No disability specific information found regarding this element.

**Customized Employment**

This is an ongoing effort on the part of OVR to assist with the establishment of a community rehabilitation program (CRP). The goal for VR to assist in the establishment of a CRP, to assist VR clients in facilitating integrated employment / customized employment, specialized training facility to improve outcomes for individuals served by OVR, especially those most significantly disabled. (Page 107) Title VI

The Supported Employment Program will maintain its efforts towards the attainment of these outcomes: • Continue to expand and improve existing services to increase the number of physically and intellectually challenged individuals placed in permanent jobs having successfully completed the Supported Employment Program • Continue to identify and develop new programs to expand supported employment opportunities through closer collaboration with the private sector and government in the establishment of a favorable environment that will nurture desired program expansion. The Supported Employment Program will maintain its efforts towards the attainment of these outcomes: • Continue to expand and improve existing services to increase the number of physically and intellectually challenged individuals placed in permanent jobs having successfully completed the Supported Employment Program • Continue to identify and develop new programs to expand supported employment opportunities through closer collaboration with the private sector and government in the establishment of a favorable environment that will nurture desired program expansion. Objectives: The following objectives have been established for the program: 1. Continue expansion by fostering greater collaboration with other agencies and service providers in maximizing services to Supported Employment Program (SES) consumers. 2. In recognition of the impairments delimiting possibilities for the Supported Employment Program, there is a need to provide technical assistance to eligible consumers seeking self—employment ventures as an option. 3. Foster greater support for the SES Program, by promoting and continue increasing public awareness on SES services to include outreach activities to the outer islands and to minorities. 4. Provide in—service training activities to SES staff to ensure that the delivery of services is of the highest quality possible. 5. Increase OJT contract agreements to include trial work experiences with public and private sector employers. 6. Intensifying job development activities to increase the number of placements and job contracts. 7. Obtain a reliable vehicle, appropriately equipped to provide for the growing transportation needs of SES consumers and staff. 8. Maintain and update SES Job Bank as an
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effective resource in providing pertinent information for obtaining job opportunities for consumers. Increase the number of referrals from VRC.

OVR commits VI-B funding for youth with the most severe disabilities.

The provision of extended services for a period not to exceed 4 years

• OVR will continue to find partnership opportunities with Department of Human Resources Workforce (WIOA) and Developmental Disabilities Planning Council to continue outreach to transition students who may need supported employment.

• OVR will work with DOE-Special Education to offer work experiences to transition students while still in high school, ensuring a more hopeful employment path.

• OVR will also continue to utilize On-the-Job training agreement, to assist an employer in associated costs of training a youth in a job.

• Changes to Supported Employment services are necessary to meet the higher number of individuals to be served under WIOA, to include customized employment and reduce the level and time necessary for extended services.

• Services will be streamlined and provide lasting value and outcomes to the individuals served. (Page 117-118) Title I

Braiding/Blending Resources

American Samoa through the Department of Education also received a 7 million grant to develop a State Longitudinal Data System (SLDS) for the Territory. The SLDS is needed to collect high school to College and Career data that will better assist the Department of Education, American Samoa Community college and the Department of Human Resources for workforce development. The ASCC, Department of Human Resources, and the Department of Education have a MOU in place to share this data for workforce planning.

Continuing the focus on coordination among partners enhances services to individuals by reducing duplication and promoting integrated service strategies for individual customers. All partners and their customers benefit from aligning and leveraging services whenever possible. An example of the value of service alignment is the strong partnership of OVR and the Department of Human Resources, WIOA Office. These partners work closely together to ensure that OVR customers whose disabilities are less severe and do not meet the OVR order of selection receive individualized workforce services at the Department of Human Resources WIOA office that support their employment goals. (Page 25) Title I

Human Resource Development efforts will continue to be oriented toward appropriate and adequate training for all personnel. Although there has been an emphasis on assisting counselors in meeting the CSPD standard and on developing the technical, managerial, and leadership skills
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of the supervisors and managers, staff development opportunities are provided to employees at every level. The Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor continues to remain versatile and diligent by making sure that all services at the disposal of the client are being optimally utilized. The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation is committed to the adoption of the holistic service approach so that all of the needs of the client are effectively addressed. For example, if assistive technology is needed, he/she must be knowledgeable about the types of assistive devices with proven records to be suggested to the client. Further, the counselor must be aware of all impediments that might preclude the use of a certain assistive device. This challenge can be overcome by forming an alliance with the assistive technology specialist to ensure that not only the best fit device is recommended, but sensitivity with regard to cost is also very important. Based on the local prevailing economic system and job availability, the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation is aggressively encouraging clients to pursue the self-employment option, by focusing attention on niche services. The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation has been meticulous in making sure that the counselors receive training on assistive technology and the available assistive devices that are available in the market. Attempts are being maintained to continue to involve physicians in the service process especially in the area of prosthetics and the assessment of the nature and extent of the disability. For fiscal year 2018 and on ward, training emphasis will be placed on building counselors and staff capacities to aggressively promote the concept of entrepreneurship given bleak economic forecast for the territory. The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation will continue to collaborate with its partners on training fund leveraging to address the growing need for funds to finance the continuance of needed training initiatives. These partners include the American Samoa Community College, the University Center for Excellence on Developmental Disabilities, DHSS Developmental Disabilities Planning Council and workforce partners. The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation will continue to promote established goals for CSPD. These CSPD goals are: • Improve the employment outcome for the disabled community. • Increase OVR’s capacity to ensure increase in positive closures. • Increase consumer satisfaction of OVR services • Improve program effectiveness and efficiency. (Page 101) Title IV

