EMPLOYMENT FIRST is a framework for systems change that is centered on the premise that all citizens with disabilities, including individuals with the most significant disabilities, are capable of full participation in integrated employment and community life. Individuals with disabilities are a multi-skilled workforce resource for employers. An inclusive workplace promotes diversity, expands the tax base and creates an expanded pool of qualified candidates for available jobs. ‘Employment First’ is about creating an environment for individuals with disabilities, including individuals with the most significant disabilities, that empowers them with choices for their future, reduces poverty, eases demand on state and community based social service agencies and provides workers with a sense of achievement.

Competitive integrated employment will be seen as the first and primary option for all individuals with disabilities, including individuals with the most significant intellectual and developmental disabilities (ID/DD), who apply through informed choice for workforce services. (Page 57) Title I

DVRS subscribes to the Employment First principles adopted by the Governor in April 2012, and the agency believes that these principles should be accomplished in the context of long-term career pathway development. (Page 110) Title I

Since the Governor has declared through Executive Order, that New Jersey become the 14th Employment First state, the DVRS is reexamining all of the current MOUs in order to ensure policy aligns with the intent of Employment First. (Page 239) Title IV

The DDD serves individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, who meet the functional criteria of having a developmental disability, are eligible for and maintain Medicaid eligibility, and are at least 18 years of age at the time of application and 21 years of age to receive services. Conditions generally considered developmental disabilities include intellectual disability, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, spina bifida, and autism. Part of DDD’s implementation of the Employment First Initiative includes an annual discussion with individuals served, family members, and Support Coordinators providing care management services to identify each individual’s current employment status and identify how to assist the individual in reaching his/her employment outcomes. (Page 242) Title IV

New Jersey is an Employment First State, and particular attention is given to youth with the most significant disabilities who, through informed choice, wish to pursue competitive integrated employment. DVRS has approved supported employment vendors who also vendor with DDD. The DDD system provides support coordinators to their participants who identify the individualized services needed and help arrange for those supports. DVRS counselors meet with DDD support coordinators and identify supported employment vendors common to both agencies in order to ensure a smooth transition of funding. DVRS is piloting “discovery”
New Jersey (NJ) WIOA Matrix

throughout the state in order to provide counselors with the tools to address the needs of this unique population. (Pages 248-249) Title IV

New Jersey is also an Employment First state, and DVRS has identified goals to increase the number of individuals with significant ID/DD to avail themselves to DVRS services that result in an integrated competitive employment outcome. (Page 251) Title IV

- Strategic objectives to meet the DVRS Employment First initiative include the following:
  - More individuals with significant developmental disabilities (DD) and ASD will have greater access to become DVRS consumers.
  - DVRS staff members, vendors, and state partners will have the expectation that employment is the first and preferred option for adult activity for those with DD.
  - DD consumers including transition students and persons in workshops will have increased opportunities for a smooth transition into employment via a defined process established by DVRS and state partners.
  - DD consumers will be provided with programs and services that offer job targeted skill development, education and training.
  - DD individuals will have increased opportunities to become DVRS consumers, obtain job skills, and obtain competitive employment that matches their interests, skills & capabilities.
  - Through a leverage of services with DDD, DVRS will serve an increased amount of individuals with DD, including individuals with ASD. (Page 263) Title IV

In addition, the agency recently signed a new Memorandum of Understanding with the DVRS, the general VR agency, and DDD, a sister agency within the New Jersey Department of Human Services and an agency that provides a full array of employment supports including extended services to individuals with a wide array of developmental disabilities, with the goal of furthering Employment First principles in the state by increasing access to supports needed to obtain and maintain employment. (Page 331) Title IV

Funds received under section 603 of the Rehabilitation Act will be used for the provision of services that lead to supported employment. The goal is to meet the needs of individuals with the most significant disabilities to attain competitive, integrated employment. Priorities will be given to individuals with disabilities, including youth with disabilities, who demonstrate a need for intensive supported employment support in order to achieve substantial, gainful employment. These goals align with New Jersey’s emphasis on Employment First. (Page 332) Title IV

DVRS and CBI recently entered into a new MOU with DDD. The MOU identifies that resources to expand extended services and supported employment opportunities for youth with the most significant disabilities will be allocated for youth being served by DDD through individualized
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budget allocations specific for employment support in competitive, integrated settings. This agreement further supports New Jersey’s emphasis on Employment First. (Page 332) Title IV

