**Colorado (CO) WIOA Matrix**

### Employment First State Leadership Mentoring Program (EFSLMP)

Colorado received the Employment First State Leadership Mentoring Program (EFSLMP), awarded by the United States Department of Labor and Employment’s Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP). This grant provided mentoring, intensive technical assistance and training from a national pool of subject matter experts and peer mentors to core states as they transformed existing policies, service delivery systems, and reimbursement structures to reflect an Employment First approach; facilitated virtual training and knowledge translation on effective practices; facilitated dialogue on shared experiences related to effectuating Employment First policies and practice; linked participating states with Federal initiatives focused on promoting state-level systems-change conducive to Employment First objectives; and evaluated the impacts of the investments in state Employment First systems change efforts over time to identify common challenges faced by State governments; and validated innovative strategies and effective practices that lead to the successful implementation of Employment First objectives.

(Page 173) Title I

Career Pathways will fall short of meeting the talent needs in Colorado if they are not available to all potential employees, including individuals with disabilities. Colorado has enhanced its focus on mobilizing the untapped talent of individuals with disabilities by enacting state legislation regarding the concept of Employment First. Employment First is based upon the premise that all people, including people with the most significant disabilities, are capable of full participation in employment and community life. It includes:

- The prioritization of employment as the first and preferred outcome for all working-age persons with disabilities, regardless of level of disability;

- A state-level systems change framework, resulting in increased successful employment outcomes for people with disabilities;

- The alignment of employment-related policies, service delivery practices, and service funding structures between state agencies; and

- Promoting employment as defined by WorkForce Innovation and Opportunity Act language describing Competitive Integrated Employment (employment within businesses typically found in the community with regular compensation, the same opportunities for advancement and interaction with nondisabled coworkers to the same extent as other employees in comparable positions interact, i.e., a fully integrated workplace). (Page 66) Title I
In 2017, the Employment First Advisory Partnership (EFAP) was convened, representing a multi-disciplinary state team with a focus on implementing the Employment First approach with fidelity through the alignment of policies, coordination of resources, and updating of service delivery models to facilitate increased integrated employment outcomes for people with disabilities, including people with the most significant disabilities. A strategic plan was released by the partnership that includes recommendations for actions that the state and local communities can take to make Employment First a reality throughout Colorado. As state and local plans and programs are developed, these concepts should be taken into consideration in order to design the best workforce system possible that works for all Coloradans.

Recommendations of EFAP include:

- Produce data for all applicable EFAP agency partners that allow measurement of Colorado’s progress toward compliance with federal law requiring people with disabilities receive state-funded services in integrated settings;

- Implement department-wide Employment First policies and practices;

- Implement a training plan for state-contracted service providers on evidence-based practice to expand employment outcomes, in conjunction with employer-lead initiatives and networks;

- Implement a communication plan with messaging describing available services that support the achievement of successful employment outcomes for people with disabilities, including those with the most significant disabilities, which targets employers, educators, people with disabilities and their families;

- Create an Office of Employment First to coordinate cross-departmental efforts to implement Employment First policies, regulations, and practices;

- Develop appropriate funding structures that will increase employment service and support capacity for people with disabilities within Colorado to successfully align service outcomes with the definition of Competitive Integrated Employment within the Workforce Innovation and

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In 2016, Senate Bill 16-077 was passed creating an Employment First Advisory Partnership (EFAP), which identified partner agencies of the Colorado Departments of: Labor and Employment (CDLE), Health Care Policy and Financing (HCPF), Education (CDE), Human Services (CDHS), and Higher Education (CDHE), and tasked the State Rehabilitation Council with convening and leading the work of the partnership, which was to make recommendations to increase opportunities for competitive integrated employment for persons with disabilities. The EFAP’s preliminary report and recommendations were presented to members of the General Assembly in January of 2018. These recommendations will drive change within each agency individually, but also facilitate collaboration to ensure a comprehensive approach to increasing the opportunities for competitive integrated employment for individuals with disabilities.

