

WORKFORCE ESCAROSA, INC
LOCAL WORKFORCE SERVICES PLAN 2009-2010

Section I. Context, Vision, and Strategy

1.A. Economic and Labor Market Context

Provide a detailed analysis of the local economy, the labor pool, and the labor market context. (§112 (b)(4)).

In responding to this question, the RWB should update its analysis to indicate how the economic downturn has impacted the local labor market context.

Workforce Escarosa's (Escarosa) geographical area has had a significant increase in dislocations and business closures. In addition, due to the loss of sales tax revenue at the state level, many governmental services have been reduced to include local law enforcement, teaching positions, and other local government services. These reductions have created higher unemployment in those occupations and have affected our demand occupation projections for our two county areas. Teachers are no longer considered to be an "in demand" occupation. However, on the other hand, our largest industries to include health/life sciences and aerospace and defense have not seen any reductions and in some instances have seen increases.

Tourism, Escarosa's largest economic industry, has seen some reductions; however, bed tax revenues for this past month showed increases. Many economists have indicated that northwest Florida will not see the high unemployment rates as areas such as Orlando and south Florida due to the fact that northwest Florida is a "drive-to" location. Economist expects northwest Florida to rebound more quickly than south Florida.

Even though there is some good news locally, unemployment for the Pensacola MSA has gone as high as 9.6%, and is currently at 9.1%. This is lower than the State's unemployment rate, but considerably higher than previous years. Escarosa has worked closely with the Pensacola Bay Area Chamber of Commerce's Economic Development, TEAM Santa Rosa and Florida's Great Northwest to ascertain future trends and local factors. Health care, aerospace and defense, information technology, tourism, and the Department of Corrections will continue to lead our area for employment opportunities in the future.

Region 1's labor pool consists of low-skilled as well as highly skilled workers. The Pensacola Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) has seen dislocations occur among prominent employers to include Wayne Dalton, General Electric, Solutia, and others to name a few. Individuals employed for many years for these and similar companies are now experiencing unemployment due to the economy. These dislocations have resulted in a more highly-trained and stable labor pool for our area; however, without like or similar job opportunities in transferable industries, household incomes will continue to decline and will continue to result in an increased need for public assistance. Escarosa believes that many of the higher-skilled dislocated workers will be afforded access to retraining services while receiving UI benefits as well as financial assistance for retraining. The opportunities due to the Recovery Act will allow the dislocated workers to

bring skills current; obtain industry recognized certifications; or look to a comparable or related field for retraining.

Overreaching Local Strategies

1.B. Describe the strategies that are in place to address the local strategic direction, local priorities, and workforce development issues identified through the local economy.

The RWB should describe the following local actionable strategies it is deploying to achieve the state and local vision for the use of Recovery Act and regular formula funds.

1. How the local workforce investment system resources, both stimulus and regular formula funds, can and will be used to serve the increased number of workers in need.

Regular formula Workforce Investment Act (WIA) funds, Wagner Peyser (WP) funds, as well as American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds will be used to support dislocated workers, unemployment claimants, unemployed and under employed adults, and older youth with increased access to universal services as well as financial assistance for retraining opportunities.

WP ARRA funding will be used to increase staff that provide assistance in Escarosa's Career Centers Resource Rooms. During better economic times, Escarosa was seeing approximately 6,500 visits per month. Over the past 6 months, visits have continued to increase and are now at approximately 13,000 visits per month. Escarosa has increased staff so that more personal attention can be given to individuals seeking services. Computer equipment has been updated and additional equipment and labs have been added. In addition, a computer lab is available for individuals who have little to no experience with computers. Staff was finding that many dislocated workers who had been employed for long periods of times, were less likely to understand the working components of the computer to include the use of the mouse. The introduction to computers lab assists these individuals with learning how to navigate the internet and the functions of the keyboard and mouse.

2. How adults and dislocated workers, including low-income adults, who need to acquire new skills will have increased access to education and training opportunities.

Over the past years, Escarosa did not have the financial capabilities to serve all individuals who sought assistance with training and/or retraining. Escarosa closely monitored the number of customers placed into training to ensure Escarosa did not exceed budget capabilities. A "Most In Need" policy was implement which limited those we served to household income amounts of 150% of poverty based upon the Lower Living Standard Income Level (LLSIL) for our area. Due to the additional funding received under the stimulus funding and increases in our WIA allocations, Escarosa's Board of Directors approved increasing household income levels to 200% of poverty based upon the LLSIL; increasing the amount of the Individual Training Account (ITA) from \$5,000 to \$7,500; will allowing the PELL grant to be used by the customer for day-to-day living expenses; and increasing assistance with childcare and transportation. All of these

policy changes approved by the Board of Directors, directly increases an individual's ability to succeed with training or retraining services.

3. How the RWB will address a dual-customer approach, meeting the skill needs of existing and emerging employers and high-growth occupations, as well as the needs of under-skilled adults.

Escarosa determined that current participants enrolled into training prior to ARRA funding will remain enrolled in WIA formula funded services and will continue for the duration of their training. Individuals accessing services after receipt of the ARRA funds would be dual-enrolled under ARRA and WIA formula funding; however, if the ARRA formula funds become fully expended and/or expire, these customers would be continued under the WIA formula based grant.

Escarosa also broadened occupations for which training is approved by reviewing surrounding areas and their demand occupations. Based upon this review, the Board approved staff adding additional occupations to our approved training list based upon commuting distances for surrounding regional workforce boards, to include our neighbors to our west in Alabama. By using a regional approach, Escarosa is able to take into consideration job growth in other communities. For many years, individuals who reside in lower Alabama and parts of southern Georgia work in northwest Florida and vice-versa. Many individuals who reside in northwest Florida work in Mobile, and even farther west to include off-shore employment. Escarosa's current policy takes the regional perspective into account. Escarosa also reached out to all public educational entities as well as private, training vendors to increase customer choice for training providers as well as available training slots.

4. How workforce activities (e.g., adult education, job training, postsecondary education, registered apprenticeship, career advancement, needs based payments and support service activities) will be aligned in career pathways both now in implementing the Recovery Act and in the transformed workforce system of the future.

As mentioned above, workforce activities through revisions to local policies have been re-evaluated to make local policies more conducive to current economic trends and the needs of the workforce. In addition, support services to include childcare and transportation have been implemented and are currently being used by our customers. Realignment of the PELL Grant to allow that funding to be used for day-to-day expenses also strengthens the participant's ability to attend training and successfully complete the training. Escarosa also offers assistance with utilities, rent/mortgage, uniforms, tools, work clothes, etc., as determined by need and if lack of that assistance would hinder the individual's ability to attend and/or complete training. Needs based payments have not been implemented at this point in time due to the extension of unemployment payments and also in lieu of the additional support services that Escarosa provides.

All services are in support of demand occupations that lead to a self-sufficient wage. Individuals who are in dead-end; low wage, low skill occupations, who are identified when accessing universal services; and who are underemployed are provided a preliminary career counseling

session to determine whether or not the individual should be referred to WIA and advanced training. If the participant is eligible and could advance through career pathways, the individual is referred to WIA for additional information and additional assessments.

Through ARRA funding, Escarosa has increased staff support to Escarosa's Career Center's Resource Rooms so that more individual attention and support can be given to the sheer number of individuals staff are seeing on a daily basis. By providing more staff support, individuals are less likely to fall through the cracks during this process and can be referred to other programs and services.

Escarosa has also increased access to computers. Escarosa purchased a software program that allows users a two (2) hour window of access in our Resource Rooms. This software tracks the time the customer is using the computer and after 2 hours, the software denies access to that customer. This allows for the flow of customers to continue without any one individual tying up the computer for 3 or 4 hours which was occurring prior to installation of the software. The two hour timeframe keeps traffic moving while allowing the user plenty of time to look for jobs and work on his/her resumes.

5. How the RWB will partner to develop workforce solutions with community colleges, business and labor organizations, registered apprenticeship program sponsors, civic groups, and community organizations to align workforce development strategies and align workforce strategies with strategies for regional development and shared prosperity.

