

H. Coordination and Non-Duplication

1. Services Provided Through Programs Identified in Unified Plan

[Federal Planning Guidance: Describe how your State will coordinate and integrate the services provided through all of the programs identified in the unified plan in order to meet the needs of its customers, ensure there is no overlap or duplication among the programs, and ensure collaboration with key partners and continuous improvement of the workforce investment system. (States are encouraged to address several coordination requirements in a single narrative, if possible.)]

The Arkansas Workforce Investment Board will be responsible for coordinating and integrating the services identified in this plan. The membership of this board includes the directors of the state agencies responsible for these programs, and with guidance and oversight provided by the full board, these directors will work together to ensure that programs and services are provided with minimum duplication and with increasing efficiency.

A primary vehicle for coordinating these programs and services is the State Unified Plan. The design of State Unified Plan presents the essential elements of the state's employment and training programs in a single comprehensive document that will enable the Arkansas Workforce Investment Board to analyze these programs by comparing and contrasting those essential elements. Where duplication of services or the need for greater coordination is discovered, the board will work with the state agency directors to eliminate these problems.

The design of the local service delivery system will also provide practical opportunities to discover duplication and the need for collaboration between agencies and programs. With all program and service providers operating through the One-Stop service delivery system, local workforce investment boards will be able to observe the activities in the local service centers and discover areas for improving the delivery of services. The state board will direct the local boards to bring these opportunities to improve services to the attention of the agency directors responsible for the programs that are involved and to inform the state board, as well. Local boards will be directed to offer suggestions for eliminating duplication and improving services, and the best solutions will be adopted throughout the state.

Coordination between One-Stop partners will contribute to meeting the needs of the customer without duplication of services. Partner meetings should be held regularly to inform all partners about the goals and programs of each partner, to discuss common challenges, and to make recommendations to the board for improvement of the workforce investment system. As partners learn more about other programs, they become more adept at coordinating and integrating services. This opening of lines of communication, combined with a common application, intake, and tracking system, solidifies the “no wrong door” concept.

[A general overview of how the services of various programs will be coordinated and integrated are provided below. In accordance with USDOL planning guidance, more detailed information about specific programs follows this general overview.]

PERKINS III (SECONDARY AND POSTSECONDARY) AND TECH PREP

Recipients of the Perkins basic grant funds are public school districts and postsecondary/higher education institutions. As described under Item F-Funding, secondary vocational centers also participate in the Perkins funds. The Arkansas Department of Workforce Education interacts at the state level through membership on Workforce Investment Board and at the local level with the respective administrators and presidents of these institutions while those persons in turn will interact with their local boards. School administrators, including directors of secondary vocational centers, and postsecondary/higher education institution presidents are represented on the local workforce investment boards.

WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACT TITLE I (YOUTH, ADULT, AND DISLOCATED WORKER)

Title I program operators are entering into memoranda of understanding describing how each partner will provide services and how they will be coordinated. While each local area is different, various areas will coordinate using co-location of partners, joint staff meetings and cross training, designation of an appropriate partner to provide functional supervision for each activity, decisions that one program's staff will provide certain activities, shared staff, and other means. Arkansas is working toward an automated information system that will assist with joint service and that will provide feedback on services already provided or scheduled by one partner to other partners as they plan to provide additional services.

ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY

Adult Education will coordinate and integrate services collaboratively with adult education providers, Arkansas Department of Economic Development (ADED) customized training coordinators, and company representatives in order to meet the needs of its customers. A progressive attribute of the alliance and collaborative relationship between Arkansas' private, non-profit, and community-based literacy programs and the Arkansas Department of Workforce Education-Adult Education Section is the sharing of resources and information. Adult Education and literacy council programs participate, sometimes jointly, in family literacy and English as a Second Language programs. The integration and collaboration of services ensures that there is no overlap or duplication of services among programs.

FOOD STAMP EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING PROGRAM

A federal law requires the state to operate this program. Many of the components of the program are provided through collaborative efforts.

TRADE ACT PROGRAMS

The greatest danger of duplication is with dislocated worker programs, Pell grants, other educational assistance, and unemployment insurance benefits. The TAA and NAFTA/TAA programs are operated by the Arkansas Employment Security Department (AESD) central and local office staff who have regular contact with all programs that provide those benefits. Through the One-Stop delivery system, AESD staff will ensure coordination and non-duplication of benefits.

WAGNER-PEYSER ACT

Coordination and non-duplication will be accomplished at two levels. At the state level, the Field Operations Administrator will work with his counterparts in other state agencies to enter into an agreement delineating the use of state-level resources. At the local level, AESD local office managers will enter into specific memoranda of understanding with their partners describing the coordination and non-duplication of services.

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PROGRAM

- **ARKANSAS REHABILITATION SERVICES**

Information concerning the Arkansas Rehabilitation Services' coordination and integration of services with other programs is given in 1(d) below. The ARS responses address cooperative agreements with other agencies and organizations to assure coordination and non-duplication. The Rehabilitation Act requires extensive coordination with partners in the workforce system through written agreements that have been and are continuing to be developed. Also, by law ARS is required to have a Rehabilitation Council and State Independent Living Council to ensure coordination and non-duplication of services. A member of the State Board is a required member of the Rehabilitation Council. Oversight is provided to ARS through RSA federal benchmarks of the evaluation standards and performance indicators, on-site monitoring and Self-Assessment Guide, as well.

- **DIVISION OF SERVICES FOR THE BLIND**

The Division of Services for the Blind will coordinate and integrate services with other programs to meet the needs of its consumers by developing clear and concise memoranda of understandings with the local area One-Stop centers. The Division has, and will continue, to develop cooperative agreements with other entities who are not members of the local area centers who serve mutual consumers. The Division requires all vocational rehabilitation counselors to attend IEP meetings for all transition students assigned to their caseload, which are held in the school district they represent, if they are invited by the district or the parent. Vocational rehabilitation counselors are required to meet with each school district to inform them of the services offered by this agency, to inform them of the students they are assisting and encourage the district to include the counselor in the IEP planning.

Vocational counselors are required to use all comparable services and benefits available, when it will not delay services, in order to maximize agency funds. The agency feels that by following the above policy it will ensure that there is no overlap or duplication of services among programs, that there will be coordination between partners, and that there will be maximum utilization of funds.

Additional details concerning plans to coordinate services and avoid duplication of services are given in 1(d) below.