Recommendations of EFAP include:

- Produce data for all applicable EFAP agency partners that allow measurement of Colorado’s progress toward compliance with federal law requiring people with disabilities receive state-funded services in integrated settings;

- Implement department-wide Employment First policies and practices;

- Implement a training plan for state-contracted service providers on evidence-based practice to expand employment outcomes, in conjunction with employer-lead initiatives and networks;

- Implement a communication plan with messaging describing available services that support the achievement of successful employment outcomes for people with disabilities, including those with the most significant disabilities, which targets employers, educators, people with disabilities and their families;

- Create an Office of Employment First to coordinate cross-departmental efforts to implement Employment First policies, regulations, and practices;

- Develop appropriate funding structures that will increase employment service and support capacity for people with disabilities within Colorado to successfully align service outcomes with the definition of Competitive Integrated Employment within the Workforce Innovation and
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Opportunity Act;

• Design and coordinate locally-based pilot projects to demonstrate the expansion of employment outcomes for people with disabilities through best-practice employment services and supports implementation; and

• Become a “model employer” for Colorado citizens with disabilities.

Each of the recommendations assigns primary responsibility to particular agencies within the partnership. Full implementation will require ongoing collaboration between all partners, as well as other key stakeholders, with the ultimate goal of improving competitive integrated employment for individuals with disabilities. (Page 170) Title I

In 2016, Senate Bill 16-077 was passed creating an Employment First Advisory Partnership (EFAP), which identified partner agencies of Colorado Department of Labor and Employment (CDLE), Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financing (HCPF), Colorado Department of Education (CDE), Colorado Department of Human Services (CDHS), and Colorado Department of Higher Education (CDHE), and tasked the partnership with making recommendations to increase opportunities for competitive integrated employment for persons with disabilities. While the work of EFAP is not limited to youth with the most significant disabilities, if implemented, several recommendations ask partner agencies to identify strategies to increase resources for extended services and expand supported employment opportunities for this population. The EFAP’s preliminary report and recommendations were presented to members of the General Assembly in January of 2018. These recommendations include actions such as implementing Department-wide Employment First practices and policies; implementing training for service providers on evidence-based practices to expand employment outcomes; and developing appropriate funding structures that will increase employment service and support capacity for people with disabilities within Colorado to align outcomes with the definition of competitive integrated employment within WIOA. DVR, and other partner agencies, are actively engaged in beginning the work to implement the recommendations made by EFAP. (Page 200) Title IV

Customized Employment

SRC Recommendation 2 - All DVR staff will receive ongoing training in order to provide effective and high-quality services to their consumers. An inter-disciplinary approach may be employed where counselors and others with expertise work with staff to build skills. Training areas may include development of excellent customer service skills for office staff, counseling and guidance, specific disability trainings with resources available, work incentive training, assessment, cultural competence, or job development. Training may also include best practices for implementation of the key elements of WIOA, including customized employment, using “discovery” as part of the assessment process, or person-centered planning practices.

SRC Recommendation 3 - Vendors working with Colorado DVR shall receive training so that they will have a clear understanding of the rehabilitation process and will be effective and qualified to work with counselors and their consumers for the consumers’ success. Training
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topics should include specifics on the rehabilitation process, increased cultural competence, clear understanding of disability issues, supported employment, use of interpreter and translation services, and more. Training may also include best practices for implementation of the key elements of WIOA, including customized employment, using “discovery” as part of the assessment process, or person-centered planning practices. Job coaches must be trained in order to provide effective services. (Pages 162-163) Title IV

Braiding/Blending Resources

DVR Goal 3 Strategies:

• Implement integrated professional development for DVR staff with WIOA partner programs to elevate internal expertise and equip them with the tools necessary to operate a comprehensive, holistic approach to talent development for business and industry. Put particular emphasis on leveraging the synergies resulting from the merger of DVR and CDLE.

• Develop processes to ensure a statewide cadre of qualified vendors able to meet the requirements of working with disability-related issues.

• Implement the Colorado LEAN process to assure a customer-focused, continuous improvement culture of operational excellence.

Strategy 1: Implement integrated professional development for DVR staff with WIOA partner programs to elevate internal expertise and equip them with the tools necessary to operate a comprehensive, holistic approach to talent development for business and industry, putting particular emphasis on leveraging the synergies resulting from the merger of DVR and CDLE.

