



Maine's Workforce Investment Act Strategic Plan Modification 7/1/09 – 6/30/10

The following document is a Draft of Maine's Workforce Investment Act Strategic Plan Modification, July 1, 2009 – June 30, 2010.

The Modification addresses 24 questions selected by the United States Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration. The questions focus on new strategies and activities related to the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funding. Additional information contained in the current plan provides the complete picture of Maine's Workforce Investment Act Strategic Plan, and can be viewed at;

[www.state.me.us/labor/mjc/documents/strategicplan07.pdf](http://www.state.me.us/labor/mjc/documents/strategicplan07.pdf)

## **Section I. Context, Vision, and Strategy**

### **Economic and Labor Market Context**

**Question IV in PY 2009 Stand-Alone Planning Guidance: Provide a detailed analysis of the state's economy, the labor pool, and the labor market context. (§112(b)(4).)**

#### **IV. Maine's economy, labor pool, and labor market context.**

Economic conditions in Maine have deteriorated precipitously during the recession, paralleling the national downturn. From the beginning of the recession in December 2007 through March 2009 the number of unemployed people surged 72 percent to 56,900, raising the unemployment rate from 4.7 to 8.1 percent.

The economic downturn has continued to drive unemployment up throughout the state. The manufacturing and natural resource sectors that have long been the economic backbone of the rim regions have been hit especially hard by the downturn. Forest products industries including logging, paper mills, and saw mills have experienced a large number of temporary and permanent layoffs, business closures, and reductions in work schedules and benefits.

Most forecasts call for an end to the recession in the coming months. When job growth returns Maine will continue to face profound workforce challenges. Demographic trends in the population are slowing labor force growth; restructuring of employment is causing knowledge and skill gaps between the needs of employers in growing industries and the experience of displaced workers; and the geographic divide between where many workers displaced from declining industries live and where businesses in stable and growing industries are located continues to complicate re-employment prospects for thousands of individuals and families.

Maine has a number of important initiatives under way to address this complicated dynamic. Investments in green and clean jobs, in areas such as organic farming, renewable energy, and energy efficiency are being made across the spectrum of economic and human capital development. Community colleges have developed programs to train and certify windmill technicians; the University of Maine's engineered wood composites center has developed and patented a range of important products and technologies, a number of which have directly led to the creation of new businesses; and a number of businesses are on the leading edge of wind and ocean energy development, bio fuels. The Maine Technology Institute has fostered the growth of innovative technologies that are directly leading to job creation in a wide range of small businesses in Maine.

To address skills gaps and assist unemployed and under-employed workers to transition to in-demand occupations, the Maine Department of Labor recently invested in a new tool known as TORQ, short for Transferable Occupation Relationship Quotient. TORQ is an analytical tool that produces intelligent comparisons between occupational characteristics in order to determine effective workforce transition strategies that are aligned with economic demand. It measures the transferability of workers among and between different occupations based on the workforce competency of jobs in terms of

knowledge, skills, abilities, education, and experience to identify new career options, define knowledge and skill gaps that may need to be addressed to successfully make the transition to a certain occupation, and identify available education or training programs. The Department of Labor is also exploring utilizing other new tools for use by program participants and will work with the Local Workforce Investment Boards to determine which tools would be most beneficial in the Career Centers.

The recession has exacerbated the workforce development challenges Maine faces, but from a long-term perspective, the challenges of demographic trends, shifting employment structure, and geographic divide between job displacement and job growth remain the same as those outlined in the 2007 to 2009 WIA plan modification.

The following sections, A through H, refer to the response contained Maine's Workforce Investment Act Strategic Plan Modification, July 1, 2007 – June 30, 2009.

#### **A. Composition of Maine's economic base by industry:**

As outlined in the 2007 to 2009 plan modification, Maine's economic base is similar to the nation. We continue to have higher than average concentrations of jobs in industries impacted by tourism, including relatively low-paying, highly seasonal industries such as retail trade and leisure and hospitality services. Due in part to our older, less well-educated, less prosperous population than the nation, we also have higher than average concentrations of jobs in state government, health care, and social services. Maine has lower than average concentrations of jobs in high-paying sectors such as professional & business services and manufacturing.

