

State of New Jersey

PY 2005 Workforce Information Grant Plan

A. Statewide Workforce Information System

- **The process used to ensure that the SWIB can exercise its responsibility for ensuring that state workforce information policy is responsive to the needs of the state and local workforce investment system.**

The New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development's (LWD) Office of Labor Planning and Analysis (LPA) and Office of Workforce New Jersey, and the State Employment and Training Commission (SETC), New Jersey's state workforce investment board, have worked and continue to work collaboratively to meet the needs of the state and local workforce system. In conjunction with this collaborative effort, LPA – acting for the Department – and the SETC will continue to consult with local WIB directors to develop demand driven products and to gauge their satisfaction with labor market information (LMI) products, through monthly WIB Director meetings and other periodic meetings to discuss products and training needs.

- **How the statewide workforce information system supports the goals of the state's WIA/Wagner-Peyser Two-Year Strategic Plan for state and local workforce development.**

The statewide workforce information system offers the vital information and data resources about New Jersey's labor market needed to provide effective customer service and to direct programs and services to meet the goals of the statewide two-year strategic plan. Among the goals supported by the statewide workforce information system is the maintenance of a fully integrated system of services and programs that is locally driven and that provides universal access to all customers. The LMI data and services supported by this grant provide a broad range of state, labor market and local level data and projections required by planners, employers, workers, jobseekers, students and other customers. In addition, these resources are being made more accessible by posting more data and information than ever on the Internet, thereby providing customers easier and more convenient access to these data. LPA is committed to providing training and assistance to local WIB leaders, LWD Business Services staff and One-Stop Career Center staff in how the data can best be utilized throughout the system to meet the needs of its customers.

- **How the grant activities are consistent with the strategic vision of the Governor and the SWIB.**

The strategic vision of the Governor and the State Employment and Training Commission includes a workforce investment system that is demand driven, provides customers with well grounded choices and which maintains a balance among the needs of New Jersey's citizens and businesses, and between local and statewide needs. The grant activities are consistent

with the strategic vision of the Governor and the SETC because they provide the data and informational resources customers need to make informed and effective decisions.

- **The strategy of the SWA and the SWIB for consulting with local workforce investment boards and stakeholders in the workforce investment system to determine customer needs for workforce information.**

Customer needs will be determined through regular consultation with the SETC, WIB directors and feedback from data users (*see Section C for additional information regarding plans for customer satisfaction*).

- **The broad strategic approach for workforce information delivery to principal customers.**

Effective communication will be the key to workforce information delivery to customers. Good lines of communication, continuous feedback and improvement will be the overall strategic approach used to deliver labor market information. Ways to deliver LMI will include broadening the distribution of publications, e-lert notifications and capacity building.

- **How workforce information and services are delivered as core services to customers through the state's One-Stop service delivery system.**

Labor market information and services will be delivered using a variety of means including the Internet, publications, the development of custom products and by direct participation of field labor market analysts in One-Stop Career Center activities. Field labor market analysts will also consult with local WIBS and One-Stop Career Center staff to determine product needs and customer satisfaction. In addition, One-Stop Career Centers conduct workshops informing jobseekers of the value of understanding labor market information in making better career choices and provide labor market information to its clients.

- **A description of the customer consultation and satisfaction assessment method(s) to be used to collect and interpret customer satisfaction information and the principal customers to be consulted.**

See Section C for response.

- **A concise summary of customer satisfaction findings for the most recent survey of products and services and the effect those findings had on the planned products and services for PY 2005 including how the plan addresses inadequacies or gaps identified by users.**
 - Conference LMI session surveys - Customer satisfaction surveys were developed and distributed to attendees of the LMI workshops at the NJ State Data Center Conference, December 2004 and the State Employment and Training Commission Conference, December 2004.

