



# U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

FY 2022 – 2026 Strategic Plan

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## Secretary's Message



I am proud to present the Department of Labor's (DOL) Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2022–2026, which summarizes how all DOL agencies will work together to achieve their missions. At the Labor Department, this boils down to a simple idea: ***empowering all workers morning, noon and night***. With the support of our federal partners, we can do that by focusing on three large goals.

### **INVEST IN AND VALUE THE NATION'S CARE ECONOMY**

We are focused on the care infrastructure to ensure workers have the opportunity and support to thrive in their jobs. That means ensuring workers can care for their families without risking their jobs. That means staying home when they're sick, or when they need to care for a

sick family member. That means having access to the resources they need to manage their mental health. It also means ensuring care economy workers are valued and are appropriately paid, trained, and work in safe conditions.

### **BUILD A MODERN, INCLUSIVE WORKFORCE**

We are focused on ensuring all people can have a good job and opportunity for advancement. That means giving workers a seat at the table. That means people can have a job that is safe, a job that pays a fair wage, a job in which discrimination does not occur, cause exploitation or social harms, and that has opportunities for growth. And that means a job where workers have a say in their work, realize their goals, and make meaningful contributions.

### **SUPPORT A LIFETIME OF WORKER EMPOWERMENT**

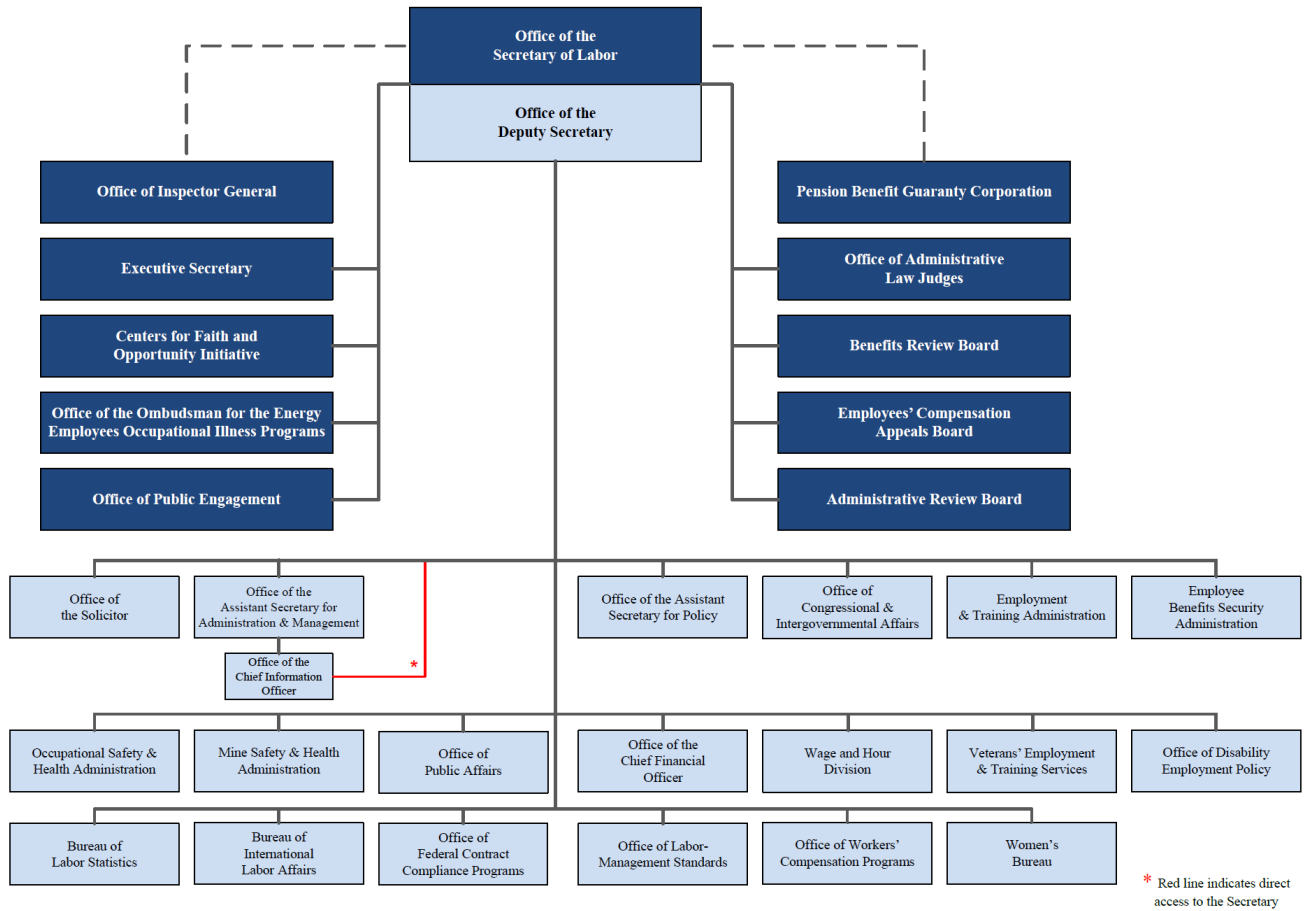
We are focused on making sure people don't have to worry that the loss of a job will destroy their financial well-being. That means making sure people can save for retirement, that they have access to health care, and that if something goes wrong they have the support they need to get through it.

As we chart a path forward, every move we make will be with that one lofty goal in mind: empowering all workers, morning, noon and night. By empowering workers, we will rebuild our middle class; we will protect the rights of wage earners, job seekers and retirees; and we will lay a strong foundation for our next generation. That is how we will meet the moment, and that is how we will build back better.

MARTIN J. WALSH  
Secretary of Labor

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# Organization Chart



# Strategic Plan Overview

This Strategic Plan meets the requirements of the Government Performance Results Act Modernization Act (GPRAMA) and is the foundation for the Department of Labor’s (Department, DOL) planning and budget activities. Four Strategic Goals (Goal 1, etc.), one Management Goal, ten Strategic and Management Objectives (1.1, etc.), and twenty Agency Performance goals (ETA 1.1, etc.) support realization of Secretary Walsh’s Vision and achievement of the Department’s Mission.

**Vision:** Empowering all workers morning, noon and night.

**Mission:** To foster, promote, and develop the welfare of the wage earners, job seekers, and retirees of the United States; improve working conditions; advance opportunities for profitable employment; and assure work-related benefits and rights.

<b>Goal 1: Build Opportunity and Equity for All</b>			
<b>1.1 Advance training, employment, and return-to-work opportunities that connect workers to higher-wage jobs, especially in ways that address systemic inequities.</b>			
<b>ETA 1.1</b> Create customer-focused workforce solutions that serve all workers, including underserved communities.	<b>VETS 1.1</b> Provide veterans, transitioning service members, and military spouses with resources and tools to gain and maintain employment.	<b>WB 1.1</b> Formulate policies and initiatives to promote the interests of working women.	<b>ODEP 1.1</b> Develop evidence-based policies, practices, and tools to foster a more inclusive workforce to increase quality employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities.
<b>Goal 2: Ensure Safe Jobs, Essential Protections, and Fair Workplaces</b>			
<b>2.1 Secure safe and healthful workplaces, particularly in high-risk industries.</b>			
<b>OSHA 2.1</b> Secure safe and healthful working conditions for America’s workers.		<b>MSHA 2.1</b> Prevent fatalities, disease, and injury from mining, and secure safe and healthful working conditions for America’s miners.	
<b>2.2 Protect workers’ rights.</b>			
<b>WHD 2.2</b> Enforce labor standards to protect and enhance the welfare of the nation’s workforce.	<b>OFCCP 2.2</b> Promote equitable and diverse workplaces for America’s federal contractor employees.	<b>OLMS 2.2</b> Promote union financial integrity, transparency, and democracy.	
<b>2.3 Improve the security of retirement, health, and other workplace-related benefits for America’s workers and their families.</b>			
<b>EBSA</b>			



<b>2.4 Strengthen labor rights, improve working conditions, promote racial and gender equity, and empower workers around the world.</b>		
<b>ILAB</b>		
<b>Goal 3: Improve Administration of and Strengthen Worker Safety Net Programs</b>		
<b>3.1 Ensure timely and accurate income support when work is unavailable by strengthening benefits programs and program administration.</b>		
<b>OWCP 3.1</b> Increase the efficiency and accuracy with which OWCP provides workers' compensation benefits for certain qualified workers who are injured or become ill on the job and improve return-to-work outcomes for injured workers.	<b>ETA/UI 3.1</b> Support states' timely and accurate benefit payments for unemployed workers.	
<b>Goal 4: Statistical Goal – Produce Gold-Standard Statistics and Analyses</b>		
<b>4.1 Provide timely, accurate, and relevant information on labor market activity, working conditions, price changes, and productivity in the U.S. economy.</b>		
<b>BLS</b>		
<b>Management Goal: A Department Grounded in Innovation, Evidence, and Employee Engagement</b>		
<b>M.1 Drive innovation in administrative, management, and financial services.</b>		
<b>OASAM M.1</b> Optimize the Department of Labor's Enterprise Services.	<b>OCFO M.1</b> Promote fiscal integrity and the effective and efficient use of resources through innovation.	
<b>M.2 Strengthen the Department's commitment and capacity for evidence-based decision-making.</b>		
<b>OASAM M.2</b> Integrate Budget and Performance with Evaluation & Risk Management to improve decision-making.	<b>OCFO M.2</b> Invest in risk-based decision-making to enhance the Department's operations.	<b>OASP M.2</b> Invest in strategic and evidence-based decision-making, policy and regulatory development.
<b>M.3 DOL as a model workplace</b>		
<b>OASAM M.3</b>		

### Stakeholder Outreach

The Department of Labor's mission is broad and diverse, touching the lives of working people, employers, and organizations that support workforce information, training, security, benefits, and working conditions – including labor unions. In addition to review by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), the GPRAMA requires agencies to solicit and consider the views and suggestions of those entities potentially affected by or interested in a strategic plan. DOL directly engaged its employees and stakeholders via DOL.gov; comments were distributed to the relevant component agencies for consideration; and changes were made to the Strategic Plan as appropriate.

## Agency Priority Goals

Agency Priority Goals (APGs) identify near-term improvements in outcomes, customer service, or efficiencies that advance progress toward longer-term strategic goals and objectives. They are two year goals that reflect the top implementation-focused, performance improvement priorities of agency leadership and the Administration, and therefore do not reflect the full scope of the agency mission. Implementation and management of APGs require decisions about agency priorities, trade-offs, measurement, evidence, strategies, timing, and leadership that are reviewed at least quarterly to see that sufficient time, resources, and attention are allotted to addressing specific problems or opportunities related to the goal.

For the two year period ending September 30, 2023, DOL has established two goals:

### **An Economy for All Workers**

By September 30, 2023, DOL programs will prioritize the advancement of diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility, to better support underserved communities through a series of measures and milestones across agencies that demonstrate concrete and sustained progress.

### **Strengthening America's Safety Net for Workers**

By September 30, 2023, the Department will 1) increase intrastate first payments of unemployment benefits made within 21 days by at least 10 percent towards the regulatory target of 87 percent and 2) reduce the estimated improper payment rate of unemployment benefits.

# Strategic Goal 1

## Build Opportunity and Equity for All

### Strategic Objective 1.1

**Advance training, employment, and return-to-work opportunities that connect workers to higher-wage jobs, especially in ways that address systemic inequities.**

#### Partner Agencies Driving this Objective

Employment and Training Administration (ETA)  
Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS)  
Women's Bureau (WB)  
Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP)

The American economy must work for all workers. ETA, VETS, WB, and ODEP oversee programs and develop policy as part of the nation's public workforce system, providing support to workers and employers. In the coming years, these agencies will strengthen their efforts to expand opportunities to address equity and inclusiveness.

These partner agencies invest in workforce development and modernized practices; they also build upon established collaborations with other DOL agencies, federal, state, and private organizations to influence evidence-based policy changes, conduct important research, and strengthen employer engagement.

Collectively, these agencies' performance goals contribute to improving employment outcomes for workers today and tomorrow, and to improving DOL's agility to evolve in an ever-changing environment. Additionally, DOL's Civil Rights Center investigates and adjudicates alleged discrimination and other violations of equal opportunity requirements, and provides technical assistance, to ensure that the workforce system is operating in compliance with the law.