Customized Employment

DVRS is committed to establishing Employment First initiatives throughout the state. Strategies included establishing Project SEARCH and developing targeted hiring events for qualified candidates with disabilities; both these efforts have been accomplished as of FY 2018. The business outreach unit will lead these efforts. Additionally, DVRS identified goals to improve services to Deaf/hard of hearing consumers. Strategies to reach these goals include establishing regional Deaf language specialist positions throughout the state, improving the direct access for Deaf consumers via video phones in the offices, updating the DVRS hearing aid policy that includes best practices regarding individuals with cochlear implants, and working with the three Deaf centers to increase outreach to this population. DVRS also plans to contract with the Boggs Center, New Jersey’s Center of Excellence on Developmental Disabilities, to provide technical assistance for the following:

- TA to designated institutes of higher education in order to establish programs for youth with ID/DD that will provide industry-recognized credentials and a Career Pathways approach for their skill development; and

- TA to designated sheltered workshop staff for training in Customized Employment and Person-Centered Planning. (Pages 283-284) Title IV

CBVI will continue to provide professional staff with developmental instruction that will enhance the delivery of VR services. Specifically, CBVI has and will continue to provide its staff with instruction in Customized Employment practices, the use of labor market information in career planning, leadership development programs, and other VR-specific opportunities and courses, as they are made available. (Page 305) Title IV

Additionally, under a MOU with The College of New Jersey’s Center for Complex and Sensory Disabilities, a pilot program called Youth Employment Solutions (YES) was initiated to facilitate competitive, integrated employment outcomes for youth with the most significant disabilities who have exited the secondary school system. This program utilizes the Customized Employment model to engage the youth in the Discovery Process, and, in partnership with a supported employment service provider and the Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor, develops a Customized Employment placement. Once an employment placement has been achieved, the identified supported employment service provider takes over with providing on-the-job supports. (Page 314) Title IV

The Blindness Learning Community, a training and technical assistance initiative that focused on building the capacity of staff at supported employment agencies to more effectively serve individuals who are blind, vision impaired, and deaf-blind and require supported employment services to obtain and maintain a job. This training focused on blindness-specific topics, as well as person-centered approaches to evaluation and job development, including Customized
## New Jersey (NJ) WIOA Matrix

**Employment. (Page 341) Title IV**

CBVI will develop innovative quality career and employment programs, in response to needs identified in the comprehensive needs assessment.

- Develop competencies for Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors and Supervisors in utilizing evidence-based practices, including incorporating motivational interviewing techniques, labor market information and customized employment methodologies into the counseling relationship to increase employment outcomes. (Page 343) Title IV

**Update 2018:** The Youth Employment Solutions pilot program was implemented in FFY 2016, and completed its first full year in the fall of 2017. Youth Employment Solutions (YES) was initiated to facilitate competitive, integrated employment outcomes for youth with the most significant disabilities who have exited the secondary school system. This program utilizes the Customized Employment model to engage the youth in the Discovery Process, and, in partnership with a supported employment service provider and the Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor, develops a Customized Employment placement. Once an employment placement has been achieved, the identified supported employment service provider takes over with providing on-the-job supports. Of the 15 individuals who have worked with the YES program, five have obtained competitive, integrated employment. Given the improved success rate compared to prior employment rates of graduates of the WSP program, additional youth have been identified to begin the program in Spring/Summer 2018, and CBVI will look to expand the program in the future. (Page 346) Title IV

## Braiding/Blending Resources

**g. Sustainable Plans:** The program shall have a plan for continued funding of initiative, which may include single-source or a variety of funding streams, including braided funding strategies. This should include a plan for continuing staffing and resource allocation sufficient to continue or expand the effort. (Page 146) Title I

- Through a leverage of services with DDD, DVRS will serve an increased amount of individuals with DD, including individuals with ASD. (Page 263) Title IV

Under the DVRS EF strategy, long-term SE services will be provided by the DDD and the DMHAS for consumers who qualify for these services after a DVRS consumer is successfully placed in employment. This braiding of funding provides supports to a higher number of consumers. The DVRS continues to partner with the DDD and the DMHAS in order to do this. (Page 290) Title IV

