



South Carolina (SC) WIOA Matrix

Employment First State Leadership Mentor Program (EFSLMP)

No specific disability related information found.

Customized Employment

This assessment determined that the following gaps exist in this area:

- SCCB does not offer supported employment or customized employment services to its consumers with significant and most significant disabilities. This is reflected in the low numbers of employment outcomes for these individuals.
- Individuals with disabilities identified the following as barriers to achieving employment outcomes:
 - Attitudes of the public and employers toward individuals who are blind or visually impaired.
 - Lack of reliable and accessible transportation.
- A significant number of SCCB consumers receive SSA benefits and fear the loss of benefits if they seek employment. Access to benefits counseling provided by either SCCB or outside agencies appears to be minimal.
- Independent living skills are a major need of SCCB consumers. The Rehabilitation Center (EBMRC or the Center) meets this need for a small percentage of SCCB consumers, but many individuals, staff and partners expressed a need for more comprehensive services to be available throughout South Carolina especially in rural areas. (Page 385)

SCCB should consider developing partnerships with other state agencies, including SCVRD, to determine if individuals with most significant disabilities who are also blind and visually impaired can be served in existing programs. SCCB should consider modification of its programs at EBMRC to address the needs of individuals with most significant disabilities. Specifically, SCCB should investigate how Supported Employment and Customized Employment can be integrated into EBMRC's programs. SCCB should consider assigning a program administrator the responsibilities of reaching out to individuals with the most significant disabilities and overseeing services that meet their needs. Once SCCB either creates or gains access to Supported Employment programs, these programs should have administrative oversight as well. In compliance with WIOA, SCCB

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should investigate the options for creating Customized Employment programs that would serve individuals with the most significant disabilities. While there are several organizations around the country that provide training in Customized Employment, it should be noted that training alone will not increase SCCB's capacity to serve individuals with most significant disabilities. Extensive planning, partnership development, policy and fee structure development are also needed. SCCB should develop an extensive strategic plan around building capacity for serving this population. SECTION 3 NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH BLINDNESS AND VISION IMPAIRMENTS FROM DIFFERENT ETHNIC GROUPS, INCLUDING NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE BEEN UNSERVED OR UNDERSERVED BY THE VR PROGRAM Section 3 identifies the needs of individuals with blindness and vision impairments from different ethnic groups, including needs of individuals who have been unserved or underserved by SCCB. Recurring Themes Across all Data Collection Methods The following themes emerged across all data collection methods in the area of the needs of individuals with blindness and vision impairments from different ethnic groups, including individuals who have been unserved or underserved by the VR program: Indicators Hispanic or Latino residents make up 5% of the state's general population. (Page 421)

Priority 2.2: Increase Employment for those with Most Significant Disabilities

Strategy 2.2.1: JOBS Specialists (Job Oriented Blind Services) SCCB will establish three (3) Job Oriented Blind Services (JOBS) Specialist positions that will provide Supported Employment (SE), Customized Employment (CE), and on-going supports for consumers who have Most Significant Disabilities. These positions will 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.

Strategy 2.2.2: 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 and life skills training.

Strategy 2.2.3: Build SSA Benefits Counseling Capacity SCCB will work to build the capacity and specialized expertise necessary to provide effective and accurate benefit planning to help improve consumer knowledge of how employment affects SSA benefits and incentives for engaging in employment. The perceived risks of losing benefits are a significant barrier to employment for this population. (Page 435 & 439)

Strategy 2.4.3: Staff Training & Development in Evidence Based Practice SCCB will invest in staff training and development in VR evidence based practices such as: Motivational Interviewing; Customized Employment; Discovery Assessment; Supported Employment; Individual Placement and Supports; Integrating Labor Market Information into Vocational Goal Setting, IPE Development and Informed Choice.

Strategy 2.4.4: Summer Internship Program (SIP) SCCB will continue to offer the successful Summer Internship Program (SIP) where college students engage in a paid summer internship program in their chosen field of study. Students complete a set number of working internship hours and receive a stipend upon successful completion. SIP has a proven track record of influencing the obtainment of permanent employment. (Page 441)

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Strategy 2.1.2: Talent Pipeline Project Engagement SCCB has been an engaged partner in South Carolina's Talent Pipeline Project with the WIOA core partners. SCCB will continue to be engaged in this workforce development effort, and will work to align SCCB VR program efforts with the broader state goals, strategies, and objectives. These include focus on developing a strategy for Career Pathways, Customized Training, and services to business including talent acquisition and talent retention services.

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 has committed itself to

Strategy 2.2.1: JOBS Specialists (Job Oriented Blind Services) SCCB will establish three (3) Job Oriented Blind Services (JOBS) Specialist positions that will provide Supported Employment (SE), Customized Employment (CE), and Individual Placement and Support (IPS) models employment services to consumers who have Most Significant Disabilities. These positions will 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. As well as

Strategy 1.2.2: Engagement with Department of Disability & Special Needs SCCB will engage with DDSN to develop a new Cooperative Agreement designed to improve collaboration and leverage long term supported employment funding to meet the needs of persons with Most Significant Disabilities. (Page 446)

Braiding/Blending Resources

Additionally, the continued use of collaborative work groups allows partners to gain a better understanding of the resources available and to identify opportunities for braiding and leveraging resources. (Page 56)

As mentioned previously, the SWDB approved funding for EvolveSC, a grant program that allows businesses to develop a training program in partnership with technical colleges that meet employer skill needs and improves educational access for incumbent workers and newly hired employees. EvolveSC is another example of braiding and leveraging resources to increase educational access. Co-enrollment strategies also facilitate resource sharing across workforce development programs. One of the state's strategies for alignment and coordination is co-enrollment across core, mandatory, and optional programs, replicating the co-enrollment practice that already exists between TAA and WIOA and increasing access to education and training, case management, and supportive services.

In addition to the examples provided above, the state will continue to seek grant funding opportunities that align with the state's vision and strategic goals for workforce development and coordinate with colleges that receive grants. (Page 86)

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Section 188/Section 188 Guide

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

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. (Page 123)

DEI/Disability Resource Coordinators

No specific disability related information found.