#### LEARNING AGENDA

The DOL Evidence-Building Plan for FY2022-2026 includes 13 research projects related to Strategic Objective 1.1., such as the **Case Management & Navigation Evidence Building Portfolio** with ETA to explore how these services can support positive labor market outcomes.

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#### Risks

ETA, VETS, WB, and ODEP face numerous challenges in assisting workers and employers as the Nation transitions from dual public health and economic crises and tries to combat systemic injustices in race, gender, and underserved communities. Here are just a few examples:

For ETA's Office of Apprenticeship (OA), if growth continues to increase at the current pace, there will be reduced ability to guard against non-compliance in areas such as apprentice safety, Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO), misclassified costs, fiscal controls, and performance management.

For VETS programs, disparate recovery scenarios across the county and the possible resurgence of COVID-19 could impact service delivery methods.

WB's apprenticeship grantees continue to report lack of access to child care and other supportive services.

ODEP continues to face the risk of not having adequate data from employers to understand the labor market conditions affecting people with disabilities.

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## **ETA Performance Goal 1.1**

### **Create customer-focused workforce solutions that serve all workers, including underserved communities.**

The Employment and Training Administration (ETA) oversees a diverse portfolio of programs and services provided by the public workforce system – a network of federal, state, and local government-funded agencies and programs. The public workforce system delivers quality job opportunities and assistance in acquiring skills and credentials to workers and connects businesses with skilled workers to meet their workforce needs. ETA also includes the Office of Unemployment Insurance, which has its own performance goal in this plan under Strategic Objective 3.1.

ETA's strategies to put America back to work and help American businesses compete in the global economy include:

- Preparing America's workers for the jobs of the 21<sup>st</sup> century by investing in high-quality workforce training programs and expanding access to underserved communities;
- Scaling evidence-based practices including sector-based training and career pathways, among others;
- Expanding and increasing access to Registered Apprenticeships and effective work-based learning;
- Strengthening training and employment services by supporting the workforce system to provide critical employment and training services in a rapidly changing environment; and
- Providing assistance and best practices to the workforce system and other Federal agencies to meet the goals of a resilient and inclusive workforce.

ETA oversees the public workforce system authorized by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). Programs strategically aligned through this system include:

- WIOA Title I adult, dislocated worker, and youth state formula programs;
- National Dislocated Worker Grants;
- Wagner-Peyser Employment Service (ES) (amended by WIOA Title III) formula grants serving workers and businesses, and providing universal access to labor exchange and labor market information services;
- WIOA YouthBuild program, serving youth and young adults through competitive grants;
- WIOA Job Corps program, serving youth and young adults at primarily residential centers operated by contracted vendors and the U.S. Department of Agriculture;
- WIOA Indian and Native American program, serving youth and adults;
- National Farmworker Jobs Program;

## Strategic Goal 1

- Reentry Employment Opportunities program, assisting adult and youth ex-offenders;
- Grants to expand apprenticeships;
- H-1B Skills Training Grants, assisting America's workers in acquiring the skills and competencies needed for high-growth industries and economic sectors, and reducing the Nation's dependence on foreign labor;
- Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) formula grants, serving workers adversely impacted by international trade; and
- Unemployment Insurance, providing temporary assistance to unemployed workers, as well as providing an economic stabilizer during economic downturns (See Strategic Objective 3.1).

ETA also serves workers and businesses through its temporary and permanent foreign labor certification programs, which respond to business needs for skilled workers that cannot be met by available U.S. workers, while protecting the wages and working conditions of similarly employed U.S. workers.

ETA's work is carried out primarily through grant making and contracting authority, in cooperation with states, local governments, community and faith-based organizations, local workforce development boards, labor organizations, community colleges and other entities that oversee service delivery to meet the specific skills needs of their communities. At the national level, ETA conducts program management (including guidance and technical assistance activity), business and stakeholder engagement, performance accountability, policy development, and research and evaluation. At the regional level, ETA's federal staff, in coordination with the National Office, provide critical oversight, monitoring, and technical assistance to help states, local areas, and other grantees (as part of the public workforce system) and contractors succeed in continually improving services to workers and businesses.

### **Preparing American workers for the jobs of the 21<sup>st</sup> century by investing in high-quality workforce training programs and expanding access to underserved communities**

As the economy changes, training and employment programs must innovate and adapt to help America's workers gain necessary skills by making services, strategies, and supports accessible to those in need. ETA's investments in workforce development will prioritize underserved and adversely impacted communities. ETA will continue to build on lessons learned from previous economic disruptions and periods of rapid economic and job growth, such as the need for adult learners to earn an income while participating in training, the rapidly adapting skill needs of business, and the evolution of education and training methods to include virtual and technology-based methods. ETA will continue to assess and test training and reemployment

services, especially for underserved populations, and rigorously evaluate practices that have shown promise over the past decade.<sup>1</sup>

As the economy changes, ETA will continue to assess data on employment outcomes and use the evidence base to recommend programmatic reforms that would improve program outcomes, effectiveness, and efficiency for both workers and businesses. For example, results show that workplace education developed as part of an industry sector strategy can increase earnings among low-income individuals.<sup>2</sup> ETA will also:

- Provide high-quality job matching and labor market information services to improve business response to natural turnover in worker pools;
- Facilitate career pathways in clean energy, infrastructure, healthcare, the care economy, and advanced manufacturing, and design workforce services with a customer-centered focus;
- Collaborate with the Chief Evaluation Office to identify proven programs and strategies, and help states and grantees implement them; and
- Assist states and grantees to operate in the most cost-effective and efficient way possible.

### **Scale evidence-based practices including sector-based training and career pathways, among others**

Workforce strategies have historically focused on the supply side of the labor market. In the last 15 years, the workforce system has expanded its focus to include both supply (job seeker) and demand (employer and industry) side strategies.<sup>3</sup> Sector strategies are workforce interventions that shift from a “program administration” focus to a strategic role of building regional inclusive talent pipelines that build meaningful career pathways for workers in important regional industries. ETA has promoted sector-based strategies through sector-driven demonstration programs such as those funded with H-1B funds. ETA incorporates career pathway approaches in Job Corps, YouthBuild, Workforce Pathways for Youth, and other WIOA programs. ETA also enhances capacity in career pathway institutions through programs like Strengthening Community Colleges and the Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) program, which in past years provided funding to states to work with community colleges to build industry-aligned education and training programs. ETA plans to expand adoption of evidence-based practices through: (1) competitive grants that dedicate funding to building or adopting equitable, evidence-based strategies; (2) technical assistance on

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<sup>1</sup> Clymer, Carol; Conway, Maureen; Freely, Joshua; Maguire, Sheila (2009). *Job Training That Works: Findings from the Sectoral Employment Impact Study*, <https://www.aspeninstitute.org/publications/job-training-works-findings-sectoral-employment-impact-study/>

<sup>2</sup> Conway, Maureen, et al. (2007). *Sectoral Strategies for Low-Income Workers: Lessons from the Field*, The Aspen Institute, <https://www.aspeninstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2007/10/Sectoral-Strategies.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> King, C., & Prince, H., (2019). *Career Pathway and Sector-Based Strategies: A Broader Look*. <https://research.upjohn.org>

adopting evidence-based strategies like sector strategies and career pathways; and (3) cultivating and sharing best practices and emerging evidence around sector-based strategies, career pathways, and other evidence-based practices.

### **Expand and increase access to Registered Apprenticeships and effective work-based learning**

ETA programs support work-based learning, skills development, and work readiness. They also promote training strategies that lead to credential attainment, as evidence has long supported the idea that workers and businesses benefit from workplace training.<sup>4,5</sup> ETA promotes increased partnerships and collaborations with sponsors of Registered Apprenticeship (including businesses and unions) and the workforce and education systems. DOL's 2012 Registered Apprenticeship evaluation found that the net lifetime benefits for persons who completed an apprenticeship program were approximately \$250,000 while the net social benefits were over \$50,000.<sup>6</sup> Additionally, evidence shows that demand-driven education and work-based learning programs, especially where youth receive wages, can improve employment outcomes, increase labor force participation, and engender higher wages and earnings.<sup>7</sup> ETA will continue its efforts to enhance and expand access to Registered Apprenticeships and other effective work-based training models through:

- Modernizing Registered Apprenticeships by developing evidence-based strategies and models that expand access, extend into new industries, re-engineer current processes for establishing Registered Apprenticeship programs, and leverage technology for both industry and apprentices.
- Expanding youth and pre-apprenticeships by 1) targeting students at accredited secondary and post-secondary educational institutions, including community colleges, as well as eligible youth, ages 14-24, who face barriers to education, training, and employment; 2) working with the Departments of Defense, Education, Justice and Health and Human Services to promote Registered Apprenticeships and pre-apprenticeships for high school students, YouthBuild participants, Job Corps students, justice-involved persons, current and former foster youth, out-of-school youth, service members and their spouses, and veterans; and 3) working with WB

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<sup>4</sup> Lynch, Lisa M. (1994). Introduction. In *Training and the Private Sector: International Comparisons*, Lisa M. Lynch, ed. University of Chicago Press.

<sup>5</sup> US Department of Labor, US Department of Commerce, US Department of Education, US Department of Health and Human Services, (2014). *What works in job training: A synthesis of evidence*, <https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/OASP/legacy/files/jdt.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> Reed, Debbie, et al. (2012). *An Effectiveness Assessment and Cost-Benefit Analysis of Registered Apprenticeship in 10 States*, Oakland, CA: Mathematica Policy Research, [https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/FullText\\_Documents/ETAOP\\_2012\\_10.pdf](https://wdr.doleta.gov/research/FullText_Documents/ETAOP_2012_10.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> Ross, M., Kazis, R, Bateman, N., Stateler, L. (2020). Work-based learning can advance equity and opportunity for America's young people. *Metropolitan Policy Program at Brookings*. Retrieved June 21, 2021 from [https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/20201120\\_BrookingsMetro\\_Work-based-learning\\_Final\\_Report.pdf](https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/20201120_BrookingsMetro_Work-based-learning_Final_Report.pdf)

## Strategic Goal 1

to provide Women in Apprenticeship and Nontraditional Occupations (WANTO) grants that help expand pathways for women to enter and lead in all industries.

- Expanding opportunities for adults by working to 1) expand integrated work-readiness and work-based learning opportunities across programs serving a diverse community of workers; 2) identify employer-focused training opportunities; and 3) provide education on how the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program can support individuals in apprenticeships.

### **Supporting the workforce system to provide employment and training services in a rapidly changing environment**

ETA is investing in reemployment and training services to dislocated workers and jobseekers most affected by the economic and employment impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, including individuals from historically marginalized communities, members of communities that have been or will be impacted by the transition from fossil fuels to renewable energy, and those who have been unemployed for an extended period or who have exhausted UI benefits. ETA supports its grantees and partners through policy, oversight, management, accountability, and generating evidence to improve grant processes, service efficacy, and system direction.

In addition to investing in dislocated workers through grant programs, the WIOA Adult program is also integral to reaching adults most in need of assistance through the public workforce system. ETA has published guidance (TEGL 7-20) that emphasizes prioritizing services to individuals who are recipients of public assistance, low-income, and basic skills deficient (including English language learners); under WIOA Section 134(c)(3)(E), these individuals receive priority of service over other jobseekers, with the exception of veterans. This guidance advances equitable service delivery by establishing guidelines that ensure at least 50 percent of a state's WIOA Adult program participants are from at least one of the three priority groups, with a goal of reaching 75 percent.

### **Provide assistance and best practices to the workforce system and other Federal agencies to meet the goals of a resilient and inclusive workforce**

ETA plays a critical role in creating connections, providing support, and leveraging evidence in all corners of the workforce system. Technical Assistance (TA) is one of the strongest levers that ETA has to support, guide, and expand capacity across the system. ETA plans to focus on TA that continues to build capacity across the system and to work with its Federal partners to promote a resilient and inclusive workforce. ETA will focus on emerging evidence and innovations that support better connections across programs, states, and local areas. ETA will also focus on amplifying and implementing new and emerging evidence, ensuring that the system as a whole is not just more informed but better able to innovate using workforce program evidence as a guide.