For fiscal year 2018 and onward, training emphasis will be placed on building counselors and staff capacities to aggressively promote the concept of entrepreneurship given bleak economic forecast for the territory. The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation will continue to collaborate with its partners on training fund leveraging to address the growing need for funds to finance the continuance of needed training initiatives. These partners include the American Samoa Community College, the University Center for Excellence on Developmental Disabilities, DHSS Developmental Disabilities Planning Council and workforce partners. The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation will continue to promote established goals for CSPD. These CSPD goals are: • Improve the employment outcome for the disabled community. • Increase OVR’s capacity to ensure increase in positive closures. • Increase consumer satisfaction of OVR services • Improve program effectiveness and efficiency. Evaluation sensitivities were disclosed in the previous State Plan supporting the dependence on third parties evaluators to conduct program assessment; data collection remains one of the major obstacles. (Page 102) Title IV
The projections provided below were revised predicated on the results of the American Samoa Statistical Year Book 2016, by the Department of Commerce Statistical and Research Division that states the territory’s population at 60,200. American Samoa Office of Vocational Rehabilitation estimates 789 individuals are eligible for services in Fiscal Year 2018. This figure is calculated using the number of individuals that were served during the fiscal year and also had an individualized plan for employment as reflected on the Rehabilitation Services Administration 113 report cumulative caseload, Lines C1 and C2 or FY 2017. The schedule provided below attempts to determine the distribution of funds made available through the two funding streams to individuals who meet the vocational rehabilitation eligibility criteria. These are estimates based on the experience of the agency over 33 years of serving the disabled population of American Samoa. Annual Estimates of Individuals to be Served and Cost of Services Based on fiscal year 2013, the actual number of clients served was 220. The cost of services ($450,000) rendered in terms of assessments, vocational and educational training, rehabilitation technology, supported employment, and others, records that the cost per client served was $2,200.00. It is projected that the number of clients to be served in fiscal year 2014 will climb to 230; representing 10 more clients vying for the same amount of funding allocation. The overall effect will be that less amount of services will be provided for the total projected clientele of 230; the amount of funds to be spent on each client is $2,200.00 or $32.15 less. This discounts the effect of inflation of price of goods and services. This is not a healthy trend and the probability of additional funds is poor. The cost of each service package will continue to decline in light of the rising inflationary cost propelled by continuing energy prices. To supplement the transparent drop in financial resources, the Office of Vocational of Rehabilitation has dedicated its efforts on improving leveraging through closer cooperation with other existing federal programs such as the Workforce Investment Act and other U.S. Department of Labor Programs. Through this cooperation, clients have been placed in private sector industries along with quasi-government organizations like the American Samoa Power Authority, Feleti Barstow Library, and others. The agency is continuing to extend this leveraging effort to private companies such as the KFC, McDonalds, Talofa Print Shop and PT & Associates, and others. The Governor will again be petitioned for inclusion of local match funding in this fiscal year’s budget to forge the release of $200,000 in federal funds to supplement local efforts to improve services to the disabled population of American Samoa. (Page 108) Title IV

**DEI/Disability Resource Coordinators**

No disability specific information found regarding this element.

**Financial Literacy/Economic Advancement**

No disability specific information found regarding this element.

**School to Work Transition**

Provide an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the workforce development activities identified in (A) above.
Strengths and Challenges Core Partners collaboratively identified the strengths and weaknesses as part of the unified planning process and as part of the ongoing efforts to better align and integrate service delivery. The following summarizes key strengths of the Territory’s workforce system as identified by Core Partners. The Territory encourages innovation. Territory and local partners have recent experience in work-based learning due to National Emergency Grant (NEG). Partners continue to work collaboratively and explore opportunities for service alignment. The Territory is pursuing innovation in providing services to individuals with disabilities. The Territory is planning to provide assistance on employer engagement, work-based learning, and best practices models on serving special target populations.

The following summarizes challenges for the workforce system in the Territory as identified by Core Partners. Employers have difficulty finding skilled workers with essential workplace skills and technical skills. The quality of local career varies. The willingness to pursue innovation at the local level varies. The level and quality of local public-private sector partnerships varies. The level and quality of employer engagement varies, but the areas with weak engagement outnumber those with well-connected employers. There is an emphasis on a one-size fits-all approach, with little effort to leverage job seeker’s existing knowledge and skills to accelerate training. (Page 16) Title IV

1. The Department of Human & Social Services (DHSS) division of Developmental Disabilities Planning Council provide for systemic change, public policy development, advocacy, empowerment training, identification of barriers to employment and community inclusion for individuals with developmental disabilities, the elderly and at risk youths, referral services, and coordination with public education and awareness activities during Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month. 2. Statewide Independent Living Center provides group training to assist students and youths with disabilities in developing the skills needed to live independently; self-advocacy and awareness , advocate during IEP process, understanding the transition process and advocating for themselves in post-secondary education, employment and when receiving social services; workplace readiness training to provide students and youth with disabilities the knowledge needed to find and maintain competitive integrated employment through OVR. 3. Governor’s Committee on Rehabilitation Behavior Disability Issues, VR’s Director participates as a member of the Governor’s Committee and partners with the Committee on issues and concerns faced by the disabled population especially out-of-school youth in obtaining the needed assistance and services. (Page 89) Title IV

The Memorandum of Understanding agreement with DOE-SPED identifies and outlines the delivery of Pre-Employment Transition services to students with disabilities as promulgated in CFR 361.22. This agreement deals with mutual provision of services by both OVR and the SPED. Thus, OVR and SPED will provide an array of services to all students within this category. No student will be turned away from receiving Pre-Employment Transition Services. As identified in OVR’s revised Policy Manual; the age limit for pre-employment transition services eligibility is 16 years or when a student is in their senior year of secondary education (whatever comes first). However, this does not negate OVR working together with SPED prior to their senior year. Also referrals to OVR will be accepted from SPED at anytime of the individual student’s education tenure. Before a student completes their secondary education a vocational
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Rehabilitation plan will have been developed and put into place prior to their graduation time, if that is the choice of the student and parent’s. This will help ameliorate the student’s transition process from secondary education to work and/or their post-secondary education. Transition services will include but not limited; to training and placement, coupled with supported employment if needed, advocacy, assistive technology, counseling and guidance, independent living services and community integration and recreation. American Samoa OVR is not under any Order of Selection. This also includes any student who is in the Transition Program or referred to the Program. In 2017 OVR, DHR-WIOA and Special Education collaborated in the School to Work Program. Two High Schools participated in this project, a total of eight participates for a total of six weeks. These same individuals also participated along with twenty-two disabled students in the Department of Human Resources — WIOA Employment and Training Division Summer Youth program for six weeks. The School to Work project had the students working two to four hours either on or off campus experiencing work base learning. This continued on to the Summer Youth Program (SYP) which included all the high schools as well as students from Manu’a high school; there was a total of 30 students with disabilities participating but the total of SYP participants equaled 739. For FY 2018 OVR, DHR-WIOA and Special Education’s School to Work program included all high schools in the territory; there are thirty students with disabilities participating, the duration is for eight weeks. (Page 90) Title IV

