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**Employment First State Mentoring Program (EFSLMP)**

Able SC is approved by the U.S. Social Security Administration (SSA) to serve ticket beneficiaries as an Employment Network (EN) under SSA’s Ticket to Work program (discussed in more detail below), and also serves as the host and facilitator for the SC Disability Employment Coalition and the SC Employment First Initiative, two collaborative efforts that addresses employment barriers for individuals with disabilities. (Pages 40-41) **Title I**

In 2016, a consortium of partners working through the SC Disability Employment Coalition received a Partnership in Employment Systems Change grant known as the SC Employment First Initiative. The purpose of the grant is to increase competitive integrated employment outcomes for young adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The initiative had three broad goals: 1.) Equip high school students and recent graduated with intellectual and development disabilities with the skills, awareness, and confidence needed to enter competitive employment. 2.) Unify and empower South Carolina education professionals, employment service providers, families, and the community at large towards support of Employment First principles. 3.) Develop and expand supports for South Carolina-based employers who hire persons with disabilities in competitive, community-based positions. A major focus of the SC Employment First Initiative is to implement policy that competitive and integrated employment shall be considered the first option for any individual with disabilities applying for or receiving services from the state or any of its political subdivisions. In fact, Employment First legislation is pending in the South Carolina legislature which would have a positive effect on employment for people with disabilities. (Page 42) **Title I**

SCCB is an active member of the Employment First Initiative steering committee, an interagency partnership focused on ensuring that competitive integrated employment is the first priority for transition aged students with disabilities. SCCB is also an active member of the Advisory Council for Educating Students with Disabilities an advisory council for the Office of Special Education at the South Carolina Department of Education. All of these committees and councils create avenues for coordination and collaboration with state and local education officials. (Page 274) **Title IV**

SCCB is developing an updated Cooperative Agreement with the South Carolina Department of Disabilities and Special Needs (DDSN) to avoid duplication of services, increase coordination of employment services provided to the shared consumer populations, and to enhance Supported Employment programs. SCCB is an active partner with DDSN and both agencies are represented on the Employment First Initiative Steering Committee and the South Carolina Disability...
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Employment Coalition. (Page 278) Title IV

**Customized Employment**

SCCB has established an internal Supported Employment program that includes Customized Employment provided by three (3) regionally assigned JOBS Specialists. During program year 2018 SCCB partnered with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Technical Assistance Center and the Youth Technical Assistance Center to provide intensive Customized Employment training to the JOBS Specialists. SCCB has signed a Partnership Plus Agreement with ABLE SC under provisions in the Ticket-to-Work program to provide ongoing supports for ticket holders. SCCB is working to establish other Cooperative Agreements with entities providing ongoing supports to consumers in Supported Employment. (Page 276) Title IV

98.SCCB did not offer supported employment or customized employment services to its consumers with most significant disabilities. This is reflected in the low numbers of employment outcomes for these individuals. (Page 286) Title IV

The South Carolina Commission for the Blind has established the capacities to provide Supported Employment to youth and adults with Most Significant Disabilities in response to the findings of the FFY 2016 CSNA. Funds received under section 603 of the Rehabilitation Act for Supported Employment are utilized to fund the costs of individualized discovery assessment, job development, job placement, and on-the-job supports for Supported Employment and Customized Employment delivered internally by JOBS Specialists. SCCB provides extended services for a period not to exceed 4 years. SCCB has signed a Partnership Plus Agreement under the Ticket to Work program to provide long term on going supports through an Employment Network (Able SC). SCCB utilizes 50% of Supported Employment funds to provide Supported Employment and Customized Employment for eligible youth. SCCB has established goals to provide Supported Employment services to 6eligible individuals during FFY 2018, 8 individuals during FFY 2019, 10individuals during FFY 2020, and 10 individuals during FFY 2021. (Page 313) Title IV

Strategy 2.2.3: Provide Customized Employment that includes intensive discovery of individualized skills, abilities, potential; and intensive customization of an existing job opening, creation of a job that fills an unmet need, and other customized options. SCCB provides Customized Employment through a qualified and trained JOBS Specialist (Job Oriented Blind Service). (Page 316) Title IV

SCCB will continue to seek opportunities and partnerships to aid in the development and establishment of Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRP) to provide community based adjustment to blindness services, supported employment (SE) services, customized employment (CE) services and life skills training. (Page 320) Title IV

CRP Establishment & Development: SCCB will continue to seek opportunities and partnerships to aid in the development and establishment of Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRP) to provide community based adjustment to blindness services, supported employment (SE) services, customized employment (CE) services, Braille training, vocational evaluation, and life...
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skills training. (Page 321) Title IV

SCCB is committed to ensuring that services are provided in an equitable manner and are fully accessible. SCCB reviews, assesses and monitors agency programs to conduct continuous improvement activities. The greatest gap identified in the 2016 Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment pertained to the lack of a Supported Employment program at SCCB. In response SCCB established the JOBS Specialists (Job Oriented Blind Services) positions trained to provide Supported Employment (SE), Customized Employment (CE), and Individual Placement and Support (IPS) models to consumers who have Most Significant Disabilities. These positions function in a one-on-one consumer centered approach as Job Placement Specialists, On-The-Job Coaches, and in other employment related supportive roles allowed under Title VI. (Pages 321-322) Title IV

SCCB has established program capacity and resources to better serve individuals who have Most Significant Disabilities. SCCB has established JOBS Specialists who are providing Supported Employment and Customized Employment, evidence based practices that have not been offered by SCCB in the past. In addition, SCCB has hired and trained a Certified Work Incentive Counselor to help beneficiaries understand the implications of gainful employment on their Social Security benefits. (Page 323) Title IV