VETERANS PROGRAMS

Specifics of how coordination and non-duplication will be accomplished in each workforce investment area will be determined locally and described in the memoranda of understanding (MOUs). It is anticipated that each MOU will describe how services to veterans will be addressed by each of the partners in the One-Stop. In addition, Local Veterans Employment Representatives and Representatives of the Disabled Veterans Outreach Program coordinate regularly with representatives of other agencies that provide services to veterans, such as the County Veterans Service Officer.

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

No other state system provides unemployment insurance benefits, so there is no duplication of this system.

TANF

Locally developed procedures have been developed to ensure coordination and non-duplication of services with those agencies that provide the same type of employment services to families, particularly with the local Welfare-to-Work agencies.

WELFARE-TO-WORK

Operation of the WtW program is coordinated among the WtW program operators, the Department of Human Services (DHS) and the Arkansas Employment Security Department (AESD). DHS certifies and refers eligible people to the WtW program operators. DHS and AESD provide training and, from time to time, facilitate local information exchange. Local program operators and local AESD personnel serve on Transitional Employment Assistance (TEA) coalitions in almost every county of the state. WtW program operators are represented on the local WIBs through the Title I program operators. They also are partners in the local memoranda of understanding (MOUs) that describe the role each entity will play in service provision.

Additional details concerning strategies to prevent duplication of services and promote coordination between Welfare-to-Work and other programs is given in 1(f) below.

SCSEP

SCSEP positions in the aging network cannot be used to displace other workers funded by the Older Americans Act. The SCSEP program works closely with the state funded Older Worker Program also administered by Area Agencies on Aging. The SCSEP program serves such a narrow segment of the population that it is not in competition for workers.

COMMUNITY SERVICES BLOCK GRANT

The CSBG Program is operated by 16 local eligible entities, which in turn operate many programs targeted only toward citizens in their respective service areas (counties) of the state. These service areas are established by law and forbid the eligible entities from serving citizens outside of these boundaries. Eligible entities are also required to coordinate with other local providers to avoid duplication of services. The yearly needs assessment conducted by the eligible entities and their local diversified boards will assure continuous improvement of the workforce investment system.

Additional details concerning coordination of services is given in 1(h) below.

(a) Perkins III

[Federal Planning Guidance: Describe coordination with the following agencies or programs, including any methods proposed for joint planning:]

(i) Programs Listed in Section 112(b)(8)(A) of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998

The procedure to be used to develop the memoranda of understanding outlined in Section 121(c) of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA) and to ensure coordination and nonduplication as described in Section 112(b)(8)(A) in the WIA is being developed.

(ii) Other Federal Education Programs

The Career Opportunities Partnership Cabinet is a cabinet-level coordinating cabinet appointed by a Governor's executive order in the fall of 1997. The membership of this cabinet includes the agency directors from the Department of Workforce Education, Department of Higher Education, Department of Education, Arkansas Employment Security Department, Arkansas Economic Development Commission, Department of Human Services, Department of Health, and Department of Information Systems. With all of the state agencies involved in education and training represented on this Cabinet, joint planning and coordination has been improved.

School-to-Work Opportunities Act – Arkansas received its implementation grant for the Career Opportunities plan beginning in 1998. The Career Opportunities staff is housed in the Department of Workforce Education, which has fiscal responsibility for the funding. Although Career Opportunities is under the direction of the Career Opportunities Partnership Cabinet, it has close ties with the State Board staff. State Board staff was involved in the development of the state's plan for Career Opportunities. The local partnership councils have been in place for several years. The membership of the local councils includes secondary and postsecondary educators.

Elementary and Secondary Education Act – The Career Opportunities Partnership Cabinet allows for state-level planning and coordination. In addition, the agency directors for all three educational agencies meet together regularly to discuss various educational issues that cross agency lines.

Apprenticeship Coordination – The Department of Workforce Education has maintained an excellent working relationship with the Department of Labor's Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training (BAT) office in the state for many years. The two agencies partnered together in the 1991 legislative session to get legislation for youth and traditional apprenticeship passed. The

Arkansas Apprenticeship Coordination Steering Committee (AACSC) was formed in the mid-1980's. Staff of the Department provide support for the AACSC. The Department's partnership with the BAT and AACSC has resulted in the dramatic growth of apprentices in traditional programs and has helped to support the growth of the youth apprenticeship program. Another partnership initiative between the Department and BAT was the establishment of an tax credit for employers of participants in the youth apprenticeship programs. This tax credit now includes programs that are both BAT registered and non-BAT registered.

Individuals with Disabilities – The Arkansas Rehabilitation Services agency is under the umbrella of the Department of Workforce Education and the State Board. Thus coordination among the state-level agencies through the Career Opportunities Partnership Cabinet includes the state's vocational rehabilitation agency. The Department of Education (general K-12), the Department of Workforce Education, and Arkansas Rehabilitation Services signed an agreement in early 1998 to emphasize their commitment to coordination of services for students with disabilities and to encourage cooperative planning at the local level. State Board staff interacts with the Governor's Interagency on Self-Sufficiency (ICSS) and the Governor's Increasing Capabilities Access Network (ICAN). The mission of ICSS supports the development of independence for disabled people. ICAN provides free information and referrals to individuals needing assistive technology. This is accomplished at Technology Assistance Centers established to serve people of all ages and disabilities. These centers address specialized areas including communications/computer access, independent living, language/learning, deaf/hearing impairments, and blind/visual disabilities.

Child Care and Development Block Grant – State and national legislation, programs such as Project SUCCESS (JOBS), Arkansas Better Chance, the federal Child Care and Development Block Grant, and an increasing realization by the public of the need for quality child care intensified the demand for a state system to provide basic orientation training for child care workers. A technical committee of representatives from agencies that included the Arkansas Early Childhood Commission, Department of Human Services, Department of Health, Department of Education, provider centers, and family day care centers recommended that employees in child care centers be required to complete an orientation training program at some time during the first year of employment. The State Board receives a grant from the Child Care and Development Block Grant to provide this training.

(b) WIA Title I, Wagner-Peyser Act, and Veterans Programs

(i) Strategies

[Federal Planning Guidance: Describe the strategies of the State to assure coordination, avoid duplication and improve operational collaboration of the workforce investment activities among programs outlined in Section 112(b)(8)(A) and Section 112 (b)(18)(C);(D) of WIA 1998, at both the state and local levels (e.g., joint activities, MOUs, planned mergers, coordinated policies, non-discrimination obligations, etc.).]