#### **B. Industry and Occupational Projections:**

The outlook outlined in the 2007 to 2009 plan modification is largely the same. Since the two year mod, the forecast for jobs among industries and occupations has been updated. The outlook for the 2006 to 2016 period is much the same as it was for the 2004 to 2014 period. The primary difference is that slower labor force growth is expected – just five percent for the 10 year period – and rates of growth or decline for individual occupations have been adjusted. On the whole, the outlook to 2016 is largely for a continuation of trends that have been on-going in the labor market for many years. As with the 2014 projections highlighted in the 2007 to 2009 plan modification, health care and social assistance, retail trade, leisure and hospitality, and professional and business services sectors are expected to create most net new jobs. The manufacturing sector is expected to continue to shed jobs.

The mix of jobs by occupation continues to shift along with the industry structure and changing work practices, new technologies, and new ways of delivering products and services. The fastest job growth is expected be at the upper end of the organizational hierarchy in managerial, professional, and technical occupations, and at the lower end in service and retail sales occupations. Slow growth or out-right decline is expected in many production, construction, administrative support, farming, forestry, and fishing

occupations. Many of those occupations have long been the bastion for middle-class earnings among those who do not have a degree.

### **C. Industries and Occupations Demand for Skilled Workers:**

The issues outlined in the 2007 to 2009 WIA plan modification largely continue to persist, though there has been significant progress toward on some fronts. The shortage of nurses is likely to be alleviated in time as our educational establishment develops new programs and expands others. Similarly, the development of two pharmacology programs in the state should alleviate the shortage of pharmacists in the years ahead.

The imperative to upgrade the education and skills of the unemployed, under-employed, and those in low-paying jobs with no clear career path is as important today as ever. The imbalance between the staffing needs of employers and the education and skill sets of a broad group of workers continues to be an enormous missed opportunity to advance the economic well-being of our state.

### **D. Jobs/Occupations Most Critical to the State's Economy:**

The 2007 to 2009 WIA plan modification outlined critical and emerging industries and Governor Baldacci's strategy to develop a workforce geared to meet the needs of those industries. Those remain important to workforce development in Maine. Since then additional focus has turned to the dual imperatives to deliver better health care more efficiently at lower cost, and to transform our economy from one based on fossil fuels that endanger our planet to renewable, more efficient forms. The ARRA includes a range of initiatives on these fronts. Rapid growth in health care demand has created shortages in a number of health professions. Maine's educational community has responded with expansion of existing programs, particularly nursing, and development of new programs in pharmacology.

Less easily defined by specific occupations is the critical need for workers and workforce development of green and clean jobs. Maine is part of a consortium of states that have joined together to grapple with questions around how to define what is or is not a green job, and the specific knowledge and skill requirements for which the education and training communities should develop curriculum to meet needs of employers in this growing, important field. Many green jobs are not new: heavy equipment operators and structural construction workers erecting wind mills or architects and engineers designing composite bridges. Some are traditional occupations that require new skills such as solar panel installation by plumbers.

Issues around defining and measuring green jobs and development of training programs to meet the needs of the rising green economy will continue to be fleshed out in the months and years ahead.

### **E. Skill Needs of Critical and Projected Jobs:**

The skill needs of critical and projected jobs outlined in the 2007 to 2009 WIA plan modification remain the same today.

## **F. Current and Projected Workforce Demographics:**

The current and projected workforce demographics outlined in the 2007 to 2009 WIA plan modification are largely unchanged, though more recent labor force projections call for even slower growth through 2016 than was previously expected through 2014.

## **G. “In-migration” or “Out-migration” Trends:**

Maine experienced a net in-migration of population between 2000 and 2006, but since then there has been a net out-migration. Between 2007 and 2008 Maine had the eighth fastest rate of out-migration among the states.

There has been a natural decrease in population (more deaths than births) in seven of the 16 counties since 2000. As the population ages, the share of people in their prime childbearing years is declining and mortality rates are rising.

As outlined in the 2007 to 2009 WIA plan modification Maine continues to grapple with the workforce challenges presented by an influx of Somalis, Sudanese, Togolese, and others from under-developed nations who require intensive education and training to meet the needs of employers.

## **H. Skill Demand and Gap:**

The knowledge and skill gaps associated with rising foreign competition, business restructuring, technological innovation, and other factors that are shifting and evolving the processes involved in production and service delivery outlined in the 2007 to 2009 WIA plan modification continue to persist today. In addition, the rise of the green economy is creating demand for new skills, often characterized as new skills for traditional occupations.