- Business community in-person presentation/survey - A presentation about the need to obtain feedback from employers about their opinions and usage of LMI products was given to the 50 state council members attending the New Jersey Employer Council meeting in January 2005. A customer survey was distributed prior to the meeting and collected at the end of the meeting.
- Web-based surveys - Customer satisfaction surveys were developed and posted on selected LMI product pages from October 1, 2004 through March 31, 2005. The seven products included in this automated survey for Program Year 2004 were: occupational employment statistics, Census 2000 data, industry and occupational employment projections, labor force estimates, population estimates, employment and wage data, and Census data for affirmative action.
- LMI product update survey - An e-mail based customer satisfaction survey was developed and attached to the monthly LMI Product Update E-mail that was sent in March 2005 to 820 recipients.
- Direct mail survey - A customer satisfaction survey focusing on the quarterly *Employment & the Economy* newsletter was mailed directly to over 950 recipients of this publication.
- Surveys inserted in publications - There were LMI customer surveys inserted in two publications for PY 2004: *Projections 2012* and *New Jersey Occupational Wages*. Postage-paid return envelopes were provided with each publication.

As the result of these customer satisfaction efforts, recommendations were made to alter LMI products and processes, and the following actions were taken:

- Numerous comments regarding the website pointed out the need to redesign it in a more accessible and user-friendly way. The agency has contracted for the complete redesign of the site, incorporating many of the specific recommendations from the surveys.
- The product description of data on the website now includes the most recent revision date, as well as the expected date when new data will be available.
- As a result of the direct mail survey sent to recipients of the *Employment & the Economy* newsletter, about five percent of the mail was returned because of address errors, which gave us the opportunity to update our distribution list; in addition, the appropriate deletions will result in a savings in postage.
- Other changes being considered include:
 - The use of “Zip-Plus 4” on all publications lists of 250 or more, to reduce postage costs;
 - The inclusion of Web addresses on hardcopy LMI products; and

- The inclusion in publications of a contact person for specific products.
- **Identify funds leveraged or matched from funding sources other than these grant funds and how these funds will enhance delivery of products and services as part of the state’s workforce information system.**

Workforce Investment Act (WIA), Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) and limited state funding will enhance the delivery of labor market information products and services to One-Stop Career Center customers. In addition, LPA coordinates the development of career information products and services with the Center for Occupational Employment Information (COEI), thereby reducing possible duplication of efforts.

B. Core Products and Services

State Workforce Agency Deliverables

1. Continue to populate the ALMIS Database with state data.

- **Description of core product, service or other demand activity**

Labor market information will be made available using an updated ALMIS database to provide comprehensive workforce information to customers in the state and the nation. Specifically, the following files will be populated and updated on a regular schedule:

- *Three licensing tables, as required*
- *School tables (completers and school names)*
- *Current Employment Statistics (CES)*
- *Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS)*
- *Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW)*
- *Occupational projections*
- *Industry/occupational estimates*
- *OES wages*
- *ALMIS employer database.*

Other non-required ALMIS tables will be populated according to customer demand and in conjunction with the development of the new LWD website.

- **Customer support for product or service as indicated in customer satisfaction survey results or other customer consultations**

A continually updated ALMIS database will allow LPA customers the opportunity to develop custom data tables so that they may better employ the data to meet the specific goals and needs of their operations.

- **Support goals of the state’s WIA/Wagner-Peyser Two-Year Strategic Plan**

An updated ALMIS database will provide the information needed to make effective strategic decisions which support the goals of the state's WIA/Wagner-Peyser strategic plan. The updated ALMIS database will give a clearer picture of the entire labor market enabling comparison of New Jersey data with that of the nation and of other states.

- **Principal Customers**

Our customer base for an updated ALMIS database includes planners, businesspersons, decision makers, local WIBs, One-Stop Career Centers, job seekers, students and academicians, employers, media and the general public.

- **Projected outcome(s) and system impact(s)**

The system will be more effective and empower our customers by providing them access to updated labor market data in the ALMIS database and the ability to customize the data to meet their own varying needs.

- **Planned milestones**

LPA will update ALMIS tables as required using Version 2.3 of the database to conform to the requirements of our present online LMI delivery system (note, the redesigned website will use version 3.0 of the software). ALMIS tables will be populated on an ongoing basis using updated information from the cooperating data collection units. All core ALMIS database tables that are part of the ETA deliverable will be populated for use in the new LWD website.