The Arkansas Workforce Investment Board (state board) will coordinate and establish policy for conducting all employment and training activities within the workforce investment system created by the federal Workforce Investment Act of 1998 and Arkansas Act 1125 of 1999, including all activities conducted in and through Arkansas' One-Stop career centers. Criteria for certifying these One-Stop career centers are given in Part B of the State Unified Plan.

In accordance with Section 11(g) of Act 1125 of 1999, each local workforce investment board, in partnership with the chief elected official, will conduct oversight with respect to local programs of youth activities, local adult employment and training, and the one-stop delivery system in the local area. Section 11(j) of Act 1125 of 1999 states that each local board shall coordinate the workforce investment activities carried out in the local area with economic development strategies and develop other employer linkages with the activities. Each local board should be proactive in avoiding duplication and improving operational collaboration of the workforce investment activities among programs in the local area.

The Arkansas Employment Security Department (AESD) is responsible for administering Wagner-Peyser Act, for administering Veterans programs, and for monitoring and providing technical assistance for the operation of WIA Title I programs. The Secretary's Agreement governing service to veterans was negotiated and a copy is attached as Attachment H-1. Staff of the Arkansas Workforce Investment Board is responsible for monitoring and providing technical assistance to One-Stop centers and to local workforce investment boards in setting up and operating One-Stop centers. Staff of these and other state agencies will strive to work with local boards and centers in an effort to assure coordination, avoid duplication and improve operational collaboration of the workforce investment activities among the various programs .

Services provided by each of the One-Stop partners will be coordinated and made available through memoranda of understanding (MOUs) between local boards and One-Stop partners. Training sessions will be scheduled from time to time to ensure that each partner is aware of the responsibilities of other programs and the scope of services and activities available. The memoranda of understanding will set program responsibilities incorporating any joint activities or coordinated policies. The MOU will also help create a system to avoid duplication of services

while providing assistance to all customers. Non-discrimination requirements will be a part of every MOU.

The Arkansas Workforce Investment Board has established standards for local MOUs, as described in Part B of the State Unified Plan. Each local board will develop and enter into a memorandum of understanding with the one-stop partners in compliance with Section 121(c) of the federal Workforce Investment Act of 1998. A copy of each memorandum of understanding must be included with the local plan.

Each MOU will outline the services that are available to customers and designate which partner is responsible for providing each service and for ensuring consistent, high quality service delivery. As additional partners and services are added, the information available to customers will be revised so that there is always a complete service provider list. This service provider list will be a vehicle for ensuring collaboration and non-duplication of effort among partners.

The Arkansas Employment Security Department, the deliverer of services under the Wagner-Peyser Act, will be a full partner in the One-Stop delivery system throughout the state. In that capacity, the Employment Security Department will enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in each Workforce Investment Area. That MOU will describe the services to be provided by each partner and will identify potential areas of duplication. The Employment Security Department expects to oversee the job placement function in each of the areas, but will make its automated system available to selected partners to assure that employers and those seeking job-finding assistance receive the most effective and efficient service without duplicating effort in contacting employers or serving customers.

All unemployment insurance (UI) claimants who are not attached to a specific employer must register for employment services at AESD local offices in order to meet UI eligibility requirements, and UI staff refers claimants to employment service (ES) staff for these services. ES staff confirms the claimant's registration either by completing a new application or by updating and renewing the claimant's existing application. Reemployment assistance will be provided to UI claimants by offering them all the traditional employment services, such as job referrals, job-seeker information, and referrals for supportive services using the three-tiered strategy. Information obtained in fulfilling the work test requirements, that may bear on a UI claimant's responsibility to work, including information that may disqualify the claimant will be promptly reported to UI staff. The claimant's ES application and record of services received are also available on-line for UI staff to view.

To ensure coordination and avoid duplication of services, each One-Stop system will use a common application, intake, and tracking system. These systems are being developed by the

Arkansas Department of Information System with the coordination and approval of the Arkansas Workforce Investment Board, as described in Part L of the State Unified Plan.

To further facilitate the non-duplication of services, the Arkansas Workforce Investment Board may recommend coordination of policies and mergers. Section 6(a)(10) of Act 1125 of 1999 charges the state board with the responsibility of recommending the programs identified in Section 7(b)(8)(A) of the Act which may be consolidated or realigned.

(ii) Eliminate Existing State-Level Barriers to Coordination.

[Federal Planning Guidance: Describe how the State Board and Agencies will eliminate any existing state-level barriers to coordination. (Sec. 112(b)(8)(A))]

Members of the Arkansas Workforce Investment Board include directors of 6 state departments/programs, as well as representative members of state legislature. It is the responsibility of this board to eliminate state-level barriers to coordination among One-Stop partners.

A major barrier to coordination is the issue of confidentiality. This barrier is eliminated by using a common intake and case management system, which allows the customer to release relevant information to partners who can best provide services. The privacy of the customer is insured through confidentiality agreements among the staff who have access to this information.

(c) Adult Education and Family Literacy

[Federal Planning Guidance: Describe how the Adult Education and Family Literacy activities that will be carried out with any funds received under AEFLA will be integrated with other adult education, career development, and employment and training activities in the State or outlying area served by the eligible agency. (Sec. 224(b)(11))]

Description of Activities Integration

The development of workplace education programs is done collaboratively with adult education providers, the Arkansas Department of Economic Development (ADED) Customized Training Coordinators, and company representatives. An exemplary pre-employment program, the Workforce Alliance for Growth in the Economy (WAGE), is growing statewide. Many adult basic and secondary academic programs continue to be offered in hundreds of work site locations across the state.

Approximately forty-seven community-based and/or privately operated literacy councils are funded annually with federal Direct and Equitable (D/E) and/or Correctional/Institutional (C/I)

funds. A progressive attribute of the alliance and collaborative relationship between Arkansas' private, non-profit, and community-based literacy programs and the Arkansas Department of Workforce Education (ADWE-AES) is the sharing of resources and information. This collaboration has gained strength through the efforts of numerous insightful leaders in the state over the past 10 to 12 years.