The SCSEP program is currently working with host sites to leverage resources that will ensure successful outcomes for participants that foster individual economic self-sufficiency, and expanding training opportunities in community service activities. The state will also provide a wide range of programs and services to participants, spanning multiple divisions and departments. Funds for the Older Americans Act are leveraged with state general funds, and other programs and services located within the Division of Workforce Development and
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<td>New Jersey DVRS has a significant presence in most of the high schools across the state assessing and counseling, attending IEP meetings and working with the schools and other community partners. This will provide a foundation for developing and offering a wide range of pre-employment transition services, including developing IPEs for students with disabilities, coordinating and developing internships and other summer or afterschool employment. (Page 267)</td>
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The Commission maintains, in conjunction with the DVRS, an Interagency Agreement for Transition from School to Adult Life with the appropriate SEA (Offices of Special Education Programs -OSEP). This agreement complies with the provisions of 34 CFR 361.22(b). Under the agreement, the agency provides technical consultations to transition-aged youth and/or their parents/guardians and other members of the Individualized Education Program (IEP) team in the form of telephone consultations, face-to-face meetings, and/or attendance at IEP meetings. The IEP shall designate the individuals and agencies responsible for the provision of transition services to be implemented while the student is in school.

Throughout the transition process, contact with the Local Educational Agency (LEA) and the Teacher of the Blind and Visually Impaired at the agency remains constant. The need for specialized training, specific programs and assistive technology are addressed as part of the IEP and are also developed more fully in the Transition IPE. Technical consultation begun in the earlier grades with the Teacher of the Blind and Visually Impaired is continued through the transition process, and the transition counselor actively seeks participation in the development of IEPs. The transition counselors may also begin evaluative activities at age fourteen that ultimately lead to development of the IPE and continue to play an organizational role with technical consultations and through their active participation in school-to-work activities, task force memberships, career fairs, etc. At various points during the transition process students are evaluated and presented with opportunities to participate in specific programs funded by the Commission, such as:

- Employment, Development, Guidance, and Engagement (EDGE) 1.0, a year-round program targeted to high school-aged blind, vision-impaired, and deaf-blind consumers that focuses on development of work readiness and blindness-specific skills of independence, mentorship and instruction in self-advocacy from blind and vision-impaired role models, and a work-based learning opportunity in an integrated setting;
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• Life 101, a two-week summer program for Freshman and Sophomores in high school to focus on acquisition of Pre-Employment Transition Services, including core blindness-specific skills of independence, job exploration counseling, including counseling on post-secondary education opportunities and work readiness training, provided in a residential environment at the Commission’s Joseph Kohn Training Center;

• The College Prep Experience Program, dedicated to providing students likely to seek post-secondary education with the necessary skills to function successfully as blind or vision-impaired students, including post-secondary enrollment counseling, job exploration counseling, self-advocacy skills instruction, and work readiness skills;

• Employment, Development, Guidance, and Engagement (EDGE) 2.0, an extension of EDGE 1.0, that serves to assist undergraduate college students in successfully making the transition from a secondary to post-secondary academic setting, and facilitates the development of work readiness and self-advocacy skills, ongoing post-secondary enrollment counseling, job exploration counseling, and work-based learning through internships and other work experiences;

• Work Skills Prep, a two-week summer program for blind, vision-impaired, and deaf-blind students, possessing additional complex disabilities, that delivers workplace readiness and self-advocacy skills instruction through hands-on activities and work-based learning opportunities. (Pages 311-312) Title IV

The agency also developed the Youth Employment Solutions (YES) program in partnership with The College of New Jersey’s Center for Complex and Sensory Disabilities to facilitate competitive, integrated employment outcomes for youth with the most significant disabilities who have exited the secondary school system, and who will benefit from supported employment services. This pilot program targeted of the agency’s Work Skills Preparation Program (WSP), a summer Pre-Employment Transition Services Program for students who are blind, vision impaired, and deaf-blind, who have multiple disabilities, including intellectual and developmental disabilities. This program utilizes the Customized Employment model to engage the youth in the Discovery Process, and, in partnership with a supported employment services provider and the Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor, develops a Customized Employment placement. Once an employment placement has been achieved, the identified supported employment service provider takes over with providing on-the-job supports. Of the 15 individuals who have worked with the YES program during the first 18 months of the pilot, five have obtained competitive, integrated employment. Given the improved success rate compared to prior employment rates of graduates of the WSP program, additional youth have been identified to begin the program in Spring/Summer 2018, and CBVI will look to expand the program in the future. (Pages 350-351) Title IV