## **Connecting businesses to skilled workers by timely processing foreign labor certification applications**

For generations, immigrants have fortified America’s most valuable competitive advantage—the spirit of innovation and entrepreneurship. Research suggests that “the total annual contribution of foreign-born workers is roughly \$2 trillion.”<sup>8</sup> Key sectors of the U.S. economy, from agriculture to technology, rely on foreign talent. Working-age immigrants keep America’s economy growing, communities thriving, and the country moving forward. The challenge of attracting skilled foreign workers while ensuring jobs are available for Americans requires ETA to focus its resources on ensuring that America’s workers are provided first access to jobs with fair pay and working conditions, while also meeting required statutory and regulatory processing times on employer applications to fill certain jobs with foreign workers. ETA will continue its efforts through:

- Connecting Businesses to Workers: Connecting businesses to skilled workers and protecting the employment and wages of U.S. workers by timely processing foreign labor certification applications.
- Modernizing the PERM application processing system, which processes employer applications to fill jobs with immigrant workers, by integrating it into the Foreign Labor Application Gateway (FLAG) system – a modern and cloud-based solution that will replace the 15-year old legacy PERM system.<sup>9</sup>
- Improving program administration by seeking legislative authority to institute cost-based fees to finance the processing of foreign labor certification applications and reduce reliance on appropriated funds.
- Enhancing State Workforce Agency (SWA) grants to improve program effectiveness by continuing to pursue additional funding for SWAs targeted to the states where workload demands in the H-2A and H-2B programs are greatest.
- Reducing annual operating costs to enhance program administration by pursuing several administrative initiatives to improve the electronic filing and case processing systems, ensuring staff have the latest technologies to efficiently review applications in a fully remote workplace environment, and expanding staff interoperability efforts to achieve optimum case processing for the prevailing wage and permanent labor certification programs.
- Advancing the Administration’s Collaborative Migration Management Strategy by actively managing staffing and other resources during peak filing seasons to ensure the

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<sup>8</sup> The Hamilton Project, 2018. Fact 7: Foreign-born men work more than native born men, but foreign-born women work less. *A Dozen Facts About Immigration, para.1*, Brookings Institute, [https://www.hamiltonproject.org/charts/output\\_in\\_the\\_economy\\_is\\_higher\\_and\\_grows\\_faster\\_with\\_more\\_immigrants](https://www.hamiltonproject.org/charts/output_in_the_economy_is_higher_and_grows_faster_with_more_immigrants)

<sup>9</sup> The enhanced FLAG system will offer employers mobile-friendly form preparation options, improved automated data validations to improve the quality of applications, and a new electronic “PERM Labor Certification Boarding Pass” that will save employers time and money filing immigrant petitions with the Department of Homeland Security, and facilitate the sharing of electronic labor certification decisions with federal partner agencies.

## Strategic Goal 1

timely processing of H-2A applications while ensuring each job opportunity granted labor certification offers fair wages and working conditions to U.S. and foreign workers.

### Environmental and External Factors

Several environmental and external factors outside of ETA's control may influence or significantly re-shape, or create obstacles to, the design, goals, and implementation of the programs contemplated by this strategic plan.

- **Labor Market/Business Cycle:** The strength of the economy and its various sectors can severely fluctuate during economic disruptions. In a strong economy, jobs are easier to find for most; however, underserved and disadvantaged groups still face other barriers to employment. In a weak economy, jobs are less available and workers may accept lower wages, with less opportunity for growth and advancement. ETA and its programs must be agile and flexible in order to adapt to shifting labor market cycles.
- **Structural Shifts in the Economy and the Changing Face of the Workforce:** Building a workforce that is inclusive of workers who have historically been marginalized and face barriers to employment requires us to ensure that our services are oriented to provide the critical supports needed to ensure these workers have meaningful opportunities to obtain quality jobs. As the makeup of the workforce continues to change, ETA adapts programs, goals, and strategies to respond.
- **Changing Nature of Work/Workplaces:** Globalization, outsourcing, the shift from manufacturing to service jobs, and the gig economy have changed the nature of work. The pandemic accelerated shifts in how we engage and collaborate, leveraging more technology and relying less on brick and mortar workplaces. ETA and DOL must continue to develop evidence, best practices, and insights in order to carry out its mission while accounting for the changing nature of work and the workplace.

ETA – Create customer-focused workforce solutions that serve all workers, including underserved communities.								
Performance Measure	2019 Result	2020 Result	2021 Result	2022 Target	2023 Target	2024 Target	2025 Target	2026 Target
Percentage of exiters engaged in work-based learning opportunities, including apprenticeships (OWI/OJC/OTAA/OA) <sup>10</sup>	27.8%	41.1%	--	42.0%	44.0%	46.0%	48.0%	50.0%

<sup>10</sup> Measure name revised for clarification purposes. Calculation method has not changed. Results and targets based on Program Year timeframe (12 months ending June 30).

Strategic Goal 1

ETA – Create customer-focused workforce solutions that serve all workers, including underserved communities.								
Performance Measure	2019 Result	2020 Result	2021 Result	2022 Target	2023 Target	2024 Target	2025 Target	2026 Target
Percentage of exiters attaining credentials within one year after exit (OWI/OJC/OTAA/OA) <sup>11</sup>	68.9%	59.8%	--	65.0%	65.2%	66.0%	68.0%	70.0%
Percentage of program participants employed in the second quarter after exit (OWI/OJC/OTAA) <sup>12</sup>	69.8%	61.8%	--	69.0%	69.2%	69.4%	70.0%	72.0%
Number of Active Registered Apprentices (OA)	633,476	636,515	589,229	700,000	800,000	900,000	1,000,000	1,100,000
Number of states at or above 75% of participants who are recipients of public assistance, basic skills deficient, or low income individuals (WIOA Adult Program)	29	36	--	38	40	42	44	45
Percent of Complete H-2A Employer Applications Resolved 30 Days Before the Date of Need (OFLC).	86.1%	96.8%	97.0%	97.0%	97.0%	97.0%	97.0%	97.0%

<sup>11</sup> Measure name revised for clarification purposes. Calculation method has not changed. Results and targets based on Program Year timeframe (12 months ending June 30).

<sup>12</sup> Results and targets based on Program Year timeframe (12 months ending June 30).

## VETS Performance Goal 1.1

### Provide veterans, transitioning service members, and military spouses with resources and tools to gain and maintain employment.

The Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS) administers programs that address the employment, training, and job security needs of 200,000 service members who transition to civilian life each year, nearly 800,000 National Guard and Reserve members, and over 8 million military veterans. VETS is committed to providing job training programs that empower all transitioning service members, veterans, and military spouses to reach their full potential in the workplace. This includes a special emphasis on advancing racial and gender equity and support for underserved communities by embedding equity initiatives across all its programs.

Over the next four years, VETS will assess available data to make the appropriate programmatic reforms that focus on good-quality jobs for all participants it serves. VETS will continue to employ the following 4 P programmatic strategies to assist service members, veterans, and their spouses to reach their full potential in the workplace:

- **Prepare** veterans, transitioning service members and spouses for civilian employment.
- **Provide** employment and training services to eligible veterans and military spouses.
- **Protect** employment and re-employment rights of service members and veterans and ensure that federal employers give appropriate preferential hiring to veterans.
- **Promote** employment opportunities for all veterans.

#### PREPARE

VETS offers employment-related workshops that provide assistance to the nation's transitioning service members and military spouses by preparing them with the tools necessary for a successful transition from military to civilian employment.

VETS will continue to provide and improve TAP curriculums that meet the specific needs of transitioning service members, military spouses, and veterans. This will be accomplished by increasing the number of courses and the frequency of delivery of the Transition Employment Assistance for Military Spouses (TEAMS) curriculum, creating curriculum for transitioning service members who have an unscheduled separation from service due to health conditions, as well as pilot additional workshop delivery mechanisms to increase the number of veterans served.

VETS will work with DoD Skillbridge program, DoD Military to Civilian Transition Office (MCTO), and DOL ETA Office of Apprenticeship to encourage employers to develop Registered Apprenticeship Programs within Skillbridge. VETS will promote Skillbridge participation to transitioning service members as part of the DOL TAP workshops and through our Employment Navigator and Partnership Pilot site.

## Strategic Goal 1

### **PROVIDE**

The Jobs for Veterans State Grants (JVSG) program provides funding to states for Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialists, Local Veterans' Employment Representative (LVER) staff at American Job Centers (AJCs), and Consolidated Roles throughout the country. DVOP specialists provide Individualized Career Services to eligible veterans with significant barriers to employment. LVER staff promote hiring veterans in communities through outreach activities with local employers. The Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Program (HVRP) addresses one of the most vulnerable populations by helping to reintegrate homeless veterans into the workforce and society.

VETS will improve outreach to the veteran community to promote services available at AJCs and create a deliberate campaign targeting communities of color and underserved veterans in order to improve connections to job opportunities and outcomes for veterans. VETS will also build opportunities in emerging markets, technical fields, and green energy jobs by expanding the network of training partners and employers in the green energy sector to ensure veterans can train and be placed in a variety of locations around the country.

### **PROTECT**

VETS is responsible for investigating compliance with Federal statutes that provide employment and reemployment protections and preferential hiring for veterans. Under the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994 (USERRA), VETS provides technical assistance and guidance on USERRA to the public and investigates claims of USERRA violations from persons experiencing service related problems involving their civilian employment. VETS also investigates claims under the Veterans Employment Opportunities Act (VEOA), which provides for veterans' preference in Federal hiring.

VETS will continue to conduct compliance assistance outreach activities at the national, regional, state, and local levels, to help civilian employers, employees, potential employees, service members, spouses, and others understand their rights, benefits and obligations under USERRA.

### **PROMOTE**

The Veteran Employment Outreach Program (VEOP) makes it easier for employers to find, hire, train, and retain veterans by leveraging Federal, state, and local resources. The Honoring Investments in Recruiting and Employing (HIRE) America's Military Veterans Act of 2017 recognizes employer efforts to recruit, employ, and retain veterans. The program provides two tiers of recognition, with Platinum and Gold HIRE Vets Medallion Awards, to recognize employers based on specified criteria established for small, medium, and large employer categories.

VETS will implement a comprehensive strategic communication plan for internal and external messaging that will provide information and relevant products for outreach with partner agencies. VETS will provide common, synchronized, and coordinated messaging to inform and

Strategic Goal 1

inspire people and organizations to leverage VETS programs in support of transitioning service member, veteran, and military spouse employment.

VETS – Provide veterans, transitioning service members, and military spouses with resources and tools to gain and maintain employment.								
Performance Measure	2019 Result	2020 Result	2021 Result	2022 Target	2023 Target	2024 Target	2025 Target	2026 Target
Facilitator satisfaction through post course survey	--	--	96%	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%
Median Earnings (2nd quarter after exit) for veterans served by DVOP	\$6,420	\$6,679	\$6,957	\$6,500	\$6,600	\$6,700	\$6,800	\$6,900
HVRP Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit	\$4,374	\$4,836	\$7,540	\$7,000	\$7,100	\$7,200	\$7,300	\$7,400
Percent of USERRA investigations completed within 90 days	82.8%	86.2%	85.6%	84.0%	84.5%	85.0%	85.5%	86.0%

## **WB Performance Goal 1.1**

### **Promote policies and support programs focused on improving women's employment and economic outcomes.**

The Women's Bureau (WB) is the only federal office exclusively concerned with serving and promoting the interests of the more than 75 million women in the U.S. labor force today. WB provides leadership on policies and initiatives that advance equity in employment and economic outcomes for working women, especially women of color and others who have been historically underserved, marginalized, and adversely affected by persistent poverty. WB works to create parity for women in the labor force by conducting research; policy and data analysis; grant-making; informing and promoting policy change; and increasing public awareness and education. WB identifies and builds collaborations with individuals and organizations that are critical to the implementation of new policies, programs, and practices that can positively impact working women.

WB invests in innovation and best practices in workforce development focused on eliminating persistent gender and racial wage gaps by improving wages and working conditions in key, female-dominated sectors and disrupting occupational segregation, driving women into pathways to good jobs. WB works to advance equity by reducing caregiving penalties for women and low-paid workers by expanding access to paid leave and affordable child, elder and disability care. WB also works to eliminate pay discrimination and gender-based employment discrimination, including harassment and discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity, and pregnancy.