The Executive Director for Escarosa is currently involved with several organizations to include Pensacola Junior College, local areas businesses through TEAM Santa Rosa, Santa Rosa Chamber of Commerce, Florida's Great Northwest and Pensacola Bay Area Chamber of Commerce; the United Way and several initiatives to include Bay Works, Poverty Solution Team and Bridges Out of Poverty; Catholic Charities; Neighborhood Enterprise Foundation; the Community Action Program and a community group comprised of several agencies that received stimulus funding for various services known as the Stimulus Community Group. The Stimulus Community Group is focusing on the various services to be offered to include assistance with housing, utilities, childcare, employment, transportation and training to ensure non-duplication of services to the general public. The Stimulus Community Group is currently compiling eligibility criteria for the different organizations and the services each organization can provide. The Group hopes to share information on customers and the various services they are accessing to ensure non-duplication of payments for housing assistance, childcare, transportation, etc.

All activities mentioned above are to ensure all workforce strategies are aligned with strategies within our community that moves all individuals out of poverty and into economic self-sufficiency. All organizations are working to ensure community coordination and communication lines are open with all understanding the direction our community needs to take to increase regional strategies to increase prosperity.

I.C. Service Delivery Strategies, Support for Training

Describe innovative service delivery strategies the RWB has or is planning to undertake to maximize resources, increase service levels, improve service quality and achieve better integration.

1. Increase services to workers in need.

Workers in need are identified as those workers who lack the knowledge, skills, abilities, or support mechanisms to rapidly return to work and acquire sustainable high skill/high wage jobs. All Workforce Escarosa service delivery offices provide comprehensive delivery of services to this population via the following activities or services: assisted and unassisted job search; resource room services, computer access, State employment website (EFM); Proveit comprehensive assessment tools; introduction to computer classes; resume writing classes; job search workshops; job fairs; individual and group counseling; disability navigator to assisted this population; Education and training (including remedial education)based on local demand high growth/wage occupations; referral to vocational rehabilitation as well as vocational training. Additionally, Workforce Escarosa has initiated a customized job search assistance program for ex- offender population to facilitate their transition into gainful employment, and increased business services staff to increase employer penetration resulting in job opportunities.

2. Support the full range of One-Stop Career Center customers in acquiring the skills needed to attain jobs in high growth, high-wage industries and occupations, including such support services, need-based payments basic skills remediation, English as a second language, and other supportive services.

In order to support the full range of One- Stop Career Center customers in acquiring the skills needed to attain jobs in high growth, high-wage industries and occupations workforce has made significant changes in service delivery. Escarosa has increased the number of staff delivering core, intensive, training, and support services in the full service One Stops. These include nine WIA staff, nine core services and U.C. reemployment services staff, four business services staff, one additional support services staff to increase overall delivery of workforce services.

The RWB has increased the amount of the individual training account (ITA) from \$5000 to \$7500, increased child care support expenditures from 50% to 100%. The most in need policy has increased from 150% to 200% of LLSIL. The radius of service delivery of training courses and providers has been increased to within 200 miles of the RWB.

Workforce Escarosa provides upfront diversion to participants entering immediate employment and who are faced with and unable to meet the requirements associated with the employment. The services include but are not limited to: 100% cost of childcare services; uniforms/tools; transportation allowances; licensure reimbursement; physical examinations; background checks; and drug testing.

Region 1 counselors and staff refer customers to English as a second language and basic skills remediation when needed as part of its comprehensive delivery of services.

To facilitate the customers' access to high growth/high wage industries and occupations, Workforce Escarosa has expanded its training services, workshops, and business services. Regarding training, Workforce Escarosa has increased its eligible training provider list and programs; has now included short term certifications in specialized fields; and is developing workshops to include soft skills, communication skills, and professional imaging.

Regarding business services and high growth/high wage jobs, Workforce Escarosa has increased the number and types of On- The- Job training opportunities. The RWB has increased the OJT dollar cap paid to the individual employer to facilitate positive outcomes in training and retention. Additionally, RWB1 has increased the number of business services staff to expand outreach and recruitment of high growth /high wage jobs; is developing a newsletter for businesses to facilitate outreach and placement services; and provides specialized job fairs focused on the individual needs of high growth/high wage employers. Business services staff have begun to coordinate customized high growth/high wage job orders with One Stop counselors and jobseekers to provide a tailored, individualized connectivity between job openings and customers.

3. Ensure education and training delivered through the workforce system results in education and workforce skills of demonstrated value, and focus assessments and certifications towards the next level of education and employment.

As previously noted, to ensure that education and training delivered through the workforce system results in education and workforce skills of demonstrated value, Workforce Escarosa has made several changes to its education and training delivery approach. Universal One Stop customers have access to online interest assessments such as Career Voyager, ONET, and Career InfoNET as initial tools for planning and making career decisions. The RWB has expanded the assessment tools to include the Proveit system which includes up to 1000 different assessment options. Career Scope is a computer based interest and abilities inventory that customers can use jointly with their career advisor for employment/career planning.

The RWB has increased the provider list and programs with expanded focus on high growth/high wage jobs; the RWB now offer short term certifications in specialized fields; Escarosa has increased programs specific to the targeted training occupations list; and Escarosa is developing workshops to include soft skills, communication skills, and professional imaging.

4. Strategically use youth, dislocated worker and adult funds to quickly deliver innovative services.

Workforce Escarosa's strategic plan to quickly deliver innovative services to youth, dislocated workers, and adults includes the following:

In an effort to triple the number of customers in the WIA training components Escarosa has instituted an automated WIA orientation, and acquired additional WIA intake and case management staff to expedite the enrollment process. To meet increased universal customer demand in One Stop Centers, RWB1 has: added computers; increased workshops (basic computer skills; soft skills, etc) ; added new assessment tools (Career Scope and Proveit); and

increased pre-screening tools (eg. Proveit,) to assist business staff in marketing job seekers to employers. Likewise, Escarosa is increasing outreach services (e.g. television, radio, press releases, brochures etc.) to expand community awareness of programs and services which should expand the level of awareness amongst One Stop services to job seekers and employers. Additionally, Escarosa offers educational vendor fairs to expand jobs seekers awareness of post secondary training opportunities that are available to them. Likewise, Escarosa has expanded OJT, customized, and employed worker training opportunities in anticipation of increased workforce demands resulting from increased economic development efforts.

Finally, Escarosa has used Recovery Act funding to initiate a summer youth program to provide work experience, work readiness skills, and income for up to 300 economically disadvantaged youth ages 14 through 24 years of age. Escarosa initiated an RFP process to identify and select service providers for the summer youth employment program.

5. Provide targeted work experiences in order to prepare individuals for job opportunities in new industries or occupations, particularly using registered apprenticeship and on-the-job training for all jobseekers, and summer work experience for youth.

In an effort to prepare individuals for job opportunities in new industries RWB1 has initiated the following procedures: increased business staff to provide expanded employer outreach resulting in more OJT opportunities; expanded OJT to all industry groups to increase high growth/ high wage opportunities for job seekers; increased OJT amount to facilitate employer participation in OJT; and initiated upfront diversion costs for employment to facilitate job seeker transition into employment. Finally, RWB1 has used ARRA funding to initiate a summer youth program to provide work experience, work readiness skills, and income for up to 300 economically disadvantaged youth, ages 14 through 24 years of age.

6. Align workforce activities with education strategies and economic and community development strategies to meet skill needs of jobs and industries important to the local regional economies and meet the needs of under-skilled adults.

The Escarosa Business Competitiveness Council has met over the past several months and reviewed demand occupations; related training courses and the associated eligible training providers; Labor Market projections; and economic forecasting information from the HAAS Center. In addition, information from Florida's Great Northwest as well as our local economic development entities was taken into consideration as well as new or expanding businesses known to the local community. Every effort has been made to insure that all financial assistance for training programs are in areas considered to be in demand or are projected to be in demand within the next 2 to 3 years. Escarosa's primary focus for training and retraining will center around Health and Life Sciences; Aerospace and Defense related occupations and industries; Service Industries; Information Technology; and Government related employment centered around correctional facilities. Several local businesses involved in information related occupations are expanding and are looking to hire a more skilled workforce. In addition a new correctional facility is being constructed and will employ approximately 400 individuals and will include occupations as correctional officers, as well as health care related positions. Special

classes and/or courses may be designed and assistance provided with Recovery Act funds to ensure a skilled workforce is available by the summer of 2010.

Section II. Service Delivery

Local Governance and Collaboration

II.A.1. Describe how the local partners involved in the workforce investment system interrelate on workforce economic development and education issues.

In its response, the RWB should describe how it is ensuring cross-agency and partner collaboration so that workforce investments are tied to other investments funded by the ARRA outside of workforce development.