Career Pathways

New Jersey’s Talent Development Strategy is focused on five critical themes.
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Theme 1: Building Career Pathways with a focus on Industry-Valued Credentials

Theme 2: Expanding High-Quality Employer-Driven Partnerships

Theme 3: Providing Career Navigation Assistance through One Stop Career Centers and Broad Partnerships

Theme 4: Strengthening Governance through Effective Workforce Development Boards and Regional Collaborations

Theme 5: Ensuring System Integrity through Metrics and Greater Transparency

The strategies associated with each of these themes are detailed below (see Section II.c.2), including:

• Career Pathways Definition and Career Pathways for Secondary Education Students
• Identification of Industry-Valued Credentials
• Literacy Priorities and Standards
• Employment First Framework and Career Pathways for Individuals with Disabilities (Page 54) Title I

Competitive integrated employment will be seen as the first and primary option for all individuals with disabilities, including individuals with the most significant intellectual and developmental disabilities (ID/DD), who apply through informed choice for workforce services.

As part of this effort, New Jersey will work to expand career pathways for individuals with disabilities and to ensure that an increasing number of individuals with disabilities obtain a post-secondary industry-valued credential or degree. (Pages 57-58) Title I

b. The development of strategies to support the use of career pathways for the purpose of providing individuals, including low-skilled adults, youth, and individuals with barriers to employment (including individuals with disabilities), with workforce investment activities, education, and supportive services to enter or retain employment; (Page 80) Title I

DVRS is committed to establishing Employment First initiatives throughout the state. Strategies included establishing Project SEARCH and developing targeted hiring events for qualified candidates with disabilities; both these efforts have been accomplished as of FY 2018. The business outreach unit will lead these efforts. Additionally, DVRS identified goals to improve services to Deaf/hard of hearing consumers. Strategies to reach these goals include establishing regional Deaf language specialist positions throughout the state, improving the direct access for Deaf consumers via video phones in the offices, updating the DVRS hearing aid policy that includes best practices regarding individuals with cochlear implants, and working with the three Deaf centers to increase outreach to this population. DVRS also plans to contract with the Boggs
**New Jersey (NJ) WIOA Matrix**

Center, New Jersey’s Center of Excellence on Developmental Disabilities, to provide technical assistance for the following:

- TA to designated institutes of higher education in order to establish programs for youth with ID/DD that will provide industry-recognized credentials and a Career Pathways approach for their skill development; and

- TA to designated sheltered workshop staff for training in Customized Employment and Person-Centered Planning. (Pages 283-284) Title IV

**Apprenticeship**

No disability specific information found regarding this element.

**Work Incentives and Benefits**

DVRS will encourage and provide TA to CRPs who wish to become an employment network. (Page 281) Title IV

The DVRS is housed in LWD as part of workforce development. This provides a solid foundation to work with the state’s workforce investment system. The DVRS is a core participant in the One—Stop Career Center system and maintains an active presence in the eighteen local WDBs as well as the State Employment and Training Commission (SETC), New Jersey’s State WDB. The DVRS local offices are now located within the OSCCs in 16 catchment areas throughout the state.

The LWD has established four priorities for the next three years:

1. **Reemployment** — What steps can LWD take to decrease the amount of time that people receive UI?

2. **Opportunity** — How can LWD assist more people to move from government benefits (SSI, SSDI, GA, and TANF) to work?

3. **Alignment** — How can LWD increase the number of people who have an industry recognized, post—secondary credential?

4. **Accountability** — What data and information about program performance would help us to improve services? The DVRS, as part of workforce development, provided input to these priorities to ensure that other components of the statewide workforce investment system can appropriately assist individuals with disabilities who access general services. (Page 283) Title IV

Strategies to overcome identified barriers relating to equitable access to and participation of individuals with disabilities in the state Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program and the state Supported Employment Services Program include the following:

- Updating the extended employment guidelines;
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- Standardizing vendor reporting forms;
- Monitoring required vendor accreditation and staff development;
- Meeting with the APSE board;
- Continuing the liaison meetings with ACCSES NJ;
- Outreaching to the DDD to provide employment services to individuals affected by deinstitutionalization;
- Encouraging CRPs to become employment networks; and
- Participating as a lead member to implement the Employment First initiative in the state. (Page 284) Title IV

