

# Chapter One

## METHODOLOGY AND CASE STUDY SUMMARIES

*Patricia Billen, Rockefeller Institute of Government*

The Nelson A. Rockefeller Institute of Government, the public policy research arm of the State University of New York, was awarded a contract in 2002 by the U.S. Department of Labor to conduct a study of service delivery under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998. This two-volume set of state case studies is the result of eighteen months of work by the project's researchers to understand how states and localities interpreted and operationalized the provisions of the act. The project took a close look at the orientation, governance, structure, and services of the workforce investment systems in eight states, and two local areas in each state, to provide information for the reauthorization of WIA. Federal legislation reauthorizing the 1998 act was not yet enacted when this volume was finalized for publication.

The Workforce Investment Act of 1998 replaced the Job Training and Partnership Act (JTPA) to provide employment and training services to the unemployed, underemployed, and to employers seeking workers. WIA made significant changes to the nation's workforce development system through a series of principles and parameters set forth in legislation, while leaving the details of program administration and service delivery to states and localities. Research to date indicates that states and local areas are using the flexibility provided by WIA to design and implement new processes and packages of services, resulting in workforce development systems that vary across states and local areas.

### Major changes made by WIA include:

- Increasing the role of employers in the workforce development system by requiring business to constitute the majority of members on state and local Workforce Investment Boards.
- Institutionalizing the concept of the One-Stop Career Center by requiring local boards to establish at least one full-service center in each service delivery area. The act designates as mandatory partners for One-Stop delivery systems seventeen programs administered by four different federal agencies — the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Housing and Urban Development.<sup>1</sup>
- Sequencing services to customers and documenting their movement through three tiers of services. The three tiers are core services, intensive services, and training,

which are defined in WIA legislation.<sup>2</sup> Many state and local officials initially interpreted the sequencing of services to be a “work first” requirement similar to that of the federal Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) program.

- Providing universal access to core services. This is a departure from the JTPA program’s income eligibility standards for adult and youth services.
- Increasing reliance on market mechanisms by delivering training services using Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) that allow the customer to select training from an eligible provider list that includes information on the performance of providers.
- Linking performance incentives to achieving placement, retention, earnings, and skill attainment rates for WIA-funded programs and meeting performance requirements in adult education and literacy, and vocational education programs.

Given the changes that the Workforce Investment Act made to the nation’s workforce development system, it is important for federal officials, and other stakeholders in the system, to be informed on how states and localities interpreted and operationalized the requirements of the 1998 act as reauthorization proposals are considered.

## **Methodology and Products**

This study was conducted using the field network methodology that involves:

- Reliance on a network of knowledgeable field researchers who are experts in the policy area being studied;
- Use of structured field reporting guides;
- Preparation of state-level reports by field researchers; and
- Production of synthesis reports by central project staff in collaboration with field researchers.<sup>3</sup>

Beginning in the summer of 2002, project staff completed field research in the eight states and 16 local areas included in this study (see the box below for researchers, states, and local areas). The sample was selected purposefully, and in consultation with the U.S. Department of Labor, staff of the National Governors Association, and state officials, to include states and local areas that were beyond early implementation of the Workforce Investment Act.

Field researchers for each state conducted a series of interviews with members of state and local boards and their staff, state and local elected officials and their staff, state agency officials responsible for workforce development and welfare programs, service

providers, advocates, and other interested parties. Researchers also studied sample One-Stop Career Centers in each state.