- **Estimated costs (identify equipment purchases of \$5,000 or more per unit cost)**

No equipment purchases at this cost level are anticipated.

2. Produce and disseminate industry and occupational employment projections.

- **Description of core product, service or other demand activity**

Long-term industry and occupational employment projections for the year 2014 will be produced. State NAICS-based projections will be completed by April 2006 while county NAICS-based projections will be completed by December 2006. (These due dates are contingent upon BLS making the national projections available to the states by September 2005.)

The completed projections will be released on the LPA website and in a printed format. The projections will also be available in the format required for the ALMIS database.

The data will also be used in the development of occupational analysis products. (See item #3 below.) Both industry and occupational projections will provide One-Stop Career Center customers, students and others with information that can be used in the career decision-making process.

During PY 2005, LPA will produce 2005-2007 NAICS-based short-term projections for the state and labor areas.

- **Customer support for product or service as indicated in customer satisfaction survey results or other customer consultations**

Customer satisfaction will be determined by focus groups consisting of WIBS, One-Stop Career Center operators, demographic and economic experts. See Section C for additional information.

- **Support goals of the state's WIA/Wagner-Peyser Two-Year Strategic Plan**

The projections will give a clearer picture of the way the labor market is changing, helping to shape more effective strategic decisions pursuant with the New Jersey One-Stop Workforce Investment System Unified State Plan.

- **Principal Customers**

The principal customers for the projections include local WIBS, LWD staff, One-Stop operators and customers, students, businesses, government planners, career counselors and the general public. They also are used by the Center for Occupational Employment Information (COEI) to identify labor demand occupations.

- **Projected outcome(s) and system impact(s)**

These industry and occupational employment projections will be produced and published. Industry employment projections will be an input in the projection of occupational employment, which will be disseminated for use by job and training seekers, employment counselors, job placement organizations and other customers.

- **Planned milestones**

Long-term projections:

Completion of State Projections: January 2006

Statewide Projections Review Meeting: February 2006

Release of Statewide Projections: April 2006

Completion of County Projections: October 2006

County Projections Review Meeting: November 2006

Release of County Projections: December 2006.

Note: The planned milestones are all contingent on BLS making the national projections available by September 2005. If this deadline is not achieved, all due dates will be delayed accordingly.

Short-term projections:

Begin short-term 2005-2007 projections: November 2005

Finalize short-term 2005-2007 projections: February 2006

- **Estimated costs (identify equipment purchases of \$5,000 or more per unit cost)**

No equipment purchases at this cost level are anticipated.

State Workforce Investment Board (SWIB)/State Workforce Agency (SWA) Deliverables

3. Provide occupational and career information products for public use.

- **Description of core product, service or other demand activity**

Occupational wage estimates for WIB defined labor areas will be developed using the OES Estimates Delivery System (EDS). These estimates will be based on occupational employment and wage data collected from the November 2004 and May 2005 OES wage survey panels. These estimates will be reviewed by COEI staff, field labor market analysts and staff in the Bureau of Occupational Research before release.

Based upon input received from counselors of the One-Stop Career Centers, LPA will produce rankings of industries within labor areas and the occupations found within these industries. Skills, knowledges and abilities required of these occupations will also be provided. One-Stop Career Center customers can use this information to focus on career choices. Information will be made available on the Internet in an attractive, easy to understand format.

Using funds from other sources, information housed in the ALMIS database and other data will be incorporated into the updated and expanded NJNextStop website. A joint product of the SETC, the Department of Education and the Department of Labor and Workforce Development, NJNextStop informs high school students, parents, teachers, counselors, and jobseekers about the skills that New Jersey employers expect to be in demand today and in the future. Additional LMI products – such as our computerized career information delivery system, the *NJ Occupational Outlook Handbook* and the 4th edition of New Jersey's *Hot 50* in September 2006 – will also be developed using funds from other sources.

- **Customer support for product or service as indicated in customer satisfaction survey results or other customer consultations**

The SETC and One-Stop Career Center staff were consulted in the development of these activities and customer satisfaction will be conducted to determine project effectiveness.