SCCB expended Supported Employment revenue during FFY 2017 for the first time as JOBS Specialists were on boarded and began providing Supported Employment services. Consumers being served by SE funds are currently in the placement and support phase, therefore no consumers served by Supported Employment funds have been transitioned to extended services at this time. SCCB signed a Partnership Plus Agreement with Able SC to provide on-going supports at the time when a consumer transitions from VR support. Building a quality Supported Employment program is a continued goal of SCCB for FFY 2018. Currently SCCB is undergoing extensive Customized Employment training and technical assistance to build capacity and program effectiveness. SCCB also added the capacity to provide benefit and work incentive counseling. (Page 325) Title IV

SCCB made substantial progress on creating a Supported Employment program through the establishment of the JOBS Specialists, providing both Supported Employment and Customized Employment training to these staff, and building the capacity to provide benefits and work incentive counseling services. The greatest impediment was that these resources had to be created where they did not exist prior. (Page 325) Title IV

SCCB expended Supported Employment revenue during FFY 2017 for the first time as JOBS Specialists were on boarded and began providing Supported Employment services. Consumers being served by SE funds are currently in the placement and support phase, therefore no consumers served by Supported Employment funds have been transitioned to extended services at this time. SCCB signed a Partnership Plus Agreement with Able SC to provide on-going supports at the time when a consumer transitions from VR support. Building a quality Supported Employment program is a continued goal of SCCB for FFY 2018. Currently SCCB is
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undergoing extensive Customized Employment training and technical assistance to build capacity and program effectiveness. (Page 326-327) Title IV

Braiding/Blending Resources

CCB has developed a Self-Employment Toolkit intended to walk eligible consumers through the microenterprise development process. SCCB has partnered with the University of Wisconsin-Madison to provide Self-Employment and Social Security Work Incentive training to SCCB’s VR Counselors on May 17, 2018 and August 8, 2018. SCCB is working to build community partnerships to leverage resources from entities engaged in business development such as Small Business Development Centers, Business Incubator Programs, and South Carolina’s Technical College System. SCCB is also working to incorporate our Career Exploration Lab (3D Printer Lab) as a tool to assist in product development and prototyping. (Page 66) Title I

•SCVRD leverages other public and private funds to increase resources for extended services. Extended services providers are identified in each area to provide follow along and extended services following successful exit from the VR program. Partnerships at the state and local level with DDSN and the local DSN boards continue to grow and provide key linkages to extended services providers. (Page 182) Title I

SCVRD’s ongoing support services are limited to 24 months unless extended by an amendment to the IPE. Transition to extended services starts after an individual is stabilized in his/her job setting and has met the individualized work goal. The client’s employment stability is determined by the achievement of adequate job performance without a need for ongoing, intensive shadowing/mentoring from the job coach. The client, employer, job coach, and SCVRD counselor agree that this has occurred before transition to the extended service provider takes place. SCVRD continues to leverage resources for identifying extended service providers to meet long-term support needs. (Page 260) Title IV

Goal 1: Increase Program Capacity Leveraging Partnerships & Community Engagement

Priority 1.1: Improve WIOA Partnerships & One-Stop System Engagement

Priority 1.2: Improve Partnerships & Strategic Alliances to Increase Program Capacity

Priority 1.3: Increase Public Awareness & Community Engagement

Priority 1.4: Align Ellen Beach Mack Rehabilitation Center (EBMRC) Programing

Report of Progress Goal 1: SCCB achieved substantial progress on goal 1. SCCB improved WIOA partnerships and One-Stop System Engagement through the strategies of formalizing American Job Center partnerships with Memorandum’s of Understanding which include infrastructure cost agreements, specified co-located staff office times and space, center accessibility assessment and technical assistance, and staff cross training. SCCB has active MOU’s with all SC Works Centers. SCCB worked with core WIOA partner programs to create
### South Carolina (SC) WIOA Matrix

Agency cross training modules for partnership workforce staff, and explored data sharing and common intake opportunities. SCCB finalized a Cooperative Agreement with SC Department of Education and is currently negotiating an update to the SC Vocational Rehabilitation Department Cooperative Agreement. SCCB negotiated and entered into a number of Cooperative Agreements with community based qualified fee-for-service vendors and other partners to expand capacity and available resources statewide. This has expanded program capacity to provide independent travel training (8 new vendors), home management training (2 new vendors), and Braille Literacy (2 new vendors) in community settings. SCCB also provides ZoomText, Jaws, and other assistive technology training through a fee-for-service contract with the National Federation of the Blind of South Carolina. (Page 322) Title IV

### DEI/Disability Resource Coordinators

No disability specific information found regarding this element.

### Financial Literacy/Economic Advancement

**Goal 1.2:** Provide comprehensive vocational rehabilitation services to adult job seekers who are blind or visually impaired resulting in the attainment of industry recognized in-demand credentials required for competitive integrated employment.

**Strategy 1.2.1:** Provide quality Adjustment to Blindness and Pre-Vocational Training at the Ellen Beach Mack Rehabilitation Center for Employment & Independence. Adjustment to Blindness Training includes: Orientation & Mobility (Independent Travel), Independent Living Skills, Braille Literacy, Employability Soft Skills, Basic Financial Literacy, and Psychosocial Adjustment to Blindness Counseling. Pre-Vocational Training includes: Basic Keyboarding, Basic Microsoft Office Suite Training, and Assistive Technology Training such as Computer Screen Readers, Text Magnifiers, Low Vision Aids, Etc. (Page 315) Title IV

In 2017 SCCB rewrote the curriculum and courses offered at the Ellen Beach Mack Rehabilitation Center for Employment and Independence. This new curriculum includes pre-test and post-test assessments to measure skill gains and provide for continuous improvement. Several new center programs have been implemented including a partnership with Adult Education that brings GED preparation instruction and testing to the center. SCCB added a Basic Financial Literacy course using curriculum designed by the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau. SCCB has also added Soft-Skills training based on the “Skills to Pay the Bills” curriculum. (Page 323) Title IV