#### **Rockefeller Institute Field Researchers and States and Local Areas Studied**

<b>Florida</b>	First Coast (Region 8), Chris, Levy, and Marion Counties (Region 10) Burt Barnow, Amy MacDonald Buck
<b>Indiana</b>	Fort Wayne (Northeast), Indianapolis/Marion County Patricia Billen, Richard Nathan
<b>Maryland</b>	Baltimore City, Frederick County Burt Barnow, Amy MacDonald Buck
<b>Michigan</b>	Lansing (Capital Area), Traverse City (Northwest) Dan O’Shea, Christopher King
<b>Missouri</b>	Kansas City and Vicinity, Central Region Peter Mueser, Deanna Sharpe
<b>Oregon</b>	Salem, The Oregon Consortium Laura Leete, Neil Bania
<b>Texas</b>	Austin (Capital Area), Houston (Gulf Coast) Dan O’Shea, Christopher King
<b>Utah</b>	Salt Lake City, Moab Christopher King, Dan O’Shea

Field research was conducted in accordance with a guide developed by central project staff. The guide contained sample interview questions to elicit information on the system’s leadership and governance, system planning, system administration including structure and funding, One-Stop Career Center organization and operations, services and participants, market mechanisms, information technologies, and reauthorization issues.

Researchers analyzed information from their interviews as well as public documents and reports. The case studies for four states — Florida, Indiana, Texas, and Utah — are included in this volume. The case studies for the four remaining states — Maryland, Michigan, Missouri, and Oregon — are in volume one.

The case studies provide information on the governance, structure, administrative processes, and services of the workforce development systems in each study state and for the local areas visited. Readers will notice some variation in the information presented, as authors were asked to focus on the special characteristics of the state and local systems. These materials were prepared to be used by members of central project staff to

write the study's reports, and for use by the Labor Department. We are grateful to the Labor Department for making these documents available for public use.

Presented below are the summaries by the case study authors for the four states included in this volume. The summaries and the case studies that follow, depict state and local systems in place at the time research was completed in 2002. Two of the study states in this volume — Indiana and Utah — have new governors. Where possible, the case studies have been updated to reflect the new administration's early plans for workforce development.

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## FLORIDA

*Burt Barnow, Johns Hopkins University*  
*Amy MacDonald Buck, Johns Hopkins University*

Florida has long been a highly innovative state in developing and implementing workforce development policy. The state has 24 workforce investment areas overseen by regional workforce boards, Florida's equivalent to local Workforce Investment Boards.

The legislature has played a major leadership role in Florida. In 2000, the Florida legislature consolidated the funding streams of TANF, WIA, Wagner-Peyser Act, Food Stamp Employment and Training, Welfare-to-Work, veterans' employment and training services, and Job Corps outreach. In the same year the state placed all employment service employees under the local boards' control. The state legislature has also provided strong leadership in: 1) establishing many performance standards beyond those required by the federal government for workforce development programs; 2) dedicating \$2 million in WIA funds for an incumbent worker program; and 3) requiring additional members for state and local boards.

The chief policy organization for workforce development in Florida is Workforce Florida, Inc., a quasi-public nonprofit organization that serves as the state Workforce Investment Board. The Agency for Workforce Innovation is the state agency that administers the WIA program in Florida. The agency was created in 2000 by the legislature to consolidate administration of workforce programs and operates under a performance contract with Workforce Florida, Inc.

Major contributors to the state five-year strategic plan included the WIA design committee of Workforce Florida, Inc., the 24 regional workforce development boards, other state agencies, and legislative staff. The state has submitted a unified plan that covers all WIA Title I and related programs.

Local boards have administrative authority over the Workforce Investment Act Title I programs, Welfare-to-Work formula funds, welfare transition programs (TANF workforce development funds), Food Stamp Employment and Training, Job Corps

recruitment, and Wagner-Peyser Act funded activities. These services are provided through the One-Stop delivery system. The Agency for Workforce Innovation administers each of these programs. The state does not require additional One-Stop Career Center partners beyond those laid out in WIA, but the Workforce Florida Act of 1996 strongly encourages co-location. Each local board develops its own memoranda of understanding (MOUs) with local partners. Local boards have found achieving One-Stop Career Center collaboration with certain partners particularly challenging, including veterans' employment and training programs and vocational rehabilitation.