Other State Programs/Pilots that Support Competitive Integrated Employment

The South Carolina Workforce Development Board (SWDB) approved \$741,235 to fund an EvolveSC pilot for Program Year 2015. Through EvolveSC, businesses, either individually or as a consortium, can apply for training grants to upskill their existing workforce. Additionally, EvolveSC provides nationally recognized certificate training for new hires in order to meet the requirements for entry level positions. Twenty-five Evolve SC grants have been awarded to fund training in the areas of manufacturing, healthcare, construction, transportation, logistics, and distribution. (Page 31)

The DD Council is federally funded by the Developmental Disabilities Act (DD Act) and consists of consumers and family members, DD Act partners, and non-governmental organizations. The DD Council provides leadership in planning, funding, and implementing initiatives that lead to improved quality of life for people with developmental disabilities and their families. The council recently funded several pilot projects across the state, including Ready, Set to Go to Work, Project Inclusion, and STEP for SC. In addition to providing employment-training experiences for students with disabilities, these pilot projects also fund the training of job coaches and other support professionals who work directly with students.

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A brief description of each project is provided below.

Project Inclusion. Executed by Able SC, Project Inclusion is a pilot project that connects independent living specialists with students with disabilities to promote transition to adulthood with an emphasis on community-based employment in Abbeville, Laurens, and Fairfield counties. Activities include classroom instruction on topics related to employment skills development, self-advocacy during IEP meetings, and rights and responsibilities of individuals with disabilities in the workplace. Several school districts have integrated these activities into their curricula, including Laurens and Fairfield School Districts.

STEP for SC. STEP for SC is a pilot project executed by Community Options, Inc. in the Midlands region that connects high school students with disabilities with community-based career experiences. A job coach assesses students' job skills and provides training so students are able to participate in community-based internships at local businesses. Job coaches work with students to transition internship experiences and supports into job accommodations and employment.

SCCB Summer Teen Program. As previously mentioned, SCCB also operates the Summer Teen Program which provides five weeks of vocational exploration, job shadowing and internship opportunities, as well as adjustment to blindness training, work readiness and self-advocacy skills training. The Student Internship Program (SIP) provides paid summer internships to college seniors and juniors in their field of study. (Page 41)

Similarly, DEW and DSS are piloting a co-enrollment partnership in the Pee Dee LWDA where DEW provides case management and works with DSS clients to develop an Individual Employment Plan (IEP). DEW also provides workshops and helps DSS clients obtain employment. More recently, the Governor announced that the SNAP E&T program will be transferred to DEW resulting in better alignment and coordination of programs that help individuals prepare for competitive employment. (Page 43)

Manning One-Stop Pilot. DEW and SCDC are partnering to help offenders find jobs through a work ready initiative that launched in November 2014. With onsite support from SC Works at the Manning Correctional Institution, this venture allows inmates to apply to participate in a series of workshops that develop important capabilities including computer skills, interview techniques, resume writing and work assessments testing. After completing the required workshops and intensive services, job-ready participants are referred to a recruiter or career development specialists for additional training and services. DEW also assists in getting each inmate that successfully completes the program bonded through the Federal Bonding Program. (Page 44)

Goal 2, Priority 2.3: Increase Vocational Exploration & Opportunities for Transition Students

Strategy 2.2.3: Build SSA Benefits Counseling Capacity SCCB will work to build the capacity and specialized expertise necessary to provide effective and accurate benefit planning to help improve consumer knowledge of how employment affects SSA benefits and incentives for engaging in employment. The perceived risks of losing benefits are a significant barrier to employment for this population.

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Strategy 2.3.1: CareerBOOST Pre–Employment Transition Services SCCB will pilot a demonstration project called CareerBOOST (Building Occupational Opportunities for Students in Transition). This program will augment SCCB’s transition services program by providing the five (5) required Pre Employment Transition Services (PETS) to eligible or potentially eligible students statewide. These PETS services will include:

1. Self–Advocacy Training
2. Work Readiness Workshops
3. Work–based Learning Experiences
4. Post–Secondary Education Enrollment and Careers Exploration
5. Information & Referral to SCCB’s Transition VR Program

Strategy 2.3.3: Student Internship Program Jr. SCCB will work to expand our highly successful Student Internship Program (SIP) that provides paid summer internships for college seniors and juniors, by developing a SIP Jr. Program that will provide paid summer internship opportunities in a variety of career fields to transition students in their senior and junior year of High School.

Strategy 2.3.4: Inventor Lab SCCB will use authority under “innovation and expansion” utilizing Pre–Employment Transition Services set aside funds to establish “Inventor Lab” where transition students will be exposed to career exploration in functional 3–D fabrication, manufacturing using 3–D printer technology, product development, business development, microenterprise development, entrepreneurship, marketing and other science, technology, engineering, and math careers.

Strategy 2.3.5: Summer Teens Program SCCB will continue the very successful Summer Teens Program that brings students from across the state to the Ellen Beach Mack Rehabilitation Center for 5 weeks each summer. This program introduces students to career exploration & counseling, assistive technology, social skills and work readiness skills training, adjustment to blindness skills training, and other activities designed to increase confidence, improve knowledge, skills, and abilities, and create peer mentor networks & self–advocacy.

Strategy 3.1.2: Establish an SCCB Business Advisory Council SCCB Business Relations will work to establish an eight (8) member Business Advisory Council consisting (Page 445)

Financial Literacy/Economic Advancement

Benefits counseling to consumers. Outcomes for SSA Beneficiaries (RSA 911 FY2014 Data) SSI and SSDI beneficiaries earn on average \$5.00 per hour less than non-beneficiaries. SSI/SSDI beneficiaries worked on average 10 hours less per week than non-beneficiaries. Observations Based on the Data The percentage of SCCB applicants who are individuals with blindness was fairly constant over time at approximately 25% from 2012 to 2014. Very few deaf-blind consumers applied for services over the 3-year period. Vision impaired is the disability-type most highly represented among SCCB applicants, although the percentage declined from 61% to 53% over the three years while those classified as “Other” climbed from 13% to 20%. In each of the three years

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2012 to 2014, individuals with the most significant disabilities were virtually unserved by VR, declining in number from 18 to 8, and from 5% to 2.5% of all applicants, over the 3-year period. According to SCCB, 21% of its 2014 consumers were SSA beneficiaries. While it is unclear whether these individuals have more significant disabilities than other consumers, it is evident that SSI and SSDI beneficiaries earn less per hour and work fewer hours per week than non-beneficiaries, suggesting that they have more employment-related challenges. Many of these individuals and their families are concerned about losing the safety net that is provided by either SSI or SSDI if they go to work.

