

TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT NOTICE	NO. 17-14
	DATE January 13, 2015

TO: STATE WORKFORCE AGENCIES
STATE WORKFORCE ADMINISTRATORS
STATE WORKFORCE LIAISONS
STATE AND LOCAL WORKFORCE BOARD DIRECTORS
AMERICAN JOB CENTER MANAGERS

FROM: PORTIA WU /s/
Assistant Secretary
Employment and Training Administration

KATHLEEN MARTINEZ /s/
Assistant Secretary
Office of Disability Employment Policy

SUBJECT: Announcement of the Web-Based Survey and Site Visits for the Evaluation
Study of the Accessibility of American Job Centers to Individuals with
Disabilities

1. **Purpose.** The U.S. Department of Labor (Department or DOL) is sponsoring a study to help policymakers and program administrators understand the level of accessibility of American Job Centers (AJCs) for individuals with disabilities. The purpose is to aggregate data to capture a broad overview of the degree to which AJCs, on average, are accessible to individuals with disabilities. The issue of accessibility is of particular interest to multiple stakeholders, including customers of the public workforce system, Congress, state and local leaders, AJC Managers, and the Department, as we seek to help identify ways to improve accessibility. **The study will not be used to audit for compliance with laws and regulations regarding accessibility of AJCs.**
2. **References.**
 - Wagner-Peyser Act, Sections 8(a) and (b) (29 USC 49 (g) and (b)).
 - Sections 171 and 172 of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998.
3. **Research Goals.** The main objective of the study is to measure the accessibility status of the AJC network to individuals with disabilities. The study will answer the following questions: (a) to what degree do AJCs provide accessible services to individuals with disabilities? (b) how does this accessibility vary by the type of accessibility required, such as physical, programmatic, and communications? and (c) how does accessibility vary by the characteristics of AJCs (*e.g.*, affiliate *vs.* comprehensive, or rural *vs.* urban)?

4. **Research Tasks.** The tasks of this study include an examination of past research on accessibility, data collection, and data analysis. This study will derive data from: (a) a survey of all comprehensive and affiliate AJC Managers, and (b) site visits to a sample of 100 AJCs. The study will not provide information on the accessibility of individual AJCs to the Department. The study will report information as aggregate data that will be used only for the purposes of this study.
5. **Request for Participation.** IMPAQ International (IMPAQ), an independent research company, and its partners the Burton Blatt Institute of Syracuse University and Universal Designers and Consultants, are conducting this study on behalf of the Department. The Department encourages AJCs to participate in this important study in two ways. First, all AJC Managers will receive an email from IMPAQ, within the next two weeks, providing a link to the web-based survey. Please complete the survey as soon as possible. Second, IMPAQ will select 100 AJCs for on-site visits, using criteria that will include sites with a range of characteristics, such as location, size, type of center (*i.e.*, comprehensive *vs.* affiliate). IMPAQ will contact the selected AJCs to schedule an in-person visit by the fall of 2014.
6. **Research Time Frame.** The research effort began in August 2012. A literature review refinement of methodology and field testing of the survey have been conducted to-date. A final report is expected in 2016.
7. **Paperwork Reduction Act.** This information collection has been approved by the Office of Management and Budget under control number 1290-0010, expires October 31, 2017. The Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 provides that persons are generally not required to respond to a Federal collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. Responding to this survey is voluntary. The survey is estimated to average 40 minutes per response, including time for reviewing instructions and completing the reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information to Jonathan Simonetta, Deputy Chief Evaluation Officer, U.S. Department of Labor-ASP, Chief Evaluation Office, U.S. Department of Labor, Frances Perkins Building, 200 Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20210.
8. **Action Requested.** The Department requests that states and AJC Managers: (a) review and convey the information contained in this issuance to other state and local workforce partners, as appropriate; (b) participate in the Accessibility of AJCs study; and (c) cooperate with IMPAQ in survey and site visit activities for this research study.
9. **Inquiries.** States or AJC Managers seeking to obtain more information about this study may direct questions to the appropriate Regional Office, or directly contact Jonathan Simonetta, Deputy Chief Evaluation Officer, DOL, Chief Evaluation Office at (202) 693-5959 or simonetta.jon.A@dol.gov.