The OVR is committed to working with businesses and employers in recognizing competitive integrated employment and career exploration opportunities in serving job seekers with disabilities. In FY 2016, the School-to-Work program was re-activated, we had eight participants from two high schools participating. The eight students were training at actual worksites as part of work base learning. The training lasted six weeks with students training one to two hours during school or after school. Further, VR will focus upon pre-employment transition services when serving students with disabilities. The Department of Human Resources, Employment and Training Division (DHR-ETD) (WIOA) and OVR are the primary resource for businesses seeking solutions to their disability-related issues and for information about employing individuals with disabilities. With our help, employers are beginning to recognize OVR and DHR-WIOA role as business consulting service that is able to help them meet the challenges of today's work environment by providing information on staffing, financial incentives, accessibility and accommodation options, educational programs, and expertise on the Americans with Disabilities Act. In addition, employers are beginning to understand that DHR-ETD and VR can help them gain a critical business advantage by connecting them with a qualified and largely untapped labor force. (Page 93) Title IV

Workforce Development Board (DHR—WDB) and the American Samoa Office of Vocational Rehabilitation. The purpose of the intensive cross education is to begin a strategic partnership of working together when it comes to strategic outreach to businesses. A deeper and more strategic partnering with DHR—WDB, should help our territory better work with businesses. Because both DHR—WDB and VR have access to a pool of candidates looking to enter the workforce, it is logical to coordinate the outreach efforts only after ensuring that the agencies are educated on the specific services available to assist not only the job seeker but also the employer. Employers grow weary of the many agencies working individually to gain opportunities for their clients. VR and the Workforce Development Board hope to streamline services collaborate and partner in
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Outreach efforts across the state in order to efficiently use their time working with employers. Future plans for Business Partnership Network are to expand the capacity. Meetings have been scheduled for the Network to explore options for further building the outreach to businesses in an effort to expand employer engagement, provide disability—related information and resources (e.g., disability awareness training, business-to—business resources for beginning disability hiring initiatives, etc.), and develop work—based learning opportunities, internships and apprenticeships for individuals with disabilities. The goal is to make outreach more robust across the territory with potential hiring events, encourage disability hiring initiatives, job fairs, and other business services. This is not meant to duplicate efforts of other core WIOA partners, but to allow for resources within VR to assist in such critical collaboration, as well as provide expertise and resources for business in the area of disability. (Page 95) Title IV

The agency’s goals and priorities have been identified and discussed in collaboration with the agency’s State Rehabilitation Council. The goals and priorities were developed through both interactions among WIOA core partner programs toward implementation of the new partnerships and legislation through WIOA. The first set of goals and priorities for the agency to be accomplished in the next four year scope of this state plan is the successful implementation of an integrated systems, processes and relationships that bring the agency and state towards meeting the intent of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. GOAL 1: Diligently collaborate with the WIOA core programs and other appropriate agencies to provide a client-centered approach to service delivery to assist individuals with disabilities achieve their employment outcomes. Priority 1.1: Develop a common understanding among WIOA core programs and other appropriate agencies (e.g., DHSS - Developmental Disabilities Planning Council and Department of Education) of Vocational Rehabilitation and the services it may provide to eligible consumers, in varying capacities, in order to provide an integrated service delivery and improve employment outcomes for consumers. VR Leadership continues discussions with appropriate agencies throughout FFY 2018 and develop written agreements by winter 2018. Priority 1.2: Collaborate with core partners and Guam Department of Labor to connect with a web—based consulting organization for a virtual one stop VR case management system to improve the efficiency and enhance the mobile working environment of VR counselor and enrich the data utilized by VR to make informed program decisions. The system will also ensure appropriate system integration and data-sharing to align resources, collect common consumer information, increase efficiencies, track effectiveness of the program, and ultimately improve the consumer’s experience in VR in meeting his/her employment goal. Priority 1.3: Develop processes and procedures to ensure proper and consistent referrals to and from VR and WIOA core programs (and other appropriate programs) in order to maximize the service options and service delivery for individuals with disabilities. Priority 1.4: Ensure VR staff is trained, highly knowledgeable, and are providing information on services across WIOA core programs, and other appropriate programs that may assist individuals with disabilities achieve their employment outcome. New staff will participate in web-based and classroom-based training throughout, at minimum, the first year of employment. Priority 1.5: Work in partnership with WIOA core programs to strategically enhance employer engagement and work—based learning opportunities for individuals with disabilities. This includes expanding VR employer engagement to develop appropriate disability—related information and resources (e.g., disability awareness training, business-to-business resources for beginning disability hiring initiatives, etc.) for employers.
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Development of a strategic plan will be developed with the installation of the integrated web base software of all core partners. (Page 110) Title IV