## **State Vision and Priorities**

**Question I.C. What is the Governor’s vision for ensuring a continuum of education and training opportunities that support a skilled workforce? (§112(a) and (b)(4).)**

### **The Governor’s Vision, direction and priorities**

Governor Baldacci’s future vision for Maine includes that state would become the renewable energy leader in New England. To this end he has directed our workforce development system to focus the use of Recovery funds on the areas of Energy and “Green jobs”, and weatherization. He is further directing the use of the funds toward the growing sectors of IT and Healthcare. He also expects us to develop and implement a robust training pathway for computer literacy. The Governor requests that we look to maximize opportunities to leverage these valuable resources with other funding sources and related programs. He directs us to look for opportunities to partner with existing programs and leverage other resources to carry out the intent of the ARRA workforce

funding. The future of our workforce and the Maine economy are dependent upon the efficient and effective use of these resources.

Governor Baldacci has established the Young Mainer Weatherization Corps as a priority for a portion of Recovery Act summer Youth funds. The Maine Youth Weatherization Corps will be a component of the WIA Summer jobs program. There will be 100 slots across the state allocated by formula that will combine a work experience with a work readiness skills program. The Weatherization Corps will partner with entities such as Maine Housing, Youthbuild, the CAP agencies and work readiness providers such as Jobs for Maine's Graduates, Adult Ed etc. to implement the program for the summer of 2009. The program will consist of a pathway of training experiences leading to a credential.

The Governor has stated that no less than 80% of the ARRA – WIA funds for each of the funding streams will be spent directly on participants for training; supportive services and needs based training. Although ARRA - WIA funds can be combined with other WIA funding, Recovery Act investments must be tracked and accounted for separately.

The Governor will be directing the 10% set aside monies into programs that will directly impact Maine citizen's ability to seek additional training and support. He expects to do that through existing programs like the Competitive Skills Scholarship Fund.

The ARRA – WIA 5% funds reserved for administration will be used primarily for administrative support functions such as contract execution, required reporting, monitoring and evaluation of statewide Recovery Act activities.

**Question I.E. What is the Governor's vision for ensuring that every youth has the opportunity for developing and achieving career goals through education and workforce training, including the youth most in need of assistance, such as out-of-school youth, homeless youth, youth in foster care, youth aging out of foster care, youth offenders, children of incarcerated parents, migrant and seasonal farm worker youth, youth with disabilities, and other youth at risk? (§112(b)(18)(A.))**

The Governor's vision for ensuring that every youth has the opportunity for developing and achieving career goals through education and workforce training is supported by both new and ongoing collaborations between MDOL Career Centers, and local staff of the Departments of Education, Corrections, Health and Human Services and other youth and family serving agencies, employers and organizations such as Job Corps, Maine Conservation Corps, Jobs for Maine's Graduates, Committees on Transition, local adult education and high schools, housing providers and homeless shelters, alternative schools and others.

The Governor has provided direction to the Departments of Labor and Education to expand the successful Maine Lap Top Initiative, which will provide technology to Maine's students and their parents. The agreement between Labor and Education will make the lap tops available for home use and will have software and links that will be

helpful to students as they progress through the Education system, planning for their futures, as well as adults who may need basic computer literacy skills or are searching for new employment opportunities in this changing economy.

The Governor has also directed the Workforce Development System to establish a Young Mainers Weatherization Corps that will begin the work of weatherizing every residential dwelling in Maine by 2020. Working with the Community Action Agencies that serve as the Local Weatherization Agencies, the Weatherization Corps will provide Maine's youth with a work experience that could lead to further education and training in the energy efficiency field or "green" construction sector. Local Workforce Investment Boards are encouraged to connect with Youth Service Providers who are already connected to the populations targeted for service by Recovery Act funds. The goals for the Weatherization Corps include assuring that 95% of enrolled Weatherization participants attain work readiness certificates before exiting the program and transitioning 95% of enrolled participants into Registered Apprenticeship, On the Job Training, post secondary school or unsubsidized employment.

Each of Maine's Local Workforce Investment Boards contains a separate Youth Council, comprised of youth and adult representatives from the private and public sectors with an interest in youth. Youth Councils set the direction and oversee local WIA youth programs provided to young people through Maine's CareerCenter system.

**Question II. Identify the Governor's key workforce investment system priorities for the state's workforce investment system and how each will lead to actualizing the Governor's vision for workforce and economic development. (§§111(d) and 112(a).)**

As previously stated in the 2007 – 2009 WIA State Plan Modification, *Investing in People* and *Focusing on Key Sectors* of the economy continue to be priorities for the Maine workforce development system. Governor Baldacci has provided direction for expending WIA-ARRA funds related to both priorities.