### School to Work Transition

The Transition Alliance of South Carolina is a broad systems improvement and technical assistance resource for professionals working with students with disabilities. Their primary outcome is to empower students to transition into community-based employment. Local transition programs choose to enhance their curriculum through a variety of evidence-based transition practices, including student-led IEP meetings, goal setting and attainment, socializing
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in the workplace, job accommodations, and other activities meant to empower students with disabilities to control their career strategy. TASC consists of a state-level interagency steering committee that supports local interagency transition teams across the state. (Page 42) Title I

SC Department of Education Office of Adult Education has a special education task force that creates and delivers training for adult education practitioners serving students with special needs. The OAE meets regularly with SCDE Office of Special Education Services to ensure compliance with all special education regulations. Additionally, OAE requires that all funded local providers have a written plan with local Special Education Departments to transition IEP (Individualized Education Plan) students, and that local providers comply with the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) which requires each provider to describe the steps they propose to take to ensure equitable access to, and participation in, its federally assisted programs. OAE monitors for compliance with the written transition IEP as part of its annual compliance process, and collaborates with the Office of Special Education to monitor all other GEPA requirements. (Page 109) Title I

GEPA (General Education Provisions Act) 427 requirements are overseen by the SCDE-OAE in the following ways:

• In cooperation with SCDE - Office of General Counsel and the SCDE - Office of Special Education Services, OAE delivers training for adult education practitioners serving students with special needs.

• OAE meets regularly with the SCDE - Office of Special Education Services to ensure compliance with all special education regulations.

• OAE requires that all funded local providers have a written plan with local Special Education Departments to transition IEP (Individualized Education Plan) students, and that local providers comply with GEPA which requires each provider to describe the steps they propose to take to ensure equitable access to, and participation in, its federally assisted programs.

OAE monitors for compliance the written transition IEP as a part of its annual compliance process, and collaborates with the SCDE - Office of Special Education to monitor all other GEPA requirements. (Pages 170-171) Title I

SCVRD utilizes the “Guideposts for Success” (based on the work of the National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth — NCWD/Y) as a framework for school-to-work transition services. This includes regular activities that focus on each of the required pre-employment transition service activities: job exploration counseling, work-based learning, counseling on opportunities for comprehensive transition or postsecondary educational programs, workplace readiness training to develop social skills and independent living skills, and instruction in self-advocacy. Group activities provide opportunities to not only facilitate peer mentoring, but also allow transition staff to observe and cultivate students’ leadership skills, as well as communication and social skills. Mentoring is a key component of the High School High Tech (HS/HT) program, and SCVRD collaborates with organizations that have youth-led mentoring programs in place. Through the agency’s VR Ambassadors program, former clients
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that have successfully transitioned into employment or postsecondary activities are available to assist with mentoring and participation in transition activities such as Disability Mentoring Day, and summer transition institutes. (Pages 174-175) Title I

In collaboration with the SC Department of Employment and Workforce (SCDEW) and the SCDE, SCVRD’s school-based transition counselors work together with local education agencies, community partners, workforce development boards, SC Works Centers and business partners to advise students with disabilities, and their families, regarding available career pathways and educational/training opportunities. SCVRD maintains a Transition Services Coordinator position and additional regional Transition Specialist positions whose duties focus on the authorized activities required for effective provision of pre-employment transition services. These include:

• Coordinate all transition-related activities and projects including those that involve other agencies, community organizations and local SCVRD field offices;

• Develop, monitor and update all transition documents and cooperative agreements;

• Provide technical assistance, professional development and training on transition-related issues to field office staff, education personnel, community organizations, families, and students;

• Review and update client service policy to ensure policies and procedures are reflective of SCVRD mission and focus on quality in serving youth in transition;

• Serve on the planning committee for the interagency South Carolina Youth Leadership Forum, a summer youth development and leadership program; • Participate in TASC, an interagency initiative to create systems change and support development of local interagency transition teams. (Page 175) Title I

Strategy 1.2 Enhance school-to-work transition services.

• Objective 1.2.1 Maximize relationships with education officials in all South Carolina school districts to support development of education and career pathways.

• Objective 1.2.2 Improve services to individuals with autism spectrum disorders and intellectual/developmental disabilities.

• Objective 1.2.3 Enhance services for at-risk youth with disabilities.

• Objective 1.2.4 Expose students with disabilities to careers in science, technology, engineering and math through High School/High Tech programs. (Page 247) Title IV

SCCB Career BOOST (Building Occupational Opportunities for Students in Transition): Is a
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contractual pilot program in partnership with South Carolina’s Independent Living Centers, the National Federation of the Blind of South Carolina, and LEA’s. Pre-Employment Transition Services are provided to eligible and potentially eligible students with disabilities in the public schools and other settings. These services include Self-Advocacy Workshops, Work Readiness Soft Skills Workshops, Exploration of Higher Education through College Tours, and Work Based Learning Experiences. (Page 272) Title IV

SCCB Vocational Rehabilitation Comprehensive Transition Services Program: This program serves students from age 15 until exit from high school at which time they are served by the SCCB adult VR program. SCCB has four (4) dedicated Transition Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors statewide building program infrastructure and education relationships to improve services to Transition Students. The Transition Counselors primarily collaborate with education officials such as the South Carolina Department of Education (local school districts), the South Carolina School for the Deaf and Blind (SCSDB) and the South Carolina Department of Disabilities and Special Needs (SCDDSN). Transition Counselors develop the initial Individualized Plan of Employment (IPE) while the consumer is attending high school. The IPE includes services pertaining to the adjustment, prevention or stabilization of vision, and Pre-Employment Transition Services as defined in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA). In an effort to avoid the duplication of services, low vision and assistive technology needs will be coordinated with local school districts in accordance with the student’s Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and IPE. In such instances, the alternative service providers and funding sources will be identified on the IPE and coordinated accordingly. SCCB will conduct semiannual meetings with the statewide vision teachers in an effort to facilitate the coordination of services to the most significantly disabled students and their need for supported employment services. Discussions will include, but not be limited to, collaboration with SCDDSN, SCDOE and the SCSDB to coordinate transition services. (Page 273) Title IV