Employer/Business

All Vocational Rehabilitation business services staff will have full access to the Salesforce platform, which will be the client relationship management system for the entire WIOA and One-Stop system statewide. This will allow smooth communication on specific businesses and WIOA Title I business representatives will be able to easily task the DVRS staff to respond to a business need or other specific activity like a modification assessment or other work. (Page 120) Title IV

The SETC has a relationship with the two State Rehabilitation Councils, outlined in prior sections, dedicated to the cause of increasing the number of individuals with disabilities in the workforce. Through the recommendations of the Councils, policies and practices are examined to ensure that One-Stop services are fully accessible to all. Members from both Councils assisted in the creation of an Accessibility Checklist. The Accessibility Checklist will be used to analyze the competency of a One-Stop Career Center in the areas of: staff training and knowledge; employer engagement; customer focus; quality of programs; and technology. (Page 162) Title IV

CBVI has developed a Business Relations Unit to strengthen the relationships with employers as a secondary customer of the VR program and to coordinate efforts with the larger employment engagement developed for the Workforce Development system in New Jersey. The members of the unit will work with employers throughout the state to assist in addressing their need for qualified candidates to fill critical vacancies in their workforce and provide education on disability-related topics. Services provided by the Business Relations Unit can include, but are not limited to, consultation and evaluation around assistive technology and accessibility issues; disability awareness training; recruitment for internships and employment vacancies; and targeted hiring events. CBVI’s Business Relations Unit will also seek opportunities for customers to engage in career exploration activities with business partners, such as informational interviews, job shadowing, and work experiences. (Page 314) Title IV

The agency is also undertaking additional strategic initiatives to improve performance in line
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with the new performance accountability measures under section 116 of WIOA.

- Establishing a business relations unit designed to meet the needs of the business community in New Jersey. CBVI is one of eleven state agencies in the first cohort that received intensive technical assistance from the Job-Driven Vocational Rehabilitation Technical Assistance Center at the University of Massachusetts-Boston with the goal of assisting the agency to develop this service unit to promote employer engagement;

- Coordinate with DVRS to develop targeted hiring events at a regular basis;

- Train all agency counselors on using Labor Market Information (LMI) to increase informed choice in the process of choosing a career pathway;

- Implement at the agency the Talent Acquisition Portal (TAP) created by the National Employment Team to increase employment opportunities for consumers. The TAP has job listings from companies throughout the United States.

- Coordinate with the Workforce Development System in New Jersey in developing and participating in Career Fairs throughout the state. (Page 342) Title IV

LVERs in New Jersey are aligned with the business services team in order to keep their focus on employer engagement. Jobseeker staff communicate on a regular basis with the LVERs to ensure they are generating job orders consistent with the skills, education and aptitude of the veterans being served. (Page 369) Title IV

Data Collection

DVRS upgraded its case management system to a fully functional AWARE system from Alliance Enterprises during FFY 2014. This was DVRS’s first full year working in the upgraded AWARE system. AWARE made it possible for DVRS to streamline information, easier to generate and compile data and reports required by RSA in a timely manner and for internal management reviews.

AWARE provides all required reporting elements from the U.S. Department of Education, Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA). These reports include:

- Quarterly VR 113 -Cumulative Caseload Report
- Annual VR 911 -Case Services Report
- Annual VR-2 -VR Program/Cost Report (Page 129) Title I

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No disability specific information found regarding this element.
The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act requires States and local workforce areas to certify their One-Stop Career Centers based on requirements and criteria outlined in Section 121(g). The following are the general requirements that will assist in the development and implementation of New Jersey’s One-Stop Center Certification Process. The eligibility for receiving infrastructure funding is contingent upon the establishment of an objective criteria and process that will be administered by the local WDB areas. The One-Stop Center Certification criteria and process must be developed with standards related to service coordination on the overall system. The One-Stop Center Certification criteria must include factors relating to the effectiveness, accessibility, and improvement of the one-stop delivery system. The criteria must focus on the negotiated local levels of performance, the integration of available services and the needs of the local area employers. The local board areas have the autonomy to develop additional criteria that will respond to labor market, economic and demographic conditions and trends found in the local area. The One-Stop Center Certification Process must be reviewed and or modified by state or local plans on a biennial basis. (Pages 63-64) Title I

Wagner-Peyser provides accessibility for all populations to the full range of One-Stop Career Center employment and training programs. Programs designed to serve the needs of special populations with or without significant barriers to employment are integrated into the universal access provided by Wagner-Peyser and WIOA. Members of special populations, however, identified as having significant barriers to employment often require more intensive services to reach the employment goal. Significant barriers include poor previous attachment to the workforce, literacy or language barriers, ex-offender status, educational or occupational skills gap or lack of a credential, physical or mental disability, and driver’s license suspension.

