

Veterans Employment and Training Service State Plan **Narrative Instructions**

In accordance with the Jobs for Veterans Act of 2002 (P.L.107-288), each grant recipient must have an approved State Plan submitted for each year of grant funding. The plan narrative describes (a) the employment situation in the State relative to the manner in which the States provide, or will facilitate, the employment, training, and placement services for veterans as required under Chapter 41, Title 38, United States Code (38 U.S.C. 41) as amended; and, (b) the development of costs associated with each program and fiscal area. The Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS) reserves the right to negotiate or reject each request for funding. This narrative needs to be succinct, consisting of no more than ten (10) pages.

To be eligible to receive funds in FY 2005 the State's narrative plan will address:

I. Planning and Coordination:

A. The projected employment outlook for veterans in the State.

1. Describe the projected employment opportunities for veterans, considering current and prospective employers, including Federal, State and local employers, and in particular Federal contractors and subcontractors.
2. Identify how the hiring and retention of veterans will be promoted among representatives of such employers.
3. Identify the characteristics of the veteran population (including separating military personnel and their spouses) to be served by the public labor exchange and by DVOP and LVER staff respectively.

B. Procedures taken to ensure program integration and coordination in the provision of employment and training services to veterans.

1. Explain in specific terms how the State will:
 - a. Ensure that, beyond co-location, Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialists and Local Veterans' Employment Representative (LVER) staff and their functions are integrated into the delivery of services to veterans within One-Stop Centers and other locations where mediated labor exchange services are provided.
 - b. Ensure that service provider(s) and their staff work together with DVOP specialists and LVER staff to promote employment, training and placement services and opportunities for veterans through the Workforce Investment Act and other Department of Labor (DOL) funded programs operated throughout the State. The plan should indicate any steps the State will take to ensure

collaboration and integration of services among DVOP/LVER staff and other service providers to ensure optimum promotion of the One-Stop services and activities for veterans and other eligible persons seeking jobs or training opportunities.

2. Provide a description of:

- a. How the State makes optimal use of the services and linkages to other service providers in the State to enhance the employability and placement of veterans who seek employment and training-related services.
- b. The process used by the State to seek out other organizations that provide employment services to veterans and how they will include these entities, through partnership or agreements, as part of its service delivery strategy.
- c. The level of outreach (including electronic outreach) and partner participation that best enables veterans and eligible persons seeking employment to easily access additional, available employment and training-related services.

C. Procedures taken to ensure veterans and other eligible persons are provided employment and training services within the integrated employment service and one-stop delivery system.

Particularly:

1. Describe the priority of service strategies that ensure maximum efforts by all partners. Including:

- a. How priority of service will be provided and monitored;
- b. How veterans are made aware of their priority of service entitlement;
- c. How SWA staff are made aware of their responsibilities to provide priority of service;
- d. How veterans are made aware of the special assistance provided by DVOP and LVER staff;
- e. How the State addresses prioritization of special populations of veterans identified by the Veterans' Employment and Training Service or any additional priority groups of veterans identified by the State.

2. Identify the services available that maximize the job and training opportunities provided within the One-Stop centers and through other service providers to eligible veterans, transitioning service members, vocational rehabilitation participants and other such groups targeted for special consideration, including difficult to serve veterans and veterans with barriers to employment, including:

- a. How the above populations are made aware of these services.
 - b. A description of any annual agreements with other service providers, financial or otherwise, for direct services or to coordinate services to the above populations.
3. The processes employed by the State to maintain, monitor, and assess the success of their accomplishments in relation to their approved State plan.

D. Outreach, advocacy and promotional activities.

1. Outreach activities and public information that will be used to inform veterans and targeted veteran populations of the services available through the employment service and workforce development system.
 - a. The narrative should outline an outreach strategy detailing the utilization and placement of DVOP and LVER staff to increase the use of their services by targeted populations of veterans and eligible persons.
 - b. Goals and expected outcomes that measure the effectiveness of outreach to veterans, veterans with barriers to employment and other eligible persons according to categories of priority as defined by the Act of 2002 need to be established
2. Advocacy activities that will be used to promote the development of increased hiring opportunities for veterans and eligible persons and how those efforts and resources increase veteran hiring among local employers, government agencies, and federal contractors.