While these gaps are areas of continued focus for SCCB, much has been accomplished since the Statewide Needs Assessment. SCCB now provides Career BOOST services to students with disabilities who are eligible or potentially eligible for VR services. Career BOOST provides students with instruction in self-advocacy skills, work readiness skills training, work based learning experiences, and exploration of opportunities for career training in post-secondary schools and institutions of higher education. SCCB designed and operates the Student Internship Jr. Program that provides high school transition students with a paid work experience. SCCB Transition VR Counselors have increased their involvement in IEP meetings, and SCCB has formalized memorandum of understandings with LEA’s. (Page 288) Title IV

SCCB established contractual programs for Pre-Employment Transition Services with South Carolina’s Independent Living Centers and the National Federation of the Blind. Since inception Career BOOST has provided 761 students with Self-Advocacy Workshops, 494 Work Readiness Workshops, and 160 Work Based Learning Experience such as paid internships and work site tours and job shadowing. Under Career Boost 62 eligible and potentially eligible high school students have participated in college and university tours, exploration of post-secondary educational options, and counseling on financial aid opportunities. SCCB conducted public awareness outreach and implemented a social media presence to enhance agency visibility. In
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2017 SCCB rewrote the curriculum and courses offered at the Ellen Beach Mack Rehabilitation Center for Employment and Independence. This new curriculum includes pre-test and post-test assessments to measure skill gains and provide for continuous improvement. Several new center programs have been implemented including a partnership with Adult Education that brings GED preparation instruction and testing to the center. SCCB added a Basic Financial Literacy course using curriculum designed by the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau. SCCB has also added Soft-Skills training based on the “Skills to Pay the Bills” curriculum. (Pages 322-323) Title IV

Career Pathways

South Carolina’s one-stop delivery system is designed to be fully accessible so that all job seekers and employers can participate in the services offered. The Methods of Administration (MOA) - a state document required by the Civil Rights Center - is a “living” document that ensures current federal regulations and directives are implemented at the state and local level expeditiously, and details how compliance with WIOA Section 188 will be accomplished.

Monitoring performed at both the state and local level ensures that all SC Works Centers are in compliance with Section 188 of WIOA, the ADA, and other applicable regulations. Individuals who seek to utilize South Carolina’s workforce system can expect facilities, whether physical or virtual (e.g. SC Works Online Services) to meet federally-mandated accessibility standards. Complaints of discrimination are directed to the State Equal Opportunity Officer.

Per federal regulations, each LWDA must appoint a local Equal Opportunity Officer who is responsible for ensuring local WIOA Section 188 compliance. Local Equal Opportunity Officers are trained to use the “ADA Checklist for Readily Achievable Barrier Removal,” the “Checklist for Existing Facilities,” and a recommended assistive technology checklist. New local Equal Opportunity Officers are provided with detailed training on regulations, policies, and procedures following appointment. Ongoing training is provided through EO Roundtables and on-site training on such topics as, “Serving Customers with Disabilities,” “Current EO Trends,” as well as topics deemed relevant by LWDAs and designed in response to their training requests. (Page 108) Title I

For the current Unified State Plan, SCCB identified gaps from two primary sources. The first being unmet gaps identified in the FFY 2016 Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment. The second source is the South Carolina Workforce Development Board’s Economic Analysis and Strategic Plan in order to align SCCB initiatives with the goals of South Carolina’s Workforce Development System. The following gaps have been identified:

Gap 1: South Carolina’s current labor force, including individuals who are blind or visually impaired, do not have industry recognized credentials, knowledge, skills, or abilities to meet current or emerging demands of the business community.

Gap 2: SCCB needs to improve alignment of policies, resources, and staff expertise to provide job driven, labor market informed, vocational counseling and guidance that aligns with South Carolina’s Talent Pipeline Project and Sector Strategies initiatives to assist eligible consumers in
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accessing career pathways that lead to high and middle skill/income jobs in growth sectors.

Gap 3: SCCB needs to improve partnerships with business in order to more accurately identify current and future workforce needs of business and industry to support career pathways in growth sectors and improve services to business. (Page 291) Title IV

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### Goal 2: Increase Quantity & Quality of Employment Outcomes

**Priority 2.1:** Align VR Counseling with South Carolina’s Talent Pipeline Project, Emphasizing Career Pathways, Attainment of Industry Recognized Credentials, Job Driven/Sector Strategies & Labor Market Information