Investing in people; The Governor is expanding Maine's Competitive Skills Scholarship Program (CSSP) by utilizing the WIA 10% for statewide activities to increase the funds available for training Maine's citizens that are most in need. CSSP can pay for training that results in certificates, two or four year degrees and targets high wage, in-demand occupations. Additionally CSSP provides wrap around supports such as child care, transportation, books, supplies, equipment, remedial and prerequisite training

The Governor has stated that no less than 80% of the ARRA – WIA funds for each of the funding streams will be spent directly on participants for training and support services. This represents a substantial increase in available resources that can be utilized for participants compared to historical spending.

Focus on key sectors; Throughout the country statewide strategies that support industry driven sector projects are at the center of workforce and economic development activity. Maine will focus ARRA – WIA funding on four sectors; Energy, Green Jobs, Health

Care, and Information Technology. These sectors, identified as having growth potential and above average wages, will provide an opportunity for workers who are interested in employment in emerging sectors.

Sector strategies will:

- Address the needs of Maine's Employers by focusing on skills needed for a specific occupation or a set of occupations in that industry
- Address the needs of workers by promoting career paths
- Align Education and Economic Development planning and activities with Workforce Development planning and activities
- Engage new partners in community/regional economic development.

### **Overarching State Strategies**

**Question V.B. What strategies are in place to address the national strategic direction discussed in [Section 4] of this guidance, the Governor's priorities, and the workforce development issues identified through the analysis of the State's economy and labor market? (§112(b)(4)(D) and 112(a).)**

As stated in the Governor's vision, Maine's workforce Development system will focus ARRA-WIA funds on specific sector based initiatives, recognizing that a skilled workforce is the single most important factor in the State's future prosperity. Understanding how to leverage investments to strengthen the workforce connected to key industries will be critical in providing employers the workers they need as well as creating more opportunity for Maine's people. These sectors, identified as growth industries and having high wage in-demand occupations, are Energy, Healthcare, Information Technology, and Green Jobs. Through these emerging industry partnerships, Career Centers will connect those most impacted by the recession to education and training opportunities aligned with industries and jobs important to Maine's economy. Using a dual customer approach, the workforce development system will connect job seekers and workers with business in need of skilled employees, in effect "growing our own" workforce.

Given the recent changes in Maine's economy, the Maine Jobs Council and the Center for Workforce Research and Information will be hosting a series of Listening Sessions in cooperation with major employer/industry associations to capture employer input so as to better determine industry workforce needs and projections. While anecdotes of hiring difficulties are useful in learning more about Maine employer experiences with hiring the workers they need, they are not sufficient to alter policies or redirect limited funding for skill training investments. Through these structured listening sessions, we will gather well constructed evidence on what occupations and skill requirements Maine employers have had difficulty in locating applicants and hiring workers. Such evidence when combined with traditional occupational projections will provide Maine with better information around which to plan education and training investments.

## **Service Delivery Strategies, Support for Training**

**Question IX.G. Describe innovative service delivery strategies the state has or is planning to undertake to maximize resources, increase service levels, improve service quality, achieve better integration or meet other key state goals. (§112(b)(17)(A).)**

The State of Maine's strategy for increasing services to workers under the ARRA include:

- a requirement that a minimum of 80% of WIA program funds are for direct training and supportive services for participants, with no more than 20% of program funds to be devoted to staffing and overhead costs for service providers;
- tactical focus upon key economic sectors, targeting ARRA training resources to the areas of energy/weatherization/"green jobs," health care, and information technology and computer literacy;
- the State's requirement that ALL ARRA-related employment opportunities are posted on the Maine Department of Labor's web-based job bank, "Maine's Job Bank,"
- the utilization of the entire WIA 10% Set Aside/ARRA to enhance the State's successful Competitive Skills Scholarship Program (CSSP). CSSP provides training and support services in high wage in-demand occupations for individuals at 200% or less of the federal poverty level. Under the ARRA effort, Governor Baldacci has required that CSSP enhancement efforts be devoted to recipients of unemployment compensation;
- the utilization of the WIA 5% Administrative funds to develop a layoff aversion and training program using valuable lessons from the Governor's Training Initiative. This will not supplant state budget cuts that may affect GTI.
- that the Maine Department of Labor, the Maine Jobs Council, and Maine's four Local Workforce Investment Boards convened a conference of potential youth providers for the development of an accelerated Summer Youth Employment Program. The Summer Youth Employment Program will include the deployment of a "Young Mainers Weatherization Corps" to work in conjunction with the Maine State Housing Authority, Community Action agencies, and others;
- that the Maine Department of Labor, the Maine Jobs Council, and the LWIB's convene a meeting of significant training providers in Maine, including the Community Colleges, Adult Education, and the Career/Technical Education to explore "bulk purchasing" of training slots in targeted sectors, and potential capacity expansion for providers.