Family literacy and English as a Second Language (ESL) programs are growing in number and intensity in Arkansas. Both adult education and literacy programs participate, sometimes jointly, in family literacy and ESL programs. One literacy program has piloted a family literacy program specifically for ESL students. Most of the family literacy programs are collaborative ventures with school districts, Even Start, and Head Start programs, with the adult education component provided by programs funded by the Department of Workforce Education (DWE). The number and emphasis on these two activities is projected to increase, based on a growing, non-native speaking population in Arkansas and on the availability of funds in the area of family literacy.

The DWE funds activities through the Arkansas Literacy Councils, Inc., which train and credential tutors in the areas of tutoring reading and ESL. The DWE also sponsors the participation of paid, non-profit literacy council personnel for AALRC professional development activities in the areas of learning disabilities, ESL, instructional strategies and techniques, counseling, and program development.

Continue collaboration and encourage communication among local employers, municipal and state government agencies, industrial development organizations, and educators.

Collaborate with One-Stop Centers to meet the needs of mutual clients

Linkages with Post-Secondary Institutions

- Continue communication between Arkansas Department of Workforce Education and Arkansas Department of Higher Education
- Research the potential for collaborative ventures in student services and data collection

Coordination between some service provision agencies has been active for many years. The workforce investment board's State Unified Plan and other already existent collaborations will strengthen this effort. The Governor of Arkansas has mandated interagency communication through regularly scheduled cabinet-level partnership meetings. The NIFL grant has provided an opportunity for the DWE to partner with many agencies and organizations that serve adults with learning disabilities.

(d) Vocational Rehabilitation

(i) Plans, Policies, and Procedures for Coordination

[Federal Planning Guidance: Describe the State agency's plans policies, and procedures for coordination with the following agencies or programs:]

Federal, State and local agencies and programs, including programs carried out by the Under Secretary for Rural Development of the Department of Agriculture and State use contracting programs to the extent that such agencies and programs are not carrying out activities through the statewide workforce investment system.

ARKANSAS REHABILITATION SERVICES (ARS)

Coordination With Federal, State And Local Agencies And Programs That Are Not Carrying Out Activities Through The Statewide Workforce Investment System

Arkansas is primarily a rural state with agriculture as one of the major industries. The Eastern Arkansas area is included in the Southern Delta Region of the U.S. Farming and related occupations are a major portion of the agricultural industry in the state. Farm related accidents and injuries account for a significant number of disabilities leading to loss of employment and income. Rural populations of individuals have been recognized as unserved and underserved regarding vocational rehabilitation by NIDRR and others.

ARS is exploring the development of cooperative agreements with programs carried out by the Under Secretary for Rural Development for the Department of Agriculture. ARS will explore the development of an Information and Referral System with the appropriate programs through Rural Development to refer individuals whose employment has been impacted as a result of agricultural related or other disabilities.

The plan calls for referrals to be made directly to the appropriate ARS field office serving the individuals' community. ARS serves all 75 counties in Arkansas and VR counselors have itinerary points in each community.

Education officials responsible for the public education of students with disabilities, including a formal interagency agreement with the State educational agency. (Sec. 101(a)(11)(D))

ARKANSAS REHABILITATION SERVICES (ARS)

Coordination With Education Officials Responsible For The Public Education Of Students With Disabilities

Arkansas Rehabilitation Services has adopted a definition of transition services duplicating the definition included in the IDEA. Administrative policies and procedures regarding transition are in place. These procedures use current school documents to assist in establishing eligibility. An IPE is developed prior to the students with disabilities exiting school with participation of the school's Individual Transition Plan team. These procedures ensure that no gap exists between the education system and the rehabilitation system.

The Arkansas Governor's Interagency Council on Self Sufficiency (ICSS) was established in November of 1990. A signed agreement commits the participating organizations to interagency collaboration, coordination, and management of resources, which will support transition service development. The agreement is to remain in effect until terminated. The Council is composed of the Director or designee of the following organizations: Governor of Arkansas, Department of Workforce Development (previously the Vocational Technical Division of the Arkansas Department of Education), Department of Education, Department of Human Services, Employment Security Department, University of Arkansas, Department of Health, Arkansas Children's Hospital, University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences, and the Arkansas Department of Higher Education. Many other organization and entities frequently participate in ICSS meetings on an ad hoc basis.

As a regular member of ICSS, Arkansas Rehabilitation Services has employed and permanently assigned staff to assist in the development and operation of statewide programs designed specifically for students with disabilities who are receiving special education services. This commitment by ARS involves the development and implementation of transition services that promote, facilitate and encourage the accomplishment of long-term vocational rehabilitation goals and intermediate objectives for students while they are receiving special education services. ARS has developed and implemented administrative policy and procedure regarding transition services. The agency procedures include using current school documents to expedite and assist in determining eligibility for services, participating on school Individual Education Plan (IEP) team for Transition planning, and developing Individualized Plan for Employment for eligible students before the student leaves the school setting. These procedures assure that no gaps in service exist between the education system and the rehabilitation system.

As an active member of the ICSS, the Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ARS) engages in the following activities or been involved in the following accomplishments:

- Identified rehabilitation supervisors, counselors, administrative, and support personnel to assist students, schools and other agencies in the transition planning process
- Assigned rehabilitation counselors to work with each local school district and special education teachers to provide assistance in developing appropriate procedures to assure referrals are made appropriately and in a timely manner
- Provides administrative, technical and consultative services as needed or requested through assigned rehabilitation staff
- Provided leadership in the development and design of the ICSS Transition Referral Process, which includes a computerized system of referral and follow-up on students in transition
- Assisted in the design and revisions of the Transition Referral Form to enable more efficient and timely referrals of students with disabilities
- Provides vocational assessment services including prevocational skill instruction, vocational training, work experience, employment linkages, supported employment, case management, and IPE's prior to the student exiting the school
- Developed an exemplary program for vocational evaluation, assessment, training and job placement of high school students in special education at the Hot Springs Rehabilitation Center
- Participates with IEP teams and attends IEP meetings
- Provides information to students, families, and schools of advanced technologies which promote independent function in school, employment, and community environments
- Developed an information packet for students with disabilities who are seeking information about vocational rehabilitation
- Allows the release of information across agencies for the purpose of implementing transition planning and service delivery (with appropriate releases)
- Participated in the development and revision of a comprehensive Resource Directory for use in identifying appropriate resources for the transition process
- Developed an employment preparation manual to assist students with disabilities in acquiring occupational knowledge and job readiness skills
- Collaborates with other agencies and organization such as the Division of Developmental Disabilities, and Children's' Medical Services to coordinate the provision of services for students in special education

The Arkansas Department of Education's Special Education Unit transition unit in concert with the Arkansas Rehabilitation Services has established a state-wide program of coordinated services to students in special education which will continue to be revise and updated to meet needs as they change or are identified.