Regional workforce investment boards designate the operators of local One-Stop Career Centers. The Workforce Innovation Act of 2000 requires the state board to incorporate a workforce marketing plan into its strategic plan. In Florida there are a range of designations for One-Stop Career Centers, including full-service centers, business services centers, more professionally tailored partial-service One-Stop Career Centers in retail districts, and kiosks in malls, public housing complexes, and community colleges. The state board does not generally approve local boards to directly provide services. Wagner-Peyser Act funded staff is located in the One-Stop Career Centers and provide staff-assisted job referrals and other core services. Labor exchange activities are completely integrated in the One-Stop Career Centers. Local boards sometimes supplement the Agency for Workforce Innovation staff with staff of a private contractor. Unemployment Insurance (UI) staff is not present at the One-Stop Career Centers.

The most common services participants request are labor exchange services and training. The majority of participants served are from low-income families with children and other low-wage groups. In addition, some WIA services are available for professional/managerial employees, though this varies by region. Some local boards have concentrated their efforts on higher level skills development and education. Many One-Stop Career Centers provide services to employed workers to support job retention and advancement. All local boards provide supportive services, such as transportation.

ITAs are required to be used for most training. Local boards have the option of setting dollar limits on the amounts of ITAs. Local boards are required to train for high-wages/high-demand positions. In Florida, selection of a training provider is almost always a guided choice rather than a pure voucher. ITAs have been used extensively in Florida. Customized training and on-the-job training have also been frequently employed.

Because community and technical colleges were already reporting relevant data, the new WIA reporting standards have not proved additionally burdensome or acted as a disincentive. Florida has developed its own measures. Legislation enacted in 1996 required the state to develop a three-tier performance management system to cover all job training, placement, career education, and other workforce programs. These measures, particularly the "Red and Green Indicator Matrix," are used extensively by state and local boards in an attempt to gauge system performance.

Florida is currently developing a web-based One-Stop Management Information System that will integrate all workforce programs, as well as both financial and program data, including employer services, under one application. The degree to which One-Stop Career Centers capture and track information for persons using self-directed services varies by local area.

Workforce Florida, Inc. members believe that WIA has definitely influenced states/localities to become more systemic and “big picture” oriented in their thinking about workforce development. Under WIA, anything that helps people get to work, stay at work, and succeed at work is part of “workforce.” WIA has also helped strengthen economic development linkages.

State board members interviewed believe that Florida has had tremendous success in empowering the state and local boards in prioritizing services and funding. Agency for Workforce Innovation staff indicated that the full integration of welfare/workforce development under one agency has helped to provide seamless service.

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## INDIANA

*Patricia Billen, Rockefeller Institute of Government*  
*Richard Nathan, Rockefeller Institute of Government*

Indiana began laying the foundation for its One-Stop delivery system well before enactment of the Workforce Investment Act. The functional realignment of the state-level system to include Wagner-Peyser Act, UI, and JTPA programs in the same agency was complete in advance of the 1998 act. At the local level, the state piloted co-locating Wagner-Peyser Act and JTPA services in six Workforce Indiana Centers in 1990. By the time the state received a national One-Stop planning grant in 1995, 16 One-Stop Career Centers with Information Resource Areas were operating. Indiana’s current One-Stop delivery system includes 16 service delivery areas and 12 planning regions, and approximately 27 full-service One-Stop Career Centers and 72 Express Centers.

Governor Frank O’Bannon (1997-2003) is often cited as the driving force behind Indiana’s implementation of WIA. O’Bannon’s vision to treat workforce development as an economic development tool is evident in the state’s use of regions closely aligned with economic realities instead of service delivery areas for system planning and performance measurement, and the required establishment of local Incumbent Worker Councils to increase the skill level of the incumbent workforce.

The state’s unified plan spans two state agencies, Department of Workforce Development and Family Social Services Administration, to include the WIA, Wagner-Peyser Act, Carl Perkins, Vocational Rehabilitation, and Welfare-to-Work programs.

These programs are not fully integrated throughout the unified plan. Large program-specific plans are attached as appendices to the document.