## **Section II. Service Delivery**

### **State Governance and Collaboration**

**Question III.A.2. Describe how the agencies involved in the workforce investment system interrelate on workforce, economic development, and education issues and the respective lines of authority. (§112(b)(8)(A).)**

The Governor's Workforce Cabinet, which is Chaired by Labor Commissioner Laura Fortman, and has representatives from Education, Economic Development, Workforce Development, Community Colleges, University System, Maine State Housing Authority and Finance Authority of Maine, supports state and local efforts to improve our education

and training system through expansion of programs that promote high achievement and which align workforce training with the new skill-set requirements of the 21st century global economy.

The Maine Jobs Council, (MJC) which serves as the State Workforce Investment Board, also has representatives from Education, Workforce and Economic Development, and is connected to the Workforce Cabinet by virtue of the fact that the MJC Director is the Staff to the Cabinet.

Representatives of the MJC have been asked to participate in the Department of Education's 21<sup>st</sup> Century Advisory Council. The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Partnership uses a framework which presents a holistic view of 21st century teaching and learning that combines a discrete focus on 21st century student outcomes (a blending of specific skills, content knowledge, expertise and literacies) with innovative support systems to help students master the multi-dimensional abilities required of them in the 21st century.

Another new effort underway in Maine is Mobilize Maine, which will align Community Economic Development Strategies with the Local Workforce Investment Act plans. Mobilize Maine will identify and develop strategies to address Maine's unique assets, which may be skills, businesses, activities or special places that have market-leverage in the global economy, but may not have been previously recognized.

**Question III.C.1. Describe the steps the state will take to improve operational collaboration of the workforce investment activities and other related activities and programs outlined in section 112(b)(8)(A) of WIA, at both the state and local level (e.g., joint activities, memoranda of understanding, planned mergers, coordinated policies, etc.). How will the State Board and agencies eliminate any existing state-level barriers to coordination? (§§111(d)(2) and 112(b)(8)(A).)**

The Maine Jobs Council, the LWIBs and the Maine Department of Labor continue to work in close consultation and collaboration for the effective delivery of ARRA-related service. The MDOL has convened meetings of ALL Executive Branch agencies in receipt of ARRA funds to coordinate ARRA-related employment opportunities and potential training needs. Governor Baldacci has designated the Commissioner of Labor as the "HR Director for ARRA in Maine." Again, we are vigorously enforcing the Governor's directive that ARRA jobs be posted on Maine's Job Bank, providing rapid employment opportunities for unemployed workers in the state.

MDOL is also working in close collaboration with the Maine Department of Education on Governor Baldacci's laptop initiative, which is providing up to 100,000 laptop computers to high school students statewide, with easy access also available to adult workers seeking employment and training information and opportunities. MDOL and MDOE have signed a Memorandum of Understanding with MDOE to facilitate successful implementation of this initiative.

MDOL also is utilizing a close working relationship with the Governor's Office of Health Policy, and the Dirigo Health Agency, which provides supplemental support to workers eligible for the Health care Tax Credit under the Trade Act.

Also, MDOL's Bureau of Employment Services and Bureau of Unemployment Compensation Program work closely on re-employment efforts through REA, profiling, and Job Search Express for unemployment compensation recipients.

### **Reemployment Services and Wagner-Peyser Act Services**

**Question IX.C.4.b. Describe the reemployment services the state provides to Unemployment Insurance claimants and the worker profiling services provided to claimants identified as most likely to exhaust their Unemployment Insurance benefits in accordance with section 3(c)(3) of the Wagner-Peyser Act. (§112(b)(17)(A)(iv).)**

The MDOL plans to utilize our successful experience with the REA program to effectively deploy ARRA Reemployment Services funds. REA, Job Search Express, profiling, and "First Pay" workshops will be conducted in our CareerCenters and at our itinerant sites statewide (see map, attached).

Again, using the WIA 10% Set Aside under ARRA to supplement CSSP efforts, focused upon unemployment compensation recipients, provides a strong re-employment link.