Please see Attachment A, Workforce Escarosa's Local Workforce Services Plan, 2007 – 2009, Sections I A.2; Section V - D.4.1 and D.4.2; and Section V. F.16.e – F.16.j. Services provided under ARRA for the adult, year-around youth, and dislocated worker programs will be aligned with current services under the regular WIA programs. To promote transparency of the use of WIA regular funding and ARRA funding, training opportunities will be expanded to serve more adults, dislocated workers and older youth, as well as the expansion of support services. Through community partnerships, Escarosa is very aware of new businesses moving into the area; expanding businesses; additional training needs due to current economic conditions; an expansion of training courses offered based upon current economic conditions; and improved communication among community based organizations seeking assistance for their clients.

II.A.2. Describe the steps the RWB will take to improve operational collaboration of the workforce investment activities and other related activities and programs outlined in section 112(b)(8)(A) of WIA at the local level (e.g., joint activities, memorandum of understanding, planned mergers, coordinated policies, etc.).

Steps taken to improve collaboration include Escarosa's participation in the Stimulus Community Group so that staff understands other community based organizations and the stimulus funding they will receive to offer services. This collaboration is very important to ensure non-duplication of support services (e.g., housing assistance; utility assistance; training support, etc.) which will be offered in our area. This group is having discussions surrounding confidential information agreements; memorandums of understanding; and the referral processes; however, at this point in time no formal written agreements have been completed. Escarosa expects that the discussions will result in the above forms and agreements within the next three months. All community organizations involved are providing information on eligibility criteria; customer flow processes; confidentiality requirements and local policies so that each organization understands their specific processes. This will result in joint activities and coordinated policies if all can move forward as planned.

II.B Reemployment Services and Wagner-Peyser Act Services

The ARRA makes funding available for reemployment services (RES). RES funding provides job search and other employment related services to UI customers. These funds are to be used to provide RES through the one-stop career centers, in addition to regular Wagner-Peyser Act funded employment services in order to accelerate UI customers' return to employment. Under the Wagner Peyser Act, Section 7(a) through (c), allowable activities include job search and placement services to job seekers including counseling, testing, occupation skills, labor market information, assessment, referral to employers, and appropriate recruitment services and special technical assistance services for employers. These services may include:

- Services provided to UI claimants identified through the UI profiling system;
- In-person staff assisted services;
- Initial claimant reemployment assessments;
- Career guidance and group and individual counseling, including provision of materials, suggestions or advice which are intended to assist the job seeker in making occupation or career decisions;
- Provision of LMI, occupational and skills transferability information that clarifies claimants' reemployment opportunities and skills used in related or other industries;
- Referral to job banks, job portals, and job openings;
- Referral to employers and registered apprenticeship sponsors;
- Referral to training;
- Assessment, including interviews, testing, individual and group counseling, or employability planning; and
- Referral to training by WIA-funded or third party service providers.

II. B.1 Please describe the full array of reemployment services the RWB Provides to the Unemployment Insurance claimants and the worker profiling services provided to claimants identified as most likely to exhaust their unemployment Insurance benefits in accordance with section 3(c)(3) of The Wagner Peyser Act (112(b)(17)(A)(iv)).

In responding to this question, the RWB should describe:

1. How RES will be coordinated with other services provided at the One-Stop Career Center under WIA. Describe any changes to the reemployment services including the ARRA funded services that will be provided to unemployment insurance claimants and the Priority Reemployment Planning (PREP) services that are provided to include a discussion of the increased numbers of ARRA job seekers entering the One Stop Career Centers. Also describe how PREP will advance the local ARRA funded RES efforts. For those RWBs participating in the Re-employment and Eligibility Assessment Program pilot please also describe how this effort will be coordinated with RES.

Due to staffing limitations previous PREP services were limited to an orientation of local workforce and WIA services where the U.C. claimant was responsible for self-initiated re-employment services. Within the past program year 2008-2009 U.C. recipients have more than doubled for Region 1. In response to this increase and in coordination of ARRA implementation RWB1 has expanded staff assisted services and Priority Re-Employment Planning activities in

all One Stop Centers. These services include: in- person staff assisted services; initial claimant reemployment assessments; career guidance and group/individual counseling; provision of LMI, occupational, and transferability information via Career Scope, ONET, and other online services; referral to job openings based on present or transferrable skills; formal assessments to include testing, counseling, and employability plans; referral to training provided by WIA-funded service providers.

Based on results of initial PREP assessments, claimants are referred to the above mentioned activities with coordinated services between WIA and other workforce staff to also include: staff-assisted job search; job search workshops; resume assistance; interview skills class; labor market information; vocational and career counseling; vocational interest and assessments; and referral to education or training. PREP advances the local ARRA funded RES efforts through early identification and referral of U.C. recipients (most likely to exhaust their benefits) to workforce services tailored to expedite their return to employment and enhance their skills sets to increase their ability to compete in the workforce.

2. How UI Claimants will be identified quickly and RES provided as early as possible following initial receipt of UI benefits or referrals through UI profiling systems. What methods will be used to assess claimants to identify the mix of interventions and services for different groups of UI claimants.

Potential UI claimants are identified through indicators in the initial registration in the State job bank, local Rapid Response activities, as well as the State UI PREP notification system. Rapid response activities include an orientation of re-employment and re-training services as well as methods to apply for UI. Potential UI claimants are provided a menu of services to include: job seeker registration; access to job postings; resume, interview, job search, and other workshops; labor market information to include high demand/ high skill/ high wage jobs in the region; and available re- training opportunities through WIA.

PREP activity identifies those claimants that may exhaust U.C. benefits. Identification works as follows:

- A. The PREP database collects elements from the initial claims filing process.
- B. Labor Market Statistics (LMS) data elements such as O*NET codes, occupation changes and local unemployment rates are also collected in each local area.
- C. Monetarily eligible claimants, who have received their UC benefit payment, are identified.

Each week, Escarosa reviews and schedules identified claimants for PREP activities. In order to serve the claimants most likely to exhaust benefits, a large number of claimants are required to attend orientation and seek intensive services if needed. Those claimants who are currently enrolled in the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) program and who have received re-employment services within the last 15 days are excluded from the PREP pool.

As part of PREP Orientation claimants complete an initial face-to-face assessment to identify preliminary strengths and barriers toward obtaining employment. Claimants considered job ready (i.e. those that demonstrate knowledge, skills, abilities for immediate employment in a demand occupation; possess a resume; illustrate job search and interview skills; and have no significant

barriers) are scheduled for staff assisted job search. Claimants not considered job ready are referred for further assessment or more intensive re-employment activities. Methods of assessment include: one-on-one interview with a vocational counselor; Test for Adult Basic Education (TABE) to determine functioning educational levels; and career exploration tools such as Career Scope (computer based and paper/pencil) as well as ONET Connector to determine transferable skills and alternative career options.

3. The model used to ensure that UI claimants receive the full array of services as indicated above, including an enhanced level of service in the one-stop career centers. The description should include all services that will be provided under RES, including in-depth services such as skill assessment, career guidance, individual service plans, labor market information, job clubs, expanding UI profiling systems for referring UI claimants through the one-stops, etc.

As mentioned above the models used to ensure that UI claimants receive the full array of services are primarily Rapid Response events and UI PREP activities. The services provided under RES include staff assisted job search; initial assessment to determine strengths and barriers to employment; skills identification and assessment via the Employ Florida Marketplace skills analysis and ONET Connector which identifies transferable skills; vocational interest assessments; face-to-face vocational/career counseling and guidance to include creation of individual service plans; labor market information, job search workshop; resume creation and critique workshop; interview skills workshop; computer and internet use workshop; and referral to education or training. Additionally, quarterly job fairs and vocational training vendor fairs are provided to enhance employment and training opportunities. UI recipients are provided basic information on accessing the state job website (EFM) and are sent messages thru this system of new jobs created on this website. Likewise, a local RWB1 initiative provides weekly notification of new jobs, recruiting events, and upcoming job fairs via e-mail to those customers electing to utilize this service.