Outreach and Identification of Students with Disabilities Not Receiving Special Education Services

Procedures are also in place to ensure outreach to and identification of students with disabilities who are not receiving special education services. In each region of the state, counselors are charged with developing working relationships with every school district. The working relationship include; education of school personnel about rehabilitation services, outreach to and identification of students with disabilities. Students with disabilities are offered the opportunity to apply for services at the completion of their junior year.

Private, Non- Profit Vocational Rehabilitation Service Providers Through the Establishment of Cooperative Agreements

ARKANSAS REHABILITATION SERVICES (ARS)

Coordination With Private, Non-Profit Vocational
Rehabilitation Service Providers

Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ARS) recognizes the importance of open and constructive communication in successful partnering with community based, private, non-profit vocational rehabilitation service providers in the establishment and positive development of the Workforce Investment System.

ARS currently purchases a variety vocationally oriented services form a large network of statewide Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRP's), and has entered into cooperative agreements with these non-profit vendors to confirm individual party responsibility and to establish clear and concise consumer outcome goals.

Workforce Investment Act (WIA) oriented activities can, and often are initiated by local ARS Field Program staff. However ARS also provides assistance to statewide non-profits through the agency's Community Program Development Section (CPDS). Contract certification, program compliance, training, and technical assistance are an ongoing responsibility of the CPDS.

ARS promotes, and works closely with two major State Universities, through federal grant opportunities, to coordinate pertinent and needed training, and WIA compliant curriculum development specifically for community non-profits.

Community non-profit organizations have member representation on the Rehabilitation Council, which has direct input and programmatic oversight regarding ARS involvement in the Workforce System.

ARS supports and is directly involved with on-going activities of the State Independent Living Council (SILC), and promotes collaboration, and coordination of consumer services provided by the non-profit Centers for Independent Living (CIL) and other local non-profits involved in the Workforce Investment System. ARS has representation on the State Workforce Investment Board, and encourages statewide field staff to become directly involved and active in local board activities.

Other State Agencies and Appropriate Entities to Assist in the Provision of Supported Employment Services

ARKANSAS REHABILITATION SERVICES (ARS)

Effective July 1, 1993, Arkansas Rehabilitation Services was transferred from the Department of Human Services to the Arkansas Department of Workforce Education. An inter-agency agreement has previously been entered into between the Division of Rehabilitation Services, the Division of Developmental Disabilities, the Division of Mental Health, and the Arkansas Department of Education. This agreement shall remain in effect for the purpose of continued inter-agency response to Public Law 99-506, The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended. This collaboration provides for long-term support for severely disabled individuals in supported employment.

DIVISION OF SERVICES FOR THE BLIND (DSB)

The Division of Services for the Blind is the designated state agency to administer the supported employment services and program in Arkansas for individuals who are blind.

The Division of Services for the Blind has issued policies and procedures for the provision of supported employment services. Supported employment is defined as a specific program of services to provide competitive employment in the community for consumers who have the most significant disabilities. Supported employment services may be provided for a period of time not to exceed 18 months unless there are special circumstances for which the eligible individual and rehabilitation counselor jointly agree to extend the time in order to achieve the rehabilitation goals identified in the individualized plan for employment.

Supported employment is a specific program of services designed to provide employment in an integrated work setting for individuals with the most significant disabilities. A basic premise of supported employment is that individuals with the most significant disabilities can, with the availability of extended ongoing support services, maintain competitive employment in the community where these individuals interact with employees who are not disabled and the general

public. Wages are paid consistent with the Fair Labor Standards Act and must be consistent with the wages paid to other workers in a similar job function.

Vocational rehabilitation counselors follow supported employment policies and procedures stated in the DSB Policy Manual when accepting an individual into the supported employment program of services, planning and developing the individualized plan for employment with the individual, purchasing supported employment services, and completing case documentation. Vocational rehabilitation staff provide a copy of the DSB supported employment guidelines to and review the guidelines with vendors before services are initiated.

An individual whose case has been closed successfully rehabilitated in the supported employment program of services may reapply for vocational rehabilitation services if there is a loss of employment and/or when a new comprehensive program of services is identified as needed.

An individual shall be eligible to receive supported employment services if:

- The individual is eligible for vocational rehabilitation services,
- The individual is determined to be an individual with the most significant disability, and
- A comprehensive assessment of rehabilitation needs of the individual is conducted including an evaluation of rehabilitation, career, and job needs and identifies supported employment as the appropriate rehabilitation outcome for the individual.

Supported employment services begin while the individual's case is an active vocational rehabilitation case and continues after successful vocational rehabilitation case closure with funding from sources other than vocational rehabilitation.

Post employment services may be provided in a discrete manner to an eligible individual. If a supported employment case has been transitioned to the vendor or closed successfully rehabilitated, then only discrete post-employment services may be purchased for job retention. Discrete post-employment services are provided only if the needed services are not available through the vendor. The following are examples of such services: job station redesign, repair and maintenance of assistive technology, replacement of prosthetic and orthodontic devices, and orientation and mobility services. The purchase of additional job coach services is not allowable. The vendor has made the commitment to provide or arrange available services after case transition and after the vocational rehabilitation case is closed.

Individuals are placed on jobs in the community and needed training and supports are developed during employment.

All supported employment plans must include placement in an integrated work setting for the maximum number of hours possible based on the unique strengths, resources, interests, concerns, abilities, capabilities, and informed choice of individuals with the most significant disabilities.

Cooperative arrangements have been entered into with organizations such as HIRE, Abilities Unlimited, United Cerebral Palsy, Easter Seals, and Goodwill Industries to provide supported employment services. An initial agreement was entered into this program year with a center for independent living for supported employment services. Arrangements may also be entered into with other public or nonprofit agencies or organizations within Arkansas, employers, natural supports, and other entities with respect to provision of extended services.

Extended services are defined as support services and other appropriate services, needed to support and maintain an individual with a most significant disability in supported employment. Extended services are provided singly or in combination and are organized and made available in such a way as to assist an eligible individual in maintaining supported employment. Extended services are based on a determination of the needs of an eligible individual as specified in an individualized plan for employment. Extended services are provided by the Division of Services for the Blind, a nonprofit organization, employer, or any other appropriate resource, after an individual has made the transition from support provided by the Division of Services for the Blind.