Maine's Job Bank currently has more than 100,000 registrants, approximately one half of whom have filed unemployment compensation claims on line. During the initial filing for benefits, the applicant has the opportunity to register on the Job Bank and utilize the job match functionality to search for employment.

Maine also plans to enhance re-employment efforts by utilizing new technological tools that perform resume building, job matching, skill assessment, career ladder, career "lattice" and other functions to significantly improve our services in the CareerCenters and on the web.

Reemployment Service and Wagner-Peyser funds under ARRA will also be used to enhance staffing levels in our CareerCenters on a limited period basis.

**Question IX.C.1.b. Describe how the State will ensure the three-tiered service delivery strategy for labor exchange services for job seekers and employers authorized by the Wagner-Peyser Act includes: (1) self-service, (2) facilitated self-help service, and (3) staff assisted service, and is accessible and available to all customers at the local level. (§112(b)(17)(a)(i).)**

Maine will continue to use WIA and W-P funds to assist targeted populations, including veterans, people with disabilities, low income individuals, and recipients of public services. Maine's LVER/DVOP team has significantly increased outreach to veterans, Maine is pleased to continue the Disability Navigator Program, and to enhance CSSP. MDOL is also working with the Maine Department of Health and Human Services to assist in the effective use of employment and training funds under the Food Stamp

Program. Finally, Maine will use ARRA funds to upgrade our Rapid Response efforts and provide additional training and support services to dislocated workers.

### **Adult and Dislocated Worker Services**

**Question IX.C.1.a. Describe state strategies and policies to ensure adults and dislocated workers have universal access to the minimum required core services as described in §134(d)(2).**

In addition to providing regular Informational sessions about CareerCenter services, each Local Workforce Investment Board is doing more outreach than ever before, providing services at satellite locations in communities that previously did not have a CareerCenter presence. This is a result of reconfiguring the CareerCenter footprint that occurred last year in response to reduced federal funding.

A web-based platform to provide labor exchange activities has been developed and deployed, allowing rural citizens to access services when challenged by distance, transportation and geography.

Additional assistance is available at the Career Centers for people with disabilities through the Disability Program Navigator as well as to Veterans through the DVOP / LVER programs.

In an attempt to make more resources available for serving Maine's citizens, Governor Baldacci has directed the system to utilize the WIA 10% funds, for statewide activities, to be used to expand Maine's Competitive Scholarship Program, which focuses on low income individuals and training for high wage in demand occupations. Additionally the Governor is directing the system to expend at least 80% of the available funds on direct service to participants which represents a substantial increase for the system.

**Question IX.C.1.c. Describe how the state will integrate resources provided under the Wagner-Peyser Act and WIA Title I for adults and dislocated workers, as well as resources provided by required One-Stop partner programs, to deliver core services. (§112(b)(17)(a)(i).)**

See IX C1a, IX C4b, IX G

**Question IX.C.3.a. Describe the Governor's vision for increasing training access and opportunities for individuals including the investment of WIA Title I funds and the leveraging of other funds and resources. (§112(b)(17)(a)(i).)**

As stated in the Governor's Vision, the 10% ARRA-WIA set-aside funds will be used for increasing the capacity of the Competitive Skills Scholarship Program (CSSP). CSSP

serves low income individuals and focuses on training for High Wage In-Demand occupations identified by the Center for Workforce Research and Information.

Discussions are underway between the Department of Labor and the Department of Health & Human Services concerning the opportunity to expand CSSP even further, utilizing other training funds, which would allow more citizens to receive needed occupational training and meaningful employment in growth sectors. Similar conversations are occurring with Maine's Public Utilities Commission about using a portion of their ARRA training funds to focus on "green and clean" jobs.

Maine will focus its workforce investments on Key Sectors important to Maine's economy. Governor Baldacci has directed the system to partner with businesses and organizations connected to those sectors identified as having increased employment potential and that provide above average wages. By developing Industry led initiatives, Maine will train its citizens for available jobs in growth industries, while being responsive to the needs of Maine's employers.

Additionally the Governor is directing the system to expend at least 80% of the available funds on direct service to participants. This represents a substantial increase for the system.