#### **Encourage Economic Recovery and Equity for Women in the Workforce**

WB will initiate research on the pandemic's near, medium, and long-term impact on women, particularly women of color, and low-paid workers in industries hardest hit by the pandemic with the goal of aligning DOL priorities and programming with the full economic recovery for women and other vulnerable workers. WB also will expand a new grant initiative to promote equity in access to benefits and awareness of rights, and will collaborate with other federal partners, national, state, and local organizations, governments, and employers, providing technical assistance, resources, and education. WB regional staff, who are knowledgeable about their states and issues on the ground, will facilitate stakeholder engagement, outreach, education, and communications with state-based stakeholders on WB's priorities, and serve as liaisons with regional staff in sister agencies. Without the cooperative action of these entities, the U.S. is at risk of perpetuating historical patterns that have not worked for women and other populations.

#### **Expand Apprenticeship Opportunities and Paid Leave Supports for Working Women**

WB will continue to scale up the Women in Apprenticeship and Non-Traditional Occupations

(WANTO) grant program to increase opportunities for women from historically underrepresented communities, including women of color and women with disabilities, in Registered Apprenticeship programs and nontraditional occupations. WB will advance best practices for hiring and retaining women in the trades and expand programs helping formerly incarcerated women re-enter the workforce. WB will conduct research on the work-related opportunity costs of caregiving and engage with stakeholders to promote the use of the DOL-funded Worker Paid Leave Usage Simulation (Worker PLUS), an open-source simulation tool that can be used by researchers and federal, state, and local policy makers to estimate the effects of various worker leave scenarios and policy options on worker leave-taking behavior, and to estimate the benefits paid as well as costs of administering any given program, in the development of universal and equitable paid leave policies. In addition, WB will launch the National Database of Childcare Prices, a new data source providing the most comprehensive information on childcare prices in the United States. WB will highlight gaps in access to childcare and the associated reduction in women’s employment by cost of care for various demographic groups and hold meetings with childcare advocates on how to build a stronger, better care system that works for working women.

WB – Promote policies and support programs focused on improving women’s employment and economic outcomes.								
Performance Measure	2019 Result	2020 Result	2021 Result	2022 Target	2023 Target	2024 Target	2025 Target	2026 Target
Number of policy & research deliverables	21	17	23	32	32	32	32	32
Number of strategic partnerships with organizations primarily serving underserved communities	--	--	--	Base	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD



## **ODEP Performance Goal 1.1**

### **Develop evidence-based policies, practices, and tools to foster a more inclusive workforce to increase quality employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities.**

The Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) works to advance training, employment, and return-to-work opportunities that connect workers to higher-wage jobs. ODEP's policy activities address systemic inequities, promote evidence-based policies and practices, and coordinate with stakeholders at all levels of government to increase the number and quality of employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities. ODEP employs strategies to help employees succeed by connecting them to the appropriate resources to retain or obtain work. This includes matching the skills and talents of employees with disabilities to suitable employers. Additionally, ODEP uses data and evidence to promote the adoption and implementation of policy strategies and effective practices to increase the number and quality of job opportunities for people with disabilities. Based on research and evaluation, ODEP develops or identifies effective policy and practices, conducts outreach to share this critical information, and provides technical assistance to all levels of government and employers to aid them in adoption and implementation. Over the next four years, ODEP will continue to support employers and expand partnerships to encourage the full inclusion of people with disabilities, and promote equity for disadvantaged and underserved subset communities, while simultaneously adapting strategic programs and initiatives to address new challenges in a pandemic-impacted economy.

#### **Retaining Employment and Talent After Injury/Illness Network (RETAIN)**

Recognizing the importance of giving workers with disabilities including those in underserved communities economically sustainable alternatives to disability benefits, ODEP awarded Retaining Employment and Talent After Injury/Illness Network (RETAIN) Demonstration projects to pilot evidence-based solutions designed to improve stay-at-work/return-to-work outcomes.

#### **State Exchange on Employment and Disability (SEED) Initiative**

Further, recognizing that states play a critical role in advancing disability employment policy, through the State Exchange on Employment and Disability (SEED) initiative, ODEP assists state policymakers in effectively addressing policy barriers that hinder the employment, retention, and advancement of people with disabilities. Since inception in FY 2015, SEED efforts have been some of ODEP's most effective policy adoption mechanisms to date—generating more new laws, executive orders, task forces, and senior state official collaboration.

#### **Job Accommodation Network (JAN)**

Improving the link between high-skilled workers and employers is critical towards increasing opportunities for labor force participation and advancement for all workers and jobseekers with

Strategic Goal 1

disabilities, in general, and increasing the economic empowerment of youth and young adults, in particular. Consequently, ODEP funds the Job Accommodation Network (JAN), which provides free, expert, and confidential guidance on workplace accommodations and employment issues related to the employment of people with disabilities.

**Center for Advancing Policy on Employment for Youth (CAPE-Youth)**

ODEP also funds the Center for Advancing Policy on Employment for Youth (CAPE-Youth), which helps both general and disability-specific youth service programs improve employment and post-secondary education outcomes for youth with disabilities.

**Advancing State Policy Integration for Recovery and Employment (ASPIRE) and the National Expansion of Employment Opportunities Network (NEON) Initiative**

Finally, ODEP provides technical assistance and promotes policies designed to increase competitive integrated employment for workers with significant disabilities, including those with mental health conditions, transitioning from segregated settings and subminimum wages through initiatives like the Advancing State Policy Integration for Recovery and Employment (ASPIRE) and the National Expansion of Employment Opportunities Network (NEON) initiative.

ODEP – Develop evidence-based policies, practices, and tools to foster a more inclusive workforce to increase quality employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities.								
Performance Measure	2019 Result	2020 Result	2021 Result	2022 Target	2023 Target	2024 Target	2025 Target	2026 Target
Number of policy outputs	66	51	41	42	44	46	48	50
Number of implementation tools	110	98	128	112	125	134	145	156
Number of Technical Assistance Events (Targeted)	403	195	246	243	250	259	261	267
Percent of customers that find technical assistance center information useful	96%	92%	98%	92%	93%	94%	95%	95%

## Strategic Goal 2

### Ensure Safe Jobs, Essential Protections, and Fair Workplaces

#### Strategic Objective 2.1

##### Secure safe and healthful workplaces, particularly in high-risk industries.

###### Partner Agencies Driving this Objective

Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)  
Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA)

All workers have a right to a safe and healthful work environment. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) recognize that some workers are more vulnerable than others and that some workplaces are more hazardous than others. By strategically scheduling inspections and outreach in high-risk areas, in addition to completing mandated enforcement activity, DOL expects to have the greatest effect on overall compliance. With more employers in compliance, workplace injuries, fatalities, and illnesses should decline – the ultimate outcome for workers.

The Secretary’s vision provides workers a voice in the workplace so that they may actively participate in the protection and promotion of their workplace rights without hindering their employment growth opportunities. Workers are more likely to have a voice in the workplace if they are better informed of their employment rights, and are better able to freely exercise those rights and do not have reason to fear adverse consequences. OSHA and MSHA provide a range of protections for workers who claim their rights are being violated.

###### LEARNING AGENDA

The DOL Evidence-Building Plan for FY2022-2026 includes 6 research projects related to Strategic Objective 2.1., such as a project that will assess the extent to which **OSHA’s Susan Harwood Training Grants** reach vulnerable populations of workers, and identify promising practices for reaching these populations.

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###### Risks

OSHA and MSHA have consistently faced short and long-term challenges in securing safe and healthful workplaces due to significant loss of staff over the last several years. To address this risk to public safety, both agencies will be undertaking significant recruitment, hiring, and onboarding of new staff over the next two years. This will include attracting a more diverse and inclusive talent pool, providing training and mentoring for them to assume their responsibilities, and then focusing on retaining talent for the long term. Ultimately, an increased cadre of skilled staff will result in improved safety and health outcomes for workers.

## **OSHA Performance Goal 2.1**

### **Secure safe and healthful working conditions for America's workers.**

The Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 (OSH Act) (Public Law 91-596) establishes the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's (OSHA) mission to assure so far as possible safe and healthful working conditions for all working people in the Nation. With its State Plan partners, OSHA focuses resources on workers in those industries where the risk of occupational injury and illness is high. A strong correlation exists between high-risk industries and those industries in which America's most vulnerable populations work. In the context of occupational safety and health, vulnerable populations are those groups of people exposed to occupational risks with little or no agency to prevent, avoid, or reduce those risks, and few resources to recover if an injury or illness occurs. Often these are ethnic or racial minorities, non-English speakers, immigrants, the economically disadvantaged, and adults with diminished capacity.

#### **Targeting Resources for Effective Impact**

OSHA's work includes setting and enforcing standards, providing training, outreach, education, and assistance, and protecting workers who report violations from retaliation. OSHA and its inspectors are committed to strong, fair, and effective enforcement of safety and health requirements in the workplace. Since OSHA does not have the resources to inspect every workplace, it puts extensive resources into training inspectors, workers and employers to extend the agency's impact on occupational safety and health. Through the OSHA Training Institute (OTI) facility in Arlington Heights, Illinois, OSHA trains compliance safety and health officers, state consultants, whistleblower investigators, and other government staff. This is in addition to the OSHA Outreach Training Program, which provides training for hundreds of thousands of workers and employers on the recognition, avoidance, abatement, and prevention of safety and health hazards in workplaces. The OSHA Whistleblower Protection Program assures that workers who report hazards are not retaliated against and that cases are cleared in a reasonable amount of time.

#### **Responding to the COVID-19 Pandemic**

To accomplish its mission over the next four years, OSHA is using funding from the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARP) to support 163 Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) staff to conduct the mission-critical work of protecting workers from COVID-19 hazards and retaliation. OSHA will also focus its resources on vulnerable and hard-to-reach workers in high hazard industries. The ARP funding will help OSHA facilitate increases in COVID-19 related enforcement efforts as well as increase outreach and training resources available to employers, workers, and the agency. OSHA is also using ARP funds to reinforce resources for whistleblower protection; standards and guidance development; OSHA's State Plan partners; Information Technology (IT) needs; technical support; Human Resources (HR) support; and Susan Harwood Training Grants. The agency is developing a broader infectious-diseases standard to provide long-term protection to

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workers from future contagions, which will also necessitate a broader approach to agency enforcement and outreach.

OSHA – Secure safe and healthful working conditions for America’s workers.								
Performance Measure	2019 Result	2020 Result	2021 Result	2022 Target	2023 Target	2024 Target	2025 Target	2026 Target
Safety Inspections	27,890	17,558	19,948	25,120	27,032	27,089	27,089	27,089
Health Inspections	5,511	4,116	4,407	6,280	6,758	6,772	6,772	6,772
Percent of inspections conducted through emphasis programs specifically focused on reducing or eliminating employee exposure to fall, struck-by, caught-in, and electrical hazards in all workplaces	--	31%	33%	32%	33%	34%	35%	36%
Number of people trained by OSHA	1,627,368	1,371,943	1,371,488	1,309,000	1,400,200	1,520,000	1,520,000	1,520,000
Average age of pending whistleblower investigations.	307	333	350	330	320	310	300	290
Average days to complete new complaint screening process. (WB)	11.0	11.8	7.0	10.0	8.0	6.0	5.0	5.0

## **MSHA Performance Goal 2.1**

### **Prevent fatalities, disease, and injury from mining, and secure safe and healthful working conditions for America's miners.**

The Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) works to prevent fatalities, disease, and injury from mining and secure safe and healthful workplaces for America's miners. Under the Federal Mine Safety and Health Act of 1977 (Mine Act), mine operators, with the assistance of miners, have the primary responsibility to prevent unsafe and unhealthful conditions. MSHA promotes safety and health through inspections and enforcement, stakeholder outreach, education and training, and improved regulations.

#### **Strong Mine Act Enforcement**

The foundation of MSHA's enforcement strategy is the mandatory inspections it conducts at active mines in the U.S. and its territories. This enforcement mandate is essential to protect miners and advance a culture of safety and health in the mining industry. Data collected through the inspection process enables MSHA to monitor and address health and safety trends on an industry- or sector-wide basis.