To help special populations with significant barriers to employment, New Jersey has created targeted programs and dedicated staff to help ensure positive outcomes. The challenge is to meet customers where they are by creating a proactive approach to promote and serve special populations. Once special populations enter the One-Stop Career Center system, ensuring that customers receive the services needed to reach their goal becomes a staff responsibility. All One-Stop Career Center staff members need to take ownership for the customer experience by providing warm handoffs when referrals to other service providers are appropriate. That involves taking the extra time to walk customers to where they need to go, introducing them to staff that can help them, and then circling back with customers to make sure their needs were met. Staff need to follow-up with customers to ensure all jobseekers remain engaged and focused on overcoming barriers to enable them to successfully (re)enter the workforce. Maintaining a stronger, more supportive connection to customers will result in better outcomes and improve the perceived value of the One-Stop Career Centers. (Pages 76-77) Title I

Additionally, DVRS staff work with businesses to identify a firm or worksite’s need for modifications to physical, organizational or other aspects of their business in order to be more welcoming and accessible for individuals with disabilities, both as employees and as customers. DVRS staff can support other business representatives in helping companies develop better accessibility plans and make reasonable accommodations when hiring individuals with
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In addition, CBVI will work in collaboration with the WIOA Training Unit and DVRS within LWD to develop specific training protocols for staff with the One-Stop Delivery System with the goal to increase awareness about issues related to physical and programmatic accessibility of the various components of that system. CBVI staff will be available to provide ongoing technical assistance and coaching to build staff skills sets that promote a welcoming environment for individuals with disabilities, including those individuals who are blind, vision impaired, and deaf-blind. (Page 160) Title I

The Accessibility Checklist is used as a foundational element of the One-Stop Career Center Certification process established by the State Employment and Training Commission (SETC) in its Policy Resolution 2016-14 on September 20, 2016. Specifically the One-Stop Certification policy maintains objective criteria and processes through which local boards will certify their One-Stops. New Jersey’s One-Stop Career Center Certification by local WDBs includes as a prerequisite that the WDB verifies the accessibility of its physical locations. This is not limited to physical accommodations; accessibility considers staff knowledge, technology, signage, marketing materials and access to programs and services, through the use of the One-Stop Accessibility Checklist. SETC Policy 2016-14 is provided in Appendix 4 of this Plan. (Pages 162-163) Title I

In relation to staff training and methods to ensure the programmatic accessibility of One-Stop Career Centers, New Jersey is putting in place a process of staff training by DVRS and CBVI for One-Stop staff. The Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired (CBVI) will develop appropriate blindness and low-vision sensitivity and substantive vocational rehabilitation training to be shared with the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (LWD) and its One-Stop programs so that potential blind and vision-impaired consumers who make initial contact with One-Stop programs are able to receive adequate assistance before, or instead of, referral to CBVI for comprehensive services. CBVI will work in collaboration with DVRS and other core partners in LWD to develop the inter-agency training program to be implemented at the various One-Stop Career Centers throughout the state. (Page 163) Title I

• The Disability subcommittee of the WIOA Blueprint Team developed an accessibility checklist and training protocols for the One-Stop Career Centers. The SRCs should be given the opportunity to review those documents and make recommendations for improvement. In the absence of this opportunity, the accessibility checklist should be relied upon strongly in helping these facilities provide an accessible service environment. (Page 300) Title IV

Vets

New Jersey is at the forefront in the nation in using its Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG) funding to work with businesses. New Jersey’s Local Veterans Employment Representatives (LVERs) and Disabled Veteran Opportunity Program contacts (DVOPs) have developed national best practices in making outreach to businesses, developing priority hiring partnerships with New Jersey companies, and placing veterans into employment.
**New Jersey (NJ) WIOA Matrix**

Many New Jersey firms and national employers with New Jersey locations are seeking qualified and dependable veterans, and many have stepped up to hire significant numbers of veterans and build coordinated hiring initiatives with Veterans and One-Stop programs. This systematic approach by large companies is something New Jersey’s WIOA and partner staff have been highly successful in building. When building one of these relationships, LWD dedicate a lead business representative (usually one of the LVERs) to be the company’s main point of contact to respond to their needs statewide, and to manage the local relationships between various company worksites and One-Stops such that the same level of services is offered across the state. The JVSG system is in the process of demonstrating and mentoring other Business Representatives in this model, since this kind of centralized contact and statewide coordination is a central part of the “sector team” approach being developed under New Jersey’s Talent Network initiative.