Progress: Since the implementation of WIOA, DVR has been closely engaged with WIOA partner programs to ensure cross-education across partners and ensure a comprehensive approach to services for all participants. DVR is represented on the Job Seeker Services Alignment team, which seeks to create alignment of process, procedures, forms, and data collection to the extent possible across all programs, in addition to promoting cross-education among partners to occur. These professional development opportunities occur at the state, regional, and local level to ensure consistent information and support local partnership. DVR’s Business Outreach Specialists are members of CDLE’s broader Business Services Team, and serve as a conduit to bring real-time Labor Market Information (LMI) back to their local teams. Further, DVR is receiving intensive technical assistance from the Job Development Vocational Rehabilitation Technical Assistance Center, with the goal of infusing LMI into the comprehensive assessment process to establish employment goals that tie into available LMI, leading to higher wages and increased self-sufficiency of clients. Additional training will also equip supervisors to support—through clinical supervision and coaching—counselors in their efforts to incorporate LMI more directly when counseling clients. (Page 208) Title IV

Colorado’s SCSEP will take advantage of the unique resources available through the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment, and its statewide network of Workforce Centers, by
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Utilizing WFC staff to assist in creating opportunities for participants of SCSEP. In addition to providing more opportunities to place participants, Colorado has a cadre of community recruiters who regularly send applicants to SCSEP host agency sites, leveraging the efforts of SCSEP project directors. This gives SCSEP project directors’ unique recruitment opportunities in their local communities. Project directors are called upon to speak to local business leaders as part of the larger public/private partnership. Project directors will assist the local WFC to implement the “Protocol for Older Workers.” Colorado will continue to send SCSEP participants to staff the WFC locations and collaborate with other WFC partners such as Veteran Services, Wagner-Peyser, and Vocational Rehabilitation to maximize participant referrals. (Page 255-256) Title I

### DEI/Disability Resource Coordinators

Colorado applied for and received a $2.25 million Disability Employment Initiative grant from USDOL that is being implemented during 2018 and will provide increased access to one-stop career and training services. WIOA Title I funds will be leveraged with grant funds to ensure increased training and employment opportunities for the disabled population. (Page 116) Title I

In addition, Colorado served as a lead state in the national Disability Navigator initiative between 2002 and 2009, providing technical assistance to other states and participating in the national evaluation process. During that time, the one-stop system partnered with Assistive Technology Partners, who worked with staff on the purchase of assistive technology and trained staff in its use. (Page 116) Title I

### Financial Literacy/Economic Advancement

Additionally, Ability Connection Colorado (ACCO) operates the Colorado Work Incentive Planning and Assistance (WIPA) program and the Colorado Benefit Offset National Demonstration Project (BOND). The WIPA program receives funding from Social Security to provide Social Security Disability Income (SSDI) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) beneficiaries with no-cost access to work incentives planning and assistance. BOND is a project created to help SSDI beneficiaries return to work through the use of a benefit offset. ACCO is the only nonprofit approved to provide benefit counseling services through the Social Security Administration Program. DVR collaborates extensively with ACCO to implement both the WIPA and BOND programs. DVR partners with ACCO to contractually support the WIPA program’s ongoing and statewide availability of workforce incentive and benefits counseling. DVR and ACCO recently partnered in the BOND project in Colorado and Wyoming, through which DVR provided work incentives counseling, service coordination, and information and referral services to SSDI beneficiaries who are randomly selected and enrolled into BOND. (Page 177) Title IV

### School to Work Transition

Pre-employment transition services provided to students with disabilities, including: job exploration and counseling, work-based learning experiences, counseling on opportunities for enrollment in comprehensive transition or postsecondary educational programs at institutions of higher education, workplace readiness training to develop social skills and independent living.
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and instruction in self-advocacy. (Page 52) Title I

The designated State unit’s plans, policies, and procedures for coordination with education officials to facilitate the transition of students with disabilities from school to the receipt of VR services, including pre-employment transition services, as well as procedures for the timely development and approval of individualized plans for employment for the students.

Since 1985, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) has partnered with the Colorado Department of Education (CDE), and with local school districts and Boards of Cooperative Education (BOCES), in supporting a comprehensive transition planning and service delivery process for youth with disabilities. DVR has organized a Youth Services and Transition Unit within Administration. The Unit is responsible for assuring the provision of high-quality vocational rehabilitation services to Colorado’s youth with disabilities.