The Department of Workforce Development administers WIA at the state level. Additional workforce programs administered by the department include Wagner-Peyser Act, UI, veterans' programs, school-to-work, Welfare-to-Work, Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA), North American Free Trade Agreement Transitional Adjustment Assistance (NAFTA-TAA), labor market information, and state-funded employment and training programs. Department employees provide Wagner-Peyser Act, UI, and veterans' services statewide. The Department of Workforce Development also provides staff support for the Commission on Vocational Education, the governing body for Indiana's vocational education programs. The department is a member of each local board and typically a member of the local consortium of providers operating the One-Stop Career Centers. The Human Resource Investment Council, Indiana's state board, is responsible for strategic oversight of the system. The council advises the governor and the Department of Workforce Development on WIA policy.

Adult Basic Education and Vocational Rehabilitation are required programs in the WIA system that the Department of Workforce Development does not administer. The Department of Education oversees Indiana's Adult Basic Education program. The Family Social Services Administration administers the Vocational Rehabilitation program. The Family Social Services Administration also administers the state's TANF program, Food Stamp programs, and medical programs for the poor. TANF is not a state-mandated partner in Indiana's workforce development system and its presence on the local boards and in the One-Stop Career Centers varies across the state.

State officials characterized the orientation of their workforce development system as "enhanced work first." State policy encourages immediate labor force attachment and continued service to help the customer obtain a better job. Officials indicated that progression through WIA's core and intensive services is a condition of eligibility for training to ensure that training is appropriate. There was indication at the local level that immediate labor force attachment is emphasized to the detriment of human capital investment and that the current system discourages training.

State officials characterized Indiana as a "home rule" state where decision making is vested in local boards whenever possible. Although there is a professed deference to local authority, state officials have used enabling legislation and Department of Workforce Development policies to influence the direction of local systems. The governor's policy to focus the system on the needs of the incumbent workforce is reinforced by the statutory requirement that local boards establish Incumbent Worker Councils that recommend training strategies and programs for the incumbent workforce to develop skills that are in demand by existing and prospective employers. Additionally, the administration's stated policy of developing strong regional economies is furthered by requiring local boards to plan for workforce development services using workforce planning regions reflective of economic realities.

Indiana set minimum requirements for full One-Stop Career Centers, called WorkOne Centers, to include federal criteria and the state mandated Information Resource Area, an open access area with information on job openings, careers, community resources, education and training programs, and labor markets. Centers offering fewer services are established as WorkOne Express Centers. At a minimum, Express Centers must offer Internet access to core services and have staff on-site to assist with navigating these services.

The level of engagement of the One-Stop Career Center partners varies across the state depending on local policies, resources, and pre-WIA arrangements. U.S. Department of Labor programs including WIA Title I, UI, Wagner-Peyser Act employment services, Veterans' Employment and Training, and TAA/NAFTA-TAA are typically co-located in the One-Stop Career Centers. Other WIA-related programs including Adult Education, Vocational Education, Vocational Rehabilitation, and Older Americans Title V usually have a presence in the One-Stop Career Centers but have their main base of operations elsewhere.

The presence in the One-Stop Career Centers of the Indiana Manpower and Comprehensive Training (IMPACT) program, the state's TANF and Food Stamp employment program, varies across the state. The Family Social Services Administration's Office of Family and Children contracts with service providers in each of the state's 92 counties for IMPACT services, including job search, development, placement, and retention services. The local Office of Family and Children determines eligibility for IMPACT services and refers clients to service providers. The IMPACT service provider is typically co-located in the One-Stop Career Center when the center's WIA Title I provider is also an IMPACT provider.

Indiana does not have a call-in center for UI claims. The state uses the Computer Self-Service System (CS3), a web-based system for UI and labor exchange services, to file and track UI claims. Claimants must file the initial application for benefits at a WorkOne Center. Consequently, in Indiana's WorkOne system, UI and employment services are not disconnected as in states where UI claims are filed by phone. On-site staff provide assistance with filing UI claims on CS3.