These fears may adversely affect return-to-work behavior and result in settling for part-time work that keeps them under the Substantial Gainful Activity (SGA) amount, or prevents them from going over the “cashcliff.” Benefits counseling, along with financial literacy training, could improve consumer perceptions of employment options available to them resulting in increased wages and lifting many of them above the poverty level. 2010 RSA Monitoring Report Findings and Recommendations As a result of a federal monitoring visit conducted in 2010, RSA issued findings and recommendations for SCCB to address. Those that coincide with this report’s findings on services to individuals with the most significant disabilities include: SCCB has a long-standing history of not providing Supported Employment, and SC residents do not have access to long term supports, or job coaches, either inhouse or through CRPs. While consumers with multiple disabilities could benefit from joint service provision between SCCB and SCVRD, and despite an interagency agreement with SCVRD, there has been no evidence of collaboration even though consumers could benefit from dual enrollment. Needs of Individuals with the Most Significant Disabilities: Qualitative Data on Barriers and Improvements Focus Groups and Key Informant Interviews The following themes emerged on a recurring basis from the individual interviews conducted for this assessment regarding the needs of individuals with the most significant disabilities, including their need for supported employment: Partners indicated that 60% of individuals with blindness and vision impairments have multiple diagnoses, but that SCCB caters to the 40% whose only diagnosis is blindness and does not have the capacity to meet the needs of the 60% with multiple disabilities. (Page 419)

Benefits

- 55,700 persons with disabilities aged 18 to 64 receive benefits. (Page 23)

Ticket to Work. 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.

Work Incentives Planning and Assistance (WIPA). Walton Options for Independent Living and Able SC are WIPA providers that empower SSI and SSDI beneficiaries with disabilities to make informed decisions regarding their career strategies and transitioning to self-sufficiency. Community Work Incentives Coordinators provide in-depth counseling about benefits and the effect of work on those benefits; conduct outreach efforts to beneficiaries of SSI and SSDI (and their families) who are potentially eligible to participate in federal or state work incentives program; and work in cooperation with federal, state, and private agencies and nonprofit organizations that serve social security beneficiaries with disabilities.

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Project SEARCH. Project SEARCH is an international program first developed in 1996 at the Cincinnati Children's Hospital. There are 300 programs across 46 states and five other countries. South Carolina currently has two Project Search locations – Spartanburg and Columbia – based at regional hospitals. (Page 42)

Job Seeker Services. There is at least one comprehensive SC Works Center in each LWDA and one or more satellite center or access point. Through these centers, job seekers can access WIOA programs and Wagner–Peyser Employment Services. Individuals can also get assistance filing for UI benefits and reemployment assistance, including but not limited to: looking for a job, resume preparation, and interviewing skills workshops. Job seekers can also access employment services and manage UI benefits remotely using SC Works Online Services (SCWOS) and the MyBenefits (Page 54)

Calculation Method: factors include: total overhead cost; adjustment rate for wage change; unemployment rate; mortality rate; underestimation of referral earnings; gain not attributable to VR services; fringe benefits factor; discount rate; tax factor; retirement age.

Associated Objective(s): 3.1.1 (Page 248)

Frequency: annual
Calculation Method: factors include: total overhead cost; adjustment rate for wage change; unemployment rate; mortality rate; underestimation of referral earnings; gain not attributable to VR services; fringe benefits factor; discount rate; tax factor; retirement age
Associated Objective(s): 3.1.1. Item 17 Performance Measure: Reimbursement from Social Security Administration for SCVRD Job Placements Last Value: \$906,146 Current Value: (Page 350)

- South Carolina Worker's Compensation Commission (WCC) to facilitate the referral process of injured workers to SCCB to enhance return-to-work efforts;
- Social Security Administration (SSA) to collaborate on employment incentives and supports and maximize Social Security Administration/Vocational Rehabilitation (SSA/VR) reimbursement activity through the Ticket to Work Program;
- South Carolina Office of Veterans' Affairs (OVA) to help identify veterans who need additional supports in securing benefits, gaining employment, and accessing advocacy services;
- South Carolina Department of Disabilities and Special Needs (DDSN) to eliminate potential duplication of services and increase coordination of employment services provided to the shared consumer populations;
- South Carolina Department of Social Services (DSS) to eliminate duplication of services and increase coordination of employment services provided to the shared consumer populations;
- SCCB will develop a Cooperative Agreement with the South Carolina Department of Mental Health to collaborate, coordinate, eliminate potential duplication of services, and enhance the employment outcomes of shared consumer populations. (Page 369)

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This assessment determined that the following gaps exist in this area:

- SCCB does not offer supported employment or customized employment services to its consumers with significant and most significant disabilities. This is reflected in the low numbers of employment outcomes for these individuals.
- Individuals with disabilities identified the following as barriers to achieving employment outcomes:
 - Attitudes of the public and employers toward individuals who are blind or visually impaired.
 - Lack of reliable and accessible transportation.
- A significant number of SCCB consumers receive SSA benefits and fear the loss of benefits if they seek employment. Access to benefits counseling provided by either SCCB or outside agencies appears to be minimal.
- Independent living skills are a major need of SCCB consumers. The Rehabilitation Center (EBMRC or the Center) meets this need for a small percentage of SCCB consumers, but many individuals, staff and partners expressed a need for more comprehensive services to be available throughout South Carolina especially in rural areas. (Page 385)
- A significant number of SCCB consumers receive SSA benefits and fear the loss of benefits if they seek employment. Access to benefits counseling provided by either SCCB or outside agencies appears to be minimal.
- Independent living skills are a major need of SCCB consumers. The Rehabilitation Center (EBMRC or the Center) meets this need for a small percentage of SCCB consumers, but many individuals, staff and partners expressed a need for more comprehensive services to be available throughout South Carolina especially in rural areas.

Section Three: Needs of individuals with blindness and vision impairments from different ethnic groups, including needs of individuals who have been unserved or underserved by the VR program.