#### **Protect the Rights of Miners**

To ensure that miners' rights are protected, MSHA will review all discrimination investigations to protect a miner's right to report health and safety hazards without fear of retaliation. MSHA will inform the industry and miners of their rights and responsibilities under the Mine Act by providing training and distributing educational materials at mine sites.

#### **Provide Outreach, Education, and Training**

MSHA will expand compliance assistance to mine operators to help operators understand and follow regulations and identify solutions to hazards associated with mining injuries, illnesses, and fatalities. MSHA gives special attention to the leading causes of mining fatalities. About half of all U.S. mining fatalities in recent years were due to accidents involving powered haulage. MSHA has made the prevention of powered haulage accidents a priority, with an initial focus on three areas: mobile equipment at surface mines, seat belt usage and conveyor safety.

MSHA will use funding provided to the Department in the American Rescue Plan Act for COVID-19 related worker protection activities. MSHA will provide expert advice and guidance in health hazard enforcement, support enforcement and regulatory activities, develop standards concerning miner exposure to silica and other health-related hazards, including MSHA Guidance on Mitigating and Preventing the Spread of COVID-19, support internal needs to address any safety and health risks, and work with mine operators to

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address mitigation of health concerns in miners.

In FY 2020, MSHA consolidated the Coal and Metal/Nonmetal program areas into one unified enforcement structure. The new enforcement structure provides the flexibility to address industry changes and maximizes the most effective and efficient use of MSHA's resources. MSHA will ensure its hiring plan advances diversity, equity and inclusion. MSHA will promote recruitment efforts that attract and support a diverse and multilingual workforce to enhance the enforcement of safety and health standards at our Nation's mines. MSHA is dedicated to advancing equity for all by implementing policies and programs that eradicate systematic barriers to opportunities and benefits.

MSHA – Prevent fatalities, disease, and injury from mining and secure safe and healthful working conditions for America's miners.								
Performance Measure <sup>13</sup>	2019 Result	2020 Result	2021 Result	2022 Target	2023 Target	2024 Target	2025 Target	2026 Target
5 year rolling average of reportable injuries associated with powered haulage equipment per 200,000 hours worked	0.179 [r]	0.173 [r]	0.172 [e]	0.169	0.169	TBD	TBD	TBD
5 year rolling average of fatal injuries per 200,000 hours worked	0.0102 [r]	0.0095	0.0107 [e]	0.0091	0.0091	TBD	TBD	TBD
5 year rolling average of all injuries per 200,000 hours worked	2.18 [r]	2.08	2.02[e]	1.99	1.99	TBD	TBD	TBD

<sup>13</sup> To account for changes in the mining industry from year to year, MSHA measures the number of miner fatalities and injuries per 200,000 hours worked for the prior 5 year period.

## Strategic Objective 2.2

### Protect workers' rights.

#### Partner Agencies Driving this Objective

Wage and Hour Division (WHD)

Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP)

Office of Labor-Management Standards (OLMS)

All workers have the right to be paid properly and treated equitably. WHD, OFCCP, and OLMS promote fair pay, worker rights, equal opportunity, and serve as the voice of the American workforce. These agencies enforce laws and provide compliance assistance that address worker pay and leave, affirmative action requirements, anti-discrimination, and labor-management transparency. Together, these agencies protect tens of millions of employees in millions of workplaces across the country.

#### LEARNING AGENDA

The DOL Evidence-Building Plan for FY2022-2026 includes 7 research projects related to Strategic Objective 2.2, such as a collaboration with WHD to conduct a **Worker Survey** to measure the prevalence and severity of violations among selected worker populations, occupations, and industry subsectors, and explore how conditions vary among different sub-populations of workers.

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#### Risks

These agencies face risks related to staffing levels, investments in modern information technology solutions, and implementing practices that lead to timelier outcomes for workers. WHD will be hiring and onboarding a significant number of new staff in the first part of this Administration and will need to focus on quickly training them in their new roles. OLMS is looking to replace a legacy IT system that would improve electronic filing of union financial reports and disclosure, as well as the cybersecurity posture of the agency. Finally, OFCCP will be focused on rebuilding its workforce, training staff to revitalize enforcement, and streamlining its processes to achieve greater impact.

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## **WHD Performance Goal 2.2**

### **Enforce labor standards to protect and enhance the welfare of the nation's workforce.**

The mission of the Wage and Hour Division (WHD) is to promote and achieve compliance with labor standards to protect and enhance the welfare of the nation's workforce. WHD enforces critical worker protections like minimum wage, overtime, family and medical leave, child labor and other labor standards laws. WHD enforces the Davis-Bacon and Related Acts and the Service Contract Act covering the prevailing wage requirements of many government contracts—a critical program for ensuring the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act creates good jobs and a path to the middle class. Collectively, these laws cover most private, state, and local government employment and protect more than 148 million workers in more than 10 million workplaces throughout the United States and its territories.

#### **Equity**

WHD plays a critical role in addressing economic equity, and research has shown that wage violations contribute to inequality in job quality.<sup>14</sup> While the laws enforced by WHD are important for all workers, they are especially critical for workers of color, immigrants, and women, who due to marginalization are often overrepresented in those occupations most vulnerable to violations. The agency will expand efforts in industries marked by the highest rates of minimum wage and overtime violations, where evidence suggests workers are at risk of misclassification as independent contractors, and in historically underserved communities at risk of labor violations. WHD will increase investments in developing resources that better serve the greatest number of workers, distressed communities, and good faith employers—including materials available online, in multiple languages, and specific to industries.

#### **Protecting Essential Workers**

Increased investment in enforcement staff will directly support sector-based strategies serving low-wage workers who have also disproportionately been impacted by the pandemic. The crises created by COVID-19 highlighted the critical contributions of essential workers in fueling the country's economic recovery and growth, yet they continue to be at greatest risk of labor violations. During the initial weeks of the pandemic, the most highly exposed industries employed more hourly workers and part-time workers and paid considerably lower wages and total earnings than other parts of the economy.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Marinescu, Ioana, Yue Qiu, and Aaron Sojourner, "Wage Inequality and Labor Rights Violations," National Bureau of Economic Research, February 2021.

([https://www.nber.org/system/files/working\\_papers/w28475/w28475.pdf?utm\\_campaign](https://www.nber.org/system/files/working_papers/w28475/w28475.pdf?utm_campaign))

<sup>15</sup> Dey, Matthew, Mark A. Lowenstein, David S. Piccone Jr., Anne E. Polivka, "Demographics, earnings, and family characteristics of workers in sectors initially affected by COVID-19 shutdowns," *Monthly Labor Review*, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, June 2020. [https://www.bls.gov/opub/mlr/2020/article/demographics-earnings-and-family-characteristics-of-workers-in-sectors-initially-affected-by-covid-19-shutdowns.htm#\\_edn7](https://www.bls.gov/opub/mlr/2020/article/demographics-earnings-and-family-characteristics-of-workers-in-sectors-initially-affected-by-covid-19-shutdowns.htm#_edn7) (visited April 19, 2021).

As America emerges from a global pandemic, WHD protects those workers who formed the backbone of America's resiliency during this crisis and who will continue to anchor the country's return throughout the recovery. Essential workers include workers in grocery stores, health care, delivery services, retail establishments, agriculture, and other essential industries who remained on the job despite many potential risks to their own health or that of their families.<sup>16</sup> Care workers are also among the fastest growing occupations in the country. Yet these workers experience higher rates of wage violations and may be least likely to complain, due to intimidation, fear of retaliation or a lack of awareness of their rights.

### **Strategic Enforcement**

WHD utilizes a data-driven strategy focused on identifying industries where low-wage workers are most likely to suffer wage theft, but least likely to complain. WHD will continue using BLS and Census Bureau survey data to identify areas where workers are in considerable need of WHD enforcement. For more than a decade, WHD has used the Current Population Survey (CPS) to identify industries that have high per-capita Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) violation rates and relatively low complaint rates. This methodology provides a national level, industry-based lens for strategic enforcement. In order to achieve a more worker-focused, place-based resource allocation strategy, WHD will undertake additional data analysis efforts including a focus on workforce populations named in Executive Order 13985: Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government.

These data-driven strategies are carried out through strategic initiatives advancing multiple objectives, including protecting essential workers, advancing equity, and addressing the impacts of COVID. WHD's strategic initiatives are working to address the misclassification of workers as independent contractors across industries and helping workers who experience retaliation. A strategic approach to enforcement allows WHD to address compliance at multiple points within an industry structure. Carrying out these comprehensive, coordinated approaches requires ongoing research on industries and worker experiences; data analytics, including data visualization, working with large data statistical sets, and statistical modeling; extensive stakeholder engagement; and multi-faceted media strategies. WHD will also reestablish strategic partnerships with local and state governments, industry and diverse stakeholders that can further the agency's efforts to protect worker wages and benefits, deter health and safety violations and address compliance more broadly.

WHD continues to learn and, through these combined efforts, is taking an already mature strategic enforcement program to the next level. To that end, WHD relies on several types of

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<sup>16</sup> Elka Torpey, "Essential work: Employment and outlook in occupations that protect and provide," Career Outlook, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, September 2020. <https://www.bls.gov/careeroutlook/2020/article/essential-work.htm> (visited April 19, 2021).

## Strategic Goal 2

measures to advance evidence-based strategies and to promote effective and efficient enforcement. WHD performance measures emphasize protecting essential workers through strategic initiatives and high impact cases. The evidence-based strategies for enforcement and outreach within strategic initiatives are how the agency believes it can most effectively advance equity goals, detect and address misclassification, and improve compliance for essential workers. The performance measure for compliance actions associated to a strategic initiative is a measure that focuses on essential workers in particular as each strategic initiative is organized around essential workers in priority industries (e.g. care workers, agricultural workers). WHD is also aiming to conduct the majority of outreach events in furtherance of strategic initiatives. The severity index, which produces severity scores for investigations, is guiding the agency's efforts to prioritize impactful cases. While the vast majority of back wages are paid directly to workers by employers, WHD established a performance measure focused on ensuring that all workers receive the wages they are due, particularly the most vulnerable.

WHD – Enforce labor standards to protect and enhance the welfare of the nation's workforce.								
Performance Measure	2019 Result	2020 Result	2021 Result	2022 Target	2023 Target	2024 Target	2025 Target	2026 Target
Percent of back wages paid to workers	--	--	--	79%	82%	85%	87%	90%
Percent of compliance actions associated to a strategic initiative	--	--	--	65%	66%	67%	68%	70%
Percent of outreach events supporting strategic initiatives	--	--	40%	50%	52%	55%	57%	60%
Percent of FLSA compliance actions (excluding conciliations) with severity score of 30 or more	--	20%	18%	21%	22%	23%	24%	25%

## **OFCCP Performance Goal 2.2**

### **Promote equitable and diverse workplaces for America's federal contractor employees.**

Approximately 25,000 covered federal contractors, with 120,000 establishments, employ approximately 20 percent of the American workforce. The Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP) protects federal contractor employees, promotes diversity, and administers and enforces the following laws: Executive Order 11246, as amended (Executive Order); Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, 29 U.S.C. 793 (Section 503); and the Vietnam Era Veterans' Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974, as amended, 38 U.S.C. 4212 (VEVRAA).<sup>17</sup> Collectively, these laws make it unlawful for contractors and subcontractors doing business with the federal government to discriminate in employment because of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, disability, or status as a protected veteran. Contractors and subcontractors also are prohibited from discriminating against applicants or employees because they inquire about, discuss, or disclose their compensation, or that of others, subject to certain limitations. Additionally, they may not retaliate against applicants or employees for engaging in protected activities. These laws also require that federal contractors provide equal employment opportunity through affirmative action.

#### **Revitalizing Enforcement and Strategic Allocation of Resources**

Over the next four years, OFCCP will strategically allocate its resources through comprehensive compliance evaluations to identify and remedy systemic discrimination<sup>18</sup> in hiring, compensation, and other areas. OFCCP will invest in in-depth internal training to ensure that compliance officers and field employees are well-equipped to identify the barriers that workers face in different industries and resolve patterns of systemic discrimination in these industries.