Colorado is exploring with education partners how to best provide students with pre-employment transition services and skills training when appropriate, in order to make a positive contribution to the IEP outcome. DVR is finalizing updates to our interagency agreement to include: the provision of services under the new direction identified within WIOA; the redefinition of the transition responsibilities of DVR and of education; assurance of access to services for youth; and ongoing support of effective and efficient working relationships between partners. (Page 172) Title IV

DVR continues to monitor and implement the state-level agreement between DVR and CDE. This agreement promotes flexible and collaborative planning and service delivery among DVR, local education agencies, local school districts, and other state and community agencies for youth who are transitioning from school to work and/or post-school activities which lead to employment. The agreement promotes accessible, timely and uniform vocational rehabilitation services for all Colorado students who have a disability and require vocational rehabilitation services. Additionally, the agreement encourages education agencies to develop, implement and promote pre-vocational services and career exploration for students with disabilities prior to their referral to DVR for services. Finally, the agreement assures that vocational rehabilitation services complement the transition services provided by education agencies and that the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) for students who are eligible for vocational rehabilitation services will be developed and approved before these students leave the school setting (or if Colorado DVR is operating under an order of selection, before each eligible student able to be served under the order leaves the school setting). The key tenets of the agreement have been developed into a desktop guide, updated annually and entitled the “CDE/DVR Cooperative Services Handbook for Youth in Transition.” Thousands of these handbooks are distributed each year to youth, parents, educators, rehabilitation counselors, and community-based agency providers. Currently, DVR is partnering with CDE to update the interagency agreement and the accompanying handbook. The update will incorporate changes within WIOA and vocational rehabilitation regulation, upon their finalization. Once complete, the interagency agreement will guide local interagency operating procedures. (Pages 173-174) Title IV

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DVR maintains membership on the Colorado State Youth Council (SYC), which is a subcommittee of the Colorado Workforce Development Council. One goal of the SYC is to identify and support existing strategies, practices and projects that demonstrate success, and to augment and introduce other successful practices throughout Colorado. Each year, local communities are invited to submit local promising practices to the SYC that effectively address the needs of youth who are transitioning into adulthood. Submissions are scored against the National Center on Workforce and Disability’s (NCSD) evidence-based Design Guideposts for Success. These are: school preparation; youth development and leadership; career preparation; connecting activities; and family involvement and supports. (Page 181-182) Title IV

Strategy - During FFY 2015, Colorado’s team of DVR and Department of Education Transition Specialists continued their work to infuse transition best practices into local school districts through the provision of onsite training, technical assistance and facilitation regarding the provision of transition services to youth and students with disabilities, including those with the most significant disabilities. Additionally, in FFY 2015 Colorado developed a “Transition Community of Practice.” DVR is a key player in this Community, along with state-level partners from the Office of Behavioral Health and the Office of Community Living. A goal of this group is to assure that all youth, including youth with most significant disabilities, receive excellent transition services that lead to desired post-school outcomes. DVR will continue this strategy. (Page 211) Title IV

Direct utilization of Title I (Vocational Rehabilitation Services) and Title VI-B (Supported Employment Services) case service funds facilitate the counselor’s ability to provide supported employment services for individuals with the most significant disabilities. The resources available through the Title VI-B program were used only to provide supplemental evaluations and supported employment services, as identified in the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE), to assist eligible individuals with the most significant disabilities to obtain and secure competitive integrated employment. (Page 212) Title IV

2. The sub-grantee will continue to base community service job training assignments on the participant’s assessments and the Individual Employment Plan (IEP). Using these tools will help the sub-grantee place the participant in a community assignment the not only interests them, but is appropriate for the participant’s level of skill, previous training, and any physical or mental obstacles that the participant may have. Being in the right assignment will help the participant learn the skills or hone the skills they have to find unsubsidized work that is both meaningful work and work the participant will enjoy.

3. The sub-grantee will continue to monitor and work with the participant after they have found unsubsidized employment to ensure that the participant has the tools and encouragement they need to be successful in their new job. This follow up may include more skills training or
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coaching. This training will be done through local resources that are at no cost or very little cost to the participant or the SCSEP program. The primary purpose is to enhance the participant’s ability to succeed at their new job. (Page 263) Title IV

Career Pathways

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) leads the way by providing the full range of rehabilitation services, including one-on-one vocational guidance and counseling, necessary to understand and mitigate the ways a disability impedes the capacity to show and apply talent at work. In Fiscal Year 2016, DVR assisted 2,294 Coloradans with disabilities to secure, retain or regain employment. These workers earned an average of $12.66 an hour working 29.14 hours a week on average. DVR further works with employers and community partners to increase opportunities for employment, career advancement and economic gain for eligible Coloradans with disabilities. In addition to the work of DVR, all Workforce Centers are compliant with Section 188 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, ensuring physical and programmatic access to all services and benefits available throughout the workforce development system. Ensuring Physical and programmatic accessibility is also a component of the state’s certification policy for one-stop centers, which will help to further ensure that all customers can access services in all parts of the state. (Page 39) Title I

In addition, Colorado will incorporate evaluation strategies into all of its programs and initiatives, and develop additional outcome measures, such as wage progression, to help determine the effectiveness of strategies such as sectors and career pathways.