E. Performance goals for the public labor exchange and for staff associated with this grant. The Department of Labor established National goals for FY 2005 for the public labor exchange. These goals are: Veterans Entered Employment Rate of 58 percent; Veterans Retention Rate of 72 percent; and Disabled Veterans Entered Employment Rate of 52 percent.

1. In consultation with the DVET, states are required to establish labor exchange and grant based performance goals. These goals will be established and measured in accordance with the guidance as published in VPL 04-04 and will be identified in the state plan. State Plans should also identify:
 - a. Strategies or steps the State will initiate, with associated time frames and benchmarks, to assist in achieving the National goals and other public labor exchange goals for veterans.
 - b. Strategies or steps the State will initiate, with associated time frames and benchmarks, to assist in achieving the grant based performance goals.

F. Staff costs or activities not identified as being associated with DVOP or LVER Activities that will be supported by State grant funds.

1. How and why staff other than DVOP/LVER staff will be supported by these funds.

- a. The State's narrative should describe how any types of non-DVOP/LVER staff will be supported by these funds, and should also discuss the locations and number of hours such non-DVOP/LVER staff will perform activities funded by this grant, for such activities as workshop sessions at Transition Assistance Program (TAP) sites or approved Special Initiatives.

G. Direct costs, other than Personal Services and Personnel Benefits

1. The State's narrative should provide a listing of the object class cost categories, as enumerated in the State's own accounting system, that are included as direct costs other than Personal Services and Personnel Benefits associated with the grant (i.e., all object classes in the State's own accounting system which comprise the amounts shown on SF-424A, lines 6.c. through 6. h.).
2. The narrative should also describe the rationale for including these costs as direct charges under this grant.
3. A comparison between the relations of costs represented in SF-424A lines 6.c. through 6. h. to the total direct costs of this grant, other than Personal Services and Personnel Benefits, to similar relative non-staff related costs associated with any other grants received from the Department of Labor is to be provided.

H. Indirect costs differentiated within the grant

1. The State's narrative should delineate those indirect costs that originate in the State's department and/or the agency that carries out the State's grant, and those indirect costs associated with the State's central governmental services.

II. Performance Incentive Awards:

Note: States may wish to refer to Veterans' Program Letter 08-03 for additional guidance when outlining the plan for incentive awards.

A. The total amount of funds designated for performance incentive awards.

1. The State's narrative must identify how the designated one percent (1%) of the total grant funds will be used as performance incentive awards.
2. Those States prohibited from using these funds to provide performance and incentive awards must indicate if this is a legal or policy determination.

B. Expected outcomes to be achieved through the State's incentive awards program.

1. The State's narrative must describe the State's incentive award program.
2. How the incentive award system will encourage individuals to achieve excellence in the provision of services to veterans and/or to demonstrate improvement in the delivery of such services.

C. Selection criteria and award process.

1. The State's narrative must describe how awardees will be selected, and the general criteria used for selection.
2. Describe how the award process will consider a broad array of employment and training service delivery staff.

D. Disbursement of incentive award funds.

1. The State's narrative must identify the entity within the State that will administer funds, and should identify cash and/or non-cash award items representing the total amount of designated funding and during which FY quarters these awards will be made.
2. If monetary awards are not given, the narrative should explain the rationale and what other forms of recognition will be used and the related costs, such as items of merchandise of equivalent cost or value.

III. Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program

A. Identify and describe the duties the State assigns to DVOP specialists.

1. These duties may be enumerated in the State's narrative, the service categories may be listed, or the narrative may simply refer to the applicable Veterans' Program Letter (Refer to Veterans' Program Letter 11-02, dated September 16, 2002 or the most current Veterans' Program Letter on this subject).
2. The narrative should identify the planned number of half time and full-time positions assigned and indicate the cost per position based upon Grant Budget Worksheets.

B. Describe the State's strategy for integrating DVOP specialists into the workforce system to provide intensive services and identify the veterans they will serve.

1. The State's narrative should indicate how the DVOP specialists assigned to One-Stop Centers are integrated into the One-Stop service delivery system.
2. The State must verify in their narrative that DVOP specialists are primarily assigned to assist the needs of disabled veterans and those veterans and eligible persons who require intensive services in order to obtain and retain employment.

3. The narrative should address how DVOP specialists will work with veterans enrolled in the VA's Chapter 31 program.

4. The narrative should explain how the services of DVOP specialists, One-Stop or Workforce Investment Act partners and employability development specialists are made available to eligible veterans to improve their ability to successfully compete in local labor markets.