Additionally, OFCCP will continue to invest in its technological infrastructure to increase efficiencies and maximize impact. OFCCP is working to enhance its electronic Compliance Management System (CMS). This new paperless CMS was first deployed in FY 2019 with only the supply and service module. In FY 2021, OFCCP developed a module to process construction scheduling lists and to distribute them to field offices. In the first quarter of FY 2022, OFCCP deployed the full construction module to capture all relevant information from compliance officers conducting construction compliance evaluations. Also, in FY 2022,

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<sup>17</sup> Executive Order 11246, Sept. 24, 1965, 30 FR 12319, 12935, 3 CFR, 1964-1965, Comp., p. 339, as amended; Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, 29 U.S.C. 793, (Section 503); and the Vietnam Era Veterans' Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974, as amended, 38 U.S.C. 4212.

<sup>18</sup> Systemic discrimination involves a pattern or practice, policy or class where the alleged discrimination has a broad impact on an industry, profession, company or geographic area.

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OFCCP will deploy the complaints module that will enable the agency to identify patterns of discrimination and allow OFCCP to more closely monitor the timeliness of investigations. In addition, OFCCP will launch an online Contractor Portal for contractors to certify that they have a written and updated Affirmative Action Program (AAP) for each of their establishments. OFCCP will be able to use contractors' annual certification response as an additional criterion for the agency's neutral scheduling process, so that contractors who certify they are not in compliance will be more likely to be scheduled for a full compliance review. Finally, OFCCP is also working to develop an online portal to receive electronic construction award notifications from construction contractors and subcontractors. The online portal will significantly improve the process for scheduling construction contractors for compliance evaluations.

OFCCP also will reinvigorate its compliance program for federal construction contractors and subcontractors and federally-assisted construction contractors and subcontractors. This effort will help promote equal employment opportunities in the construction industry. This aligns with President Biden's commitment to equity by removing barriers to participation in our economy and fully enforcing our civil rights laws. Finally, OFCCP will continue to enhance its neutral contractor selection process to reach a broader universe of federal contractors and identify industries and contractors at greater noncompliance with OFCCP's equal opportunity and affirmative action requirements.

### Expanding Stakeholder Engagement

OFCCP will work with a broad coalition of stakeholders including workers' advocacy groups, employee resource groups, job placement providers, unions, community-based organizations in underrepresented communities, minority-serving institutions, and organizations serving veterans and people with disabilities to promote equity. OFCCP will provide comprehensive compliance assistance to contractors on longstanding barriers faced by marginalized workers, and strategies that have been effective in advancing pay equity and increasing the recruitment and hiring of underrepresented workers. In addition to assisting federal contractors and subcontractors in meeting their obligations, OFCCP will engage external stakeholders to educate and empower vulnerable workers.

OFCCP – Promote equitable and diverse workplaces for America's federal contractor employees.								
Performance Measure	2019 Result	2020 Result	2021 Result	2022 Target	2023 Target	2024 Target	2025 Target	2026 Target
Percent of Education and Outreach Events Focused on Workers' Rights	--	--	--	Base	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD

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OFCCP – Promote equitable and diverse workplaces for America’s federal contractor employees.								
Performance Measure	2019 Result	2020 Result	2021 Result	2022 Target	2023 Target	2024 Target	2025 Target	2026 Target
Median Days to Process S&S Cases with Discrimination Violations, Prior to Enforcement Referral	1,356	1,809	1,150	950	950	950	950	950
Median Days to Process Construction Cases With Discrimination Violations, Prior to Enforcement Referral	--	--	--	Base	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
Percent of Complaints Processed Within Standard Timeframe	87%	86%	83%	88%	88%	90%	90%	90%

## **OLMS Performance Goal 2.2**

### **Promote union financial integrity, transparency, and democracy.**

Labor organizations perform an essential function in the American economy by providing a “voice” for workers in their workplace. They do this by negotiating and enforcing agreements with employers to promote employee safety, fair and equitable policies, and fair pay. Labor unions advance the economic aspirations of many communities, those in the middle class and those struggling to get there. They raise wages and improve working conditions, and they do so with an even hand. They create equity among diverse communities by closing wage gaps that divide us by race, gender, and ethnicity.

#### **Strengthening Unions**

OLMS’ mission supports strengthening unions. OLMS is tasked with protecting unions and their members by administering the Labor-Management Reporting and Disclosure Act (LMRDA) and related laws. OLMS protects labor organizations and their membership by promoting financial integrity through its compliance audit and criminal enforcement programs. Furthermore, OLMS promotes transparency by reviewing union, employer, and persuader reports for accuracy and making them available to the public. Finally, OLMS conducts investigations of complaints filed by members concerning regularly scheduled union officer elections to protect the democratic process in the election of labor movement leaders by their membership. Unions are strong when they operate democratically, are free from corruption, and transparent in their operations. OLMS is successful in its mission when strong, democratic, and transparent unions have the full confidence of workers, employers, and policy makers.

By taking regulatory and policy actions, spotlighting the benefits that labor unions offer, enforcing reporting of anti-union employer conduct, sponsoring far-reaching research projects, contextualizing labor data with employer data, and modernizing its website, OLMS strengthens unions, helping to free the labor movement to lead us to a flourishing and equitable nation. In a similar vein, OLMS addresses the communication, regulatory and policy failures that have undermined worker support for organizing and bargaining collectively with their employers. OLMS strives to stem the decline in union density in America by researching, promoting and communicating the benefits of labor-management cooperation through collective bargaining, and in many other ways shine sunlight on existing anti-union practices meant to stop workers from building economic power and to silence their voice in the workplace.

#### **Targeting Embezzlement, Electronic Filing, and Resolving Officer Election Complaints**

To monitor progress against its goals, OLMS prioritizes three performance measures: First, OLMS will strive to audit only unions with indicia of being the victim of an embezzlement (fallout rate). OLMS will continuously evaluate the effectiveness of targeting methods as well as train new investigative staff on auditing techniques. Improving the fallout rate, through success on the “percent of targeted audits that result in a criminal case,” will assist the agency

Strategic Goal 2

to carry out necessary audits without burdening other unions where the data does not support the need for an audit. Second, through success in the “percent of disclosure reports filed electronically” measure, OLMS will improve the efficiency and ease of filing reports and making them publicly available by increasing the electronic filing rates. OLMS will continue its efforts to expand the forms that may be filed through the Electronic Forms System and emphasize the benefits of electronic filing through outreach efforts within the labor community. That said, a significant challenge for OLMS is its IT legacy system, e.LORS, which is antiquated and in need of modernization. Absent modernization, unions will experience difficulty in filing mandatory financial and activity reports electronically, the public will experience difficulty in accessing disclosure data, OLMS staff will experience continued delays and inefficiencies in case developing, processing, management, and review, and cybersecurity will remain suboptimal. OLMS and the Office of the Chief Information Officer are exploring low/no cost ways to incrementally address the greatest risks from the legacy system architecture while pursuing other avenues for the legacy system. Third, OLMS will improve upon its speed in resolving officer election complaints through team investigations and improving cross-agency communication, and measure its progress by the “average number of days to resolve union officer election complaints” measure. Success means the ballot choices of union members in selecting their leaders are respected, and election protests are addressed in a timely manner, thereby providing stability and certainty in union leadership, enabling the union to speak in one voice in the interest of its members.

OLMS – Promote union financial integrity, transparency, and democracy.								
Performance Measure	2019 Result	2020 Result	2021 Result	2022 Target	2023 Target	2024 Target	2025 Target	2026 Target
Average number of days to resolve union officer election complaints	65.6	64.9	66.9	66.0	65.5	65.0	65.0	65.0
Percent of targeted audits that result in a criminal case	19.00%	20.00%	15.25%	17.00%	17.50%	18.00%	18.50%	19.00%
Percent of disclosure reports filed electronically	85.3%	89.6%	97.4%	90.0%	91.0%	92.0%	94.0%	95.0%



## Strategic Objective 2.3

### Improve the security of retirement, health, and other workplace-related benefits for America’s workers and their families.

#### Agency Driving this Objective

Employee Benefits Security Administration (EBSA)

Workers must have confidence in, and understanding of, their retirement and health benefits. EBSA’s mission is to assure the security of the retirement, health and other workplace related benefits of America’s workers and their families. The Agency’s enforcement program uses a wide variety of approaches such as the establishment of national and regional priorities, voluntary compliance programs, civil and criminal litigation, regulations and guidance, and research-based analysis to accomplish its mission. The economic research program informs the agency’s regulatory and enforcement work, and provides important information to the public and policymakers on benefit plans.

In order to enhance benefits security and maintain public confidence in the private benefits system, EBSA administers an integrated program of regulation, compliance assistance, public education, civil and criminal enforcement, and research and analysis.

#### LEARNING AGENDA

The DOL Evidence-Building Plan for FY2022-2026 includes 3 research projects related to Strategic Objective 2.3, such as an EBSA project to **Identify Non-Filing Multiple Employer Welfare Associations (MEWAs)** by using data scraping and robotic process automation methods.

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#### Risks

EBSA has increasingly had to devote resources to investigating insolvent or fraudulent Multiple Employer Welfare Arrangements (MEWAs), a problem which the agency expects to be exacerbated by COVID-19. Financially troubled MEWAs saddle employees with unpaid claims and unpaid health benefits. EBSA utilizes data analytics as a tool to provide early warning indicators for potential investigation of troubled MEWAs. EBSA will continue to enhance these tools by integrating additional data sets to better identify financially unsound arrangements marketed towards vulnerable small employers.

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## **EBSA Performance Goal 2.3**

EBSA's mission is to assure the security of the retirement, health and other workplace related benefits of America's workers and their families. Although EBSA is a small agency, currently employing less than 800 people, it is responsible for protecting more than 154 million workers, retirees and their families who are covered by approximately 734,000 private retirement plans, 2 million health plans, and 662,000 other welfare benefit plans. Together, these plans hold estimated assets of \$12.9 trillion. In addition, the agency has important interpretive and regulatory responsibilities with respect to IRAs, which hold about \$13.2 trillion in assets, and audit responsibilities with respect to the federal Thrift Savings Plan (TSP), which is the world's largest employee contributory plan with 6.4 million participants and more than \$790 billion in assets. EBSA carries out its mission in a complex and evolving economic and regulatory environment. In order to enhance benefits security and maintain public confidence in the private benefits system, EBSA administers an integrated program of regulation, compliance assistance, public education, civil and criminal enforcement, and research and analysis.

### **Leverage Strategic Enforcement**

The primary objectives of EBSA's enforcement program are to improve compliance with the Employee Retirement Income Security Act (ERISA) and deter violations by recovering losses and unjust profits stemming from misconduct by the plan fiduciaries and service providers responsible for employee benefit plans. In addition to recovering losses and requiring the return of unjust profits, the agency pursues actions requiring systemic changes to plan governance to ensure compliance with the law (e.g., by removing impermissible impediments to the receipt of mental health or substance use disorder benefits, or requiring the adjudication of claims for improper denials of covered benefits). In EBSA's view, an effective enforcement program has overlapping and related attributes that include: effective targeting and data analysis; prompt detection and pursuit of violations; the successful pursuit of monetary recoveries; non-monetary results that promote compliance with ERISA; and the aggressive and timely pursuit of participant tips and complaints. EBSA focuses its enforcement resources on national enforcement projects, major case and employee contributions priorities, and regional projects. The major case initiative, in particular, seeks to obtain maximum benefit from EBSA's scarce resources by focusing on those cases that have the greatest potential to have a significant impact on large numbers of plans or plan participants. Additionally, EBSA plans to expand its analytical capabilities and to continue developing advanced targeting methods that include the use of external data to identify the strongest targets for investigation. EBSA's recovery targets are based on 5-year averages to smooth volatility of results. EBSA expects actual results in a given year to fluctuate around the average depending on the timing of corrections and the mix of cases closed. As the agency increases its focus on cases outside the Terminated Vested Participants Project (TVPP), it also expects to see a decline in total

## Strategic Goal 2

recoveries and in overall recoveries per staff day because of the reduced impact of the relatively large recoveries obtained in TVPP cases.