The individualized plan for employment will be developed and updated in order to

- Specify the supported employment services to be provided
- Specify the expected extended services needed
- Identify the source of the extended services, which may include natural supports, or to the extent that it is not possible to identify the source of extended services at the time the individualized plan for employment is developed, a statement describing the basis for concluding that there is a reasonable expectation that such sources will become available
- Conduct comprehensive assessments of individuals with significant disabilities and will consider supported employment as an appropriate employment

The Division of Services for the Blind assures that the use of supported employment funds will only be used to supplement, and not supplant, the funds provided under Title I to provide supported employment services specified in the individualized plan for employment.

The Division of Services for the Blind assures that supported employment services provided under an individualized plan for employment will be coordinated with services provided under other individualized plans established under other Federal or State programs.

The Division of Services for the Blind assures that, to the extent job skills training is provided, the training will be provided on the job site.

The Division of Services for the Blind assures that supported employment services will include placement services in an integrated setting for the maximum number of hours possible based on the unique strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, interests, and informed choice of the individual with the most significant disability.

The Division of Services for the Blind assures that it will not expend more than 5 percent of its Title I allotment for administrative costs to carry out the provision of supported employment services.

The Division of Services for the Blind assures that it will compile and submit other such information the manner required by the Rehabilitation Services Administration Commissioner.

Other Public or Nonprofit Agencies or Organizations within the State, Employers, Natural Supports, and Other Entities With Respect to the Provision of Extended Services

ARKANSAS REHABILITATION SERVICES (ARS)

Extended Services

Arkansas Rehabilitation Services collaborates with other public and private non-profit agencies for the provision of extended services following termination of supported employment services provided for agencies who have entered an inter-agency agreement, with the agencies being:

- Arkansas Rehabilitation Services
- Division of Developmental Disabilities, Department of Human Services
- Division of Mental Health, Department of Human Services
- Arkansas Department of Education

There are no plans at this time to develop additional agreements or to modify the existing agreements, which are on record and have been previously provided.

DIVISION OF SERVICES TO THE BLIND (DSB)

Cooperation With Agencies That Not in the Statewide Workforce Investment System and Other Entities

The Division of Services for the Blind is a partner in the Arkansas Consortium for Employment Success (ACES) with the Arkansas Rehabilitation Services, Department of Workforce Education, Disability Determination for Social Security Administration, Department of Information Systems, Employment Security Department, and the Department of Human Services. ACES is an initiative of the Career Opportunities Partnership Cabinet. ACES is a five year project designed to provide services to people with disabilities who apply for, or currently receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI). Certain individuals in the Welfare to Work population will serve under the ACES project. The consortium grew out of the Career Opportunities Partnership Cabinet created by the Governor to assure that state agencies focus on communicating and collaborating to remove barriers to employment.

The ACES project is aimed at increasing employment outcomes for persons who typically would not access VR when first applying for SSI and SSDI benefits. ACES is funded by a five-year grant from the Social Security Administration in the amount of \$599,842 each year. ACES serves a 16 county area that includes: Baxter, Benton, Boone, Carroll, Faulkner, Lonoke, Madison, Marion, Monroe, Newton, Prairie, Pulaski, Saline, Searcy, Washington, and Woodruff Counties.

ACES incorporates a cooperative referral process to target individuals with recent work histories for short-term vocational services with an emphasis of early intervention and rapid return to work. The ACES project will also seek to identify and eliminate employment barriers such as inadequate healthcare, childcare and transportation difficulties. The project will serve recipients of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families who have become employed within the past six months.

A conference Arkansas Youth Leadership Forum for Students With Disabilities (YLF) is planned for implementation the summer of 2000 for students with a disability. The leadership conference will convene on the University of Central Arkansas campus. The conference is planned by the Arkansas Governor's Commission on People with Disabilities.

The Division of Services for the Blind is actively involved in Arkansas Workforce Investment activities, discussions and meetings. Negotiations are taking place to identify methods and ways for DSB staff to participate in the local One-Stops with a physical presence in the full service One-Stops as well as on line linkage in satellite areas. DSB serves on a sub-committee lead by

the Arkansas Employment Security Department that is exploring ways to ensure all One-Stops are accessible structurally and electronically.

Interagency Cooperation With Agencies and Entities Not Carrying Out Activities Through the Statewide Workforce Investment System

The Division of Services for the Blind explores opportunities to develop interagency cooperation with and use the services and facilities of State, Federal and local agencies, and programs. These include programs carried out by the Under Secretary of Rural Development of the Department of Agriculture and state use contracting programs, to the include extent that such agencies and programs are not carrying out activities through the statewide workforce investment system.

Informational update has been provided to the State of Arkansas, Department of Rural Services on the services provided by DSB, the locations of the DSB offices, how to contact DSB offices and identification of staff contacts in each office. Informational pamphlets were also made available.

The Division of Services for the Blind Vending Facility Program is currently operating under a contract with the Arkansas Transportation Department to provide vending machine services in rest areas and information centers throughout Arkansas. Arkansas Statute 201 of 1969 provides for vending facility programs to be operated in state-owned facilities.

The Division is exploring transportation opportunities and services with the Eastern Arkansas Area Agency on Aging and other transportation providers in eastern Arkansas in trying to develop adequate transportation services for the area. This effort has resulted from a need that was identified in the public forum, which was held in the area.

Medicaid Buy-in

DSB staff is collaborating with the Arkansas Department of Human Services Divisions of Medical Services and Developmental Disabilities Services as well as the Arkansas Independent Living Council, to implement a program to allow certain individuals with disabilities to continue to receive Medicaid benefits while working. This work group is developing policies and procedures to implement Arkansas Act 1197 of 1999: "AN ACT TO ESTABLISH THE MEDICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FOR DISABLED WORKING PERSONS WHOSE FAMILY INCOME IS LESS THAN TWO HUNDRED FIFTY PERCENT (250%) OF THE FEDERAL POVERTY GUIDELINE". This act is known as the Medicaid program for low income disabled working persons and is to establish a new optional categorically needy Medicaid eligibility group under Section 4733 of the Balanced Budget Act of 1977 to provide medical assistance to eligible disabled working individuals. Program guidelines are being

developed by a work group consisting of representatives from the Arkansas Department of Human Services, which includes the Division of the Services for the Blind. Implementation is tentatively scheduled for February 2000.