4. How the RWB will use information from the enhanced FLUID-EFM interface to provide enhanced services.

Work has begun at the state level to create an enhancement to the FLUID interface for UC to provide the claimants email address, where it is obtained, and to send additional elements, which are necessary to initiate a full Wagner Peyser application, including employment history. Once the FLUID-EFM enhancements are in place the system should create a full Wagner Peyser application for all UI claimants in addition to the basic system registration. The email address will be used for automated outreach to each claimant to invite them to access the system and complete a resume. The same automated email and/or subsequent email can inform the claimant of job listings in the system that match his/her job skills and employment history. Plans are for UC to begin asking for the email addresses for those clients registering in person or by phone so that these claimants can realize the same benefits as those who register on-line. Local staff will then be able to identify new UI registrations and notify claimants of reemployment services and job openings that fit claimant skill sets via email. Where necessary and depending on staffing resources, claimants without email may receive hardcopy notification of availability of

reemployment services within a few days after their UI registration. Staff are currently file searching new jobs and notifying customers via EFM of openings. Whenever possible claimants will be encouraged to review the EFM system for messages informing them of these openings.

5. The specific population among UI claimants (including exhaustees and those most likely to exhaust benefits) that the RWB intends to target with Recovery Act funds for RES. Also describe the process used by the RWB to effectively serve UI claimants and business in need of a job ready, LMI connected workforce. Describe how the RES process will be coordinated with other services provided at the One-Stop Career Center under WIA. How will staff collaborate with UI to identify claimants who would benefit most from RES or WIA services.

Escarosa intends to target all UI claimants including exhaustees with Recovery Act funds for RES.

These claimants will be identified via UI PREP activities, Rapid Response events, and the planned UI FLUID and EFM interface. Services previously described above will be offered to claimants.

Region 1 will connect businesses with a job ready, LMI connected workforce via the Employ Florida Marketplace website and assorted recruitment activities. Staff will daily review new job orders, job match with UI claimants, and notify claimants of openings via EFM message board, email, and phone. Weekly email of “hot jobs” and upcoming recruitment events are also available to claimants. Quarterly job fairs are advertised via email, news media, and hardcopy notification. The Region I business services team interfaces with regional businesses, agencies, and chambers of commerce to promote connectivity between job seekers and employers. Business services staff are tasked to target the demand occupation employers within the RWB to identify demand occupation openings.

RES is coordinated with WIA services through a self and staff assisted referral process of UI claimants and other job seekers. Information on WIA services is available via the RWB1 website and brochures at all One Stop locations. A stand alone WIA orientation is provided to the universal customer and incorporated into UI PREP activity, as well as rapid response events.

In staff assisted registrations UI claimants and universal customers are advised of and referred to the entry point of WIA services. UI PREP claimants are tracked through WIA services via EFM services entries.

6. How the RWB intends to integrate information technology into its RES program to better indentify and serve UI claimants, including the percentage of funds that will be used for integrating ES and UI technology requirements to identify and serve the needs of UI claimants. Any labor market information tools that will be funded and integrated into RES.

Region 1 intends to utilize the following information technology systems to identify and serve UI claimants. RWB1 plans to use enhanced connectivity between UI FLUID system and

EFM system to quickly identify and begin serving UI claimants. The ONET occupational skills system, Career Scope, and possibly Ready-to-Work assessment and credential too may also be utilized in conjunction with EFM to identify skill sets and transferable skills of UI claimants. Florida's LMI website, HAAS center of business technology, and chambers of commerce websites will be used to develop information regarding local economic development and business trends. RWB1 is utilizing the InfoUSA as an additional tool for skill set transfer and research information on business trends.

7. Any labor market information tools that will be funded and integrated into RES.

RWB1 has purchased the use of the InfoUSA business tool which includes LMI and economic/business information as an adjunct to existing LMI information provided in EFM, Career InfoNET, ONET, and also available through our local HAAS Center for Business Research.

8. What types of training will be provided to one-stop center staff on assessments, UI profiling, LMI, technology, etc. to help staff understand how to use and apply the tools to target RES and increase proficiency.

A Monthly staff "Training Day" has been established to provide training of workforce services. PREP staff are trained in initial assessment; skill and barrier identification; occupational skills assessment and skills set transfer using ONET; vocational interest using "Career Scope"; LMI; techniques in presenting job skills workshop, resume workshop, interview skills workshop, and other presentations; and electronic U.C. job seeker identification and job match using the state job search system.

II.B.2. Describe how the RWB will ensure the three-tiered service delivery strategy for labor exchange services for job seekers and employers authorized by the Wagner-Peyser Act includes: (1) self service; (2) facilitated self-help service, and (3) staff assisted service, and is accessible and available to all customers at the local level.

In order to ensure that jobs generated through the Recovery Act are accessible and available to all customers, describe how the RWB will facilitate the listing of such jobs on the State Job Bank.

RWB will utilize several online systems to promote self service capability of job seekers and employers. Employ Florida Marketplace (EFM), the state's job bank system provides the following self service functions for job seekers: labor exchange; labor market information, career exploration; skills set and occupational information; resume preparation; education and training links; and other services. Likewise, in EFM, employers have access to labor exchange; labor market information; training and recruitment information; tax credits, labor law links, and other employer services. Both employers and job seekers may access services from any computer that is linked to the internet, and computer access is available at all One Stops. Other web links that provide self service include but are not limited to ONET online; America's Career InfoNET; and USAJOBS. The Workforce Escarosa website (www.workforceescarosa.com) also links to self service websites and activities, and the RWB1 is utilizing of the InfoUSA website as an additional source.

Facilitated self-help service is available by contacting the RWB1 One Stops. Job seekers receive guidance through self help websites either by phone, email, or services in our resource rooms. Types of service include facilitated self-help resume, job search, links to training providers, and links to web- based community resources. Group activities such as resume preparation, group job search activities, and interview skills classes are also provided. Employers receive similar assistance such as web-links to labor market information; occupational descriptions; job order creation; and web access to tax credits and other employer services.

Assistance is also available for those individuals and employers needing intensive, staff assisted services in each full service One Stop. Employers may receive complete staff assisted services including but not limited to: registration; job order advertising; recruitment; testing and screening; on-the –job training agreements; I-9 and alien labor certification; federal bonding; and other employer services. Job Seekers receive help in the form of staff assisted registration; resume creation; job search and job development; individual interview coaching; assessment; career exploration and vocational counseling; and other face-to-face individual services. All of the above mentioned services are available and accessible to all employers and job seekers by contacting/visiting RWB1 One Stops.

To ensure that jobs generated through the Recovery Act are accessible and available to all customers, the RWB will facilitate the listing of such jobs on the State Job Bank in the following manner: new self-service and staff assisted job orders will be monitored by the RWB1 business specialists and employers will be contacted to determine if the job is considered created through the Recovery Act. Should the job be generated through the Recovery Act, it will be designated as such in the State Job Bank. All new job orders are posted on bulletin boards in the resource rooms within the One Stops and file searched for qualified applicants who are notified of these positions through the message system of the state job bank and, where available, the job seeker's email address. Additionally, a weekly email of "hot jobs" is sent to those job seekers who consent to be notified of job openings via e-mail. Veterans receive priority of service via a daily message/email service of new job openings. Announcements of job openings are posted in One Stop group activities (PREP, WIA. and WTP orientations, etc.). Employer recruiting events and job fairs listing Recovery Act generated jobs will be identified as such to job seekers.

Adult and Dislocated Worker Services

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

The RWB should address core services for adults, dislocated workers, and target populations; especially those given preference in the WIA Adult program in the Recovery Act (recipients of public assistance and other low-income individuals).

Within the One Stop centers the universal customers (including adults, dislocated workers and all targeted populations who are visiting Workforce Escarosa for the first time) are directed to the Customer Support area where job seekers have the opportunity to register in the Employ Florida Marketplace (EFM). Customer Support staff are available to assist and answer questions regarding the EFM registration process and ensure that registrations are entered correctly.

Customer Support staff provide first time visitors with a Directory of Job Seeker Services and a monthly calendar of events to familiarize new customers with One-Stop services.

RWB Resource Room provides customers with computer, internet connectivity and print resources. Resource Advisors are available to answer questions and assist customers when needed. Resource Room Advisors also encourage customers to utilize other One-Stop services such as computer skills workshops, job search workshops, WIA orientation, Veteran's services, etc. and will refer customers to a Career Counselor as necessary. In addition to computers, the Resource Room features fax machines, telephones and copiers to assist customers with their job search and career planning. The Resource Room offers accessible equipment for persons with disabilities.

Customers who are unable to utilize the RWB Workforce Centers due to lack of computer skills, lack of literacy skills, language barriers, disabilities, or other significant barriers to employment are referred to the One Stop Center's staff assisted services. The staff assisted services include but are not limited to: staff assisted core services: registration; job search; resume preparation; interview skills; basic computer skills; educational and vocational counseling; assessment; and other staff assisted services.

