy, if available in the state. Documentation not required.</i>  <b>Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) Policy:</b> <a href="http://www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/dspresource.cfm?id=299">www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/dspresource.cfm?id=299</a>
34.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The state will not use funds received under WIA to assist, promote, or deter <b>union organizing</b> .	WIA Section 181(b)(7) 20 CFR 663.730	<b>Local Area Plan Instructions Policy</b> , page 24: <a href="http://www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/dspresource.cfm?id=88">www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/dspresource.cfm?id=88</a>  <b>On-the-Job Training Policy</b> , page 9: <a href="http://www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/dspresource.cfm?id=123">www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/dspresource.cfm?id=123</a>

### ASSURANCES AND ATTACHMENTS - ELIGIBILITY

		STATEMENT	REFERENCE	DOCUMENTATION and COMMENT
35.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Where the SWIB chooses to establish them, the state established definitions and eligibility documentation requirements regarding the “ <b>deficient in basic literacy skills</b> ” criterion.	WIA Sections 101(13)(C)(i) CFR 664.205(b)	<i>Include a link or copy of the policy.</i>  <b>Eligibility for Youth Programs Policy:</b> <a href="http://www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/dspresource.cfm?id=113">www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/dspresource.cfm?id=113</a>
36.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Where the SWIB chooses to establish them, the state established definitions and eligibility documentation requirements regarding “ <b>requires additional assistance</b> to complete and educational program, or to secure and hold employment” criterion.	WIA Sections 101(13)(C)(iv) 20 CFR 664. 200(c)(6), 664.210	<i>Include a link or copy of the policy.</i>  <b>Eligibility for Youth Programs Policy</b> , page 3: <a href="http://www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/dspresource.cfm?id=113">www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/dspresource.cfm?id=113</a>  <b>Local Area Plan Instructions Policy</b> , page 15: <a href="http://www.dol.nebraska.gov/center.cfm?PRICAT=3&amp;SUBCAT=8C">www.dol.nebraska.gov/center.cfm?PRICAT=3&amp;SUBCAT=8C</a>
37.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The state established policies, procedures, and criteria for prioritizing <b>adult title I employment and training funds</b> for use by recipients of public assistance and other low-income individuals in the local area when funds are limited.	WIA Section 134(d)(4)(E) 20 CFR 663.600	<i>Include a link or copy of the policy.</i>  <b>Eligibility for Adult Programs Policy:</b> <a href="http://www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/dspresource.cfm?id=112">www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/dspresource.cfm?id=112</a>

38. ☒	<p>The state established policies for the delivery of priority of <b>service for veterans</b> and eligible spouses by the state workforce agency or agencies, local workforce investment boards, and One-Stop Career Centers for all qualified job training programs delivered through the state's workforce system. The state policies:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ensure that covered persons are identified at the point of entry and given an opportunity to take full advantage of priority of service; and</li> <li>2. Ensure that covered persons are aware of: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Their entitlement to priority of service;</li> <li>b. The full array of employment, training, and placement services available under priority of service; and</li> <li>c. Any applicable eligibility requirements for those programs and/ or services.</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. Require local workforce investment boards to develop and include policies in their local plan to implement priority of service for the local One-Stop Career Centers and for service delivery by local workforce preparation and training providers.</li> </ol>	<p>WIA Sections 112(b)(17)(B), 322 38 USC Chapter 41 20 CFR 1001.120- .125 Jobs for Veterans Act, P.L. 107-288 38 USC 4215 20 CFR 1010.230, 1010.300-.310</p>	<p><i>Include a link or copy of the policy.</i></p> <p><b>Veterans' Priority Provisions Policy</b>, pages 5-6: <a href="http://www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/dspresource.cfm?id=307">www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/dspresource.cfm?id=307</a></p>
-------	--	---	---

### ASSURANCES AND ATTACHMENTS - PERSONNEL AND REPRESENTATION

		STATEMENT	REFERENCE	DOCUMENTATION and COMMENTS
39.	☒	<p>The state assures that <b>Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker (MSFW)</b> significant office requirements are met.</p> <p>Note: The five states with the highest estimated year-round MSFW activities must assign full-time, year-round staff to outreach activities. The Employment and Training Administration designates these states each year. The remainder of the top 20 significant MSFW states must make maximum efforts to hire outreach staff with MSFW experience for year-round positions and shall assign outreach staff to work full-time during the period of highest activity.</p> <p>If a state proposes that its <b>State Monitor Advocate</b> work less than full-time, the state must submit, for approval by the Department, a plan for less than full-time work, demonstrating that the state MSFW Monitor Advocate function can be effectively performed with part-time staffing.</p>	<p>WIA Section 112(b)(8)(A)(iii), 112(b)(17)(A)(iv)</p> <p>W-P Sections 3(a), (c)(1)-(2)</p> <p>20 CFR 653.107(a), 107(i), 653.112(a), 653.108(d)(1)</p>	<p><i>Attach plan for part-time Monitor Advocate, if applicable.</i></p> <p><b>Nebraska is not one of the five states with the highest estimated year-round MSFW activities.</b></p> <p><b>Nebraska is not one of the top 20 significant MSFW states.</b></p>
40.	☒	<p>Merit-based public employees provide <b>Wagner-Peyser Act-funded labor exchange activities</b> in accordance with Departmental regulations.</p>	<p>W-P Sections 3(a), 5(b)</p> <p>20 CFR 652.215</p> <p>Intergovernmental Personnel Act, 42 USC 4728(b)</p>	<p><b>Nebraska's WIA Five-Year State Plan:</b>  <a href="http://www.dol.nebraska.gov">www.dol.nebraska.gov</a></p> <p><b>Trade Adjustment Assistance Program Under Trade Act of 2011 Policy</b>, page 33:  <a href="http://www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/dspresource.cfm?id=118">www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/dspresource.cfm?id=118</a></p>

41. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The state has designated at least one person in each state or Federal employment office to promote and develop employment opportunities, job counseling, and placement for <b>individuals with disabilities</b> .	W-P Section 8(b) 20 CFR 652.211	<b>Currently, Joan Modrell is the designated person in the State Employment Office that promotes and coordinates employment opportunities, job counseling, and placement for individuals with disabilities.</b>
42. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	If a SWIB, department, or agency administers state laws for <b>vocational rehabilitation</b> of persons with disabilities, that board, department, or agency cooperates with the agency that administers Wagner-Peyser services.	W-P Section 8(b) 20 CFR 652.211	<b><i>Vocational Rehab is administered by the Nebraska Department of Education:</i></b> <a href="http://www.vocrehab.state.ne.us/partner/wfd.html">www.vocrehab.state.ne.us/partner/wfd.html</a>  <b><i>Nebraska's One-Stop Delivery System Policy:</i></b> <a href="http://www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/dspresource.cfm?id=121">www.dol.nebraska.gov/resources/dspresource.cfm?id=121</a>

## O. STATEMENT OF ASSURANCES CERTIFICATION

The **State of Nebraska** certifies that on the 12 day of September in 2012, it complied with all required components of the Workforce Investment Act and the Wagner-Peyser Act. The **State of Nebraska** also assures that funds will be spent in accordance with the Workforce Investment Act and the Wagner-Peyser Act and their regulations, written Department of Labor guidance implementing these laws, and all other applicable Federal and state laws and regulations.



**Governor Dave Heineman**

September 12, 2012



## P. PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION DESIGNEES AND PLAN SIGNATURES

**Name of WIA Title I Grant Recipient Agency:** Nebraska Department of Labor  
Address: 550 South 16th Street, P.O. Box 94600  
Lincoln, NE 68509  
Telephone Number: (402) 471-5919  
Facsimile Number: (402) 471-2318  
E-mail Address: [catherine.lang@nebraska.gov](mailto:catherine.lang@nebraska.gov)

**Name of State WIA Title I Administrative Agency (if different from the Grant Recipient):**

Address: same as above  
Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
Facsimile Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**Name of WIA Title I Signatory Official:** Catherine D. Lang, Commissioner of Labor  
Address: same as above  
Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
Facsimile Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**Name of WIA Title I Liaison:** Catherine D. Lang, Commissioner of Labor  
Address: same as above  
Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
Facsimile Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**Name of Wagner-Peyser Act Grant Recipient/State Employment Security Agency:**

Nebraska Department of Labor  
Address: 550 South 16th Street, P.O. Box 94600  
Lincoln, NE 68509  
Telephone Number: (402) 471-5919  
Facsimile Number: (402) 471-2318  
E-mail Address: [catherine.lang@nebraska.gov](mailto:catherine.lang@nebraska.gov)

**Name and title of State Employment Security Administrator (Signatory Official):**

Catherine D. Lang, Commissioner of Labor

Address: same as above

Telephone Number:

Facsimile Number:

E-mail Address:

As the Governor, I certify that for the **State of Nebraska**, the agencies and officials designated above have been duly designated to represent the State in the capacities indicated for the Workforce Investment Act, Title I, and Wagner-Peyser Act grant programs. Subsequent changes in the designation of officials will be provided to the U.S. Department of Labor as such changes occur.

I further certify that we will operate our Workforce Investment Act and Wagner-Peyser Act programs in accordance with this Plan and the assurances herein.

Typed Name of Governor: **Dave Heineman**

Signature of Governor:  Date : September 12, 2012

[THIS DOCUMENT IS POSTED AT [WWW.DOL.NEBRASKA.GOV](http://WWW.DOL.NEBRASKA.GOV) [Click on "GET ANSWERS" - WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACT - WIA 5-YEAR STATE PLAN FOR (7/1/2012 - 6/30/2012)]

## Q. Public Comments

### Comments Received on the Five-Year Integrated Workforce Plan, and How They Were Incorporated

	<u>Comments</u>	<u>Action</u>
1.	No written comments have been received.	