The LVERs now work within the same LWD division as other business representatives and are fully integrated within the wider Business Services division. They are deeply embedded with the other Business Services staff at New Jersey’s One-Stop Career Centers. Because there are fewer LVERs and DVOP staff statewide, there is not representation at every One-Stop Career Center. However, they are mobile and strategically sited across New Jersey’s workforce regions, and can provide customized services to companies out of any of the One-Stop locations across New Jersey. (Page 120) Title IV

LWD will also establish guidance on how to determine veterans and veterans with significant barriers early in the triage and intake process within the One-Stop Career Centers. This will require cross training of Employment Service and WIOA-funded staff in the One-Stop Career Centers who are functionally responsible for triage. There is and will continue to be prominent signage in all One-Stop Career Centers informing customers that veterans receive priority of service. (Page 162) Title IV

Veterans interested in federal employment opportunities receive preference based on the conditions of their military service and the presence of a service-connected disability. Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP) specialists and One-Stop Career Center staff will work with veterans to provide them with information on the federal application process and how to locate and apply for federal job opportunities using usajobs.gov. (Page 365) Title IV

Veterans participating in the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) Program are deemed high priority customers. In accordance with Veterans Program Letter (VPL) 01-16 Change 1 or most recent guidance, LWD has a state level Memorandum of Understanding with the US Department of Labor, Veterans Employment and Training Service (US DOL/VETS) and the VA/VR&E program that delineates roles and responsibilities for staff in the partner agencies. LWD’s primary roles are to provide workforce information to veterans who are entering a VR&E Program and to provide priority job search assistance for those veterans who are completing their VR&E Program. All partner agencies are involved in a quarterly review of VR&E customers and their progress in reaching their career goals. LWD has assigned a VR&E Intensive Services Coordinator (ISC) from among the DVOP specialists assigned to the Newark One-Stop Career Center. The staff is out-stationed at the VA/VR&E office at 20 Washington Place in Newark.
DVOP specialists are expected to provide intensive case management services for the VR&E customers which include a comprehensive assessment and individual employment plan based upon the employment plan provided by the VA. The goal is to provide the VR&E veterans with the tools to be successful in the job search such as a robust résumé, career guidance, and job search assistance. (Page 366) Title IV

Serving the workforce directed needs of New Jersey’s veterans is a responsibility shared by all One-Stop Career Center staff. Effective intake and customer flow procedures, staff training, technical assistance/reinforcement, and monitoring contribute to ensuring that only a subset of eligible veterans identified as having a significant barrier to employment as defined in 38 U.S.C. 4103A(a)(1) and guidance containing the Secretary’s priorities. All veterans served by the DVOP will be assessed and have an employability plan that directs the delivery of intensive services. (Pages 368-369) Title IV

DVOP specialists concentrate on the delivery of intensive services to veterans with significant barriers to employment as defined in USDOL guidance using a case management approach. Subsequent guidance with additional eligibility categories will not substantially impact service delivery. In a fully-integrated environment where resources are leveraged to maximize efficiency and positive outcomes, the DVOP specialist is not personally delivering all of the career services but is managing the customer toward employment based on the outcome of an assessment and employment plan. In this environment, the DVOP needs to ensure that this management is recorded in the LWD AOSOS case management system under the DVOP specialist’s account. To help ensure that accountability information is recorded in a consistent manner that reflects the level of effort by the DVOP, LWD has created a custom tab in the AOSOS case management system specifically for the DVOP specialist. Management exception reports are also being developed in partnership with LWD’s newly created Division of Workforce Research and Analytics. Unlike traditional, after-the-fact, reports that provide summary tabulations, exception reports provide actionable information from individual customer records that can be run on a regular or ad-hoc basis to identify potential mistakes, oversights, or need for customer follow-up. Items on the exception report include whether the customer is an eligible veteran, whether they have received an intensive service, whether they are in case management, and whether they have a significant barrier. Future enhancements may include whether there is a completed employment plan, and whether Federal Bonding program eligibility letter was generated for the customer. (Page 371) Title IV