- **Support goals of the state's WIA/Wagner-Peyser Two-Year Strategic Plan**

The information will provide information geared toward individual decision making pursuant with the New Jersey One-Stop Workforce Investment System Unified State Plan (July 1, 2005 – June 30, 2007).

- **Principal Customers**

Students, businesses, organized labor and other customers of the One-Stop Career Center system use our occupational and career information products.

- **Projected outcome(s) and system impact(s)**

Products will enhance the availability of labor market and career information to students and customers of the One-Stop Career Center system.

- **Planned milestones**

Occupational wage estimates for WIB areas: complete May 2006.

Ranking of high paying industries:

- ◆ May 2006: prepare list of high-paying industry sectors for state and MSAs.
- ◆ June 2006: prepare list of high-paying occupations in the top five industry sectors for state and MSAs.

- **Estimated costs (identify equipment purchases of \$5,000 or more per unit cost)**

No equipment purchases at this cost level are anticipated.

4. Ensure that workforce information and support required by state and local workforce investment boards are provided.

- **Description of core product, service or other demand activity**

During PY 2005, LPA will continue to provide LMI and technical support to the SETC and to local WIBs. LPA field staff will attend WIB meetings, when requested, and will actively pursue opportunities to serve on WIB, LMI and planning subcommittees. Funding from this ETA grant and from other sources will continue to permit field staff to be out-stationed on a limited basis at selected One-Stop Career Centers to provide direct services and assistance to local office staff and customers.

Funds from this grant and other sources will allow LMI field staff to provide technical assistance to New Jersey's Business Resource Centers. These centers are designed to help businesses with recruiting, business planning and other needs.

LPA will continue to update and disseminate Local Employment Dynamics (LED) data or Quarterly Workforce Indicators for New Jersey and WIB areas. WIBs will continue to be shown how LED data can be used for planning and policy making.

Field labor market analysts will produce monthly employment development reports describing company openings, closings, labor disputes, etc. that will be distributed to One-Stop Career Center managers, WIB directors and others in the One-Stop community.

During this program year, there will be an emphasis on providing LMI to employers. Activities will include the following:

- Produce articles for the on-line departmental publication *Employer Update*
 - Provide speakers for business associations and chambers of commerce
 - Expand mailing list of *Economic Indicators* and other LMI publications
 - Attend conferences to promote LMI services to business
 - Develop and distribute an LMI poster and brochure with a focus on the business community.
- **Customer support for product or service as indicated in customer satisfaction survey results or other customer consultations**

Local WIB and One-Stop Career Center staff routinely request LMI products and information through direct contacts with field labor market analysts. This feedback is routinely used to develop products, to the extent possible, that meet the needs of One-Stop Career Center customers.

- **Support goals of the state's WIA/Wagner-Peyser Two-Year Strategic Plan**

LMI provided to state and local WIBs directly supports the New Jersey One-Stop Workforce Investment System Unified State Plan by enabling these entities to develop and better guide policies and programs and to more effectively plan based on dynamic labor market conditions.

- **Principal Customers**

The principal customers are the local WIBs, business and the general public.

- **Projected outcome(s) and system impact(s)**

The projected outcome and system impact are that New Jersey's One-Stop Career Center system will more effectively serve customers using timely and local workforce

information. Providing these data to members of the One-Stop community will mean that better-informed career and training decisions can be made.

- **Planned milestones**

Ongoing throughout PY 2005.

- **Estimated costs (identify equipment purchases of \$5,000 or more per unit cost)**

No equipment purchases at this cost level are anticipated.

5. Maintain and enhance electronic state workforce information delivery systems.

- **Description of core product, service or other demand activity**

The current LPA website will be maintained and updated as new data and information become available. LPA and the New Jersey State Data Center will work with LWD's Office of Media and Ciber Solutions (the vendor) on efforts to develop a new departmental website, LPA website and Workforce New Jersey Public Information Network (WNJPIN) website.

- **Customer support for product or service as indicated in customer satisfaction survey results or other customer consultations**

The redesign effort is in response to customer input for improvements to the LWD websites. The objective is to develop and implement websites that are logically organized, user-friendly, easier to navigate and, where possible, reduce the number of screens that the user needs to go through before getting to the desired data/information.