Workforce Escarosa provides several workshops within core services to improve customer job searching skills and employability. All workshops and activities are posted on the monthly calendars for the Pensacola, Milton and Century centers, and are posted on Workforce Escarosa's website. The workshops include, but are not limited to the following. Employability skills, resume writing, employment interviewing techniques, and basic computer skills related to obtaining and maintaining employment.

The universal customer (which includes dislocated workers, WIA Adults, and special populations) will be provided job information, preliminary testing/screening and labor market information as initial services. Escarosa endorses the "work first" concept and believes that all individuals should set employment as their first/primary objective. Individuals receive job development opportunities and/or referrals against job orders. Job file search is conducted to facilitate selection and referral of job applicants. Certain clients may be able to handle their own employment needs with the use of the EFM, self-registration and the systems extensive web-based resource library. Others may need no service beyond group workshops/orientations on how to access a computer, develop resumes, increase interview skills, network, or create job search strategies.

Still others may have more critical needs and require intensive individual assistance and/or training as determined by Wagner Peyser (WP)/WIA/WT staff. This approach promises not only to better serve individual needs, but also increases staff efficiency. Job placement services shall be provided throughout the above process, and employment will always be emphasized as the ultimate outcome or goal for individuals. Partner agency staff are also trained to provide staff -assisted registration and job referral services to facilitate a seamless delivery of services. Formalized education through an approved training vendor may be provided if the customer is unable to find employment due to lack of marketable skills, dislocation, a basic skills deficiency,

or has other areas of concern which prohibits the individual from working in his/her area of expertise.

II.C.2. Describe how the RWB will integrate resources provided under Wagner-Peyser Act and WIA Title I for adults and dislocated workers, as well as resources provided by required One-Stop partner programs to deliver core services. (§112(b)(17)(a)(i).)

The RWB should address how it will integrate resources provided under the Recovery Act, the Wagner Peyser Act, and WIA Title I for adults and dislocated workers, as well as resources provided by required One-Stop partner programs. For example, how will the RWB use these resources to provide significant funding for low-income and low-skilled workers that help them access the services and training needed to pursue family-supporting jobs.

Please see Attachment A, Workforce Escarosa's Local Workforce Services Plan, 2007-2009, Section V. F.1.a; Sections V. F.1.h and F.1.i; Sections V. F.11.a – F.11.a.1.a and F.11.a.1.c. In addition to what is stated in the two year plan, Escarosa uses Career Scope to assess the individual's interests and abilities regarding potential training and/or to provide direction during career counseling. Escarosa has added two additional Career Counselors funded under the Recovery Act to assist the increased work load which we are experiencing. One of the Career Counselors is versed in assisting ex-offenders which is one of the largest populations Escarosa is seeing within our Career Centers.

All activities for WIA, TAA, WP, VETS, UI Re-Employment, etc., are co-located and support all services allowed within the specific funding source for each program. As these programs have common components such as job development, career counseling, case management, assessment/screening, and labor market information, whenever possible, staff from all programs work together to complete these duties. Escarosa oversees cost allocations for all programs to support the blending of programs and services to the extent allowable by law. Funding sources such as Recovery Act, WIA, and TAA, support WP activities to the extent that they benefit those programs with like or similar services. WP funding, as well as UI Re-employment, does not normally cover the expense of all WP related services; therefore, other programmatic staff do support common unassisted and assisted core services, and intensive services.

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

The RWB should describe how it will increase training access and opportunities for individuals, including the investment of WIA Title I funds and Recovery Act funds, and the leveraging of other funds and resources. How will the RWB's contract with and use contracts with institutions of higher education and other training providers to maximize funds to the greatest benefit.

In April, 2009, Escarosa's Board of Directors reviewed its local policies regarding ITA amounts, demand occupations, the Eligible Training Provider list and regional affects on these services.

The Board approved a revised demand occupational training list for our geographical area to include review of demand occupations within 200 miles of our geographical area. The Board took into account commuting distances for employment opportunities to include southern Alabama, southern Mississippi and a portion of Louisiana. In discussion it was noted that certain occupations, such as off-shore rigs which is a demand occupation in Louisiana and Mississippi, are actually jobs to which individuals will commute. This is due to the fact that an employee lives on the off-shore rig for several weeks and then returns home for a week. In addition to these types of jobs, many residents of northwest Florida work in Alabama to our west, and in Okaloosa to our east. It is becoming more and more a regional economy for our geographical area. By expanding what we consider to be demand occupations within commuting distances of the Pensacola MSA, more training opportunities become available for residents of Escambia and Santa Rosa Counties.

All training is being conducted through ITAs. Escarosa does not intend to contract with an institution of higher education and other training providers at this point in time. Training programs in demand occupations are available from numerous eligible training providers which provide greater customer choice and flexibility.

Both regular WIA funding and Recovery funds will be used to assist as many individuals as possible with training.

II.C.4. The RWB should describe its models/templates/approaches for service delivery in the One-Stop Career Centers, particularly whether it is adjusting its approach to deliver increased levels of services with funds received under the Recovery Act.

The RWB should:

1. Describe the method or organizing service delivery for Business customers in the One-Stop Career Centers.

In Region 1 businesses and employers are viewed as the primary customer—satisfy this customer and connectivity between business and job seekers will expand and maintain sustainability. The Recovery Act funds have provided the opportunity to increase business services staff and allow greater employer outreach. This has already resulted in a significant increase in the number of job orders. An outreach staff person has been added to improve the level of awareness and outreach to community businesses. A pre-employment assessment specialist has been added to improve the level and quality of screening services (increased methods/types screening, job seeker screening via electronic or hard copy assessment/testing, hard copy application pre-screening, in-depth pre-interviewing, and other services). Increased business services staff has also improved service response times on employer requests and follow-up of employer needs. Employers are provided a more personalized approach which facilitates greater rapport between employer and RWB1 business services staff which should increase employer satisfaction rates.

Escarosa currently has a Business Center in its Pensacola Career Center. The Business Center includes a conference area, projection/power point capabilities; teleconferencing; and offices in which Businesses can conduct interviews.

2. What assessment process will be utilized in the One-Stop Career Centers?

The function of the assessment process is to determine customer needs and actions required to obtain long term gainful and sustainable employment. Job seekers who register through the One Stop receive an initial needs based assessment. As customers move through the job search process and needs /barriers are identified, job seekers (such as dislocated workers or low skill/ low wage customers) have the opportunity for further and more intensive one-on-one assessment via a counselor, or possible assessment using career exploration assessment tools such as Career Voyages, ONET skills assessment, or Career InfoNET, to determine skill levels and transferable skills. Those customers determined to be in need of training may receive Career Scope to determine career aptitudes, or Test for Adult Basic Education (TABE) to determine need for remediation prior to entering a training program. All assessments focus on identifying needs/barriers to employment and ensuring a feasible plan toward reaching gainful employment.

3. What approaches will be used to ensure funds are targeted to those most in need, including low-income assistance recipients, persons with disabilities, etc.?

Escarosa is fortunate to have a Disability Navigator position. The Navigator position has greatly increased our ability to reach other agencies and community based organizations to assist persons with disability with training and/or employment. The Navigator will continue to reach-out to agencies and CBOs that provide services to disabled populations, as well as assist Escarosa's Career Centers with understanding the needs of the disabled who access services through Escarosa.

Due to the level of funding received under the Recovery Act and under our regular WIA formula funding, Escarosa's Most In Need Policy, household income levels for eligibility were increased from 150% of poverty based on the LLSIL to 200% of poverty. Escarosa will monitor adult enrollments and if needed will revert to the previous policy. Under the Recovery Act, workforce investment boards are allowed to transfer only up to 30% of the Dislocated Worker funding to the Adult funding category. With the extension of UI benefits, it may be more difficult to recruit dislocated workers for retraining until closer to the end of their benefits expiring. Funding for the Adult WIA program is limited under the Recovery Act and may affect the Most In Need Policy prior to Recovery Act funds expiring.

Escarosa works very closely with many community based organizations and non-profits. These agencies include the Department of Children and Families, United Way, First Call for Help, Homeless Coalition, Neighborhood Enterprise Foundation, Inc., First Families; Department of Health; Catholic Charities; Title I DOE, Vocational Rehabilitation and the Early Learning Coalitions, to name a few. Escarosa is very involved in providing information regarding all services and training opportunities to populations these entities serve in an effort the help recruit their clientele for our services. Escarosa will continue to reach out to these organizations and partner with them to serve those most in need.