Work in partnership with WIOA core programs to strategically enhance employer engagement and work—based learning opportunities for individuals with disabilities. This includes expanding VR/SES employer engagement to develop appropriate disability—related information and resources (e.g., disability awareness training, business—to—business resources for beginning disability hiring initiatives, etc.) for employers. Development of a strategic plan will begin in FFY 2016 to outline collaborative approaches to enhance employer engagement. GOAL 3: Develop program initiatives and training that adequately support VR/SES staff and future community rehabilitation providers in the provision of quality services. Priority 3.1: Review trends in service provision and employment outcomes on a quarterly basis throughout FFY 2016, and continue to meet at least quarterly with other service providers to review strengths and identify areas of improvement. Priority 3.2: Continue development of VR/SES staff through professional development and training, that can be shared across WIOA core programs to ensure consistency in information and increased knowledge about VR service delivery. VR will introduce new training by September 2016 that will aim to increase focus on counseling and guidance. (Page 112) Title IV

Needs of individuals with disabilities in transition according to our comprehensive island-wide needs assessment the most common themes that emerged in this area were: • OVR needs to expand its outreach and service to transition-age youth; • Transition-age youth need more exposure to work prior to exiting the school system; • Soft skill development is a major need for this group; • OVR and DOE need to increase their collaboration. OVR and Department of Education-Special Education have been collaborating and coordinating to served pre-employment transition services to students by providing work based learning experiences through the year beginning with federal year 2016. We jointly began the school to work program. Students participating in the program trained at training sites either on campus or off two to four hours for at least 2 to 3 days. These same individuals also participated in the Summer Youth Job Program and were place at actual community based job settings. There were a total of 30 pre-employment transition students participating in the Summer Youth program from all the high schools. This year there are twenty four transition students participating in the school to work program. (Page 107-108) Title IV

OVR will continue to find partnership opportunities with DHR-WIOA and DDPC to continue outreach to transition students who may need supported employment. OVR will work with schools to offer work experiences to transition students while still in high school, ensuring a more hopeful employment path when reaching adulthood. OVR also developed and will continue to utilize a OJT agreement to assist an employer in associated costs of training a youth in a job. • Fifty percent (50%) of Title VI funds for SE services will be reserved for youth with the most significant disabilities who are between 14 and 24 years old. Services leading towards competitive integrated employment will include, but are not limited to, the following: job training (work-experience and OJT); job search and placement assistance; job coaching services; personal assistance services at the jobsite; assistive technology; modifications that may be required by VR clients at employment sites; transportation; and other employment-related
services. • Continue identifying individuals or organizations to provide job coaching and other supported employment services to VR clients with the most significant disabilities. • Continue to expand outreach to employers and try and develop more frequent and diverse opportunities for OJTs in the community. (Pages 118-119) Title IV

OVR has procedures in place to ensure the agency is actively involved in the transition of students with disabilities from school to work. In addition, VR values the need of designating staff to this effort and has designated a full time Transition Coordinator to provide leadership in the plans, policies, and procedures for developing and implementing best practices and facilitating the transition of students with disabilities to appropriate VR services. The designated staff will provide outreach and education to constituents, technical assistance to VR staff, research and implement pre—employment transition services and other transition services, and promote purposeful collaboration with schools and stakeholders. (Page 122) Title IV

Job placement and work-site training follows after an appropriate job match analysis is determined to ensure a successful employment outcome. Work-site training includes teaching the consumer how to perform the job tasks appropriately as required by the employer. Coaches also assist consumers with social interactions skills. Progress reports are provided weekly from the work-site supervisor to ensure that work performance is satisfactory. Follow-up (extended services) is also provided as part of the ongoing support services to ensure that employment is maintained. OJT Contracts: OVR provides intensive on-the-job and other training services to clients to the extent necessary to achieve stable job performance, or to determine on the basis of clear evidence this cannot be achieved. These short term contracts, which include trial work experiences, have been the backbone of the services package. This mode continues to account for most of the program’s successful employment outcomes. Most of these training contracts have been with private sector employers primarily due to the continued financial problems of the local government. As mentioned before the program would be in jeopardy if it hadn’t been for the training contracts. Collaboration: Cooperative efforts to find job placements and training opportunities for the SES consumers involve continued collaboration with agencies such as the WIA Employment Training Program and National Employment Program. The Supported Employment Program is a cost sharing arrangement, working in partnership with the WIA program to provide On-the- Job-Training with the support of job coaches. Transportation: Transportation service is provided on a temporary basis, in conjunction with the following agencies such as the Samoa Center for Independent Living Program (mobility training), American Samoa Assistive Technology Program, Territorial Agency on Aging, Hope House (Sisters of Nazareth) and especially the Department of Public Works: Dial-a-Ride . All of the above agencies have accessible vehicles. Family members and co-workers also provide consumers with transportation services at times. Entrepreneurship Program: Under the guidance of the OVR Management Team (OVRMT), this program continues to utilize the SES Marketing Specialists to conduct feasibility studies of ventures of interest to consumers to be assumed and operated as a business. Goals and Objectives of For Fiscal Year 2018 and Beyond: Goal 1: Continue to expand existing services and create new employment options that includes agency support and assistance of self employment opportunities for SES consumers. Objectives: 1. Increase the number of job contacts. 2. Increase the number of client referrals from VRC. 3. Continue to assist OVRMT with self-employment options. 4. Update and expand SES Job Bank.
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5. Increase the number of OJT contracts. (Page 126-127) Title IV

The agreement provides that OVR and Department of Education will cooperatively participate in planning, training, policy development, data collection, and resource identification and dissemination to improve transition planning for students with disabilities. Also, both parties agree to provide technical assistance to education agency personnel regarding transition planning services for students with IEPs. Transition planning will facilitate the development and completion of IEPs and transition plans in coordination with the IPE for VR services.

C. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES, INCLUDING FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES, OF EACH AGENCY, INCLUDING PROVISIONS FOR DETERMINING STATE LEAD AGENCIES AND QUALIFIED PERSONNEL RESPONSIBLE FOR TRANSITION SERVICES;

The agreement describes the role of the Department of Education-SPED to ensure that the agency engage students with disabilities and their families in transition planning when it is a mandated part of the IEP process. The agreement describes the role of OVR to include providing consultation and technical assistance to assist SPED in planning for the transition of students from school to post—school activities and ensure that VR staff participate in IEP meetings where transition planning occurs. The agreement also addresses the financial responsibilities of each party. (Page 91) Title IV

The need for the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation and the Department of Education’s Special Education Division to engage in mutual collaboration is underscored. Facilitation of a holistic rehabilitation process would be impossible without cooperation between these two service agencies. Improved probability for positive closures for disabled individuals passing through the educational system would not be possible if an effective transitioning pathway was not in place and facilitated only by intimate relationship between the two service providers. The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation has made it an absolute necessity to continuously invest in building quality relationships with the Department of Education’s Special Education Division. The quality of these relationships determines the successes of transitioning clients into employment placement, secondary education opportunities, and receiving positive closure. Accordingly aggressive efforts will continue to be energized to clearly delineate responsibilities, assess needs, and recognizing the interests of each of the transitioning students. Periodically, the “Memorandum of Understanding”, will be revised to reflect necessary changes in process funding and responsibilities. The Memorandum of Understanding defines the types of services to be provided and the time of service intervention. Other provisions include the importance for supported services to begin when the student reaches the age of 16 and when the student is in his/her Junior or Senior high school year. Early intervention allows for full immersion into support needs in integrated work and community activities during program hours before graduation. Based on this belief, the determination is made to include the student in the integrated work activity in the junior year, and guided by the student’s IEP developed jointly by all stakeholders. It is agreed that the students will be referred to the project by their respective high schools based on established criteria set forth by the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation and the Division of Special Education of the Department of Education. It was further decreed that the majority of the elective coursework will be executed during the junior year with focus on career
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<th>Planning and completing graduation requirements. (Page 104) Title IV</th>
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<th>Career Pathways</th>
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<th>Apprenticeship</th>
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<td>The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation and Adult Basic Education Literacy and Extended Learning (AELEL) will align with the Department of Human Resources, Title I workforce programs. Partners will understand industry training needs in the Territory and will increase promotion of training services available to employers through the Department of Human Resources, including Apprenticeship, OJT and soft skills training. (Page 18) Title 1</td>
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OVR is in the process of updating our policy and procedures manual to include procedures for the coordination of transition services and pre-employment transition services. We will revise our policy and procedures manual to carry out the following responsibilities for the provision of pre-employment transition services —

- Job exploration counseling
- Work-based learning experiences, which may include in-school or after school opportunities, experiences outside of the traditional school setting, and/or internships
- Counseling on opportunities for enrollment in comprehensive transition or postsecondary educational programs
- Workplace readiness training to develop social skills and independent living
- Instruction in self-advocacy;

Also to be included:

1. Attending individualized education program meetings for students with disabilities, when invited;
2. Working with the local workforce development boards, one-stop centers, and employers to develop work opportunities for students with disabilities, including internships, summer employment and other employment opportunities available throughout the school year, and apprenticeships;
3. Work with schools, including those carrying out activities under section 614(d)(1)(A)(i)(VIII) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1414(d)(1)(A)(i)(VIII)), to coordinate and ensure the provision of pre-employment transition services under this section; and
4. When invited, attend person-centered planning meetings for individuals receiving services under title XIX of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396 et seq.).
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Before a student completes their secondary education a vocational rehabilitation plan will have been developed within ninety days of eligibility determination and put into place prior to their graduation time. The MOU with DOE-Special Education and our policy manual will be revise to ensure that all IPEs are completed within the new statutory requirement of ninety (90) days after eligibility determination is made. (Pages 102-103) Title IV

(1) Attending individualized education program meetings for students with disabilities, when invited;

(2) Working with the local workforce development boards, one-stop centers, and employers to develop work opportunities for students with disabilities, including internships, summer employment and other employment opportunities available throughout the school year, and apprenticeships;

(3) Work with schools, including those carrying out activities under section 614(d)(1)(A)(i)(VIII) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1414(d)(1)(A)(i)(VIII)), to coordinate and ensure the provision of pre-employment transition services under this section; and

(4) When invited, attend person-centered planning meetings for individuals receiving services under title XIX of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396 et seq.).

Before a student completes their secondary education a vocational rehabilitation plan will have been developed within ninety days of eligibility determination and put into place prior to their graduation time. The MOU with DOE-Special Education and our policy manual will be revise to ensure that all IPEs are completed within the new statutory requirement of ninety (90) days after eligibility determination is made. (Page 105) Title IV

We are the primary resource for businesses seeking solutions to their disability-related issues and for information about employing individuals with disabilities. With our help, employers are beginning to recognize OVR’s role as a business consulting service that is able to help them meet the challenges of today’s work environment by providing information on staffing, financial incentives, accessibility and accommodation options, educational programs, and expertise on the Americans with Disabilities Act. In addition, employers are beginning to understand that VR can help them gain a critical business advantage by connecting them with a qualified and largely untapped labor force. The Business Partnership Network was developed with the purpose of raising awareness of the Vocational Rehabilitation program for both individuals with disabilities who may benefit from VR services and businesses that benefit from hiring individuals with disabilities. Business leaders interested in saving time and money while expanding their business opportunities and customer base are invited to join the Vocational Rehabilitation Business Partnership Network (BPN). The network is a joint effort of public and private employers and the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation. The BPN’s mission is to provide leadership in disability employment awareness. Its goals are to introduce businesses to the state’s most significant employment resource, highlight the advantages of hiring people with disabilities and dispelling the myths. Benefits of the Network include: • being recognized as a contributor in community workforce development • the opportunity to teach topics on fundamental life skills and job preparedness • providing input to shape in-demand training • networking with other businesses •
sharing best practices Members also receive: • Education about resources and financial incentives available to employers • Strategies for accommodating and retaining employees with disabilities • Training on disabilities in the workplace There has been recent collaboration and cross education between the American Samoa Department of Human Resources – Workforce Development Board (DHR–WDB) and the American Samoa Office of Vocational Rehabilitation. The purpose of the intensive cross education is to begin a strategic partnership of working together when it comes to strategic outreach to businesses. A deeper and more strategic partnering with DHR–WDB, should help our territory better work with businesses. Because both DHR–WDB and VR have access to a pool of candidates looking to enter the workforce, it is logical to coordinate the outreach efforts only after ensuring that the agencies are educated on the specific services available to assist not only the job seeker but also the employer. Employers grow weary of the many agencies working individually to gain opportunities for their clients. VR and the Workforce Development Board hope to streamline services collaborate and partner in outreach efforts across the state in order to efficiently use their time working with employers. Future plans for Business Partnership Network are to expand the capacity. Meetings have been scheduled for the Network to explore options for further building the outreach to businesses in an effort to expand employer engagement, provide disability–related information and resources (e.g., disability awareness training, business–to–business resources for beginning disability hiring initiatives, etc.), and develop work–based learning opportunities, internships and apprenticeships for individuals with disabilities. The goal is to make outreach more robust across the territory with potential hiring events, encourage disability hiring initiatives, job fairs, and other business services. This is not meant to duplicate efforts of other core WIOA partners, but to allow for resources within VR to assist in such critical collaboration, as well as provide expertise and resources for business in the area of disability. (Page 94-95) Title IV