**Priority 2.2:** Increase Employment for those with Most Significant Disabilities

**Priority 2.3:** Increase Vocational Exploration & Opportunities for Transition Students

**Priority 2.4:** Increase Employment for all eligible consumers

**Report of Progress Goal 2:** Under the previous state plan, SCCB focused efforts on building program capacity, resources and expertise needed in order to meet goal 2. This required resource location, resource reallocation, and program building. As these programs have been built, SCCB has not experienced an increase in the number of successful employment outcomes. Under the provisions of the previous Unified State Plan, SCCB has aligned VR Counseling, career exploration, vocational goal selection, and Individualized Plan for Employment development with labor market information and sector strategies. SCCB has instituted the use of The Career Index Plus for analyzing labor market information and helping consumers make informed job driven decisions. SCCB implemented significant staff training in the area of using labor market information and understanding South Carolina’s regional economic conditions. SCCB leveraged partnerships with the Department of Employment and Workforce, and the Job Driven Technical Assistance Center to provide staff with training on sector strategies, the talent pipeline efforts, and the use of labor market information. SCCB has established program capacity and resources to better serve individuals who have Most Significant Disabilities. SCCB has established JOBS Specialists who are providing Supported Employment and Customized Employment, evidence based practices that have not been offered by SCCB in the past. In addition, SCCB has hired and trained a Certified Work Incentive Counselor to help beneficiaries understand the implications of gainful employment on their Social Security benefits. SCCB established Career BOOST, a contractual program in partnership, collaboration, and coordination with Independent Living Centers, the National Federation of the Blind, and South Carolina’s Local Education Authorities. This program provides the required Pre-Employment Transition Services to eligible and potentially eligible students with disabilities. SCCB hosted the first Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math Career (STEM) Exploration Week for transition students during the summer of 2017. During the STEM Career Exploration week, 9 high school students who are blind or visually impaired were provided instruction by a team of scientists from San Jose State University, Edinboro University of Pennsylvania, NASA’s Goddard Space Flight Center, the Space Telescope Science Institute, and the International Astronomical Union. The students
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explored STEM careers using 3D printed tactile models of galaxies, planets, and other astronomical phenomena. Additionally, students were exposed to “sonification” techniques used by blind and visually impaired Astronomers to study the universe. SCCB is repeating the program in the summer of 2018. (Pages 323-324) Title IV

### Apprenticeship

The South Carolina Vocational Rehabilitation Department (SCVRD) offers a range of training services that include OJT, job try-out, and registered apprenticeships. For OJT, in partnership with SCVRD, a company hires and trains a client for a specific position. The training progresses according to training milestones in an established training outline. Job try-outs are a stipend-funded training service coordinated between SCVRD, the client, and a business partner. During a job try-out, a career ready client learns specific, basic skills for a job at a company’s worksite(s). (Page 29) Title I

SCVRD maintains a priority on providing work-based learning experiences for students. Following a 5-year transition demonstration grant from the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA), and in keeping with evidence-based practices that support work experience to be one of the most influential factors in successful postsecondary employment outcomes, transition staff actively pursue job tryout, job shadowing, internship, and apprenticeship opportunities for students. This impacts not only the ultimate outcome of competitive, integrated employment but has been shown to be an integral support for school completion and drop-out prevention. (Page 175) Title IV

Innovation and expansion activities have been identified within these strategies and include:

- Continued expansion of work-based learning activities for students
- Expansion of Project SEARCH sites
- Cooperative agreement with Project HOPE Foundation, a non-profit organization that provides a lifespan of services and activities for individuals with autism
- Expansion of transition job coaches focused on providing supported employment services to students and youth with the most significant disabilities
- Maintaining a full-time counselor to provide vocational rehabilitation services to incarcerated youth, which has expanded to include additional programs operated by DJJ (e.g., Camp Aspen)
- Maintaining a staff interpreter for clients who are deaf to provide video remote interpreting, on-site services to mutual clients of SCVRD and DHHS, extend consistent access to interpreter services in rural areas, and enhance the accessibility of VR productions and client and staff training materials
- Creation of apprenticeships tailored to increase the participation levels of clients who are deaf (Page 259) Title IV
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**Goal 3.1:** Provide specialized training through a Pre-Apprenticeship Program to prepare adults not enrolled in college programs, as an alternative career pathway to current and future business and industry needs.

**Strategy 3.1.1:** Utilize the principles STEM education to develop a Pre-Apprenticeship training program for job seekers who are blind and visually impaired that will satisfy the entry level skills needed for acceptance into registered apprenticeship programs. Incorporate the use of the most current Assistive Technology that will make graduates competitive when applying to fill open apprenticeship positions. (Pages 316-317) Title IV

### Work Incentives and Benefits

Able SC is a Center for Independent Living (CIL) that is designed and operated within a local community by individuals with disabilities and provides an array of independent living services, including one-on-one and group training on topics such as employment soft skills, transportation utilization, accommodation requests, and transition from high school to post-secondary life.

Through funding from the SC Department of Education, SC Commission for the Blind, and local United Ways, Able SC provides independent living skills and pre-employment transition services to current middle and high school students with disabilities in the classroom.

Able SC is approved by the U.S. Social Security Administration (SSA) to serve ticket beneficiaries as an Employment Network (EN) under SSA’s Ticket to Work program (discussed in more detail below), and also serves as the host and facilitator for the SC Disability Employment Coalition and the SC Employment First Initiative, two collaborative efforts that addresses employment barriers for individuals with disabilities. (Pages 40-41) Title I

Ticket to Work is a voluntary program for people receiving disability benefits from Social Security and whose primary goal is to find good careers and have a better self-supporting future. Consumers may receive employment services through an employment network provider, including career counseling, socialization to the workplace, and job support advice, among others. (Page 44) Title I

SCVRD’s supported employment goals and plans regarding the Title VI program are based on an analysis of the comprehensive statewide needs assessment and the department’s performance on the common performance measures as well as agency key performance indicators. The priorities are as follows:

- Strengthening service delivery afforded to individuals whose disabilities and vocational needs are so significant that SCVRD’s 110 traditional program services would not be sufficient to meet their employment needs;
- Providing services to people with the most significant disabilities, especially SSI and/or SSDI recipients, in order to successfully achieve and maintain competitive employment in integrated

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work settings; and

• Providing supported employment services to youth with the most significant disabilities. (Pages 180-181) Title I

The provision of early intervention services is a major issue given the long application process associated with making eligibility determinations for both the SSI and SSDI programs. There will be a need for increased supported employment services to improve the employment outcomes of many SSI/SSDI recipients. As a total count, the number of SSI/SSDI recipients, who applied for services, increased to 2,256 by 2013. The trend reflects an increase of 7.3 percent from the previous three years. (Page 198) Title I