Indiana's experience with implementing WIA has shed light on the following issues of special concern as the federal government considers reauthorization of the act:

- Local boards are restrained by WIA membership requirements and the lack of funding for member training;
- Federal performance measures have limited access to the system to certain populations and are difficult to use for program management;
- Provider performance requirements for the Eligible Training Provider List may limit customer choice rather than increase it as intended if performance tracking requirements continue to be burdensome; and



- Vocational rehabilitation and veterans' programs are difficult to integrate into the One-Stop delivery system due to unique program requirements.

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## TEXAS

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When Texas became an early implementer of the Workforce Investment Act the state already had in place many of the new governance structures and service delivery mechanisms required by WIA as a result of state workforce reform legislation in 1993 (SB 642) and 1995 (HB 1863). Texas had consolidated most workforce programs in a single state agency, the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC), established an extensive One-Stop network and based service delivery around it, created inclusive governance structures at the state and local level, and designated 28 workforce investment areas that conformed to the federal legislation. Texas had also proscribed standing sub-contracts for service delivery and direct service provision by workforce boards, adopted a strong customer orientation, and begun experimenting with systemic, wage-record based outcomes rather than program-specific performance measures. Other features of the Texas Workforce Network include:

- A longstanding, if at times uneven, tradition of state and local collaboration.
- Reliance on a wide array of One-Stop contracting entities: nonprofits, for-profits (including professional employer organizations and management contractors), government agencies, labor, and community-based organizations.
- Increasing emphasis at the state and local level on improving business services with a strong emphasis on sectoral workforce development approaches through intermediary organizations often affiliated with local chambers of commerce.
- Continuing focus on system capacity building through state strategic planning and comprehensive workforce system measures.
- State and local policy that is evolving from a "work first" orientation to a more balanced labor force attachment/human capital approach.

State legislators, agency administrators, the governor's office, researchers, and local practitioners all provided leadership for the development and implementation of the Texas workforce system that emerged during the 1990s. The governor's office strongly supported and led the state's early implementation of WIA. More recently, administration and policy direction has been largely delegated to the three TWC commissioners; TWC; the Texas Workforce Investment Council (TWIC - formerly the Texas Council on Workforce and Economic Competitiveness), the state workforce board;

the Workforce Leadership of Texas (WLT), now known as the Texas Association of Workforce Boards (TAWB), a membership group comprised of board chairs and executive directors; and the local boards themselves. The state and local boards are “grandfathered” under WIA; the size of the latter is a local decision and varies significantly. The boards may also serve as youth councils under WIA. There is no separate state youth council.

Texas conducts a separate state strategic planning process for workforce development that is far more comprehensive than the joint plan submitted for WIA purposes. Texas had also initiated integrated workforce planning as required by state law at the local level, prior to WIA, which contained strategic and operational components; these plans parallel the unified plans envisioned in WIA.

Most major workforce programs have devolved to the boards, who receive block grants to procure services with One-Stop Career Center contractors. These programs include WIA, TANF “Choices,” Food Stamp Employment and Training, Welfare-to-Work, child care, and related special initiatives. Additionally, through most of FY 2003, local TWC program staff delivered Wagner-Peyser Act employment services, veterans’ services, TAA, and Re-Integration of Offenders (RIO) services alongside contractor staff.<sup>4</sup> One-Stop Career Centers also provide information for UI claims, but applications are taken either through regional call centers or online. Boards also procure services for WIA youth and other client needs that are typically delivered at locations in the community other than the One-Stop Career Centers. Statewide, some 270 local One-Stop Career Centers perform direct service delivery functions.

TWC prepared both a template or “umbrella” MOU for interagency cooperation at the state and local level, as well as an MOU checklist for board use with required and optional partners. Many individuals at the state and local level view the preparation of MOUs as compliance exercises that at times can be a useful starting place for mutually beneficial exchanges between agencies and programs. Programs operated by the Texas Rehabilitation Commission and the Texas Commission for the Blind are reportedly the most difficult to coordinate with One-Stop Career Center services.