**Question IX.A.5. What models/templates/approaches does the state recommend and/or mandate for service delivery in the One-Stop Career Centers? For example, do all One-Stop Career Centers have a uniform method of organizing their service delivery to business customers? Is there a common individual assessment process utilized in every One-Stop Career Center? Are all One-Stop Career Centers required to have a resource center that is open to anyone? (§§112(b)(2) and 111(d)(2).)**

In Maine, each CareerCenter has a Resource Center that is available to everyone. While there is some commonality between Career Centers with regards to assessment, there is no prescribed uniform process. Maine does not have a mandated method of delivering services to business customers.

The State has emphasized ARRA provisions related to priority of services and eligibility criteria to the Local Workforce Investment Boards.

### **Youth Services**

**Question IX.E.1. Describe the state's strategy for providing comprehensive, integrated services to eligible youth, including those most in need. (§112(b)(18).)**

**In an effort to serve to those most in need, the Department of Labor convened an informational meeting concerning the ARRA Youth programming. Specific outreach was done to youth service providers connected to targeted populations including homeless youth, youth with disabilities, youth offenders, veterans and minorities.**

## **Veterans' Priority of Service**

**Question IX.C.5.b. What policies and strategies does the state have in place to ensure that, pursuant to the Jobs for Veterans Act (P.L.107-288) (38 USC 4215), priority of service is provided to veterans (and certain spouses) who otherwise meet the eligibility requirements for all employment and training programs funded by the Department of Labor?**

Maine continues to attempt to improve priority of service to veterans. MDOL's Veterans team has increased outreach efforts in recent months. Providing employment and training service to veterans includes a Veterans component at Rapid Response sessions, utilization of our itinerant service sites, and specialized workshops for veterans at veterans' service organization locations.

Our Veterans teams have also effectively utilized local media to promote services. Vet representatives also conduct pre-deployment and post-deployment survey for Department of Defense personnel, often in person on site.

Also, the Maine Jobs Council has recently established a Veterans Sub-committee to provide additional focus on veterans' services for the state board.

## **Service Delivery to Targeted Populations**

**Question IX.C.4.a. Describe the state's strategies to ensure that the full range of employment and training programs and services delivered through the state's One-Stop delivery system are accessible to and will meet the needs of dislocated workers, displaced homemakers, low-income individuals, migrant and seasonal farm workers, women, minorities, individuals training for nontraditional employment, veterans, public assistance recipients and individuals with multiple barriers to employment (including older individuals, limited English proficiency individuals, and people with disabilities). (§112(b)(17)(A)(iv).)**

Again, WIA 10% Set aside funds under ARRA will enhance successful efforts to provide training opportunities in high wage/high demand jobs through CSSP. New technological tools like videophones and webinars improve our service to people with disabilities. The Disability Navigator Program provides significant improvement to our system's service to disabled populations. MDOL also plans additional guidance to reinforce priority of service in this area.

Specific to people with disabilities, the Department of Labor, Bureau of Rehabilitation Services will use ARRA funds to eliminate the waiting list for service, and provide a new five day Career Exploration workshop to their clients, so they are better prepared to utilize the resources and services of the Career Centers.

### **Section III. Operations**

#### **Transparency and Public Comment**

**Instruction from Section II of State Planning Guidance Plan Development Process: Include a description of the process the state used to make the Plan available to the public and the outcome of the state's review of the resulting public comments. (§§111(g) and 112(b)(9).)**

The Maine Jobs Council, will present the Draft State Plan Modification document at the MJC's Policy Committee meeting on 4/24/09 for review and discussion. The meeting will be followed by a two week Public Comment period, from 4/25/09 to 5/08/09. Comments will be reviewed and addressed in a revised document that will be presented at the full Maine Jobs Council meeting on 5/29/09. The full Council will then be asked to vote to approve and recommend for the Governor's submission, or not, by the 6/30/09 deadline.

All interested parties will be made aware, via e-mail messages and websites, of the opportunity to provide comments concerning the Plan Modification. Information about the MJC Policy Committee meeting, the Public Comment period and the full Council meeting will be posted on the MJC website at [www.state.me.us/labor/mjc/](http://www.state.me.us/labor/mjc/)

Interested parties receiving notification include representatives from; Education, Economic Development, Higher Education, Adult Education, Service providers (Women, Youth, Veterans, People with Disabilities, Older Workers, Apprentices), Workforce System Partners, Elected Officials including State Labor Committee, Industry Associations, Chambers of Commerce, Maine's Congressional Delegation, Businesses, Housing Authority, State Agencies, the Governor's Workforce Cabinet and others.