Recovery Act funds have facilitated alternative approaches in the delivery of services for job seekers. After WIA orientation, the career advisor will schedule and initial meeting with the

customer to assess the customer's needs and suitability for the WIA assisted Core, Intensive and Training services. This appointment assesses the customer's interests, work history, career goal and barriers. Various assessment and screening tools are used including; interview, interest application and suitability screening assessment such as CareerScope. Additional assessment tools such as Proveit will be utilized to assist Business Services staff in marketing job seekers and expanding training and employment for job seekers.

Identification of special populations (low income, persons with disabilities, and others) is initiated at registration and initial assessment in Escarosa's Career Centers. Partner program staff (Food Stamp Employment and Training, Welfare Transition, Non Custodial Parent Placement, Vocational Rehabilitation, Veterans Programs and others) are involved in workforce registration and are trained in basic job seeker services, referral to other core services, and referral to WIA. Participants of various programs have access to job search, employability skills, interview skills, and other workshops. These combined identification and service approaches reinforce a seamless delivery system accessible to special populations. Additionally, Escarosa employs a disability navigator who facilitates the provision of workforce services to persons with disabilities.

4. How will the RWB streamline the sequence of services to facilitate individual access to needed services and training?

Escarosa is accommodating up to 13,000 visits per month through its three Career Centers. This has doubled over the past year. To accommodate the additional visits and interest, Escarosa is offering WIA Orientations numerous times per week in Pensacola and Milton, as well as presenting information to UI claimants during PREP and UI Orientations. Escarosa purchased a software package that tracks a participant's time while on the computer in our Resource Rooms and limits the use to 2 hours. Escarosa was finding that a few customers were tying up the computers for 3 or 4 hours that caused a backlog in use by customers waiting. This software still allows the individual to perform job searches; resume preparation, and other related functions within a reasonable timeframe.

All programs, calendars for each center; forms; training occupations and eligible training provider lists are posted on Escarosa's website. Eligibility criteria, screening policies; support services; plans, etc., are also posted to the website.

RWB1 has streamlined core services so they are accessible to all universal customers from the point of initial assessment and during most points of service delivery. Those individuals who are identified in special populations (low income, low skill, persons with disabilities, dislocated worker, etc.) are encouraged to access appropriate services to remove employment barriers.

In certain cases those customers with significant employment barriers may be required to participate in sequential services (such as GED activities in conjunction with job search activities prior to beginning formalized training) however, every attempt is made to tailor services (including training) in such a way as to expedite reentry into the workforce as well as create long term sustainable employment.

Youth Services

In preparing responses to the questions identified below, please consult the RWB's Summer Youth Plan submitted in May 2009 and attach a copy of that plan. In your responses, you may also make reference to the Summer Youth Plan where appropriate rather than repeating the same language.

II.D. Describe the RWB's strategy for providing comprehensive, integrated services to eligible youth, including those most in need (§112(b)(18).)

In responding to this question, the RWB should include the following:

Escarosa's Summer Youth Employment Program Plan is included as an attachment to this plan submittal - Attachment B)

1. Describe the anticipated program design for the WIA Youth funds provided under the ARRA. Include in the description a program design for both younger, in-school, and older or out-of-school youth (including 22-24 year olds that can be served with ARRA funds).

The service design may differ slightly for youth between the two service providers contracted by Escarosa. The two providers are the Santa Rosa County School District and the Escambia County School District. Both proposals are attached and made a part of the contract. Basically both counties will serve younger and older youth who will be either in-school or out-of-school. All services will include a work experience component and a pre and post test to determine work readiness skill attainments. (Please see SYEP Plan Attachment II).

2. Will the RWB use the Recovery Act funds to fund only a 2009 summer youth program or some combination of 2009 and 2010? If using the funds over two summers, what percentage of funds does the RWB anticipate using for the first summer?

Escaorsa will use the Recovery Act Funds to fund only a 2009 summer youth program. Escarosa anticipates expending 100% of the Recovery funds for the current program.

3. If using the funds for summer employment opportunities, describe how the RWB will deliver summer youth employment opportunities. Will the RWB operate the program or allocate the funds?

Escaorsa has contracted with the Escambia County School District and the Santa Rosa County School district for operation of the summer program. (Please see Attachment B Escarosa SYEP Plan, Attachment II)

4. Describe the types of worksite that will be developed for summer employment, including a mix of public and private sector work experiences, and how the RWB will ensure that meaningful work experiences will be developed.

Private for-profit worksites as well as public and non-profit sites have been developed. Worksites include occupations in green construction, community based organizations, childcare centers, office/administration, lawn service, housekeeping, banking/accounting, health care, and other occupations considered to be in demand. Escarosa has three internal monitors which are assigned specific worksites and all participants located with those sites. Escarosa's monitors speak with the participants to gauge their interest; whether or not he/she feels the work experience is beneficial; and if the participant is experiencing any problems on the job. Escarosa also speaks with the worksite supervisors and observes the work experience to make sure the training is being provided as stipulated in the Worksite Agreements. Escarosa will also ask the participants to evaluate the summer youth program to determine the effectiveness.

5. Describe the RWB's policy for developing the mix of classroom versus worksite time in a summer employment opportunity. Describe the RWB's policy for determining that summer employment opportunities are connected to academic and/or occupational learning and the types of connections that will be utilized.

Escarosa did not stipulate the mix of classroom versus worksite time, but recommended the youth should not participate in a classroom activity for more than 50% of the program. In other words, classroom time should not exceed the number of hours for the work experience component. All program components were based on the age of the youth, the youth's abilities and interest, and the youth's age in regard to Child Labor Laws.

As the summer youth program is normally no more than a 2 month program and emphasizes work experience, academic and/or occupational learning was not required. Escarosa wanted the youth to experience what it is like to have a job and the soft skills associated with employment, while learning what job duties may be required for specific occupations. Soft skills include showing up to work on time; getting along with others; proper attire; oral and written communications; customer services skills, etc.

6. Describe any policies or strategies that the RWB is implementing to ensure that local areas implement activities that support out-of-school youth during summer and/or non-summer months, such as supportive services, needs-based payments, or childcare.

All policies passed for the summer program are included under Attachment B – Summer Youth Program Plan, Attachment III). No specific policies were passed regarding out-of-school youth. All older youth (18 – 21 and 22 – 24 years of age) who may be in-school or out-of-school and who wish to continue to post-secondary education through an Individual Training Account (ITA) will be funded using Adult/Dislocated Worker WIA and/or ARRA funds. As such, these individuals will be treated equally as the regular participants under those programs and will be eligible to receive support services in accordance with local policies and procedures which govern those programs. Support services include all items listed in 1.B.#4.

7. Provide the anticipated number of youth to be served with Recovery Act funds, including the anticipated number of summer employment opportunities created with Recovery Act funds.

Escarosa anticipates serving 275 to 300 youth will all youth participating in a summer employment opportunity.

Veterans' Priority of Services

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

In response to this question, the RWB should outline the changes to local policies and strategies that make them sufficient to meet the requirements of 20 CFR 1010.230 published at 73 Fed. Reg. 78132 on December 19, 2008, of the Jobs for Veterans Act regulations issued on December 19, 2008 implementing priority of service for veterans and eligible spouses in Department of Labor job training programs. This includes providing the following information and/or attachments to the local Plan modification:

1. The RWB should describe the changes to its local policies for the delivery of priority of service by the One-Stop Career Centers for its qualified job training programs. The description must include how:
 - a. The local policies ensure that covered persons are identified at the point of entry and given an opportunity to take full advantage of priority of service.
 - b. That local policies ensure that covered person are aware of:
 - 1) Their entitlement to priority of service;
 - 2) The full array of employment, training, and placement services available under priority of services; and
 - 3) Any applicable eligibility requirements for those programs and/or services.