The most common themes that emerged in this area were: (Page 397)

SECTION 2 NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, INCLUDING THEIR NEED FOR SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT

Section 2 provides an assessment of the needs of individuals with the most significant disabilities, including their need for supported employment, as conveyed by statistical data and as expressed by the different groups interviewed and surveyed. Recurring Themes Across all Data Collection Methods The following themes emerged in the area of the needs of individuals with the most significant disabilities including their need for supported employment: Indicators Employers' perceptions, lack of education and training and job skills, and geographic access to services and jobs were all identified by key informants as major barriers to employment for individuals with most significant disabilities. A large majority of SCCB consumers receive SSA benefits, and fear of

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benefit loss affects their return-to-work behavior. Staff and partners agree that employment barriers are different for individuals with most significant disabilities than for the general population. SCCB has a long-standing history of not providing Supported Employment services. SC residents do not have access to long term supports, or job coaches, either through SCCB in-house or through CRPs. There is no evidence of collaboration between SCCB and SCVRD on behalf of customers with multiple diagnoses. Agency performance Surveyed partners and staff were in agreement that geographic access and slow service delivery are the biggest barriers to SCCB services for individuals with the most significant disabilities. SCCB served a very small number of individuals with most significant disabilities over a 3-year period, declining from a total of 18 in 2012 to 8 in 2014. SCCB appears to provide limited services to individuals with cognitive or mental health disabilities. (Page 418)

(RSA Annual Review Report) – Total number of applicants who were SSA recipients, broken down by SSI and SSDI: FY2012 - 57 SSI recipients, 94 SSDI beneficiaries FY2013 - 60 SSI recipients, 126 SSDI beneficiaries SCCB Programming: Asset Development Services - SCCB does not provide benefits counseling to consumers. Outcomes for SSA Beneficiaries (RSA 911 FY2014 Data) SSI and SSDI beneficiaries earn on average \$5.00 per hour less than non-beneficiaries. SSI/SSDI beneficiaries worked on average 10 hours less per week than non-beneficiaries. Observations Based on the Data The percentage of SCCB applicants who are individuals with blindness was fairly constant over time at approximately 25% from 2012 to 2014. Benefits counseling, along with financial literacy training, could improve consumer perceptions of employment options available to them resulting in increased wages and lifting many of them above the poverty level. 2010 RSA Monitoring Report Findings and Recommendations As a result of a federal monitoring visit conducted in 2010, RSA issued findings and recommendations for SCCB to address. Those that coincide with this report's findings on services to individuals with the most significant disabilities include:

- SCCB has a long-standing history of not providing Supported Employment, and SC residents do not have access to long term supports, or job coaches, either inhouse or through CRPs. While consumers with multiple disabilities could benefit from joint service provision between SCCB and SCVRD, and despite an interagency agreement with SCVRD, there has been no evidence of collaboration even though consumers could benefit from dual enrollment. Needs of Individuals with the Most Significant Disabilities: Qualitative Data on Barriers and Improvements Focus Groups and Key Informant Interviews The following themes emerged on a recurring basis from the individual interviews conducted for this assessment regarding the needs of individuals with the most significant disabilities, including their need for supported employment: Partners indicated that 60% of individuals with blindness and vision impairments have multiple diagnoses, but that SCCB caters to the 40% whose only diagnosis is blindness and does not have the capacity to meet the needs of the 60% with multiple disabilities. (Page 419)

For instance, if an individual with blindness or a vision impairment wanted to go to a training program to become an IT Specialist, then the AJC could fund a part of the training with an ITA, and SCCB could fund part of the training with case service dollars, or provide AT, transportation, or other needed support services. The case becomes a shared case with both entities and the consumer benefits from the employment experience of the AJC and the disability experience of SCCB. SCCB should offer its technical expertise to the SC Works centers to insure they are fully accessible and include the latest and most relevant assistive technology. In addition, SCCB should work with SC Works staff to provide inservice training and support in the use of assistive technology. SCCB and

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the SC works centers should regularly provide cross-training to each other on the services they provide and the required processes that each organization must go through. This occurs infrequently at the current time and staff turnover and the passage of time requires more frequent training. SCCB should partner with the Social Security Administration and provide training to w the SC Works Partnership Plus model that allows SCCB to “hand-off” an SSA beneficiary in the Ticket to Work program to the SC Works center as the Employment Network (EN). This is a rarely used model that can bring resources to the SC Works Center and provide support to individuals with blindness and vision impairments for several years.

SECTION 5 NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS IN TRANSITION

The reauthorization of the Rehabilitation Act under WIOA places a greater emphasis on the provision of transition services to youth and students with disabilities, especially their need for pre-employment transition services (Pre-ETS). The Notice of Proposed Rulemaking for 34 CFR 361 and 363 released recently by RSA indicates that the comprehensive statewide needs assessment must include an assessment of the needs of youth and students with disabilities in the State, including their need for Pre-ETS. The project team investigated the needs of youth and students with blindness and vision impairments in this assessment and includes the results in this section. Recurring Themes Across all Data Collection Methods The following themes emerged in the area of the needs of individuals in transition: Indicators In 2014, 2% of South Carolina residents under the age of 18 had blindness or vision impairment. (Page 426)

2.2.2: 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 and life skills training.

Strategy 2.2.3: Build SSA Benefits Counseling Capacity SCCB will work to build the capacity and specialized expertise necessary to provide effective and accurate benefit planning to help improve consumer knowledge of how employment affects SSA benefits and incentives for engaging in employment. The perceived risks of losing benefits are a significant barrier to employment for this population. (Page 435 & 439)

School to Work Transition

Students with Disabilities. Based on FY 2014 school district report card data, the statewide total for students with Individualized Education Plans (IEP) has reached 28,738 (SC Dept. of Education). Comparatively, SCVRD opened 2,253 new cases for students referred through the school system, which represents 15% of the agency’s total new referrals. Successful employment outcomes for clients referred by the school system increased to 1,041, representing 15% of all agency closures. Although SCVRD has made significant inroads in transition services in recent years by ramping up partnerships in schools and dedicating more staffing to school-to-work transition, to meet the new WIOA requirements and the need indicated by the total number of students receiving IDEA services, additional resources and continued focus on this population will be required.