Training on disabilities in the workplace There has been recent collaboration and cross education between the American Samoa Department of Human Resources – Workforce Development Board (DHR–WDB) and the American Samoa Office of Vocational Rehabilitation. The purpose of the intensive cross education is to begin a strategic partnership of working together when it comes to strategic outreach to businesses. A deeper and more strategic partnering with DHR–WDB, should help our territory better work with businesses. Because both DHR–WDB and VR have access to a pool of candidates looking to enter the workforce, it is logical to coordinate the outreach efforts only after ensuring that the agencies are educated on the specific services available to assist not only the job seeker but also the employer. Employers grow weary of the many agencies working individually to gain opportunities for their clients. VR and the Workforce Development Board hope to streamline services collaborate and partner in outreach efforts across the state in order to efficiently use their time working with employers. Future plans for Business Partnership Network are to expand the capacity. Meetings have been scheduled for the Network to explore options for further building the outreach to businesses in an effort to expand employer engagement, provide disability–related information and resources (e.g., disability awareness training, business–to–business resources for beginning disability hiring initiatives, etc.), and develop work–based learning opportunities, internships and apprenticeships for individuals with disabilities. The goal is to make outreach more robust across the territory with potential hiring events, encourage disability hiring initiatives, job fairs, and other business services. This is not meant to duplicate efforts of other core WIOA partners, but to allow for
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resources within VR to assist in such critical collaboration, as well as provide expertise and resources for business in the area of disability. (Page 95) Title IV

The OVR has a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in effect between OVR and Department of Human Resources (DHR) WIOA Workforce Board. The purpose of the MOU is to establish collaborative efforts regarding services and to develop a common understanding of each agency’s roles, policies, and procedures to better serve individuals with disabilities who may benefit from services from both programs. A goal for both the OVR and DHR-WIOA is to increase services to individuals with disabilities who are minorities. On a statewide level, OVR engages in hiring practices that promote diversity in the workforce. Openings within our office go through DHR to advertise on television, newspaper, radio and the bulletin board at DHR. OVR review the applications in anticipation of hiring individuals who represent the diverse groups of people we serve. Following an analysis of the results of OVR’s Statewide Comprehensive Needs Assessment for FY 2014 – 2015, OVR and our SRC worked together to prioritize goals for FY 2016 -2020 as follows: • Increase the number of individuals with significant or most significant disabilities. • Increase and improve outcomes for minorities and populations identified as underserved. • Develop and maintain effective working relationships with businesses directly and through expanding participation in forums to include local chambers of commerce and local workforce development partners. Support information sharing and talent pool exchanges. • Equip and train counselors and support staff to better identify the workforce needs of businesses and accurately meet them. • Increase consumer participation in on-the-job training services; develop internship and apprenticeship programs for consumer participation. • Coordinate efforts at the local level to improve work-related transportation options for consumers and awareness of existing options. • Increase knowledge and understanding of VR and its services through systematic outreach to groups such as referral sources, employers, consumers, advocates, school systems, and workforce development partners. • Increase client satisfaction with their counselor in terms of being easy to contact. • Increase the awareness of staff as to how assistive technology can increase placements in job settings, especially high demand careers. (Page 123) Title IV

Work Incentives and Benefits

Leadership of the Governor’s Office has expressed commitment in the ascertainment of local financial resources to increase the capacity of the program to provide services to eligible individuals who have been discounted from services due to the limited pool of funds provided by the Federal Government. The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation will strive to maximize opportunities that are made available under the Social Security initiative of “Ticket To Work”. Due to situational idiosyncrasies, the inherent benefits of the program have not been maximized. The numbers provided in the schedule are estimates. The assumption that is being made here is that no additional funds will be provided. However, in the event efforts to ascertain local match are successful, more clients will be served. It was reported in the early part of this section that the service package for each client is $1,896.55. This number excludes the impact of inflation. Category Title I or Title VI Estimated Funds Estimated Number to be Served Average Cost of Services Clients to be served Title I $533,416 341 $1,564 clients to be served Title VI $32,913 15 $2,194 Category Title I or Title VI Estimated Funds Estimated Number to be Served Average Cost of Services Basic Title I $533,416 341 $1,564 Supported Employment Services Title VI
Employer/Business

Provide an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the workforce development activities identified in (A) above.