For Adult Education and Family Literacy programs, data about the progress of participants exiting the adult education and family literacy program into post-secondary education and training and employment will be analyzed annually as part of the program annual performance report process and the grant continuation application process. Data about advancement will be used by CDE’s Office of Adult Education Initiatives (AEI) in development of targeted technical assistance and promotion of best practices. Overall state assessment of participants’ post-program success will be included in the statewide annual performance report submitted to the Department of Education Office of Career Technical and Adult Education. (Page 111) Title I

GOALS 4 - Build and strengthen stakeholder relationships to increase employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities

Strategies:

1. Expand the involvement of DVR staff in regionally-focused sector partnerships to champion career pathways within business and industry for individuals with disabilities.

2. Align business outreach efforts with partner agencies to leverage the identification of employment opportunities and expand awareness of disability employment competency within the business sector.

3. Explore the provision of technical assistance to businesses that are seeking to employ
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individuals with disabilities and as feasible, develop policies and processes to provide these services. (Page 196) Title IV

DVR Goal 4 Strategies:

Strategy 1: Expand the involvement of DVR staff in regionally-focused sector partnerships to champion career pathways within business and industry for individuals with disabilities. (Page 208) Title IV

1. In grant years 2018 and 2019 DOL has indicated that these years will be used to establish a baseline for the new performance measure. During this time frame the grantee will continue to encourage the sub-grantee to provide participants with the training they will need for unsubsidized employee. This training may include skills training, job seeking and interviewing skills, and the skills needed to obtain and keep meaningful unsubsidized work. Once the baseline has been established, then the grantee with the help of the sub-grantee can look at what will need to change, if anything in order for us to meet the goals that have been established by DOL.

2. The sub-grantee will continue to base community service job training assignments on the participant’s assessments and the Individual Employment Plan (IEP). Using these tools will help the sub-grantee place the participant in a community assignment that not only interests them, but is appropriate for the participant’s level of skill, previous training, and any physical or mental obstacles that the participant may have. Being in the right assignment will help the participant learn the skills or hone the skills they have to find unsubsidized work that is both meaningful work and work the participant will enjoy. (Page 263) Title IV

**Apprenticeship**

No disability specific information found regarding this element.

**Work Incentives and Benefits**

DVR recently completed a seven year partnership with Abt Associates and Ability Connection Colorado (formerly known as CP of Colorado) implementing the Benefit Offset National Demonstration (BOND) project in Colorado and Wyoming. Funded by the Social Security Administration (SSA), BOND operated in ten different locations across the United States. Using a rigorous study design, the intent of the BOND project was to explore and evaluate the effectiveness of a variety of service levels and work incentives that, when offered to Social Security Disability Income (SSDI) beneficiaries, result in the beneficiaries obtaining and maintaining successful employment outcomes.

Within the BOND Project, DVR provided work incentive counseling, service coordination, and information and referral services to SSDI beneficiaries who have been randomly selected and enrolled in the Project. When these beneficiaries return to work, DVR assured that the beneficiary receives financial incentives not available to other SSDI beneficiaries. DVR’s participation in the Project enabled DVR to be on the cutting edge of new approaches and strategies for service delivery that are intended to improve the effectiveness of services provided to SSDI beneficiaries supporting a return to work and a better quality of life for the beneficiaries.
Additionally, ACCO operates the Colorado Work Incentive Planning and Assistance (WIPA) program and the Colorado Benefit Offset National Demonstration Project (BOND). The WIPA program receives funding from Social Security to provide Social Security Disability Income (SSDI) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) beneficiaries with no-cost access to work incentives planning and assistance. (Page 177) Title IV