The SCVRD provides a robust set of student and youth services to enhance the transition from school-to-work or other post-secondary training opportunities. As indicated in WIOA, transition counselors provide pre-employment transition services for students prior to their exit from high

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school, and SCVRD staff continue to provide services to support placement into competitive employment, or completion of post-secondary training and/or credential-based programs. The number of SCVRD successful employment outcomes for transition-aged youth has grown by 48 percent over the past two years.

SCVRD has agreements with each of South Carolina's public school districts and the S.C. Department of Education for collaborative delivery of school-to-work transition services. SCVRD has a counselor assigned to each public high school in the state, and in some instances an SCVRD counselor is physically located at a school. This entails providing pre-employment transition services to students, including: (Page 38)

Similarly, the SCCB provides student and youth services, including the pre-employment transition services listed above, to enhance the transition from school-to-work or to other post-secondary training opportunities. It recently increased the transition team to better serve students with visual impairments and/or legal blindness. Although SCCB is working to establish formal written agreements with school districts throughout the state, a counselor is currently assigned to each public high school, including the South Carolina School for the Deaf and Blind (SCSDB). Transition counselors serve a specific territory and collaborate with teachers for the visually impaired and other specialized staff to improve outcomes for students and youth with disabilities.

The employment rate for working age people with disabilities (18 to 64) in South Carolina is 29.0%, compared to 74.0% for persons without disabilities (Annual Disability Statistics Compendium). This reflects a 45 point gap in the (Labor Force Participation Rate (LFPR) between people with and without disabilities. In further detail, only 36.3% of the 24,900 South Carolinians who are blind or have vision loss are employed. Also, 46.8% of the 42,800 individuals with hearing differences are employed and only 21.9% of South Carolinians with intellectual or developmental disabilities are employed. This further illustrates the need for effective utilization of assistive technology solutions and expanding school to work transition programs. (Page 39)

A significant focus of WIOA includes strategies to strengthen school-to-work transition programs and youth programs. This includes specific activities conducted within the secondary school system for students to better prepare them for employment, post-secondary education or post-secondary training. There are also provisions within WIOA to address the needs of out-of-school youth to ensure that they are connected with the services needed to achieve competitive, integrated employment. Strong partnerships with local education agencies, VR service delivery capacity for school-to-work transition services, workforce development programs for youth, and connection with stakeholders involved in student, youth and parent engagement are being deployed in South Carolina. The work of these partnerships will help to prepare the next generation of job seekers for the emerging employment opportunities before exiting school settings, in keeping with the education and career pathways development. (Page 62)

In carrying out its mission to prepare and assist eligible individuals to achieve and maintain competitive employment, the South Carolina Vocational Rehabilitation Department (SCVRD) actively seeks referrals and comparable services and benefits. In doing so, the department has established formal and informal partnerships with other providers of facilities and services. For the purpose of referral, service collaboration, facility allocation, and staff designation, cooperative agreements have been established with the following agencies in South Carolina: Department of Mental Health (DMH), the Department of Corrections, the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ), the Department of Disabilities and Special Needs (DDSN), the Department of Health and Human

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Services (DHHS), and the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE). Detailed agreements between SCVRD and the SCDE describe the coordination of school-to-work transition services and also Adult Education services.

With regard to the S.C. Independent Living Council, the department acts in an advisory and technical support capacity. The SCVRD portion of the Unified State Plan assures that an interagency agreement or similar document for interagency coordination between any appropriate public entities becomes operative. The department has entered into collaborative arrangements with institutions of higher education as well. This is to ensure the provision of vocational rehabilitation services, described in Title I of WIOA, is included in the individualized plan for employment of an eligible individual. This includes the provision of vocational rehabilitation services during pending disputes as described in the interagency agreement or similar document. SCVRD will seek to assure the participation of individuals with physical and mental impairments in training and employment opportunities, as appropriate. With the exception of services specified in paragraph (E) and in paragraphs (1) through (4) and (14) of section 103(a) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) enacted on July 22, 2014, information shall specify policies and procedures for public entities to identify and determine interagency coordination responsibilities of each public entity in order to promote coordination and timely delivery of vocational rehabilitation services. (Page 194)

Review and measurement of key performance indicators on a quarterly basis.

- Monthly monitoring and specialized reporting on the results of outreach efforts to underserved and emerging disability populations.
- Monthly monitoring and specialized reporting on services to youth and pre-employment transition services.
- Dedicated staff for specific populations and specialized services: school-to-work transition; deaf and hard of hearing; supported employment.
- Demonstration programs to enhance supported employment services and services for youth with the most significant disabilities, individuals diagnosed with ASD, and demand-driven training based on community labor market information. (Page 202)

SCVRD has an MOU with DDSN. Staff works collaboratively with local Disabilities and Special Needs (DSN) boards and providers in serving individuals in need of supported employment services and long-term follow along supports to maintain competitive, integrated employment. DDSN has representatives on TASC to assist in school-to-work transition efforts as well as ensuring youth with the most significant disabilities have access to the supports needed to gain and maintain competitive employment. Through these efforts, clients/consumers are served in a complementary fashion based on the expertise and distinct roles of each agency. (Page 204)

SCVRD has an extensive HRD department that facilitates training for all employees, with programmatic training being provided by internal and external subject matter experts. The department provides/sponsors trainings that focus on medical, psychosocial, and vocational aspects of specific disabilities, and feature the application of assistive technology as appropriate. Recent topics include: disability etiquette, brain injury, alcohol/drug addictions, multiple sclerosis, mental

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illness, autism, deafness and hearing impairments, epilepsy, learning disabilities, musculoskeletal, spinal cord injury, diabetes as well as other disability-specific trainings. Workshops on transition from school to work, HS/HT, supported employment, vocational assessment, serving ex-offenders, serving the Hispanic/Latino population, leadership development, and maintaining a culture of quality were also provided. Counseling skills training is provided on an ongoing basis with a focus on motivational interviewing techniques. A series of statewide trainings focusing on providing specific counseling skills and the application of those skills within the VR setting to counselors and other staff who provide direct services to clients also began in 2013 and will continue for all designated new staff. (Page 212)