To ensure Veterans' Priority of Service, all veterans will be identified upon entering or accessing the One-Stop Career Center delivery system and provided services at the core level. The needs-based approach will be used to identify veterans with special needs, i.e. disabled veterans, recently separated veterans, etc., and they will be subsequently referred to the DVOP or LVER for the appropriate services. The issuing of new regulations implementing Priority of Service for veterans and eligible spouses, as provided by the Jobs for Veterans Act (JVA), and as specified by the Veterans' Benefits, Health Care, and Information Technology Act of 2006. Priority of service is to be implemented by all "qualified job training programs," defined as "any workforce preparation, development or delivery program or service that is directly funded, in whole or in part, by the Department of Labor." Since enactment of JVA in 2002, priority of service has been implemented under policy guidance issued by the Employment and Training Administration. The purpose of these regulations is to further articulate how priority of service is to be applied across all new and existing qualified job training programs. The new regulations appear in the December 19, 2008 edition of the *Federal Register* and are effective as of January 19, 2009.

The priority of services to veterans include: job search placement and assistance; career planning and counseling; case management; assessment and testing services; interviewing skills training; referral to educational and vocational training. One Stop staff are trained to inform veterans of their right to "priority of service" in workforce activities and to facilitate the veterans access to same.

Service Delivery to Targeted Populations

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

The RWB should:

1. Describe the strategy it will use to effectively implement the Recovery Act priority of service for low-income individuals and recipients of public assistance under the WIA Adult program.

Due to the level of funding received under the Recovery Act and under our regular WIA formula funding, Escarosa's Most In Need Policy household income levels for eligibility were increased from 150% of poverty based on the LLSIL to 200% of poverty. Escarosa will monitor adult enrollments and if needed will revert to the previous policy.

Escarosa works very closely with many community based organizations and non-profits. These agencies include Vocational Rehabilitation, Department of Children and Families, United Way, First Call for Help, Homeless Coalition, Neighborhood Enterprise Foundation, Inc., First Families; Department of Health; Catholic Charities; Title I DOE, and the Early Learning Coalitions, to name a few. Escarosa is very involved in providing information regarding all services and training opportunities to populations these entities serve in an effort the help recruit their clientele for our services. Escarosa will continue to reach out to these organizations and partner with them to serve those most in need. All of the above agencies assist individuals who have various levels of public assistance and all refer to Escarosa for financial assistance for training/retraining and /or support services.

Escarosa will monitor the expenditure of funds and the populations being served with local funding. Should the need exist, Escarosa will review its current operating procedures to determine if services should be curtailed back to household income levels of less than 200% of poverty in accordance with the LLSIL. If so, Escarosa may consider levels equal to 185% or 150% of poverty. This will depend on the level of funding as compared to expenditures and enrollments.

2. Indicate how the RWB will use Wagner-Peyser resources to support individuals with disabilities, such as funding disability program navigators in One-Stop Career Centers or assisting other targeted populations.

Workforce Escarosa does receive funding for a Disability Navigator's position that supports outreach to local community based organizations as well as non-profits who serve the disabled population. The Navigator works closely with these groups to share information on services and programs that are available from Escarosa. All of Escarosa's Career Centers are ADA compliant and offer adaptive equipment to assist the disabled population in accessing services. All of Escarosa's Resource Rooms have computer equipment which is conducive to serving this population and also messaging and telephone capabilities for the hearing and/or sight impaired. Wagner Peyser staff are trained on all adaptive equipment and are provided information on partner agencies and organizations for additional services if needed. Escarosa partners with many agencies to not only receive referrals for the services we provide, but also to refer out for services with which we are unable to assist.

Another large population served is Ex-Offenders. Escarosa has seen a substantial increase in the number of offenders who are visiting Escarosa's Career Centers seeking assistance with employment. Escarosa provides Career Counseling; information on the Federal Bonding program; and assistance with addressing barriers to employment. This may include review of their past criminal records; advice on occupations requiring background checks; how their record may affect their chance of employment in specific fields; and how to check their records to ensure correctness. Escarosa has hired a Career Advisor who has worked closely with Ex-Offenders so that additional assistance and advice can be offered.

Transparency and Public Comment

The Recovery Act places a high priority on transparency. The public, including partners, must have an opportunity for public comment and input into the development of the local Workforce Services Plan update prior to its submission to the State.

III.A. The RWB should provide a description of the process it used to make the Plan available to the public and the outcome of its review of the resulting public comments. (§§111 (g) and 112(b)(9).)

The RWB should describe:

1. Local efforts to promote transparency.

Use of WIA formula funds and WIA Recovery Act funds is determined by Escarosa Management to include the Executive Director, Chief Financial Officer and the Assistant Director for WIA. During Escarosa's budgeting process, it was determined that current WIA participants enrolled prior to the Recovery Act would continue to be paid from WIA formula funds to include additional support services being offered under the Recovery Act. New participants who are enrolled into intensive services, would be primarily paid out of the

Recovery Act funds; however, they are dual enrolled in WIA formula so that their status can be changed based upon expenditures and funding allocations. This is an internal decision and is a paper transaction, and our participants are unaware as to how their services are funded. All services across both programs are the same so that the category of funding does not affect this process. All participants, no matter the funding source, are treated equitably with no one receiving any additional benefit than the other.

2. The process used to make the Plan modification available to the public and the outcome of its review of the public comments received. The RWB should describe the updated process used to ensure public comment on and input into the development of the local Workforce Services Plan. Include as an attachment, all comments including those that express disagreement with the plan. Include a description of specific steps taken to include input from members of the local board and members of businesses and labor organizations. Comments received after submission of the local Workforce Services plan modification that express disagreement with the plan should also be forwarded to WFI at the address previously indicated.

Escarosa placed a public notice via a legal ad in the Pensacola News Journal to advertise the Plan and how the public can access the document. The ad was placed on July 17, 2009 and ran for 3 consecutive days. All comments were required to be in writing and could be mailed or e-mailed to the Executive Director. The Plan was posted to Escarosa's website on July 17, 2009, and was available at each of Escarosa's Career Centers and its Administrative offices for a period of thirty (30) consecutive days. In addition, an e-mail broadcasting the availability of the plan for review was sent on July 17, 2009 to all Board members, partner organizations, community based organizations and other interested parties. These entities included TEAM Santa Rosa; Pensacola Bay Area Chamber of Commerce, Santa Rosa Chamber of Commerce, Gulf Coast African American Chamber of Commerce; the school districts; Pensacola Junior College; University of West Florida; Catholic Charities; United Way; Community Action Program; and others to name a few. The end date for receipt of public comments was August 17, 2009, at 4:00 p.m. No comments were received during the thirty day public comment period. All public comment received would have been included as Attachment E.

Increasing Services for Universal Access

III.B. The RWB should describe what policies are in place to promote universal access and consistency of service. (§112(b)(2).)

The RWB should explain how it will efficiently and effectively use its Wagner Peyser Recovery Act funds to support the hiring of sufficient levels of staff in the limited time period available for local One-Stop Career Centers to provide universal access and services required to meet the needs of increased numbers of customers in the economic downturn.

Upon receipt of ARRA funds in April 2009 RWB1 immediately hired five Wagner Peyser staff to handle the increased number of customers. Four staff were assigned to PREP activities previously mentioned to handle U.C. re-employment services, one staff person was assigned to provide additional assistance to employer services. Between May and June 2009 an additional ARRA funded pre-employment assessment specialist was hired to facilitate pre-employment

screening and assist with workshops. Three additional staff persons are scheduled to be hired in July 2009 from traditional Wagner Peyser funding sources to assist with core services and facilitate other W.P. activities currently provided by existing staff. These ARRA and traditional funded positions have doubled the number of overall core services related staff, which, when coordinated with additional ARRA funded WIA positions, will blend services to meet the needs of the increased numbers of job seekers.

Similarly, three additional business services and a business outreach coordinator have been added to increase services to employers and generate job orders. These new positions, in conjunction with existing business services staff, have already begun to create significant job opportunities for job seekers as well as increase community awareness of business services.

All new staff are presently (June 09) undergoing training in Wagner Peyser job seeker and employers services, as well as training in the state workforce services site (EFM) and other web-based services sites (ONET, Career Scope, etc.) to facilitate the comprehensive delivery of Wagner Peyser re-employment services.

Procurement

III.C. The RWB should describe its competitive and non-competitive processes that will be used to award grants and contracts for activities under title I of WIA, including how potential bidders are being made aware of the availability of grants and contracts. (§112(b)(16).) (Note: All procurements must comply with OMB Requirements codified in 29 CFR Parts 95.40-95, 48 and 97.36.)

In answering the question, the RWB should describe:

1. How providers of all youth services will be procured under the Recovery Act. If using funds for summer employment opportunities and the fiscal agent is not operating this program element, please specifically describe procedures for procuring summer employment operational entities and job opportunities. **(Note: If this question was answer in the local Summer Youth Plan, please attach a copy).**

Procurement of summer youth services was addressed in the Summer Youth Employment Program Plan under Section I. Service Provider Selection. The Plan is Attachment B to this document.