### Strengthen Compliance Assistance, Consumer Outreach, and Education

EBSA's three national education campaigns (the Health Benefits Education Campaign, the Retirement Savings Education Campaign, and the Fiduciary Education Campaign) are central components of the agency's compliance and assistance efforts. EBSA gives special attention and will continue to emphasize retirement savings programs for women and minorities who generally save less for retirement, individuals for whom English is not a primary language, workers nearing retirement, and new entrants to the workforce. In addition, the agency has devoted substantial resources to assisting dislocated workers. In FY 2020, EBSA conducted 3,425 outreach activities reaching 40,371 individuals.

### Promote High-Quality Regulatory and Research Activities

EBSA's regulatory program addresses issues proactively and directly supports the Department's objective to improve health benefits and retirement security for all workers. The cornerstone of a strong regulatory program is robust economic analysis and research capability.

EBSA – Improve the security of retirement, health, and other workplace-related benefits for America's workers and their families.								
Performance Measure	2019 Result	2020 Result	2021 Result	2022 Target	2023 Target	2024 Target	2025 Target	2026 Target
Major Case Monetary Recoveries per Major Case Staff Day	\$108,807	\$135,288	\$112,103	\$87,394	\$67,424	\$62,822	\$56,075	\$50,500
Non-TVPP Major Case Monetary Recoveries per Major Case Staff Day	\$44,940	\$82,712	\$30,566	\$42,189	\$37,171	\$37,914	\$38,672	\$39,446
TVPP Major Case Monetary Recoveries per Major Case Staff Day	\$244,747	\$247,359	\$282,396	\$200,495	\$184,110	\$174,905	\$157,415	\$133,803
Monetary Recoveries on Major Cases Closed per Staff Day	\$79,773	\$86,759	\$100,940	\$67,066	\$58,864	\$54,705	\$48,620	\$43,592
Monetary Recoveries on Non-TVPP Major Cases Closed per Staff Day	\$27,842	\$58,264	\$26,101	\$29,795	\$31,633	\$32,266	\$32,911	\$33,569
Monetary Recoveries on TVPP Major Cases Closed per Staff Day	\$268,562	\$140,156	\$211,944	\$179,953	\$166,047	\$157,745	\$141,971	\$120,675
Percent of Less Complex Issue Cases Closed or Referred for Litigation in the fiscal year within 18 Months of Case Opening	89%	84%	81%	76%	76%	76%	76%	76%

## Strategic Objective 2.4

### Strengthen labor rights, improve working conditions, promote racial and gender equity, and empower workers around the world.

#### Agency Driving this Objective

Bureau of International Labor Affairs (ILAB)

ILAB works to strengthen labor rights, improve working conditions, promote racial and gender equity, and empower workers around the world. ILAB accomplishes this goal through Trade Enforcement, Policy Engagement, Technical Assistance, and Research and Reporting. ILAB's approach is validated by independent research from the [United States International Trade Commission \(2016\)](#) and the [Inter-American Development Bank \(2014\)](#) suggesting that including labor obligations in trade agreements leads to better labor laws and enforcement efforts in trade partner countries.

ILAB positions the United States as a leader on international labor rights by demonstrating U.S. commitment to work with governments, workers, civil society organizations, and other actors to achieve its mission. By benefitting workers from all backgrounds and experiences, ILAB supports inclusive trade policy that advances economic security and racial and gender equity. ILAB will continue to work to lift up women, communities of color, and people who have been systematically excluded or overlooked.

#### LEARNING AGENDA

The DOL Evidence-Building Plan for FY2022-2026 includes 3 research projects related to Strategic Objective 2.4, such as an ILAB project to conduct a **National Child Labor Survey of Mexico** to measure the prevalence of child labor in Mexico and assess how prevalence has changed in recent years.

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#### Risks

The agency's greatest risk is the varying levels of cooperation, capacity, and political will with its international partners and stakeholders. To combat this, ILAB utilizes a variety of channels, including direct, bilateral engagement with foreign countries, technical assistance, interagency working groups, trade leverage, and active participation in international fora.

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## ILAB Performance Goal 2.4

The Bureau of International Labor Affairs (ILAB) works to promote fair rules that govern markets, protect vulnerable people from exploitation, promote racial and gender equity, and empower workers around the world. When other countries fail to respect international labor standards or enforce labor laws, suppress worker voice, violate their trade-related labor commitments, or export goods produced under exploitative labor conditions, they undercut America's workers and businesses and undermine worker rights worldwide. In coordination with federal agencies including the National Security Council (NSC), U.S. Trade Representative (USTR), U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), and the Departments of State, Treasury, Commerce, Justice, and Homeland Security, and partnership with international organizations, governments, workers, labor unions, and civil society organizations, ILAB positions the United States as a leader in promoting international labor rights. ILAB employs research, technical assistance, trade engagement, and labor diplomacy to achieve its mission of promoting a fair global playing field for workers in the United States and around the world by enforcing trade commitments, strengthening labor standards, promoting freedom of association and the right to bargain collectively, and combating international child labor, forced labor, and human trafficking.

### **Enforce Trade Commitments**

ILAB negotiates strong labor provisions in bilateral and regional Free Trade Agreements (FTAs), trade preference programs and investment agreements to ensure a level playing field for U.S. workers and businesses and contribute to inclusive economic growth. ILAB will strengthen respect for international workers' rights and ensure robust enforcement of labor laws around the world by continuing to monitor, engage with trade partner countries, and provide technical assistance to improve compliance with labor-related trade commitments.<sup>19</sup>

Consistent with all U.S. FTA labor chapters since 2007, which require FTA partner countries to adopt and maintain in law and practice, "the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation," ILAB grant programs will seek to integrate racial and gender equity into design and strategy wherever appropriate. In Mexico, where the labor chapter of the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Trade Agreement (USMCA) includes a provision that expressly addresses gender discrimination in the workplace, ILAB funds targeted programs on gender equity and women's labor rights and economic empowerment and will incorporate gender equity across all its worker rights programs.

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<sup>19</sup> Further information on evaluations of these ILAB-funded technical assistance projects can be found at [https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/ILAB/research\\_file\\_attachment/ILAB\\_synthesis\\_review\\_report\\_public\\_fina\\_l.pdf](https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/ILAB/research_file_attachment/ILAB_synthesis_review_report_public_fina_l.pdf) and <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/ilab/performance-monitoring-accountability>

**Strengthen Compliance with Labor Standards**

ILAB represents the U.S. government in dialogue and cooperation with foreign governments on labor matters and coordinates U.S. government participation in international organizations and multilateral fora relative to labor issues. ILAB will expand opportunities to share lessons from its international experience to advance the Biden-Harris Administration’s worker-centered trade policy. ILAB will conduct and support research to facilitate policy engagements with other countries and to inform domestic policymaking. Finally, ILAB will promote positions that advance protection of workers’ rights, inclusive and equitable economic growth, women’s equitable participation in the workforce, safe and healthy workplaces, and fair employment policies.

**Combat International Child Labor, Forced Labor, and Human Trafficking**

ILAB combats child labor, forced labor, and human trafficking by conducting in-depth research and reporting in more than 150 countries. These reports include the annual [Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labor](#), as required by the Trade and Development Act of 2000; the [List of Goods Produced with Child Labor or Forced Labor](#), as mandated by the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2005 and subsequent reauthorizations; and the [List of Goods Produced by Forced or Indentured Child Labor](#), as mandated by Executive Order 13126. With the evidence collected from these reports and labor monitoring efforts, ILAB informs trade enforcement and procurement determinations, policy decisions, and U.S. engagement with stakeholders and with trade partners.

As the leading funder of cutting edge, rigorous research to combat child labor and forced labor, ILAB oversees and develops evidence-based strategies and technical assistance projects that can be scaled up as appropriate. ILAB oversees a portfolio of technical assistance projects as well as third-party performance evaluations that assess the effectiveness of projects.

ILAB – Strengthen labor rights, improve working conditions, promote racial and gender equity, and empower workers around the world.								
Performance Measure	2019 Result	2020 Result	2021 Result	2022 Target	2023 Target	2024 Target	2025 Target	2026 Target
Number of trade partner countries in which labor rights, including child labor and forced labor, are systematically monitored and analyzed.	155	154	154	154	154	154	154	154
Percent of high engagement trading partner countries or multilateral institutions that implement actions to improve protection of labor rights, including through law or enforcement.	--	74%	87%	80%	82%	84%	85%	87%

## Strategic Goal 3

### Improve Administration of and Strengthen Worker Safety Net Programs

#### Strategic Objective 3.1

**Ensure timely and accurate income support when work is unavailable by strengthening benefits programs and program administration.**

##### Partner Agencies Driving this Objective

Office of Workers' Compensation Programs (OWCP)  
Employment and Training Administration, Office of  
Unemployment Insurance (ETA/OUI)

America's economy must have a strong safety net to support unemployed, injured, and ill workers. ETA's Unemployment Insurance programs will focus on supporting unemployed workers and employers. OWCP programs will focus on workers who were injured or became ill on the job. These programs will leverage evidence-based strategies and strengthen the oversight of new and/or existing programs to accelerate delivery of benefits, reemployment, and return-to-work outcomes for workers.

The Department will also address inequity to underserved communities by identifying and mitigating delays and obstacles that impede claimants' abilities to receive assistance. The Department also plans to pursue development of modular solutions to support states' efforts to improve technology systems over the next several years.

##### LEARNING AGENDA

The DOL Evidence-Building Plan for FY2022-2026 includes three research projects related to Strategic Objective 3.1, such as a collaboration with ETA to develop an **Unemployment Insurance (UI) Research Center** which will utilize a research-to-action model to support partnerships between research grantees and their state UI agency(ies).

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##### Risks

Over the last several years, OWCP's Energy program has been challenged to manage the quality provision of home health care services for beneficiaries as it faced increasing costs. To mitigate this risk, OWCP is developing improved case management resources, and clarifying procedural guidance.

Extraordinarily high levels of UI claims persist and the implementation of four new emergency UI programs placed major stress on state UI agencies, impacting their ability to meet program performance standards and resulting in greater frequency of improper payments and fraud – particularly fraud perpetrated by international and domestic crime rings – and delays in timely payment of UI benefits. ETA is deploying multidisciplinary Tiger Teams to identify recommendations to improve performance; providing grants to states for fraud prevention, equity improvements, and to address Tiger Team recommendations; and pursuing pilots to develop modules that states can use to support IT modernization efforts.

## **OWCP Performance Goal 3.1**

**Increase the efficiency and accuracy with which OWCP provides workers' compensation benefits for certain qualified workers who are injured or become ill on the job and improve return-to-work outcomes for injured workers.**

The Office of Workers' Compensation Programs (OWCP) provides benefits for workers who are injured or become ill on the job.

- The Federal Employees' Compensation Act (FECA) Program provides wage-loss compensation, payment for medical treatment, return-to-work assistance, and vocational rehabilitation for federal civilian employees and postal workers who are injured or ill because of their work, and compensation to eligible survivors in case of death.
- The Longshore and Harbor Workers' Compensation (Longshore) Program oversees the delivery of benefits by private sector employers and insurance carriers to injured workers engaged in certain maritime and related employment and to federal government contractors working overseas, and enforces compliance with applicable laws.
- The Black Lung Benefits (Black Lung) Program oversees private sector employers and insurance carriers or provides compensation and medical benefits to coal miners who are totally disabled due to pneumoconiosis resulting from coal mine employment, and monetary benefits to their eligible survivors.
- The Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation (Energy) Program provides compensation and medical benefits to employees or survivors of employees of the Department of Energy (DOE) and contractors or subcontractors of DOE, who worked on the nation's nuclear weapons program and became ill due to exposure to radiation or toxic substances.

### **Strengthen Disability Management and Improve Return-to-Work Outcomes**

Returning injured workers to employment in either their previous job or other work within their disability restrictions is a positive outcome for both OWCP and the injured worker. Early vocational rehabilitation intervention increases the probability that an injured worker will return to gainful employment. In order to enhance disability management, the FECA program will review its business practices and policies governing its disability management program and take steps to strengthen and enhance return-to-work outcomes.