C. Veterans requiring intensive services, as defined by the Workforce Investment Act

1. How veterans needing intensive services will be identified and assessed;
2. How veterans will be referred to or assigned to DVOP specialists;
3. How DVOP specialists will facilitate the provision of direct services to veterans.

D. Describe the State's procedures that ensure, to the maximum extent possible, a thorough and complete search is made to locate and hire qualified veterans for DVOP positions, and that State Workforce Agencies' hiring preference policies for DVOP specialists reflect the following order of priority: Qualified service-connected disabled veterans; 2. Qualified eligible veterans; and 3. Qualified eligible persons.

1. The State's narrative should describe the process used to fill vacancies, within and outside the agency as applicable, indicating how preference over other candidates is applied for any vacant DVOP positions, and describing efforts made to recruit qualified service-connected disabled veterans.
2. The narrative should indicate how vacancy announcements are broadly distributed throughout all areas of the State and within commuting areas to the State, using electronic and print media, and in coordination with the federal agencies, veterans' service organizations, and other stakeholders.

IV. Local Veterans' Employment Representatives

A. Duties assigned to the LVER position.

1. The State's narrative should indicate how the State will use LVER and other trained and available staff to provide services and coordinate employer outreach as described in Veterans' Program Letter 11-02 or the most current Veterans' Program Letter.
2. The narrative should also indicate the planned number of half-time and full-time positions assigned and indicate the cost per position based upon Grant Budget Worksheets.

B. Discuss how the State ensures that the required quarterly Manager's Report on Services to Veterans, for which the LVER is administratively responsible, is submitted for each State-

defined local workforce investment area as per Veterans' Program Letter 09-03, dated June 9, 2003, or the most current Veterans' Program Letter.

1. The State's narrative should describe their procedures to ensure the required report is accurate, complete and submitted in a timely manner to the manager of the work location, the appropriate State authorities and the Director for Veterans' Employment and Training.

E. Describe the procedures used that ensures, to the maximum extent possible, a thorough and complete search is made to locate and hire qualified veterans for LVER positions, and that State Workforce Agencies' hiring preference policies for LVER staff reflect the following order of priority Qualified service-connected disabled veterans; 2. Qualified eligible veterans; and 3. Qualified eligible persons.

2. The State's narrative should describe the process used to fill vacancies, indicating how qualified disabled veterans are given preference over other candidates for any vacant LVER position, and describing efforts made to recruit qualified service-connected disabled veterans.

3. The narrative should indicate how vacancy announcements are broadly distributed throughout all areas of the State and within commuting areas to the State, using electronic and print media, and in coordination with the Department of Veterans Affairs, veterans' service organizations, and other stakeholders.

V. Transition Assistance Program (TAP) Workshops

A. Involvement of DVOP specialists, LVER staff, or other State Workforce Agency Staff in the delivery of facilitated services at the Transition Assistance Program workshops.

1. The State's narrative should describe the procedures it will follow to ensure that DVOP specialists, LVER staff or other State Workforce Agency staff members serve as labor market experts in providing information to transitioning service members and their spouses.

2. The State must confirm that the selected personnel who facilitate Transition Assistance Program workshops have received the required training through the National Veterans' Training Institute. Individuals who have not attended Transition Assistance Program facilitator training must complete the training prior to conducting workshops.

B. Provision of Transition Assistance Program services.

1. The State's narrative should describe the process it will follow in the provision of Transition Assistance Program services. Specifically, the narrative should indicate how the State intends to use DVOP specialists, LVER staff or other State Workforce Agency staff.

2. The narrative must provide additional planning information, e.g., cost estimates - in accordance with the applicable Veterans Program Letter; a full listing of all Transition Assistance Program sites within the State (see Enclosure 7), the number of desired workshops each site is requesting and the number, by site, the State plans to facilitate.

VI. Special Initiative Programs:

- A. Demonstrate and describe the scope and assignment of costs (DVOP, LVER or other) of the program;
- B. Provide an understanding of the need for the proposed services and planned activities; and,
- C. Indicate the expected quantifiable outcomes of the proposal.

Note: States are eligible to be considered for funding of a Special Initiative. Approval is dependent upon the above mentioned criteria and the availability of additional funding.