Community colleges have long been the major provider of education and skills training for the Texas workforce system. Although relationships between workforce development programs and community colleges actually vary significantly across and within workforce areas, they were generally impaired during the early implementation of WIA by national and state policies that de-emphasized referrals to training and by WIA eligible training provider certification procedures. The use of ITAs was sluggish early in Texas’ WIA implementation in large part because of WIA service-sequencing provisions and a perceived “work first” orientation at the federal level, as well as an overheated labor market.

In 2000-01, Texas spent nearly \$860 million for the administration and delivery of employment and training services funded by programs in the Texas Workforce Network. Child care accounted for approximately \$412 million of these expenditures.

Total WIA Title I expenditures for Texas were around \$212 million. WIA registers only a small share of all individuals who participate in One-Stop Career Center services, but undoubtedly “touches” thousands more who never proceed beyond self-assisted core services. Texas served nearly 77,000 individuals in WIA Title I programs in 2000-01, over 1,500,000 individuals with Wagner-Peyser Act employment service funds, albeit much less intensively, and nearly 130,000 TANF Choices participants. WIA is nevertheless the major training program, and its provisions shape many of the practices of the Texas workforce system.

Texas is increasing emphasis at the state and local level on improving business services. Features of renewed business engagement include TWC’s new office of Employer Initiatives, the state’s efforts to establish *system* performance measures with a clear focus on employers, restructuring services at the local level, and support for sectoral approaches.

The Workforce Integrated System of Texas (TWIST) is the state’s case management, data collection, and performance reporting system. TWC prepares a Monthly Performance Report (MPR), based on TWIST, child care, and employment service data, that informs Workforce Investment Boards and staff of their performance status on each of 35 measures. The MPR also contains a monthly “scorecard” for WIA performance. For FY 2002, the TWIC also introduced a “system performance scorecard,” and is further clarifying its approach by introducing a tiered model for system performance measurement. Several larger and/or more active Workforce Investment Boards have also been developing local system measures, including a return-on-investment measure.

Texas has long been a leader in the provision of high quality labor market information at both the state and local level. Texas is trying to coordinate labor market information with other systems, including TWIST, automated labor exchange, the Eligible Training Provider (ETP) system (AKA., Training Provider Certification system), and others. Texas is preparing to introduce [www.WorkInTexas.com](http://www.WorkInTexas.com), a web-based system that will replace the current automated labor exchange system ([www.HireTexas.com](http://www.HireTexas.com)), replace the Job Services Matching System used for employment service data management, and have reciprocal data exchange capacity for employment service and TWIST data. The web-based version of the ETP system has helped to streamline the provider certification process.

Texas clearly expects that WIA reauthorization will support continuing development of the Texas Workforce Network. The state supports provisions that enhance the employer driven system, allow continuation of the “grandfather” provisions, and promote further integration of services through the One-Stop delivery system. State and local flexibility is valued and supported by a series of recently granted waivers under WIA. Texas also has a strong belief in the need for federal guidelines for data sharing among education and workforce related programs and agencies.

Partners in the Texas Workforce Network will continue to explore methods to balance support for economic growth while helping to meet the needs of disadvantaged populations; to identify and focus on those interventions with a maximum long-term impact and at the same time to serve short-term objectives of heterogeneous businesses and job seekers; to build and reinforce partnerships among business, labor, government, education, and other workforce interests; and to measure performance in meaningful ways at the state level, as well as in the communities served by the boards.

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## UTAH

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Utah became an early implementing state under WIA in July 1999, after legislatively revamping its workforce development and welfare programs in 1996. House Bill 375 created the Utah Department of Workforce Services, consolidating five state agencies into a new one responsible for employment and training programs, cash assistance, Food Stamps, child care, and other services. Services are delivered almost exclusively by state employees in 37 full-service One-Stop Career Centers, referred to as One-Stop Employment Centers in Utah, in five workforce regions. Utah maintains a strong employment focus, but access to training is now based on individual assessment and counseling according to state guidelines.