TASC is a robust state-level interagency collaborative that works in support of increasing positive post-secondary outcomes for students with disabilities. It has multiple stakeholder agencies and organizations, and supports local level interagency teams through training, technical assistance, and strategic planning. The department continues to coordinate the development of designated staff with emerging initiatives by the SCDE and the 81 local school districts (LEAs) under IDEA and state school-to-work transition efforts. Transition training efforts this year included the following: a two-day transition summer series was conducted for transition staff that included presentations and training on vocational assessment, use of ACT and Work Keys assessments, referral development, best practices, documentation and use of school records, work experiences, using O*Net, and post-secondary training. Selected transition staff participated in a session on active training techniques and self-determination. Over 40 transition staff participated in an annual interagency transition conference, focused on local interagency planning and content sessions focused on effective service delivery for students with disabilities. Youth leaders also participated in the conference. (Page 213)

Items covered in the agreement include:

Student identification and exchange of information, procedures for outreach to students with disabilities who need transition services, methods for dispute resolution, consultation and technical assistance to assist educational agencies in planning for school-to-work transition activities, and the requirements for regular monitoring of the agreement. Timing of student referrals is individualized based on need but should generally occur no later than the second semester of the year prior to the student's exit from school. (Page 226)

Strategy 1.1 Improve the quality of employment outcomes for eligible individuals with disabilities.

Objective 1.1.1 Support continuous improvement within Program Integrity: Productivity, Compliance Assurance, and Customer Service.

Objective 1.1.2 Increase services to underserved and emerging disability populations.

Objective 1.1.3 Identify opportunities for matching client strengths and abilities with community employment needs.

Objective 1.1.4 Demonstrate effectiveness in national comparative data for performance measures. Strategy 1.2 Enhance school-to-work transition services.

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Objective 1.2.1 Maximize relationships with education officials in all S.C. school districts.

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.

Strategy 1.3 Enhance job driven vocational training programs.

Objective 1.3.1 Develop job-readiness skills through work training center activities, demand-driven skills training, and on-the-job supports.

Objective 1.3.2 Equip clients for job search through resume development, interviewing skills, other "soft" skills, and disability-related classes. (Page 297-298)

Demonstrate effectiveness in national comparative data for performance measures.

Strategy 1.2 Enhance school-to-work transition services.

Objective 1.2.1 Maximize relationships with education officials in all S.C. school districts.

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

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Objective 1.3.2 Equip clients for job search through resume development, interviewing skills, other "soft" skills, and disability-related classes.

Goal 2 We will be a team of highly qualified professionals who have the commitment, accountability and opportunity to excel.

Strategy 2.1 Provide training to equip staff to provide quality vocational rehabilitation services.

Objective 2.1.1 Develop training based on needs assessment in accordance with the State Plan. (Page 307)

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Strategies that contributed to the achievement of overall goals and specific objectives included:

- Review and measurement of key performance indicators on a quarterly basis.
- Monthly monitoring and specialized reporting on the results of outreach efforts to underserved and emerging disability populations.
- Monthly monitoring and specialized reporting on services to youth and pre–employment transition services.
- Dedicated staff for specific populations and specialized services: school–to–work transition; deaf and hard of hearing; supported employment.
- Demonstration programs to enhance supported employment services and services for youth with the most significant disabilities, individuals diagnosed with ASD, and demand–driven training based on community labor market information. (Page 347)

The following programs have recently been implemented or expanded to enhance transition services:

- Junior Student Internship Program (JSIP) – The SCCB provides eligible high school students who an opportunity to gain valuable work experience during a summer internship with business partners throughout the state. Participants receive a stipend upon successful completion of the program. This program is also available to college students.

Priority 2.3: Increase Vocational Exploration & Opportunities for Transition Students

Strategy 2.3.1: CareerBOOST Pre–Employment Transition Services SCCB will pilot a demonstration project called CareerBOOST (Building Occupational Opportunities for Students in Transition). This program will augment SCCB’s transition services program by providing the five (5) required Pre Employment Transition Services (PETS) to eligible or potentially eligible students statewide. These PETS services will include:

1. Self–Advocacy Training
2. Work Readiness Workshops
3. Work–based Learning Experiences
4. Post–Secondary Education Enrollment and Careers Exploration
5. Information & Referral to SCCB’s Transition VR Program. (Page 439-440)

Strategy 2.2.3: Build SSA Benefits Counseling Capacity SCCB will work to build the capacity and specialized expertise necessary to provide effective and accurate benefit planning to help improve consumer knowledge of how employment affects SSA benefits and incentives for engaging in employment. The perceived risks of losing benefits are a significant barrier to employment for this population.

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1. Self–Advocacy Training
2. Work Readiness Workshops
3. Work–based Learning Experiences
4. Post–Secondary Education Enrollment and Careers Exploration
5. Information & Referral to SCCB’s Transition VR Program

Strategy 2.3.3: Student Internship Program Jr. SCCB will work to expand our highly successful Student Internship Program (SIP) that provides paid summer internships for college seniors and juniors, by developing a SIP Jr. Program that will provide paid summer internship opportunities in a variety of career fields to transition students in their senior and junior year of High School.

Strategy 2.3.4: Inventor Lab SCCB will use authority under “innovation and expansion” utilizing Pre–Employment Transition Services set aside funds to establish “Inventor Lab” where transition students will be exposed to career exploration in functional 3–D fabrication, manufacturing using 3–D printer technology, product development, business development, microenterprise development, entrepreneurship, marketing and other science, technology, engineering, and math careers.

Strategy 2.3.5: Summer Teens Program SCCB will continue the very successful Summer Teens Program that brings students from across the state to the Ellen Beach Mack Rehabilitation Center for 5 weeks each summer. This program introduces students to career exploration & counseling, assistive technology, social skills and work readiness skills training, adjustment to blindness skills training, (Page 445)

Data Collection

Rallying for Inclusive, Successful Employment (RISE). RISE is a comprehensive, systematic approach to increasing employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities. Projects and services include: supporting and participating in the S.C. Disability Employment Coalition, hosting community workshops for families, partnering with the University of South Carolina (USC) to improve data collection on barriers to employment for individuals with disabilities, and providing individualized employment and empowerment services to consumers.