Additionally, as part of DVR’s performance management process, all staff consider areas of needed development in collaboration with their supervisors. DVR began using CDLE’s performance management process in April 2016, which requires agreement to a formal professional growth and development plan, enhancing DVR’s current practices. In particular, supervisors will be asked to give special consideration to training needs of their staff related to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Americans with Disabilities Act, the Individual’s with Disabilities Education Act, the Assistive Technology Act and Social Security work incentive programs, including programs under the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act of 1999, facilitating informed choice, and providing services to culturally diverse populations. (Page 188) Title IV

### Employer/Business

The continued development of sector partnerships and career pathways allows Coloradans to understand the full potential of their participation in workforce activities. Non-traditional training such as work and learn programs including OJTs and apprenticeships offer a wide selection of training opportunities, at the same time enabling local areas to customize training to fit the needs of regional industry demands. This flexibility in training options provides the state with the opportunity to assist individuals in obtaining the technical skills demanded by employers as outlined above. At the state level, the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) has been updated pursuant to WIOA Sections 122 and 134. This list ensures that Coloradans are able to make informed decisions on training providers and programs based on accurate data including completion and placement rates, labor market information, and wage expectations. (Page 48) Title I

Through state law, the Colorado Workforce Development Council (CWDC) added an Education Liaison and a Workforce Liaison in 2016, who will work together to ensure that K-12, community colleges, CTE programs, community-based training providers, and four-year institutions are plugged into career pathways and understand how to use established pathways as a resource for students. The Workforce Liaison position is specifically established to work with all community-based training providers, including entities on the Eligible Training Provider List. Opportunities will be extended to these partners to engage in initiatives and activities to create alignment with the needs of industry as identified through sector partnerships. (Page 87) Title I

Outreach, technical assistance and education to employers were identified as areas of considerable need. Most commonly identified were the need, through education, to change employer attitudes about disability and the need to educate employers about the value of hiring individuals with disabilities. Also identified frequently was the need to educate employers about
### Data Collection

Vocational Rehabilitation is still within the baseline period established by the US Department of Education for all performance accountability measures. DVR continues to work with the vendor of its electronic case management system and other WIOA partners to ensure mechanisms for collecting and reporting performance accountability measures under section 116 of WIOA are in place timely. DVR has begun to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the six WIOA-required performance measures, and continues to consider findings from our long-standing Standards and Indicators to analyze available data of performance. DVR leadership routinely review available data to identify opportunities for improvement and consider strategies to ensure strong performance. As data associated with the common performance measures has become available, these data are considered to provide a more comprehensive picture of DVR’s current performance. (Page 203) Title IV

Over the past several years, DVR has developed a comprehensive approach to using data to drive the management of the VR program. DVR has increased its capacity to identify, gather, and analyze critical data to improve services and outcomes for clients, while ensuring the accountability and credibility of VR to all stakeholders. DVR intends to continue this approach of metrics driven leadership to further enhance performance management, quality assurance, and outcomes. (Page 205) Title IV

DVR does not currently have data available to report on the performance accountability indicators under section 116 of WIOA. The new performance measures will require DVR to gather and report information in a manner which significantly differs from prior reporting on historic standards and indicators. These differences make it difficult to provide a meaningful report of past performance.

DVR continues to work with the vendor of its electronic case management system and other WIOA partners to ensure mechanisms for collecting and reporting performance accountability measures under section 116 of WIOA are in place timely. DVR has begun to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the six WIOA-required performance measures, and continues to consider findings from our long-standing Standards and Indicators to analyze available data of performance. DVR leadership routinely review available data to identify opportunities for improvement and consider strategies to ensure strong performance. As data associated with the common performance measures has become available, these data are considered to provide a more comprehensive picture of DVR’s current performance. (Page 211) Title IV

### 511

No disability specific information found regarding this element.
Equal Opportunity and Nondiscrimination: Section 188

In addition to the work of DVR, all Workforce Centers are compliant with Section 188 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, ensuring physical and programmatic access to all services and benefits available throughout the workforce development system. Ensuring Physical and programmatic accessibility is also a component of the state’s certification policy for one-stop centers, which will help to further ensure that all customers can access services in all parts of the state. (Page 39) Title I

Colorado has a rich history of going above and beyond the compliance requirements of Section 188 of the Workforce Investment Act (which are now incorporated in Section 188 of WIOA), and the American’s with Disabilities Act of 1990. Over the life of the Workforce Investment Act, Colorado’s one-stop system was governed by a comprehensive set of state policies regarding non-discrimination and accessibility that are in the process of being updated with the most current requirements. These policies include a robust system of monitoring to ensure that one-stop center programs practice non-discrimination and that centers accommodate the needs of those with disabilities. In addition, Colorado served as a lead state in the national Disability Navigator initiative between 2002 and 2009, providing technical assistance to other states and participating in the national evaluation process. During that time, the one-stop system partnered with Assistive Technology Partners, who worked with staff on the purchase of assistive technology and trained staff in its use. (Page 116) Title I