Coordination With Education Officials to Facilitate the Transition of Students With Disabilities From School to the Receipt of Vocational Rehabilitation Services

The Division of Services for the Blind collaborates with the Arkansas Department of Education to convene an annual information-sharing one-day session for transition students, their parents, and staff from DSB, Arkansas School for the Blind, Educational Services for the Blind, and the Arkansas Department of Education-Special Education Unit. The primary purpose of this activity is to provide parents, students and staff with information and requirements for transition services and introduce the entities involved in transition services. The Arkansas Department of Education discussed the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, as added by Section 101 of the Public Law 105-7.

The transition referral process and methods to identify transition students are discussed. Staff of the Arkansas Department of Education-Special Education Unit, Educational Services for the Blind and the Division of Services for the Blind developed a form that is to be used by public school instructors as a guide to identify independent living needs of transition students. This form also includes resources for students who are blind or severely visually impaired.

The Arkansas Department of Education-Special Education Unit, Arkansas School for the Blind, Educational Services for the Blind, Southwest Arkansas Planning and Development District, and the Division of Services for the Blind sponsor an ongoing a summer transition program for students ages 14-21. The summer program is a combination of orientation and mobility and rehabilitation teaching skills instruction, job placement services, and work experience. The summer program is housed on the campus of Arkansas School for the Blind. The Arkansas Department of Education has provided grant funds to support this project. The Southwest Arkansas Planning and Development District has provided additional financial support utilizing Job Training Partnership Act funds. The Arkansas School for the Deaf/Deaf-Blind Project provided funding to support interveners for a deaf-blind student. Work experience for the summer transition program is provided with JTPA funding. Transition referrals are mandated at age 14 for students with a disability. Transition referrals submitted to DSB are centrally logged and routed to the appropriate vocational rehabilitation counselor. The Arkansas Transition Referral Form, developed by the Arkansas Department of Education-Special Education Unit is used for all transition referrals made to DSB. Vocational rehabilitation counselors are to respond to the referring agency within 18 weeks of receipt of referral.

The Coordinator of the Arkansas Department of Education-Special Education Unit and the DSB Field Administrator are developing a cooperative agreement that addresses consultation and technical assistance to assist educational agencies in planning for the transition of students with disabilities from school to post-school activities to include vocational rehabilitation services; transition planning by personnel of the Division of Services for the Blind and the Arkansas Department of Education that addresses individualized education programs under Section 614(d) of IDEA; the roles and responsibilities and financial responsibility of each agency and will identify lead agencies and qualified personnel responsible for transition services. The agreement will continue the transition outreach procedures currently developed. The roles and responsibilities of agency staff were identified in the initial meetings held early in the program year, as were qualified DSB staff responsible for transition services. Names of the vocational rehabilitation counselors, catchment area, and contact information were identified and provided to Arkansas Department of Education staff. Likewise, the Arkansas Department of Education identified their qualified staff and provided reciprocal information.

Staff from the Division of Services for the Blind has provided in-service training to Arkansas Department of Education staff on techniques and strategies of working with students who are blind. Staff from ADE and DSB participated in a brainstorming session to discuss what is working and what is not, and to make recommendations and plans to improve the working relationship with ADE and DSB staff.

A formal written cooperative agreement/memorandum of understanding will be developed with Arkansas Department of Education.

Cooperative Agreements With Private Non-Profit Vocational Rehabilitation Service Providers

The Division of Services for the Blind has entered into cooperative agreements with two independent living centers in Arkansas to provide independent living services to blind and visually impaired individuals of the State. The two centers are Mainstream in Little Rock and the Spa Area Independent Living Center in Hot Springs. Both centers have employed staff who are blind and/or visually impaired, and each has made a commitment to improve services to our disability group. Each center is providing all independent living core services and is operating support groups. Each center has made available to DSB consumers training in technology access, especially in the area of computers and the technology needed to access the computers.

The Division has a cooperative agreement with Mainstream for a two-year period, which provides them with \$12,000.00 each year to provide services. The cooperative agreement with Spa Area Independent Living Center is for a one-year period and provides \$15,000.00 for the services they provide blind and visually impaired consumers. Each cooperative agreement is subject to renewal based on satisfactory performance.

Plans, Policies, and Procedures Related to the Transition of Students Who Are Individuals With Disabilities

The Arkansas Transition Agreement outlines roles of agencies participating in the Arkansas Transition Program. DSB maintains individual written agreements with the State Department of Education, Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (general agency), and the Arkansas School for the Blind.

Each agreement is developed to establish reciprocal referral services, to allow the use of each other's services and facilities as deemed feasible, to jointly plan activities to improve services for individuals with visual impairments and to otherwise cooperate to provide more effective services.

Counselors also work with the disabled student services centers at colleges and universities to stay current on transition problems and best practices. DSB counselors visit with school districts in Arkansas to identify individuals in need of transition services, and work closely with school counselors, parents and school administrators to plan and monitor transition services for the individuals identified. Such outreach is provided without regard to the student's participation in special education programs so as to ensure access to rehabilitation services for all blind/visually impaired students of transition age.

Counselors are members of regional transition teams working with other service providers, students, and family members in identifying goals and services needed to achieve a successful transition from high school to other institutions of knowledge, vocational schools, or on the job training. These transition teams are derived from planning by the Arkansas Governor's Interagency Council on Self Sufficiency (ICSS). As a participating member of ICSS, DSB is committed to providing services statewide to visually impaired students who are receiving special education services. Transition services provided promote and encourage the achievement of long-term vocational rehabilitation goals and objectives for visually impaired special education students. Policies and procedures developed and implemented by DSB assure that no gaps in service exist between the education system and the rehabilitation system for both special ed and non-special ed students. DSB Field policy and procedures require the use of current school information to assist and expedite eligibility determination, participation in the Individual Education Plan (IEP) team for special ed students or the individual Transition Plan team for non-special ed students. Such current information is also used in development of the IPE before the student leaves the school setting.

(e) Unemployment Insurance

[Federal Planning Guidance: Summarize requests for any Federal partner assistance (primarily non-financial) that would help the SESA attain its goal]

A summarization request(s) for any Federal partner assistance (primarily non-financial) to help the Arkansas Unemployment Insurance Program to attain any of its present goals is not applicable at this time.