- **Support goals of the state's WIA/Wagner-Peyser Two-Year Strategic Plan**

Improving the electronic dissemination of information and implementation of the ALMIS database supports the two-year strategic plan by expanding the accessibility of information.

- **Principal Customers**

Principal customers are job seekers, students, employers and the business community in general, local WIBs and staff, One-Stop Career Center employment counselors and other staff, legislators, planners, academicians and members of the general public.

- **Projected outcome(s) and system impact(s)**

The efficiency of any system — including labor market information — increases with better and more accessible information. The seven days per week, 24 hours per day

availability of labor market information on the Internet is aimed to help employers, job and training seekers and others to make informed decisions and to make this information accessible to all customers when they need it.

- **Planned milestones**

Testing of the revamped LPA website will take place in May 2006.

- **Estimated costs (identify equipment purchases of \$5,000 or more per unit cost)**

No equipment purchases at this cost level are anticipated.

6. Support state workforce information training activities.

- **Description of core product, service or other demand activity**

LPA will conduct training, upon request and within the constraints of our resources, for WIB, One-Stop community and business data users in the application of LMI (using the Internet and more traditional sources of LMI) and in the use of Local Employment Dynamics (LED) data. LPA also will conduct and participate in conferences and workshops and respond to informational requests.

LPA will investigate sources of training and in cooperation with other LWD offices develop suitable LMI training curriculum for front-line One-Stop Career Center staff. Such training would likely be two days in duration (including ½ day computer lab) and would be conducted by an outside agency, coordinated by LWD.

LPA will continue its own staff development by making use of training offered by the LMI Training Institute and by training offered by BLS. New labor market analysts will be sent to the appropriate level of LMI training. In addition, selected analysts will attend training on American Community Survey data and in preparation for the decennial 2010 census, including voting re-districting efforts.

- **Customer support for product or service as indicated in customer satisfaction survey results or other customer consultations**

WIBs, Workforce NJ and the SETC have expressed a need for training for front-line staff, which will be developed and provided.

- **Support goals of the state's WIA/Wagner-Peyser Two-Year Strategic Plan**

Training WIBs and One-Stop Career Center staff supports the goals of the New Jersey One-Stop Workforce Investment System Unified State Plan by empowering these customers with the use of data they need to successfully help customers to pursue their goals.

- **Principal Customers**

The principal internal customers for training will be labor market analysts within LPA so that capacity is built to produce better LMI products and better LMI analysis. Principal external customers are state and local WIBs and One-Stop Career Center staff, including Business Resource Centers.

- **Projected outcome(s) and system impact(s)**

Training should increase the effectiveness of the system by improving capacity among LMI staff, WIBs and One-Stop Career Centers to meet the needs of our customers.

- **Planned milestones**

Training will be ongoing throughout the planning year.

- **Estimated costs (identify equipment purchases of \$5,000 or more per unit cost)**

No equipment purchases at this cost level are anticipated.

C. Consultation and Customer Satisfaction Assessment

Based on consultation with our workforce development partners, the plan adopted to measure customer satisfaction with labor market information includes designing and implementing specific, targeted surveys to obtain feedback from employers, job seekers and the workforce community:

- Business Resource Centers - Surveys for LMI products will be developed and made available in the Business Resource Centers throughout the state. The centers provide resource libraries, labor market information, tax information, access to professional out-placement services and information on seminars of interest to employers.
- Direct mail survey - Since the direct mail survey sent to recipients of the *Employment & the Economy* newsletter survey in PY 2004 has yielded a significant response rate (more than 12% and rising, as responses are still being received), plans for another survey for the recipients of other LMI publications will be discussed with members of the LPA customer feedback workgroup to determine which publication or publications to target in PY 2005.
- High school guidance counselor survey - A survey will be developed and distributed to a sample of high school guidance counselors. The survey will focus on LMI products such as *New Jersey's Hot 50* and *Occupational Outlook Handbook*. Surveying counselors will be a way to also get feedback from the students since they work so closely with their counselors.