To ensure that disability status is not a barrier to participation in adult education programs, AEI is a lead partner on the new Disability Employment Initiative grant Colorado was awarded in September 2017 by the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL). The state team will make more strategic use of a career pathways framework to improve training and employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities in Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)-funded employment and training services. AEI also has an Accessibility Policy that outlines requirements for local programs around ensuring equitable access to services, staff training, testing accommodations, language on promotional materials, etc. Programs must write accessibility policies that are approved by AEI and execution of the policy is monitored by AEI staff during on-site visits. Professional learning opportunities are provided by AEI in collaboration with disability experts for local program Accessibility Coordinators. (Page 160) Title IV

DVR’s recent comprehensive statewide needs assessment (CSNA) indicated areas of need within the Colorado workforce development system related to the delivery of effective services to individuals with disabilities. Specifically, the CSNA indicated a need for greater collaboration between DVR and Colorado’s workforce development partners. Additionally, CSNA results suggested a lack of accessibility within workforce centers and partner programs related to knowledge and awareness of disability, accessible communication, accessible programs and assistive technology. To address these issues DVR is actively implementing the following strategies:

DVR is updating its Disability Awareness Training Toolkit and will continue to make these materials, including DVR staff subject matter expertise, available to core and combined plan
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partners to meet the needs of Colorado employers and promote a diverse workforce. (Page 203) Title IV

Vets

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. (Page 43) Title I

JVSG grant staff also serve other populations of veterans in the State through MOUs. Those populations include: Service-connected disabled veterans, who are targeted and identified through various Veterans Service Organizations (VSO), as well as outreach activities at Veteran Centers and Veterans Administration Medical centers; (Page 53) Title I

In addition to State and County workforce center employees, who provide career services to all veterans, CDLE currently employs 29 full-time Disabled Veteran Outreach Program (DVOP) Specialists and 9 full-time Local Veteran Employment Specialists (LVER) assigned to workforce areas around the state. These positions are funded through a USDOL Veterans Employment and Training Service (VETS) grant and fulfill all responsibilities mandated by the grant programs, including the provision of case management services to Special Disabled Veterans, Disabled Veterans, economically or educationally disadvantaged veterans, and veterans with other barriers to employment, especially homelessness. The Jobs for Veterans State Grants Plan is included under Section VII. (Pages 80-81) Title I

The Jobs for Veterans’ State Grants (JVSG) are mandatory, formula-based staffing grants to (including DC, PR, VI and Guam). The JVSG is funded annually in accordance with a funding formula defined in the statute (38 U.S.C. 4102A (c) (2) (B) and regulation and operates on a fiscal year (not program year) basis, however, performance metrics are collected and reported (VETS-200 Series Reports) quarterly (using four “rolling quarters”) on a Program Year basis (as with the ETA-9002 Series). Currently, VETS JVSG operates on a five-year (FY 2015-2019), multi-year grant approval cycle modified and funded annually. In accordance with 38 U.S.C. § 4102A(b)(5) and § 4102A(c), the Assistant Secretary for Veterans’ Employment and Training (ASVET) makes grant funds available for use in each State to support Disabled Veterans’ Outreach Program (DVOP) specialists and Local Veterans’ Employment Representatives (LVER) staff. As a condition to receive funding, 38 U.S.C. § 4102A(c)(2) requires States to submit an application for a grant that contains a State Plan narrative, which includes:

A. HOW THE STATE INTENDS TO PROVIDE EMPLOYMENT, TRAINING AND JOB PLACEMENT SERVICES TO VETERANS AND ELIGIBLE PERSONS UNDER THE JVSG
Colorado (CO) WIOA Matrix

The JVSG 5 Year State Plan states:

Colorado will assign JVSG supported staff to AJCs located within the State Workforce Agencies (SWA) in order to most effectively advance and assure both Priority of Service with regard to all employment and training services, as well as the prompt referral to appropriately needed supportive services for veteran customers. That is not to say that it is JVSG staff’s responsibility to provide Priority of Service, but to provide technical assistance for AJC staff as needed. Of the supported staff, the majority will be placed in the local areas that have the greatest Veteran population. DVOP specialists assigned to their regional AJCs will be allowed to visit the offices of our outreach partners located outside of the AJCs after an approved schedule has been arranged and approved by their Regional Director. The JVSG supported staff may be assigned to locations outside of the AJC such as, but not limited to, the Department of Veteran Affairs (DVA) Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment in Denver and, the Soldier and Family Assistance Office on Fort Carson, and college campuses. (Pages 243) Title VI

Eligible recipients of Incentive Awards are as follows: Disabled Veterans’ Outreach Program Specialists (DVOPs), Local Veterans Employment Representatives (LVERs) staff, employment service offices operating under WIOA and WIOA partner programs, and any employee of an office that provides services to veterans through employment service delivery programs, including employees who indirectly contribute to improving services to veterans such (i.e., business services, MIS, admin, support staff, etc.). Recipients of Performance Incentive Awards can be individuals, a team, or an office that meets the eligibility criteria. Ineligible recipients include volunteers, VA work studies and federal employees.

These awards recognize eligible recipients for excellence in the provision of services or for making demonstrable improvements in the provision of services to veterans through the American Job Center System. The selection criteria for award recipients will be based on performance or activities that impact the services offered to veterans during the program year for which the award is given using both objective and subjective information. Examples of such information may include but is not limited to; attitude, motivation, program improvement, positive feedback and other competency indicators of performance and outreach in the areas of entered employment rates, Priority of Service in referrals of triage processes, or best practices. (Page 246) Title IV

The JVSG and workforce center staff participate in state and local area training sessions and initiatives centered around sectors and career pathways. JVSG and workforce center staff utilize local labor market information as a tool when eligible veterans and persons are making job-driven training decisions. Before, Through the complete training process, the DVOP specialists, WIOA and Wagner Peyser staff will work in conjunction with the LVER and business service team to assist eligible veterans and persons to identify employment opportunities through the state labor exchange Connecting Colorado. The tools in which we measure the services provided include but not limited to:

• Vets 9002 and 200 Report
Colorado (CO) WIOA Matrix

- Interviewing of AJC staff
- State monitoring tool
- Review of program files and documentation
- Customer surveys
- Site visits
- Accompanying DVET during federal audits
- Quarterly Managers Report
- CDLE Regional Directors meeting (Page 251)

Within the local workforce centers the Disabled Veteran Outreach Program specialists are co-located and aligned with the WIOA divisions. The reasoning behind this decision is to promote; (i) program co-enrollments, (ii) cross training between the WIOA and DVOP case managers and case management practices and (iii) promote the appearance of a seamless application process to Veterans who apply for training in one or both programs. (Page 250) Title IV

Mental Health

Community Mental Health Center services include psychiatric services, individual and group therapy, peer services, support groups, medication management, intensive case management, educational opportunities and employment services including supported employment. Partnership between DVR and local Mental Health Centers is evidenced through the Mental Health Supported Employment Program, which operates under a formal interagency agreement between DVR and the Colorado Department of Human Service - Office of Behavioral Health (OBH) and involves local level supported employment agreements with twelve (12) Community Mental Health Centers. Services consist of job development, job seeking skills, job coaching, and on-going support. The purpose of this project is to enhance employment opportunities for individuals with severe and persistent mental illness or persons in recovery. The project has resulted in increased integrated employment opportunities for individuals and is discussed in depth elsewhere in this State Plan. (Page 178) Title IV

The Office of Behavioral Health (OBH) and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) have maintained a formal interagency agreement to provide vocational services to individuals with the most significant mental health disabilities. This agreement represents a collaborative effort to increase access to quality vocational services and to ensure the availability of supported employment opportunities for individuals with the most significant disabilities due to mental illness. (Page 180) Title IV

DVR has 12 Mental Health Supported Employment programs around the state to provide services to participants eligible for supported employment. The contracts involve billing for services for individual eligible participants according to their service needs. Regular monitoring
of these contracts occurs through a variety of mechanisms, including monthly progress reports and billing, quarterly Mental Health Consortium meetings, and a mid-year performance survey. For the eight Mental Health Supported Employment programs engaged in IPS, the IPS Fidelity Review also serves as an annual monitoring of the program. (Page 181) Title IV

**RTW/SAW**

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)