Utah workforce initiatives have been driven primarily by Governor Mike Leavitt and Lieutenant Governor Olene Walker. The 1996 report of the Task Force on Workforce Development and an influential 1992 Legislative Audit Report laid the foundation for the current system. In 1997, the governor selected a prominent Salt Lake City banker as the Department of Workforce Services' first executive director to create and implement the new business-oriented system and direct its transition to WIA. The state legislature, education, and organized labor have not played major leadership roles under WIA.

Utah is a single-state workforce investment area with a "grandfathered" State Council on Workforce Services that is responsible for planning and oversight. Eight Department of Workforce Services Regional Workforce Councils perform similar functions, jointly appoint regional directors, and determine the location of area Employment Centers. Utah established a state Youth Council and eight Regional Youth Councils. Utah uses a bottom-up/top-down system for decision making and planning, balancing state and regional power. Local elected officials are much less and the private sector more involved in workforce governance. Administrative authority is uniform statewide, with resource allocations determined at the state level.

WIA had little effect on workforce planning in Utah. The Department of Workforce Services prepared the Strategic Five-Year State Plan internally with minimal input from its partners and submitted it to the U.S. Department of Labor in July 1999.

Department of Workforce Services submitted a separate plan for WIA Youth in September 1999. As a single-state workforce investment area, Utah does no local planning as such.

Eligibility, employment, and business services functions are staffed by Department of Workforce Services at full-service Employment Centers. Labor exchange services for employers and job seekers also are available online at [www.jobs.utah.gov](http://www.jobs.utah.gov). Although UI claims are handled by the state call center, claimants may still come into Employment Centers to register for work. Effective in November 2002, they can also register online. Utah's highly integrated approach to workforce service delivery allows flexibility in serving participants with a "portfolio" of funding streams.

Education programs have not had strong connections to Utah's workforce system. There are few nonurban community college campuses, and the Utah College of Applied Technology has not fully developed its network of regional centers.

The Department of Workforce Services prescribes the design and operating procedures for Employment Centers, including the configuration of its eligibility, employment counseling, and business services teams. Information, eligibility, core, intensive, and case management services are provided seamlessly by specialized, generic, or cross-functional staff teams regardless of funding source, a process that began when the Department of Workforce Services set Employment Center "franchising" standards. Business services are mainly housed in Employment Centers as well. Employment counselors and business services teams perform intermediary roles, but sectoral and cluster-based strategies do not play a prominent role.

Statewide administration of the Employment Centers limits contracting opportunities and simplifies cost-sharing. In urban areas, youth services are provided via contracts or MOUs with Intermediate School Districts and others. Faith-based and community-based organizations also provide services, but not on a contractual basis. Utah allocates costs based on Workload Allocation Factors and a Random-Moment Time Survey. TANF and Wagner-Peyser Act funds cover most core services. TANF is the preferred funding source due to its size. WIA funds are reserved mainly for training. Participants in training are automatically counted as core and intensive participants.

Utah serves many low-income families with children, driven largely by TANF funds. WIA core and intensive services are available on-site for adults and dislocated workers, while referrals are made for classroom and on-the-job training. WIA youth opportunities may be available on- or off-site. More than 250,000 Utahns participated in Wagner-Peyser Act services in PY 2001. Customers using universal services are encouraged to register for employment services, enabling the Department of Workforce Services to track services through UWORKS, its automated case management and reporting system. Counselors generally register WIA adults who are receiving intensive services and preparing to enter training, although the point of registration varies. WIA training accounted for about 60 percent of state expenditures for adults and dislocated workers.

Utah leads in the dissemination and use of labor market information. ITAs and provider certification lists have not constrained training enrollments, but resource limits and community college access have. Utah has followed a guided-choice approach to ITAs, favoring classroom training over on-the-job training. Department of Workforce Services established a \$5,000 per-participant cap on training costs and has allowed longer stays in training, supporting its belief in the value of training.