DVOP specialists are out-stationed at facilities where there are veterans that might benefit from intensive services, including the East Orange Campus of the VA New Jersey Health Care System at 385 Tremont Street in East Orange. Outreach activities to identify and assist veterans in need of intensive services have fostered relationships with the Lyons Campus of the VA New Jersey Health Care System in Lyons, Fort Monmouth Shelter in Freehold, NJ Department of Military and Veterans Affairs at multiple locations, Lunch Break in Red Bank (homeless veterans), MOCEANS (homeless, low income, and educationally deficient veterans) in Long Branch, and the Veterans Transitional Housing Program (Veterans Haven) in Winslow. (Page 374) Title IV

JVSG staff is deployed with clearly delineated distinct duties for the DVOP specialist and LVER. These clearly distinct duties include the delivery of intensive services to targeted veterans
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by the DVOP specialist and outreach to the employer community and facilitation within the state’s employment service delivery system for the LVER. DVOP specialists and LVER provide specialized service that complement and add value to OSCC veterans’ services. DVOP specialists and LVER do not duplicate services provided by other OSCC labor exchange staff. In the case of the DVOP specialist, this is ensured by a requirement that the significant barrier/18-24 year old veteran designation be documented for every customer served. (Page 375) Title IV

New Jersey will continue to distinguish military service veterans according to USDOL guidance primarily to determine eligibility for DVOP services. Covered persons must be given priority of service which means they go to the front of the line for all One-Stop services including employment, training, and placement services. In some limited cases, a spouse of a veteran can be classified as a covered person and must be given priority of service. Only covered persons who are also defined as “eligible” can be served or should be referred to the DVOP. (Page 378) Title IV

Special disabled/disabled are those eligible veterans who are entitled to compensation (or who but for the receipt of military retired pay would be entitled to compensation) under laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans’ Affairs or who were discharged or released from active duty because of a service-connected disability.

Veterans participating in the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) Program are deemed high priority customers. In accordance with most current guidance, LWD has a state level Memorandum of Understanding with the US Department of Labor, Veterans Employment and Training Service (US DOL/VETS) and the VA/VR&E program that delineates roles and responsibilities for staff in the partner agencies. LWD’s primary roles are to provide workforce information to veterans who are entering a VR&E Program and to provide priority job search assistance for those veterans who are completing their VR&E Program. All partner agencies are involved in a quarterly review of VR&E customers and their progress in reaching their career goals. LWD has assigned a VR&E Intensive Services Coordinator (ISC) from among the DVOP specialists assigned to the Newark One-Stop Career Center. The staff is out-stationed at the VA/VR&E office at 20 Washington Place in Newark. (Page 379) Title IV

Often employers are willing to hire veterans that possess most of the qualities they desire in an ideal employee if the hire can in some way be incentivized. LVERs have been using the Work Opportunity Tax Credit, VOW, Federal Bonding Program, and on-the-job training (OJT) grants to help seal the connection between veterans and employers. New Jersey’s state-funded Workforce Development Partnership Program has helped employers through the Opportunities4Jersey on-the-job training program defray some of the extraordinary costs involved in training new workers by paying up to 50% of new hires salary for up to six months. (Page 381) Title IV

As the LVER reorganization moves forward, LWD anticipates more job order development successes as DVOP specialists and LVERs define their roles and responsibilities along guidance supplied in VPL 03-14, VPL 04-14 and VPL 08-14. LWD will concentrate LVER staff efforts on targeted job development services for veterans especially veterans determined to be job ready.
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after receipt of intensive services from a DVOP specialist. These measures will assist LWD in enhancing the existing processes and oversight to ensure DVOP specialists provide intensive services for veterans with employment barriers, including homeless veterans, veterans with disabilities, and the other service categories listed in most current guidance. (Page 381) Title IV

**Mental Health**

DVRS is continuing to establish an MOU with the Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS). The last formal agreement ended October 1, 2014. DVRS will reach out to DMHAS to establish an MOU that outlines the coordination of services in FFY 2017. (Page 251) Title I

There are presently an approved cadre of community providers throughout the state who provide supported employment services on a fee for service basis. The Commission continues to make use of time limited job coaching services to address the needs of consumers who are chronically unemployed and those who present with issues of mental health or are otherwise ineligible for services from the DDD. The Commission has traditionally placed approximately between four and five percent of all successful rehabilitations into supported employment. (Page 353) 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

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