Strengths and Challenges Core Partners collaboratively identified the strengths and weaknesses as part of the unified planning process and as part of the ongoing efforts to better align and integrate service delivery. The following summarizes key strengths of the Territory’s workforce system as identified by Core Partners. The Territory encourages innovation. Territory and local partners have recent experience in work-based learning due to National Emergency Grant (NEG). Partners continue to work collaboratively and explore opportunities for service alignment. The Territory is pursuing innovation in providing services to individuals with disabilities. The Territory is planning to provide assistance on employer engagement, work-based learning, and best practices models on serving special target populations. (Page 16) Title IV

The network is a joint effort of public and private employers and the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation. The BPN’s mission is to provide leadership in disability employment awareness. Its goals are to introduce businesses to the state’s most significant employment resource, highlight the advantages of hiring people with disabilities and dispelling the myths. Benefits of the Network include: • being recognized as a contributor in community workforce development • the opportunity to teach topics on fundamental life skills and job preparedness • providing input to shape in—demand training • networking with other businesses • sharing best practices Members also receive: • Education about resources and financial incentives available to employers • Strategies for accommodating and retaining employees with disabilities • Training on disabilities in the workplace There has been recent collaboration and cross education between the American Samoa Department of Human Resources — Workforce Development Board (DHR—WDB) and the American Samoa Office of Vocational Rehabilitation. The purpose of the intensive cross education is to begin a strategic partnership of working together when it comes to strategic outreach to businesses. A deeper and more strategic partnering with DHR—WDB, should help our territory better work with businesses. Because both DHR—WDB and VR have access to a pool of candidates looking to enter the workforce, it is logical to coordinate the outreach efforts only after ensuring that the agencies are educated on the specific services available to assist not only the job seeker but also the employer. Employers grow weary of the many agencies working individually to gain opportunities for their clients. VR and the Workforce Development Board hope to streamline services collaborate and partner in outreach efforts across the state in order to efficiently use their time working with employers. Future plans for Business Partnership Network are to expand the capacity. Meetings have been scheduled for the Network to explore options for further building the outreach to businesses in an effort to expand employer engagement, provide disability—related information and resources (e.g., disability awareness training, business—to—business resources for beginning disability hiring initiatives, etc.), and develop work—based learning opportunities, internships and apprenticeships for individuals with disabilities. The goal is to make outreach more robust across the territory with potential hiring events, encourage disability hiring initiatives, job fairs, and
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other business services. This is not meant to duplicate efforts of other core WIOA partners, but to allow for resources within VR to assist in such critical collaboration, as well as provide expertise and resources for business in the area of disability. (Page 94-95) Title IV

Ensure VR staff is trained, highly knowledgeable, and are providing information on services across WIOA core programs, and other appropriate programs that may assist individuals with disabilities achieve their employment outcome. New staff will participate in web-based and classroom-based training throughout, at minimum, the first year of employment. Priority 1.5: Work in partnership with WIOA core programs to strategically enhance employer engagement and work-based learning opportunities for individuals with disabilities. This includes expanding VR employer engagement to develop appropriate disability-related information and resources (e.g., disability awareness training, business-to-business resources for beginning disability hiring initiatives, etc.) for employers. Development of a strategic plan will be developed with the installation of the integrated web base software of all core partners. GOAL 2: Develop program initiatives and training that adequately support VR staff and community rehabilitation providers in the provision of quality services. Priority 2.1: Review trends in service provision and employment outcomes on a quarterly basis and continue to meet at least quarterly with other service providers to review strengthen and identify areas of improvement. Priority 2.2: Continue development of VR staff through professional development and training, that can be shared across WIOA core programs to ensure consistency in information and increased knowledge about VR service delivery. VR will introduce new training that will increase focus on counseling and guidance. (Page 110) Title IV

The system will also ensure appropriate system integration and data—sharing to align resources, collect common consumer information, increase efficiencies, track effectiveness of the program, and ultimately improve the consumer’s experience in VR in meeting his/her employment goal. Priority 2.3: Develop processes and procedures to ensure proper and consistent referrals to and from VR/SES and WIOA core programs (and other appropriate programs) in order to maximize the service options and service delivery for individuals with disabilities. Written procedures will be drafted in FFY 2016. Priority 2.4: Ensure VR/SES staff is trained, highly knowledgeable, and are providing information on services across WIOA core programs, and other appropriate programs that may assist individuals with disabilities achieve their employment outcome. New staff will participate in web—based and classroom—based training throughout, at minimum, the first year of employment. Priority 2.5: Work in partnership with WIOA core programs to strategically enhance employer engagement and work—based learning opportunities for individuals with disabilities. This includes expanding VR/SES employer engagement to develop appropriate disability—related information and resources (e.g., disability awareness training, business—to—business resources for beginning disability hiring initiatives, etc.) for employers. Development of a strategic plan will begin in FFY 2016 to outline collaborative approaches to enhance employer engagement. (Page 112) Title IV

Data Collection

The agreement provides that OVR and Department of Education will cooperatively participate in planning, training, policy development, data collection, and resource identification and dissemination to improve transition planning for students with disabilities. Also, both parties
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agree to provide technical assistance to education agency personnel regarding transition planning services for students with IEPs. Transition planning will facilitate the development and completion of IEPs and transition plans in coordination with the IPE for VR services. (Page 91 Title IV

The Pacific Jurisdiction members propose to build off existing technology to enhance connectivity across programs and services both locally and among regional Pacific Jurisdiction workforce development partners. Modifications will include the changes necessary to implement the common performance accountability system and reporting on common performance indicators. The web-based system will be expanded regionally to provide a labor exchange and WIOA case management system for the neighboring Pacific islands. This will help address the challenges resulting from continued migration of long-term unemployed individuals or dislocated workers, many with significant barriers to employment. 3. With regard to coordination with education officials, the Council recommends that OVR add language to define ASDOE-Division of Special Education’s role in providing Pre-Employment Transition Services. OVR Response: ASDOE-Division of Special Education’s role in providing Pre-Employment Transition Services is defined in the revised memorandum of understanding (MOU) between OVR, as referenced in the Coordination with Education Officials section of the modified VR plan. 4. It is widely recognized in business and industry that soft skills are important 21st Century skills and are part of workplace readiness. The SRC commends OVR develop and implement a Soft Skills program. (Page 86) Title III

511

No disability specific information found regarding this element.