SCVRD’s supported employment goals and plans regarding the Title VI program are based on an analysis of the comprehensive statewide needs assessment and the department’s performance on the common performance measures as well as agency key performance indicators. The priorities are as follows:

• Strengthening service delivery afforded to individuals whose disabilities and vocational needs are so significant that SCVRD’s 110 traditional program services would not be sufficient to meet their employment needs;

• Providing services to people with the most significant disabilities, especially SSI and/or SSDI recipients, in order to successfully achieve and maintain competitive employment in integrated work settings; and

• Providing supported employment services to youth with the most significant disabilities. (Page 244) Title I

The individual placement model for competitive employment remains the primary supported employment model being used by SCVRD. Emphasis is placed upon providing services to people with most significant disabilities, especially SSI and/or SSDI recipients, whose employment needs are so significant that traditional 110 program services would not be sufficient to meet them. SCVRD coordinator of supported employment services also assists area office staff to identify and serve all eligible clients with the most significant disabilities. (Page 261) Title I

During the period of the last Unified State Plan cycle, SCCB made significant progress in closing these gaps. SCCB hired, trained, and obtained certification for a Work Incentives Counselor, and established referral pathways to the WIPA grantee benefits counseling services. SCCB established JOBS Specialist positions trained to provide Supported Employment including Customized Employment. SCCB signed a Ticket to Work Partnership Plus agreement with an Employment Network to provide on-going supports for supported employment cases. And SCCB has signed a number of fee-for-service agreements throughout the state with qualified service providers in the areas of Orientation and Mobility, Braille Instruction, Independent Living Skills that Support Employment, and adjustment to blindness psychological counseling. SCCB continues to work to close these gaps, and this modified state plan reflects these goals and
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priorities. (Page 286) Title IV

The South Carolina Commission for the Blind has established the capacities to provide Supported Employment to youth and adults with Most Significant Disabilities in response to the findings of the FFY 2016 CSNA. Funds received under section 603 of the Rehabilitation Act for Supported Employment are utilized to fund the costs of individualized discovery assessment, job development, job placement, and on-the-job supports for Supported Employment and Customized Employment delivered internally by JOBS Specialists. SCCB provides extended services for a period not to exceed 4 years. SCCB has signed a Partnership Plus Agreement under the Ticket to Work program to provide long term on going supports through an Employment Network (Able SC). (Page 313) Title IV

As required by WIOA 50% of Supported Employment funds will be used to provide Supported Employment Services to youth with most significant disabilities. SCCB built in-house capacities and resources to meet this goal since FPY 2016. SCCB has signed a Partnership Plus Agreement under the Ticket to Work program to provide long term on going supports through an Employment Network (Able SC). SCCB will look for opportunities to engage with private and public partners to fund extended and ongoing supported employment services for this population. (Page 313) Title IV

### Employer/Business

SCVRD utilizes multiple methods of working with employers to identify competitive, integrated employment and career exploration opportunities to facilitate the provision of VR services for adults and transition services, including pre-employment transition services, for students and youth with disabilities. On a statewide and local basis, the Business Partnership Network, or BPN, provides an opportunity for regular engagement with business partners to gain input on hiring needs, training curricula, and opportunities for outreach with business and industry. Business Advisory Councils (BACs) are established to provide input on specific programs, such as the IT Training Centers, in Columbia and at the Bryant Center in Lyman. Members of the BAC assist in evaluating courses of study and curricula to ensure SCVRD stays current with what is needed in the workplace for IT professionals. Also, SCVRD utilizes Business Development Specialists (BDSs) across the state whose role is to identify opportunities for training, work-based learning, job development and placement, and emerging career pathways. BDS staff participate on local business services teams, along with partners from SC Works and LWDBs, to provide a coordinated approach to business development activities. BDS staff also work with transition counselors and coaches to identify opportunities for work-based learning experiences, internships, apprenticeships, and OJT for students in conjunction with the pre-employment transition services that are provided in high school settings. (Page 182) Title I

SCCB actively engages with the South Carolina business community through services provided by the Training & Employment Division (T&E) Employment Consultants. SCCB T&E Employment Consultants build and maintain partnerships with businesses to:
South Carolina (SC) WIOA Matrix

- Assess and better understand the unique human resource needs of South Carolina businesses;

- To help align SCCB programs to better meet the unique and specific human resource needs of South Carolina businesses;

- To create, establish, and foster relationships with South Carolina businesses that help them meet their unique and specific human resource needs, including talent acquisition and talent retention;

- Develop opportunities for Work Based Experiences, Internships, Job Shadowing, and other work based learning experiences that provide South Carolina Businesses with opportunities to gain experience with a diverse and qualified workforce;

- Create mutually beneficial relationships and facilitate linkages of job openings to a highly skilled and diverse talent pool of candidates. Referrals of consumers who are seeking employment and who have been judged to be Job Ready are received from SCCB Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors. The Employment Consultant’s role is job development and placement that meets the needs of the business and the consumer. The Consultant also provides businesses and consumers with access to services that can be provided by SCCB or other governmental agencies. Incentives that may be applicable are also presented. These include:
   - The Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC). This program allows a maximum available credit of $2,400 per eligible worker.
   - Sensitivity and awareness training for employers and organizations. This training includes American Disability Act (ADA), sighted guide techniques and attitudes regarding blindness. The presentation is designed to remove myths and apprehensions about blindness.
   - Technical assistance for the implementation and support of assistive technology. (Pages 276-277) Title I

Data Collection

South Carolina has a vast workforce development system consisting of multiple public and private partners, the goal of which is to facilitate financial stability and economic prosperity for employers, individuals, and communities. We will evaluate the overall effectiveness of our system using the following tools: (1) WIOA common performance measures that assess employment, earnings, credential attainment, skills gain, and employer engagement; (2) SC Works Certification Standards that assess system management, job seeker services, and employer services; and (3) SWDB Strategic Plan key performance indicators. (Page 54) Title I