#### **Increasing Services for Universal Access**

**Question VI.C. What state policies are in place to promote universal access and consistency of service statewide? (§112(b)(2).)**

See IX 1a; IX C4b

#### **Local Planning Process**

**Question VIII.D. Describe the state-mandated requirements for local areas' strategic planning, and the assistance the state provides to local areas to facilitate this process. ((§112(b)(2) and 20 CFR 661.350(a)(13).)**

The Maine Department of Labor hosted an informational session concerning the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and the Summer Youth Employment program. Presenters included Maine's First Lady, Karen Baldacci, Chair of the Maine Children's Cabinet, who spoke about the Governor's vision for Maine's youth, Department of Labor Commissioner Laura Fortman who spoke about the goals and priorities for the ARRA and the summer youth program including providing meaningful employment and serving those youth most in need, and Commissioner Ryan Lowe who

spoke about the fiscal reporting requirements emphasizing increased accountability and transparency.

Frequent and on-going meetings between the Department of Labor, the Local Workforce Investment Boards (LWIB), and the Maine Jobs Council are taking place to communicate ARRA information as it becomes available from the USDOL. Guidance letters have been issued from the Maine Department of Labor to the Career Center system, and from the Maine Jobs Council to its members and interested parties. The Department of Labor intends to provide on-going technical assistance to the field as well as weekly conference calls with the LWIBs and a bi-weekly update to frontline staff.

Two mandated requirements for Local plans include the 80% expenditure rate and the sector focus established by the Governor. Each LWIB plan must reflect the Governor's direction to expend at least 80% of the ARRA funds on direct service to participants. This new goal represents a substantial increase compared to current expenditure rates.

### **Procurement**

**Question VIII.F.5. Describe the competitive and non-competitive processes that will be used at the state level to award grants and contracts for activities under title I of WIA, including how potential bidders are being made aware of the availability of grants and contracts. (§112(b)(16).)**

As stated in the previous question (**VIII.D**) the Maine Department of Labor has hosted informational sessions concerning ARRA funds, timelines and program activities.

MDOL, the Maine Jobs Council and the Local Workforce Investment Boards meet in person regularly, and via teleconference as needed, as new program information and guidance becomes available.

Governor Baldacci has directed all State agencies to post ARRA information, guidance and contracts on Maine's Recovery Act Website;  
[www.maine.gov/governor/baldacci/policy/Recovery2009.html](http://www.maine.gov/governor/baldacci/policy/Recovery2009.html)

The WIA State Plan Modification document and the public comment process will also serve as a communication vehicle to make citizens aware of what activities are being proposed with ARRA funding.

### **Technical Assistance**

**Question VIII.G.2. Describe how the state helps local areas identify areas needing improvement and how technical assistance will be provided. (§112(b)(14).)**

The MDOL, through the Bureau of Employment Services, will provide ongoing technical assistance to local areas and providers throughout the ARRA period and beyond. BES plans to enhance monitoring staff to assure the proper use of ARRA funds.

MDOL, through the Bureau of Labor Standards, will also provide Employment Law training and health and safety training for participants in the Summer Youth Program.

### **Monitoring and Oversight**

**Question VIII.H. Describe the monitoring and oversight criteria and procedures the state utilizes to move the system toward the state's vision and achieve the goals identified above, such as the use of mystery shoppers, performance agreements. (§112(b)(14).)**

As previously noted, all ARRA funds in Maine will be tracked and posted on the State web site, Recovery.gov.

Governor Baldacci's direction through the MDOL and the Maine Jobs Council that a minimum of 80% of program funds under WIA/ARRA be for direct training and support services will significantly increase the number of people served, as well as quality of service, in keeping with the letter and spirit of the ARRA.

MDOL will also be tightening contract procedures with the Local Workforce Investment Boards by requiring line item budgets and staffing plans to assure the proper expenditure of ARRA funds.

### **Accountability and Performance**

**Question X.C.1. Describe the state's performance accountability system, including any state-system measures and the state's performance goals established with local areas. Identify the performance indicators and goals the state has established to track its progress toward meeting its strategic goals and implementing its vision for the workforce investment system. (§§112(b)(3) and 136(b)(3).)**

The Maine Department of Labor has worked with the Local Workforce Investment Boards to establish performance standards that are articulated in the 4/15/09 letter to the USDOL-ETA, requesting to extend the current State Plan for one year.

The Department of Labor is developing a rigorous monitoring schedule that increases program monitoring from annually to quarterly.

As stated numerous times in this document, the Governor has required that at least 80% of the ARRA funds be spent on direct service to clients.