2. How the RWB will implement the Recovery Act provision that it may award a contract to an institution of higher education or other eligible training provider if the local board determines that it would facilitate training of multiple individuals in high-demand occupations, and if such a contract does not limit customer choice.

Escarosa does not intend to award a contract to an institution of higher education or other eligible training provider, but will continue to use the Individual Training Accounts (ITA) and customer choice and selection of the training vendor which best meets the needs of our customers.

Technical Assistance

III.D. The RWB should describe how it identifies areas needing improvement and how technical assistance will be provided. (§112(b)(14).)

The RWB should describe its strategy for providing training and technical assistance to all programs funded by the Recovery Act, including whether Recovery Act funds will be used for technical assistance and training. The RWB should also address training to be provided to new staff and technical assistance on the creation of a summer employment program.

All new staff hired through ARRA and summer youth employed by contracted service providers have undergone extensive training in ARRA reporting requirements and EFM data entry requirements. Additionally staff have been trained in the state workforce services site (EFM) and other web-based services sites (ONET, Career Scope, etc.) to facilitate the comprehensive delivery of Wagner Peyser re-employment services. New staff are paired with senior staff for purpose of job training and mentoring during their training period. RWB will monitor programs and services , identify any areas needing improvement and provide additional training and technical assistance as needed. ARRA funding will be used as need to allow staff to participate in meetings, seminars, workshops and or training related to the ARRA.

Monitoring and Oversight

III.E. The RWB should describe the monitoring and oversight criteria and procedures it utilizes to move the system toward achieving the local vision and goals, such as the use of mystery shoppers, performance agreements, etc.

In responding to this question, the RWB should describe its policies and procedures, through a monitoring plan or otherwise, that the local monitoring system meets the requirements of 20 CFR 667.410(b)(2), and that the RWB's local plan includes monitoring and oversight of the additional funds provided under the Recovery Act, particularly plans to monitor reemployment services and summer employment, including summer employment worksites.

Escarosa has hired three (3) SYEP Program Monitors specifically for the summer youth employment program as well as one (1) Safety Monitor. The SYEP Program Monitors are assigned specific worksites and specific participants for each site. The SYEP Program Monitors visit each worksite at least every 2 weeks, but weekly if possible. During the monitoring visits, the SYEP Program Monitors interview participants to gauge whether or not the program is beneficial; whether or not the youth is receiving the training according to the job description and duties; whether or not the youth is experiencing any problems or issues on the job or with the jobsite; and also to determine whether or not all emergency contact information is available on each youth at each worksite.

All SYEP Program Monitors have been trained in Child Labor Laws. All worksites have been provided Child Labor Law handbooks and posters posted at all worksite where applicable. SYEP Program Monitors ensure all Child Labor Laws are adhered to by the worksite.

In addition to interviewing the youth participants, the SYEP Program Monitors also speak with the worksite supervisor to ascertain whether or not the youth is having any difficulties; how the youth is progressing on the job; and if there have been any issues with the youth's performance to include soft skills types of issues (attendance, tardiness, dress, attitude, etc.). Weekly reports of all visits are written by the SYEP Program Monitors and any issues are addressed immediately. The SYEP Program Monitors work closely with the service providers' Case Managers to relay any issues or concerns.

The SYEP Safety Monitor works very closely with Landrum Professional Services who has assisted Escarosa with safety training, worker's compensation procedures, and even visited sites with Escarosa's SYEP Safety Monitor to assist us in determining any issues at the worksites. All safety precautions are taken into consideration and the SYEP Safety Monitor has the discretion to stop all work if any safety concerns are noted.

Escarosa has also hired an additional WIA Monitor to assist in the regular, year-around adult, dislocated worker and youth programs. The additional WIA Monitor will assist Escarosa's WIA Senior Monitor with all programmatic monitoring currently required by Escarosa. Due to the increase in participants who will be attending training under the Recovery Act funds, additional assistance was needed.

The Welfare Transition (WT) and Wagner Peyser (WP) Monitor will be responsible for monitoring of all reemployment services activities. The WT/WP Monitor has been updated on the requirements under the Recovery Act for reemployment services and will include a schedule for these activities during the current fiscal year (July 1, 2009 - June 30, 2010). Monitoring will be conducted in accordance with required activities as stipulated by the Recovery Act.

Accountability and Performance

III.F. The RWB should describe its performance accountability system, including any system measures and any performance goals established. The RWB should identify the performance indicators being tracked to measure its progress toward meeting its strategic goals and vision. (§§112(b)(3) and 135(b)(3).)

1. The Recovery Act emphasizes the importance of accountability. The RWB should describe its overall efforts to account for the results of activities by the Recovery Act, and how it will measure whether it has achieved its local implementation goals.

Escarosa has received all TEGs issued by the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) and the reporting requirements for the Recovery Act funds. Staff have been trained on all TEGs currently received and will continually be trained as new information is received from the Agency for Workforce Innovation. All reporting requirements and tracking requirements have been provided to staff and Escarosa's Information Technology Specialist is current on all requirements.

Escarosa has not established any new performance measures for the Adult and Dislocated Worker program due to the Recovery Act; however, current performance measures required by

Workforce Florida, Inc. (WFI), and the Agency for Workforce Innovation (AWI) will be adhered to and applied to the Recovery Act services. These measurements will include employment upon completion of training/intensive services; wage at placement and long-term employment retention and wages. Any other measurements as required by USDOL, WFI and AWI will also be tracked and reported.

All services provided will be reported in the Employ Florida Management Information System (EFM) as required by the state. All services will be documented and supported within the participant's case file and will be monitored for accuracy.

2. The Recovery Act requires RWBs to report on work readiness to assess the effectiveness of summer employment opportunities for youth. The RWB should identify its methodology for determining whether a measurable increase in work readiness skills has occurred, and what tools will be used for this determination. **(Note: If this question has been answered in the Summer Youth Plan, please refer that plan where appropriate).**

All summer youth service providers addressed the work readiness credential in their proposal as submitted to Escarosa. The service providers will conduct a pre-test and post-test to determine whether or not the youth has achieved a work readiness credential. It is expected that 95% or greater of all youth participants will achieve a work readiness skill credential. Other performance that will be reported will include successful completion of the work experience component and also unsubsidized placements into employment as a result of the youth's participation in the work experience activity. No performance measures were set for these two items; however, they will be tracked and reported.

Attachments

- A. Workforce Escarosa Two Year Plan, 2007-2009*
- B. Workforce Escarosa Summer Youth Plan, 2009*
- C. List of One Stop Memorandums of Understanding
- D. Local Operating Procedures Referenced in the Local Workforce Services Plan*
- E. Public Comments on Local Workforce Services Plan
- F. Current Board Membership Roster Certification
- G. Signature Page

The Workforce Escarosa Two Year Plan, the Summer Youth Plan and WIA Operating Procedures are available for review at www.workforceescarosa.com. From the home page click on "Workforce Escarosa" top left; then click on "Local Plans, Audits and Monitoring". The full plans with all attachments can be viewed at this site.

Terminology/Acronyms

ARRA	American Recovery and Reinvestment Act
AWI	Florida State Agency for Workforce Innovation
EFM	Employ Florida Marketplace
Escarosa	Workforce Escarosa, Inc.
ITA	Individual Training Account
LLSIL	Lower Living Standard Income Level
LMI	Agency for Workforce Innovation, Labor Market Information
OJT	On-the-Job-Training
Pensacola MSA	Pensacola Metropolitan Statistical Area
PREP	Priority Reemployment Planning
RES	Reemployment Services
RFP	Request for Proposals
RWB	Regional Workforce Board
RWB 1	Regional Workforce Board for Region 1, Workforce Escaorsa, Inc.
Recovery Act	American Recovery and Reinvestment Act
Region 1	Workforce Escaorsa, Inc.
Stimulus Funding	American Recovery and Reinvestment Act
TEGL	Training and Employment Guidance Letter, USDOL
UC	Unemployment Compensation
UI	Unemployment Insurance
USDOL	United States Department of Labor
WFI	Workforce Florida, Inc.
WIA	Workforce Investment Act
WIB	Workforce Investment Board
WP	Wagner Peyser Act
WT	Welfare Transition Program