Accordingly, continuous improvement initiatives to build on the agency’s long-term history of success have focused on quality. SCVRD has embarked on an initiative known as “Quality One” (or “Q1”), which has a theme of “Quality happens one person at a time.” This included the establishment of workgroups to address quality measures and provide recommendations for a cohesive system that supports the provision of quality client services and metrics to gauge success and to realize results in increased successful employment outcomes for clients.
South Carolina (SC) WIOA Matrix

initiative aligns with SCVRD’s longstanding commitment to its Program Integrity model, which seeks a balance among productivity, customer service, and compliance assurance. Each of those components has measurable results and can be used to evaluate the agency at levels ranging from specific caseload or work unit up to an agency-wide level. The agency is proactively integrating the new WIOA common performance measures into program evaluation, data collection, and management information reports. (Page 92) Title I

SCVRD’s supported employment goals and plans regarding the Title VI program are based on an analysis of the comprehensive statewide needs assessment and the department’s performance on the common performance measures as well as agency key performance indicators. The priorities are as follows:

• Strengthening service delivery afforded to individuals whose disabilities and vocational needs are so significant that SCVRD’s 110 traditional program services would not be sufficient to meet their employment needs;

• Providing services to people with the most significant disabilities, especially SSI and/or SSDI recipients, in order to successfully achieve and maintain competitive employment in integrated work settings; and

• Providing supported employment services to youth with the most significant disabilities. (Pages 180-181) Title I

Based on the past three years’ data on services for students and youth, SCVRD estimates it will provide services, including but not limited to pre-employment transition services, to approximately 8,480 individuals that are initially referred by the school system.

Data collection for the new 911 Case Services Report will allow for better identification of students with disabilities and provision of pre-employment transition services. As the new data becomes available, projections and fiscal forecasting for the provision of pre-employment transition services will be updated. (Page 204) Title I

511

No disability specific information found regarding this element.

Equal Opportunity and Nondiscrimination: Section 188

Able Access is a fee for service program offered by Able SC to promote accessible and inclusive environments within businesses and government agencies. Staff provide Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) trainings and consultations. These services include but are not limited to policy and procedure review, onsite accessibility survey, testing on online property for screen reader/magnifier accessibility, and tailored staff trainings in a wide variety of disability topics (Page 41) Title I

Most workforce, economic development, and education programs are managed locally, and the quality of service delivery may vary by area. A number of measures are underway to improve the
### South Carolina (SC) WIOA Matrix

consistency of service delivery, including: the implementation of SC Works Center Standards and WIOA Eligible Training Provider provisions. The SC Works Center Standards address service delivery to job seekers and employers and center management, and are used by LWDBs to evaluate effectiveness, programmatic and physical accessibility, and continuous improvement of the SC Works delivery system. Along the same lines, training providers are now required to submit program data and meet certain requirements to be eligible to receive WIOA training funds. This will help ensure that participants receive high-quality training in high-demand, high-wage occupations. (Page 49) Title I

Monitoring performed at both the state and local level ensures that all SC Works Centers are in compliance with Section 188 of WIOA, the ADA, and other applicable regulations. Individuals who seek to utilize South Carolina’s workforce system can expect facilities, whether physical or virtual (e.g. SC Works Online Services) to meet federally-mandated accessibility standards. Complaints of discrimination are directed to the State Equal Opportunity Officer. (Page 108) Title I

As part of the SC Works center certification process, LWDBs are required to evaluate accessibility of the SC Works delivery system. SC Works centers were evaluated in 2017 and will be re-evaluated every three (3) years thereafter as required by WIOA. In order to be certified according to the SC Works certification standards, each center must meet the following accessibility baseline measures:

150. The Center is compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Every workforce area will work with Vocational Rehabilitation partners and SCDEW Office of Equal Opportunity, as needed, to ensure ADA compliance.

151. The Center provides assistive technology for customers to use when accessing computers and other services. This includes customers with visual impairments, physical disabilities, and hearing impairments.

152. Staff should be identified to assist people with disabilities at the first point of contact and in case of emergency.

153. There are linkages to services for people with special needs, including veterans and others, related to disability. (Page 109-110) Title I

158. SCCB is working with the SC Works system to ensure one-stop center accessibility to persons with visual impairments. SCCB Assistive Technology Staff are current evaluating centers in several areas of the state to propose and provide hardware and/or software that will enable persons who are blind or low vision to access one stop center programs. (Page 110) Title I

Innovation and expansion activities have been identified within these strategies and include:

Maintaining a staff interpreter for clients who are deaf to provide video remote interpreting, on-site services to mutual clients of SCVRD and DHHS, extend consistent access to interpreter services in rural areas, and enhance the accessibility of VR productions and client and staff...
Gaps included:

- America’s Job Centers (AJCs) in South Carolina (SC Works) have not effectively served individuals with blindness and vision impairments. There have been no documented instances of SCCB cases that are jointly served by other workforce entities.

- Historically, the relationship between SCCB and the AJCs, although cordial, is primarily one of referral with no evidence of substantial services after referral;

- Although the AJCs are accessible, the technology is frequently out of date and the AJC staff lack the skills to effectively operate/demonstrate the technology; Under WIOA there are legal requirements around the development of partnerships between SCCB and entities in the greater workforce development system.