State-level performance standards across WIA and other programs have not led to a sense of shared objectives. Delayed WIA registration and avoiding “soft exits” may be contributing to increased manipulation of reported performance. Other performance measurement issues include: UI wage record time lags and noncoverage (e.g., Church of Christ of Latter Day Saints); continuing data sharing issues involving workforce, education, and vocational rehabilitation; and weak definitions and inconsistent measurement of credentials. Utah developed and implemented performance measures beyond those required by WIA as part of a broader, business-oriented approach to performance management and continuous improvement.

Utah has enhanced the use of information and other advanced technologies in its Employment Centers, developing UWORKS, a case management, data collection, and reporting system across workforce and related funding streams at the state and local level. In November 2002, DWS introduced [www.jobs.utah.gov](http://www.jobs.utah.gov), its online, self-directed job matching system that will feed client-level, labor exchange information to UWORKS. Distance or e-Learning and virtual universities do not play a big role in Utah’s workforce strategies.

Utah has largely accomplished “seamless” workforce service delivery for job seekers and employers, going well beyond the rhetoric found in most states and localities, adopting a strong market-oriented approach within a state-run, publicly managed workforce system. Most major funding streams are integrated into Utah’s workforce system. Utah’s WIA program is not struggling to serve TANF and other low-skilled, low-income populations, nor is it encountering serious difficulties with employer engagement. TANF and similar populations likely receive greater attention and better services under WIA than do higher educated and skilled populations.

WIA’s focus on job seekers and employers as customers rather than clients and on services rather than programs are primary strengths. But numerous weaknesses in WIA are seen as particularly problematic, including: inconsistent definitions; funding inadequacy and funding cycle inconsistency; silo-based inflexibility; performance standards problems; cumbersome training provider certification requirements; the “fair share” funding concept for One-Stop Career Centers; and WIA’s inflexibility relative to TANF and other funding streams.

In addition to the two-volume set of case studies, the products of this Rockefeller Institute implementation-research project include an interim and final report. The interim report, entitled *The Workforce Investment Act in Eight States: Overview of Findings from a Field Network Study* (U.S. DOL-ETA Occasional Paper 2003-03), written by Burt Barnow, Johns Hopkins University, and Christopher King, University of Texas at Austin, was issued in July 2003. It is included as published as an appendix to this volume. The report summarizes the field data across the eight sample states and presents recommendations. Barnow and King are writing the final project report that will treat the history of federal programs in this field along with a longer and deeper cross-sectional analysis of the study states, comparing them in a manner that takes into account major findings and differences in goals, approaches, organizational structures, and operations. The final report is scheduled for issuance in spring 2004.

## Notes

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<sup>1</sup> The mandatory partners include WIA, the Employment Service, Unemployment Insurance, Welfare-to-Work, Trade Adjustment Assistance programs, Veterans' Employment and Training Programs, Job Corps, Senior Community Service Employment Program, employment and training for migrant and seasonal farm workers, employment and training for Native Americans, Vocational Rehabilitation, Adult Education and Literacy, Vocational Education (Perkins Act), Community Services Block Grant, and Housing and Urban Development administered employment and training.

<sup>2</sup> **Core services** are defined as an initial assessment, job search assistance, career counseling, and providing information regarding the labor market and work services. **Intensive services** include comprehensive and specialized assessments and development of employment plans as well as work experience activities, case management for participants seeking training services, and provision of literacy activities for basic workforce readiness. **Training services** include a variety of training opportunities to increase the skill level of the participant.

<sup>3</sup> For more information on the field network approach to public policy research, see Nathan, Richard P. *Social Science in Government: The Role of Policy Researchers* (Albany, NY: Rockefeller Institute Press, July 2000).

<sup>4</sup> TAA and RIO were devolved from state to local board control during the latter part of PY 2003. The transfer of more management responsibility for employment service and veterans' services was scheduled for the fall of 2003.