Ticket to Work. 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 42)

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A State-level Vision for System Integration has been outlined with an initial timeline. Activities that have occurred or are in process include the following: review of final rules regarding performance and reporting, review of current intake forms/applications, and identification of common elements and referral processes. Early fall activities will include a review of system needs and project planning in the context of final reporting guidelines and data collection instructions. Each core program is adapting and making changes to data collection and reporting systems to adhere to the final reporting requirements. (Page 81)

SCCB's data collection process consists of data that is collected directly from consumers, medical health providers (eye and medical doctors), educational institutions, consumer organizations and advocacy groups, and the Social Security Administration. Although Counselors in all consumer services programs have the primary responsibility of collecting and entering data, other staff, such as Counselor Assistants, Supervisors and service providers, can also collect and enter consumer data as needed.

As the SCCB works toward adopting a fully integrated case management, data collection, and reporting system that is shared by all core programs, it will need to reexamine its data collection and reporting processes so that they are consistent and aligned across partner agencies. (Page 94)

This 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. National standards and indicators, issued by the agency's parent federal organization, the Rehabilitation Services Administration, are also critical measures of SCVRD's success. The agency's performance levels in meeting those standards have been consistently high. The agency is proactively integrating the new WIOA common performance measures into program evaluation, data collection and management information reports. (Page 108)

The South Carolina workforce system continuously seeks ways to improve processes, policies, services and outcomes for job seekers and employers. As such, the core program partners will work alongside the SWDB and LWDBs to identify areas of opportunity that would benefit from further evaluation and research. For example, the new legislation highlights the need for system and data integration among core programs. In 2015, a partner agency work group began to research existing unified data collection and reporting systems in addition to other methods of data sharing. Although the group's work is still in its infancy, several systems have been demonstrated and options for portals or overlays to existing systems have been explored. As the federal oversight agencies provide more guidance on performance measures and reporting requirements, the work group can further hone the study to determine precise system needs.

The state will also coordinate evaluation and research projects with those provided for by the Secretary of Labor and the Secretary of Education. (Page 109)

Data collection efforts solicited input from a broad spectrum of VR stakeholders, including persons with blindness and vision impairments, service providers, SCCB staff and businesses.

It is expected that data from the needs assessment effort will provide SCCB and the Board of Directors with direction when creating the VR portion of the Unified State Plan and when planning for future program development, outreach and resource allocation. (Page 104)

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Data collection. Data was gathered from SCCB staff through the use of an Internet-based survey. All 125 staff were sent an electronic invitation and link to the survey. Approximately one week after the initial distribution, a subsequent notice was sent as both a “thank you” to those who had completed the survey and a reminder to those who had not. A third and final invitation was sent out 5 weeks after the second invitation. Surveys were then placed into “inactive” status and the data analyzed.

Efforts to ensure respondent confidentiality. Respondents to the staff survey were not asked to identify themselves by name when completing the survey. Responses to the electronic surveys were aggregated by the project team at SDSU prior to reporting results. This served to further protect the identities of individual survey respondents.

Efforts to ensure respondent confidentiality. Respondents to the business survey were not asked to identify themselves by name when completing the survey. Responses were aggregated by the project team at SDSU prior to reporting results. This served to further protect the identities of individual survey respondents. (Page 406)

In interviews with staff, it was indicated that these individuals “tend to sit around,” receiving no services. There is a significant gap between the needs of and services available to individuals with the most significant disabilities. Agency services appear to be targeted to individuals who are blind or visually impaired and have no additional disabilities. Individuals with cognitive and mental disabilities in addition to blindness appear to be significantly underserved, and in many cases may receive no substantial services. There is also a significant gap in the employment outcomes for these populations. Results by Data Collection Method Needs of Individuals with the Most Significant Disabilities: Quantitative Data on Barriers and Improvements National and/or Agency Specific Data Related to the Needs of Individuals with the Most Significant Disabilities, including their need for Supported Employment. SCCB uses a definition for MSD consistent with federal requirements. SSA Beneficiaries SSA Beneficiaries Applying for SCCB Services (SCCB data) - Total number and percentage of applicants who were SSA recipients: 2012: 169 (29%) 2013: 134 (25%) 2014: 88 (21%) SSI/SSDI Recipients. (Page 418)

Recurring Themes Across all Data Collection Methods The following themes emerged across all data collection methods in the area of the needs of individuals with blindness and vision impairments from different ethnic groups, including individuals who have been unserved or underserved by the VR program: Indicators Hispanic or Latino residents make up 5% of the state’s general population. South Carolina is one of only four states in the country to see an over 150% increase (specifically 167%, the 2nd highest in the nation) in the Hispanic population from 2000-2013. ? 68% of SC residents are White. African-Americans make up 28% of the general population. (Page 421)

The project team investigated the needs of youth and students with blindness and vision impairments in this assessment and includes the results in this section. Recurring Themes Across all Data Collection Methods The following themes emerged in the area of the needs of individuals in transition: Indicators In 2014, 2% of South Carolina residents under the age of 18 had blindness or vision impairment. In 2013, there were 12,700 individuals with blindness or vision impairment aged 20 and under. 57% of South Carolina residents with disabilities under the age of 18 live in poverty. 35% of South Carolina residents with disabilities attained a level of education equivalent to a high

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school diploma, and 12% attained a level of education equivalent to a college degree. Agency performance From 2012 to 2014, the rate of transition-age youth served by SCCB was 50% or more lower than the national average for Blind agencies. SCCB reported zero successful outcomes for transition age youth over the 2012-2014 reporting period. In its 2010 monitoring report, RSA recommended that SCCB expand its array of programming, including services for transition-age youth. The agency responded that transition programming would be expanded, but this had not been accomplished as of the end of 2015. (Page 425)

Small Business/Entrepreneurship

SCCB will work to expand our highly successful Student Internship Program (SIP) that provides paid summer internships for college seniors and juniors, by developing a SIP Jr. Program that will provide paid summer internship opportunities in a variety of career fields to transition students in their senior and junior year of High School.

Strategy 2.3.4: Inventor Lab SCCB will use authority under “innovation and expansion” utilizing Pre-Employment Transition Services set aside funds to establish “Inventor Lab” where transition students will be exposed to career exploration in functional 3-D fabrication, manufacturing using 3-D printer technology, product development, business development, microenterprise development, entrepreneurship, marketing and other science, technology, engineering, and math careers.