While these gaps are the focus on continuing efforts both by the AJC's (SC Works) and SCCB, much has been accomplished since the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment. SCCB has improved co-location of SCCB staff in the AJC's for specific periods of time each month where space allows. SCCB has signed MOU's and Infrastructure Cost Sharing Agreements with all SC Works service areas, and has been providing technical assistance to the AJC's in regards to programmatic and physical accessibility. (Page 287) Title IV

SCCB has been an active partner in the WIOA Unified State Plan Implementation Team. South Carolina’s plans are to continue convening this group of core WIOA partners to continue to develop meaningful and effective partnerships, share expertise and knowledge, skills, and abilities, and to expand the ability of the system to serve all individuals including those with disabilities. In addition, SCCB is working to ensure that there is agency presence in the local one stop American Job Centers on a consistent basis to provide support and expertise to consumers who are blind or visually impaired. SCCB entered into MOU’s and Infrastructure Cost Agreements with all SC Works service deliver areas. SCCB is currently working with SC Works to provide assessment and technical assistance to ensure programmatic and physical accessibility. (Page 320) Title IV

**Vets**

SC Works representatives are available in centers throughout the state to help veterans transition into the workforce. Local Veterans’ Employment Representatives (LVER) staff conduct employer outreach and job development in the local community to assist veterans in gaining employment, including conducting seminars for employers and, in conjunction with employers, conducting job search workshops and establishing job search groups. Disabled Veteran Outreach Program (DVOP) Specialists are trained to provide intensive case management services to veterans and eligible spouses with Significant Barriers to Employment (SBE), and age priority veterans ages 18 to 24, including individual career coaching, job referral, resume preparation assistance, career fairs and job search workshops, jobs training programs, and referrals to
## South Carolina (SC) WIOA Matrix

Supporting or training services.

SCVRD has an ongoing partnership with DEW’s LVERs and DVOPs to coordinate outreach efforts with federal contractors. Federal contractors are required to establish an annual hiring benchmark for protected veterans and individuals with disabilities, or adopt the national benchmark provided by the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP). Through this informal partnership, SCVRD and DEW LVERs and DVOPs identify work ready individuals and coordinate employment opportunities with federal contractors. (Page 39) Title I

In accordance with the Jobs for Veterans Act, veterans and eligible spouses are given priority of service in employment and training programs funded in whole or in part by the USDOL. Priority of service means that veterans and eligible spouses are given priority over non-covered persons for the receipt of employment, training, and placement service and that a veteran or an eligible spouse either receives access to a service earlier in time than a non-covered person, or, if the resource is limited, the veteran or eligible spouse receives access to the services instead of the non-covered person. The state has provided guidance to local workforce boards on how to implement the priority of service provisions.

The state monitors priority of service for veterans and eligible spouses by ensuring that local workforce areas have implemented appropriate priority of service policies. Local policies are assessed to determine the following:

- Whether the policy explains the differences between Veterans’ Services and priority of service for veterans and eligible spouses;
- Whether the policy describes the roles and responsibilities of SC Works Center staff and management as they pertain to Veterans’ Priority of Service; and,
- Whether the policy demonstrates appropriate actions for showing priority of service to veterans and eligible spouses for Department of Labor funded programs in SC Works Centers. (Page 107) Title I

The state has issued guidance regarding services under the Disabled Veterans’ Outreach Program (DVOP). DVOP staff must limit their activities to providing services to eligible veterans and eligible spouses who:

- Meet the definition of an individual with a significant barrier to employment (SBE), as defined and updated by DOL, or
- Are members of a veteran population identified by the Secretary of Labor as eligible for DVOP services, currently defined as veterans aged 18 to 24.

Per state guidance, an eligible veteran or eligible spouse who is identified as having a SBE must be immediately referred to a DVOP specialist. Veterans ages 18 to 24 must also be referred to DVOP specialists. In instances where a DVOP specialist is not available, referrals to a SCDEW career development specialist will be made. DVOP specialists will conduct an initial assessment.
### South Carolina (SC) WIOA Matrix

to determine if the veteran or eligible spouse will benefit from the provision of case management. In the event that case management is determined not suitable, the DVOP will refer the veteran or eligible spouse to the other program staff who would best be able to meet their needs. Veterans with a SBE and those aged 18 to 24 must have access to all appropriate SC Works services and are not limited to receiving services only from DVOP specialists. Additionally, veterans and eligible spouses who do not meet the SBE definition or are not within a specified category identified by the Secretary of Labor, are to be referred to appropriate non-JVSG SC Works staff member(s) to receive services, on a priority basis. (Pages 107-108) Title I

Another area of identified need is response to the increase of traumatic brain injuries (TBI) through outreach and a focus on serving more individuals with brain injuries. This includes the general population as well as veterans from the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.

The number of TBIs in the general population has increased slowly over the last decade according to the CDC; however, deaths from TBI have decreased. This decrease means an increase in the number of persons who might be returning to work and requiring vocational rehabilitation services. (Page 198) Title I

SCVRD provides services to veterans with disabilities; and, efforts to increase outreach to this population are ongoing. SCVRD has established relationships with local employers in all areas of the state, and collaboration with the Veterans Administration is essential to providing the greatest outreach for veterans with disabilities. SCVRD has assigned counselors to the state’s seven VA specialty clinics and each area office has designated counselors to work with local VA offices for referrals. (Page 200) Title I

### Mental Health

SCVRD works collaboratively with DMH and has an established MOA that outlines roles, responsibilities, and referral procedures. In addition, several cooperative agreements are in place across the state for IPS (Individualized Placement and Support) caseloads to provide rapid placement and job coaching for individuals with severe and persistent mental illness. Transition counselors working within the schools to provide pre-employment transition services coordinate with school-based mental health counselors to identify students in need of services, whether that is VR or mental health services. Through this “no wrong door” approach, students in need of services are connected to the appropriate resources in a timely manner. (Page 184) Title I

SCCB is developing a new Cooperative Agreement with the South Carolina Department of Mental Health to collaborate, coordinate, avoid duplication of services, and enhance the employment outcomes of shared consumer populations. (Page 278) 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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