(f) Welfare-to-Work

[Federal Planning Guidance: Describe the strategies of the State and PICs (or State Board and Local Boards) to prevent duplication of services and promote coordination among the following agencies or programs:

- TANF
- JTPA/WIA
- One-Stop centers/employment services
- Other employment and training systems throughout the State
- State Department of Transportation
- Metropolitan planning organizations
- Transit operators
- Other transportation providers
- State Housing Finance Agencies
- Public and assisted housing providers and agencies and other community-based organizations
- Public and private health, mental health and service agencies
- Vocational rehabilitation and related agencies]

The Arkansas Employment Security Department (AESD) is the State Administrative Agency for the Welfare-to-Work (WtW) Program. The Arkansas Department of Human Services (DHS) is responsible for the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Program, which in Arkansas is called Transitional Employment Assistance (TEA). These two agencies and others, including the Arkansas Department of Economic Development, the Arkansas Department of Health, the Arkansas Department of Higher Education and the Arkansas Department of Workforce Education, have worked closely since 1997 in developing the state's implementation of welfare reform. These collaborative efforts resulted in the development, submittal and approval of the FY'98 Arkansas State Plan for Title IV-A of the Social Security Act: Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, Block Grant Welfare-to-Work Formula Grant, culminated by an \$8.4M federal grant award.

Representatives from the Arkansas Employment Security Department and Department of Human Services met October 15, 1997, to discuss initial planning strategies. It was decided that AESD would write the plan with input from DHS, private industry councils (local substate areas), Department of Transportation, state housing authority, community-based organizations, Bureau of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention, Office of Child Support Enforcement, and Vocational Rehabilitation. Each agency provided contact names and phone numbers to facilitate coordination of the plan. It was decided that DHS would provide the number of individuals who

have been receiving welfare 30 or more months, by county, to use as a factor in the development of the formula.

On February 10, 1998, the Career Opportunities Partnership Cabinet approved the following statewide WtW policies/procedures to coordinate and integrate services to meet the needs of its customers and to prevent duplication of services and promote coordination among the agencies:

- DHS will identify, certify and refer TANF recipients to the WtW program operators.
- DHS will accept financial responsibility for audit exceptions involving all ineligible referrals made by DHS to WtW program operators.
- DHS will maintain all eligibility documentation on referrals.
- There will be no self-assessment. Assessment will be conducted in three parts:
 - (1) Medical and Drug Screening by the Department of Health,
 - (2) Literacy by the Adult Education or Literacy Council; and
 - (3) Work Skills – A local decision
- Service Delivery Areas (SDAs) are responsible for job placements. The SDAs will describe in local plans how this task will be completed and how the coordination will take place with the local TANF agency. (This now refers to the WIA-Title I adult of intensive services.)
- All participants performing below the 10th grade level will be referred to the local Adult Education program for academic skill improvements. If a participant is a non-reader or a very low-level reader, he or she could be referred to either the Adult Education program or the Literacy Council.
- Training should be based on assessment and be in demand occupations.
- Each SDA should follow-up on WtW placements in coordination with the local TANF Agency. Follow-up data must be based at minimum on retention in work force and increase in earnings. (This now refers to the WIA-Title I providers of intensive services.)
- The State of Arkansas is a partner in WtW, and the Legislature will be asked to appropriate match when they meet in January 1999. SDAs also will be asked to provide as much match as they can.
- SDAs should compile a list of local providers that provide supportive services, establish a contact person in the agency that has authority to commit the agency to expenditures for services or to have knowledge that funds are not available to provide the services needed from the particular agency. When a contact is established, statements from the contact must be placed in individual folders of participants saying the funds are utilized for the service. If services are provided from another funding source, it should be noted on the individual service strategy for that participant. (This is now the responsibility of the One-Stop operators and partners.)

See Attachment C-3 for a calendar of events detailing the coordination among the agencies.

(g) SCSEP

[Federal Planning Guidance: Describe the cooperative relationships and working linkages that have been established or will be established with the following employment related programs and agencies:]

JTPA/WIA

In the past, The Arkansas Division of Aging and Adult Services (DAAS) has worked with Green Thumb, a program that emphasizes training and skills development for private sector employment. Green Thumb administered the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) set-aside program for persons 55 and older. DAAS will work with the grantees for WIA Title Adult funds in order to best serve its customers.

One-Stop Delivery Centers

The Arkansas Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) will be One-Stop partners and will make services available through the One-Stop Centers. The AAAs with Internet access will be involved in accessing services that focus on employment, training, educational opportunities and assistance in eliminating barriers to employment.

Vocational Rehabilitation

The AAAs will make referrals to Vocational Rehabilitation of Older American Act Title V applicants who are potentially eligible for Vocational Rehabilitation Services. SCSEP will work with Vocational Rehabilitation to ensure that job qualifications do not discriminate on the basis of disability; ensure that SCSEP has the ability to communicate with people with disabilities as effectively as others; and ensure that all medical records will be kept separate and confidential.

Job Corps

This is not applicable, because Title V is age specific for people 55 years old and over.

State Employment Security Agencies

DAAS will continue its cooperative agreement with ESD for recruitment, and referral to the AAAs.

Agencies Administering Titles III, IV and VI of the Older Americans Act

The administration of SCSEP is located in the Arkansas Division of Aging and Adult Services, the Arkansas State Unit on Aging as authorized by Title III of the Older Americans Act. To the extent feasible, the AAAs shall utilize supportive services available from other titles of the Older Americans Act, particularly those administered by the AAAs as well as other agencies.

(h) CSBG

[Federal Planning Guidance: Describe how the State and eligible entities will coordinate programs to serve low-income residents with other organizations, including:

Religious organizations

Charitable groups

Community organizations]

The State and eligible entities will coordinate, and establish linkages between governmental and other social services programs to assure effective delivery of needed services to low income individuals and to avoid duplication of such services. Community Services Block Grant, Home Energy Assistance Program, Emergency Shelter Grants and the Weatherization Program are coordinated in the same office in state government. Eligible entities will coordinate with local agencies including religious organizations, charitable groups, and other community groups.

Contracts and grants with state and federal funding sources greatly enhance the agency's ability to provide needed services. Besides services and activities provided by the eligible entities, additional benefits come to local low-income areas and individuals because of community participation and referral services.

Also, representatives from faith based organizations, charitable groups and community organizations participate in the decision making process by serving on local boards.