Equal Opportunity and Nondiscrimination: Section 188

Describe how the one-stop delivery system (including one-stop center operators and the one-stop delivery system partners), will comply with section 188 of WIOA (if applicable) and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) with regard to the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs, services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities. This also must include a description of compliance through providing staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities. Describe the State’s one-stop center certification policy, particularly the accessibility criteria.

The Territory is committed to ensuring both programmatic and physical accessibility to the One-Stop delivery system by maintaining compliance with WIOA Section 188, the American Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and all other applicable statutory and regulatory requirements. Compliance monitoring is conducted at the local level to make certain that the One-stop services must be provided “on demand” and in real “real time” in the physical One-stop Center location or via Technology consistent with the direct linkage requirement defined in WIOA. It is imperative that if someone with a disability visits the One-Stop Center and requires a service, that the staff or Case Worker has an understanding of how to accommodate the needs of the customer. The Territory will use the best practices from the Disability Employment Initiative as
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a part of the WIOA implementation and case manager training. When appropriate, the Territory will also consult with staff from other partner agencies that have expertise in using or training in the area of reasonable accommodation or assistive technology. The WIOA Title I programs staff have been coordinating these training with the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Case Managers and their staff. The One-Stop Center /Workforce Center must meet specific physical and programmatic accessibility criteria prescribed the ASWIB. (Page 46) Title I

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<td>Required one-stop partners: In addition to the core programs, the following partner programs are required to provide access through the one-stops: Career and Technical Education (Perkins), Community Services Block Grant, Indian and Native American programs, HUD Employment and Training programs, Job Corps, Local Veterans’ Employment Representatives and Disabled Veterans’ Outreach Program, National Farmworker Jobs program, Senior Community Service Employment program, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) (unless the Governor determines TANF will not be a required partner), Trade Adjustment Assistance programs, Unemployment Compensation programs, and YouthBuild.</td>
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Workforce development, education activities in the Territory have been transforming for some time. This transformation will accelerate as WIOA is fully implemented across partner programs. (Page 15) Title I

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<td>There are no community rehabilitation providers (CRP) in the territory to provide supported employment and extended services. This creates challenges in providing for a comprehensive support system which are required for a successful program. Discussions with public agencies and organizations to provide and/or fund supported employment and extended services are ongoing. OVR will coordinate with other State agencies such as the Department of Human Resources-Workforce Board, Office of Developmental Disabilities Planning Council, and Office of Mental Health Services, and other entities to provide supported employment services and extended employment services. OVR will continue to communicate and collaborate with these agencies to provide quality supported employment services and provide referrals and information regarding mutual consumers. OVR will provide up-to-date information and training to State agencies and other entities to ensure the provision of supported employment services and extended services are provided to individuals with the most significant disabilities including youths with the most significant disabilities. OVR has established representation with and is actively involve with the Department of Youth and Women’s activities for youth all year round with the participation of several VR consumers in learning different skills such as silk screen printing, sewing, flower arrangement, basic computer skills, to name a few of the activities provided. This activity assist our clients’ in deciding their OVR employment goal. OVR/SES will provide this needed service in our commitment to serving people with the most significant disabilities including youth with the most significant disabilities by utilizing SES and Title I funds to serve this population. OVR primarily provides supported employment services to individuals with developmental disabilities and individuals with mental health disabilities, primarily for supported employment job coaching. Of these two groups, individuals with</td>
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American Samoa (AS) WIOA Matrix

developmental disabilities represent the vast majority of supported employment outcomes. (Page 92) Title IV

OVR actively collaborates with the DHSS - Developmental Disabilities Planning Council, Department of Public Health — Division of Mental Health and Office of Medicare, but as OVR is not part of these agencies, we do not yet have a formalized agreement with any of these agencies; we continue to work towards this goal. OVR is still negotiating an agreement with the Office of Medicare in order to formalize collaboration, coordination of services, and mutual understanding of scope and role of Medicare/Medicaid in promoting success for individuals who require long-term employment supports and provide options for vocational services under an Order of Selection scenario. OVR continue to negotiate an agreement with the Department of Human and Social Services division of Developmental Disabilities Planning Council in order to formalize prioritization for securing long-term supports for employed DD individuals and DDPC-eligible individuals, and for detailing means for collaboration, coordination of services, and mutual understanding of scope and role of each agency in promoting success for individuals who require long-term employment supports. OVR continues to negotiate an agreement with the Department of Public Health - Division of Mental Health in order to formalize collaboration, coordination of services, and mutual understanding of scope and role of each agency in promoting success for individuals who require long-term employment supports. (Page 97) Title IV

Negotiates are on going to formalize an agreement with the Department of Public Health - Division of Mental Health in order to formalize collaboration, coordination of services, and mutual understanding of scope and role of each agency in promoting success for individuals who require long-term employment supports. Our counselors participates in staffing cases with Public Health-Mental Health Division, mental health division refers their cases to VR once their client is considered ready to enter back into and becoming a participating member of society. (Page 97) Title IV

As part of OVR comprehensive statewide needs assessment of 2015. Identify groups that may be under-served by vocational rehabilitation programs, individuals with mental health disabilities were identified as an underserved group by participants in all three focus groups: • Psychiatric disabilities may be underserved • Homeless people with psychiatric disabilities need mental health care. • Mental health is becoming a big issue in the schools. • People with mental health disabilities, this is a difficult population to place. The Rehabilitation Counselors and other staff at ASOVR, as well as individuals from the community indicated that there is a growing demand for knowledge and training regarding service provision to people with significant mental health impairments. These consumers are growing in number and provide the greatest challenge to ASOVR staff and to other programs in the community with respect to achieving sustained success on the job. ASOVR counselors indicated that they need further training to be effective in working with this population, and there is a need for more community programs that serve these individuals. (Page 106) Title IV
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No disability specific information found regarding this element

*All enclosed information is cited directly from final state plan as of June 30, 2019

Find your local state plans here:

[https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osers/rsa/wioa/state-plans/index.html](https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osers/rsa/wioa/state-plans/index.html)