Strategy 2.3.5: Summer Teens Program SCCB will continue the very successful Summer Teens Program that brings students from across the state to the Ellen Beach Mack Rehabilitation Center for 5 weeks each summer. This program introduces students to career exploration & counseling, assistive technology, social skills and work readiness skills training, adjustment to blindness skills training, and other activities designed to increase confidence, improve knowledge, skills, and abilities, and create peer mentor networks & self-advocacy.

Strategy 3.1.2: Establish an SCCB Business Advisory Council SCCB Business Relations will work to establish an eight (8) member Business Advisory Council consisting. (Page 445)

Career Pathways

Compliance Assurance, and Customer Service.

Objective 1.1.2 Increase services to underserved and emerging disability populations.

Objective 1.1.3 Identify opportunities for matching client strengths and abilities with community employment needs.

Objective 1.1.4 Demonstrate effectiveness in national comparative data for performance measures. (Page 303)

Findings of the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment indicate that SCCB needs to reestablish Cooperative Agreements and community partnerships. SCCB is committed to becoming a cooperative and collaborative partner with community entities wherever such reciprocal

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relationships can benefit consumers and enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the VR program. SCCB will vigilantly seek out community partnerships that enhance our ability to provide comprehensive vocational rehabilitation services that lead to competitive integrated employment outcomes and career pathways. SCCB will develop and maintain new Cooperative Agreements with the following entities not carrying out activities under the Statewide Workforce Development System:

- The National Federation of the Blind (NFB) of South Carolina for the purposes of ensuring statewide availability of adjustment to blindness training, job readiness and computer skills training, and independent living skills training.
- The Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired (ABVI) for the purposes of ensuring statewide availability of adjustment to blindness training, job readiness and computer skills training, and independent living skills training.
- South Carolina Association of the Deaf, Inc.
- Goodwill Industries for the purposes of providing statewide access to job readiness and computer skills training.
- The Helen Keller National Center (HKNC) for the purpose of expanding training options for consumers who are Deaf/Blind and need training beyond the scope of programs provided at the Ellen Beach Mack Rehabilitation Center (EBMRC).
- And informal partnerships with community based partners such as faith based organizations, charitable organizations, and non-governmental community based organizations. (Page 374)

Gap: SCCB will develop the capacity, resources, and staff expertise to provide Job Driven vocational counseling and guidance that utilizes Labor Market Information and aligns with South Carolina's Talent Pipeline Project and Sector Strategies initiatives to assist eligible consumers in accessing career pathways that lead to high and middle skill/income jobs.

Gap: SCCB will develop the capacity to assist eligible consumers in the development of occupational knowledge, skills, and abilities that culminate in obtaining industry recognized credentials to include GED attainment, certifications, degrees, apprenticeships, occupational licensure, among others.

Gap: SCCB will build VR program capacities, expertise, and partnerships to provide improved transition services including Pre-Employment Transition Services to students who are blind or visually impaired. (Page 390)

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

Strategy 2.1.1: Staff Training SCCB in collaboration with the Department of Employment and Workforce (DEW) Business Intelligence Unit staff will conduct extensive SCCB staff training during FFY 2016 in order to expand VR staff knowledge, skills, and abilities to access current

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Local Labor Market Information, conduct Job Driven research, utilize Job Driven and Sector Strategies to provide informed choice and guidance to consumers in selecting vocational goals, assessing skills, locating vocational training to close skill gaps, and connect skilled consumers with existing or emerging vacant positions. (Page 439)

Strategy 2.1.2: Talent Pipeline Project Engagement SCCB has been an engaged partner in South Carolina's Talent Pipeline Project with the WIOA core partners. SCCB will continue to be engaged in this workforce development effort, and will work to align SCCB VR program efforts with the broader state goals, strategies, and objectives. These include focus on developing a strategy for Career Pathways, Customized Training, and services to business including talent acquisition and talent retention services.

Strategy 2.2.1: JOBS Specialists (Job Oriented Blind Services) SCCB will establish three (3) Job Oriented Blind Services (JOBS) Specialist positions that will provide Supported Employment (SE), Customized Employment (CE), and Individual Placement and Support (IPS) models employment services to consumers who have Most Significant Disabilities. These positions will 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. This is an expansion of a proven model. (Page 445)

Employment Networks

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 S.C. Disability Employment Coalition, an organization that addresses employment barriers for individuals with disabilities.

SC Disability Employment Coalition. The S.C. Disability Employment Coalition is a statewide systems improvement effort that comprises a broad stakeholder group working to improve employment recruitment, retention, and advancement for South Carolinians with disabilities. (Page 40)

Ticket to Work. 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.

Work Incentives Planning and Assistance (WIPA). Walton Options for Independent Living and Able SC are WIPA providers that empower SSI and SSDI beneficiaries with disabilities to make informed decisions regarding their career strategies and transitioning to self-sufficiency. Community Work Incentives Coordinators provide in-depth counseling about benefits and the effect of work on those benefits; conduct outreach efforts to beneficiaries of SSI and SSDI (and their families) who are potentially eligible to participate in federal or state work incentives program; and work in cooperation with federal, state, and private agencies and nonprofit organizations that serve social security beneficiaries with disabilities. (Page 42)

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C. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT WILL COORDINATE ACTIVITIES WITH ANY OTHER STATE AGENCY THAT IS FUNCTIONING AS AN EMPLOYMENT NETWORK UNDER THE TICKET TO WORK AND SELF-SUFFICIENCY PROGRAM UNDER SECTION 1148 OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT. (Page 364)

In addition, SCCB should work with SC Works staff to provide in service training and support in the use of assistive technology. SCCB and the SC works centers should regularly provide cross-training to each other on the services they provide and the required processes that each organization must go through. This occurs infrequently at the current time and staff turnover and the passage of time requires more frequent training. SCCB should partner with the Social Security Administration and provide training to w the SC Works Partnership Plus model that allows SCCB to “hand-off” an SSA beneficiary in the Ticket to Work program to the SC Works center as the Employment Network (EN). (Page 425)

* All enclosed information is cited directly from final state plan as of February 23, 2017

Find your local state plans here: <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osers/ras/wioa/state-plans/index.html>