### **Monitor Medical and Pharmaceutical Costs and Strengthen Oversight of Programs**

OWCP will continue its efforts to contain pharmaceutical costs and strengthen oversight of medical benefits. OWCP's FECA program will complete implementation of its Pharmacy Benefits Management services, which all claimants are required to use. OWCP will also assess whether the Energy and Black Lung programs can also benefit from such services or whether



other methods of handling pharmacy billing are more appropriate. The Energy program continues to improve the staffing, training, and systems capabilities for its Medical Benefits Adjudication Unit to support timely and effective adjudication of home and residential health care requests. Additionally, OWCP will strengthen its oversight of claims processing and benefit payments. The Black Lung program will work to protect the Black Lung Disability Trust Fund from assignment of additional liabilities, fulfill the Secretary's fiduciary duty to safeguard Black Lung Disability Trust Fund assets, and ensure the payment of benefits to coal miners and their survivors. OWCP will also continue its efforts to reduce improper payments and continue to evaluate medical bills and other payment-related issues.

**Provide Timely/Accurate Claims Processing and Enhance Productivity through Innovative Information Technology Initiatives**

OWCP will evaluate its legacy information technology systems to build or leverage existing proven systems for additional integration over the next several years. OWCP will continue to improve management reporting and tracking of various performance metrics utilizing low cost and integrated business intelligence tools. OWCP will establish an entirely new rubric for COVID-19 claims processing, requiring enhancements to existing systems, new procedures and options for filing COVID-19 specific forms in the web portal, OWCP Employees' Compensation Operations and Management Portal (ECOMP), and implement an intelligence-driven COVID-19 data analytics business processing dashboard and reporting tool. OWCP will also create a web-based auditing and quality assurance tracking system, all of which the program will integrate into the ECOMP platform. Furthermore, OWCP will expand the use and functionality of ECOMP. The Energy program will finalize the ability for employee claimants to directly access their digital case files, which will improve customer service, reduce the time it takes for claimants to see their case files, and reduce the staff burden in copying and mailing case files to claimants.

**Provide Timely/Accurate Claims Processing and Enhance Productivity**

OWCP will continue to improve the timeliness and efficiency of claims processing in all of its programs, focusing on maintaining a balanced approach to claims inventory management while minimizing the number of claims pending for more than a year (Black Lung program), or focusing on special priority workloads (such as COVID-19). OWCP will build upon recent organizational changes that provide direct oversight of field operations by national office leadership for each of its programs in order to leverage staffing efficiencies to improve claims processing times and program accuracy. The Longshore program will use improved electronic claims filing, case creation, and claims management systems to drive shorter compliance timeframes. The program will also conduct ongoing and quarterly performance management meetings with stakeholders to help ensure that the program addresses emerging issues that may impede performance and will impose appropriate civil money penalties to promote compliance.

Strategic Goal 3

OWCP – Increase the efficiency and accuracy with which OWCP provides workers’ compensation benefits for certain qualified workers who are injured or become ill on the job and improve return-to-work outcomes for injured workers								
Performance Measure	2019 Result	2020 Result	2021 Result	2022 Target	2023 Target	2024 Target	2025 Target	2026 Target
Rate of return-to-work outcomes for injured federal workers during the initial 45-day post-injury period for traumatic injuries	--	--	--	69.12%	69.81%	70.51%	71.22%	71.93%
Percent of Employer's First Report of Injury filed within 20 days: non-Defense Base Act cases	--	90.0%	91.0%	92.0%	92.5%	93.0%	93.5%	94.0%
Average number of days to complete Proposed Decision and Order following completion of all claim development for all Responsible Operator Merit Claims	29	30	35	34	32	30	28	26
Percent of Black Lung claims pending at the start of the fiscal year that are resolved by the end of the fiscal year	--	--	--	86%	87%	88%	89%	90%
Percent of sampled Part B and Part E initial claims rated as being accurate	--	--	92.00%	90.00%	90.50%	91.00%	91.5.00%	92.00%

## **ETA Performance Goal 3.1**

### **Support states' timely and accurate benefit payments for unemployed workers.**

The Unemployment Insurance (UI) system provides partial income replacement to qualifying workers while they seek suitable employment. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, unemployment benefits delivered a vital lifeline through income support to help millions of workers, helping families make ends meet.<sup>20</sup> UI is also an important economic stabilizer that maintains purchasing power during economic downturns for communities facing business closures, experiencing mass layoffs or other significant changes to the labor economy. UI helps support unemployed workers while they search for suitable employment and keeps them connected to the labor market by encouraging work search and connecting jobseekers with employment services.

Pursuant to the federal-state UI program, established by Title III of the Social Security Act and the Federal Unemployment Tax Act, ETA provides program-funding grants to state UI agencies to operate the program. To qualify for unemployment benefits, workers must establish recent employment and have been unemployed through no fault of their own. Once qualified, workers need to be able and available for work and actively seeking work. In accordance with federal law, states have flexibility to set benefit amounts, duration, and eligibility requirements. States also determine benefits eligibility and employer liability, assess and collect taxes, and make benefit payments. ETA provides broad policy guidance for administration of the program, delivers technical assistance to states, monitors states' program performance and integrity, and oversees conformity of states' laws and compliance of states' practices with federal UI laws.

The UI program faces significant challenges at the state and federal level, many of which were exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. ETA will pursue effective and evolving strategies to overcome these challenges and deliver on its mission.

#### **Enhance Connections Between Unemployment and Reemployment Systems**

The UI system serves as one of the principal "gateways" to the public workforce system and is often the first program accessed by individuals who need workforce services. The program keeps unemployed workers attached to the workforce and connects them to reemployment services. The UI program serves as the entry point for unemployed workers to American Job Centers, where jobseekers receive services that speed their return to work. The purposes of ETA's Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessments (RESEA) program are to improve employment outcomes of recipients of unemployment compensation and reduce their average duration through employment; to strengthen program integrity and reduce improper UC

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<sup>20</sup> Since the pandemic began in the U.S. in early 2020, the Department estimates that states provided over \$850 billion in UI payments to over 55 million beneficiaries under the regular UI program and the temporary emergency UI programs created under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act.

payments; to promote the alignment with the broader vision of WIOA of increased program integration and service delivery for job seekers, including UI claimants; and to establish reemployment services and eligibility assessments as an entry point for UC claimants into other workforce system partner programs. ETA will continue to promote the RESEA program and encourage states to expand UI claimants' participation in the program. ETA's Short-Time Compensation (STC) program (also known as "worksharing" or "shared work") is a lay-off aversion program in which an employer, under a state-approved plan, reduces the hours for a group of workers and these workers in turn receive a reduced unemployment benefit payment. It is an effective strategy to keep workers attached to their employers during times of economic downturn. UI will partner with other ETA programs to assist the COVID-19 economic recovery and connect UI claimants with the reemployment services offered through the public workforce system by committing significant technical assistance resources, funding and promoting evidence-based strategies such as RESEA and providing grants to states to improve and promote STC programs.<sup>21,22</sup>

### **Improve State UI Program Performance**

The economic impacts of the pandemic resulted in an unprecedented increase in UI claims. While states mobilized quickly to implement new temporary pandemic-related UI programs, states struggled to implement and operate the programs because of years of low administrative funding, reductions in staff, outdated technology, and a lack of resources. These and other factors have led many states to experience significant backlogs in adjudications and appeals, and reductions in core program performance. To address these challenges, ETA is undertaking strategies to assist and support states to return to acceptable levels of program performance as quickly as possible, which includes deploying teams of experts to identify recommendations to improve the timeliness of UI benefit payments.

### **Strengthen Service Delivery and Program Administration**

States also struggled to provide quality services to the extraordinary numbers of claimants filing for unemployment compensation during the pandemic. Many individuals experienced significant barriers to access benefits in a timely manner. States' antiquated information technology systems were a major contributing factor in the states' inability to provide the quality services and benefits. To address these shortcomings, ETA will leverage funding under the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) to work with states to improve the quality of service provided to claimants, which includes deploying teams of experts into states to help identify

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<sup>21</sup> [https://oui.doleta.gov/unemploy/docs/stc\\_report.pdf](https://oui.doleta.gov/unemploy/docs/stc_report.pdf)

<sup>22</sup> Under STC, an employer, under a state-approved plan, reduces the hours for a group of workers and these workers in turn receive a reduced unemployment benefit payment. In the context of re-opening businesses closed temporarily by a pandemic, STC can also serve as a means of bringing most or all of a temporarily laid-off workforce back to the job, even if social-distancing measures, a decline in business, or other factors prevent operating at full staffing levels full time.

process improvements that can speed benefit delivery and to improve the customer experience.

### **Improve Equity in Access to UI Programs**

The pandemic has exposed longstanding operational and technological weaknesses in state UI systems, which have resulted in delays and obstacles that disproportionately affect workers of color and created potential racial and ethnic disparities in the percentages of unemployment applicants who received benefits during the pandemic.<sup>23,24</sup> Ensuring equitable access to UI benefits is a top priority and ETA will work with states to address access and equity issues, to ensure that states have capacity to handle higher volumes of claims, and to ensure that states are prepared for future crises. ETA will leverage UI administrative funding under ARPA to support administrative and system-wide infrastructure improvements to the federal-state UI program. ETA is undertaking a variety of approaches to assist states in addressing fraud prevention, equitable access to UI programs, and timely delivery of UI benefit payments.

### **Strengthen Program Integrity by Preventing and Detecting Fraud, Reducing Improper Payments, and Facilitating Recovery of Overpaid Benefits**

Throughout the pandemic, criminal networks have committed significant benefit fraud by using stolen or synthetic identities.<sup>25</sup> ETA continues to actively and aggressively promote UI program integrity, by identifying and reducing fraud, waste, and abuse in the program. ETA will work with states to implement digital identification and authentication solutions and enact new processes to combat the use of stolen or synthetic identities to commit benefit fraud by continuing support via the UI Integrity Center, a state-driven source of innovative program strategies; developing and using UI response teams to help states address criminal fraud; and using the Benefit Accuracy Measurement program to monitor the effectiveness of these strategies.

### **Environmental and External Factors**

Several environmental factors may impact ETA's ability to successfully execute on its Strategic Plan.

- **Lasting Impacts of COVID-19 Pandemic:** The COVID-19 pandemic created huge claims volume and new temporary UI programs; these changes have placed tremendous stress on states' regular UI operations. States rapidly added new staff without full training, lost experienced staff to retirements, reassigned staff reducing capacity in some functional areas, and implemented new processes to operate in a remote work environment. Even as the pandemic wanes, states face significant adjudication and appeals backlogs.

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<sup>23</sup> <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/FY2022-Discretionary-Request.pdf>

<sup>24</sup> <https://www.gao.gov/assets/gao-21-599r.pdf>

<sup>25</sup> [https://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/attach/UIPL/UIPL\\_16-21.pdf](https://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/attach/UIPL/UIPL_16-21.pdf)

### Strategic Goal 3

- State Budgets: Funding for UI administration is counter-cyclical and as the economy improves, administrative funding to states will decrease. State UI administrative funding constraints and policy decisions may also result in reduced program funding that could jeopardize the integrity of the UI system or reduce the accuracy and timeliness of benefit payments.
- The Business Cycle: ETA does not control broad macroeconomic conditions or the business cycle. Recessions and resulting periods of high unemployment produce financial and administrative strains on the UI system and make reemployment strategies more difficult.
- Structural Economic Shifts: Economic trends such as automation, the increasing prevalence of remote work, the transition away from fossil fuels, and a shift to e-commerce may result in higher unemployment in some sectors as workers are displaced. A change in skills demanded by employers may also create challenges in executing on reemployment strategies.
- Aging and Inadequate IT Infrastructure: Aging infrastructure directly impacts the states' ability to make timely and quality benefit eligibility decisions. The pandemic further highlighted the fact that many states are dependent on antiquated operating systems. ETA is actively engaged with OSEC's Office of Unemployment Insurance Modernization in planning to effectively and efficiently use the funding investment provided under the ARPA to address these challenges.

Strategic Goal 4

ETA – Support states' timely and accurate benefit payments for unemployed workers.								
Performance Measure	2019 Result	2020 Result	2021 Result	2022 Target	2023 Target	2024 Target	2025 Target	2026 Target
First Payment Timeliness (Unemployment Insurance)	85.8%	67.0%	60.4% <sup>26</sup>	63.2%	66.4%	73.0%	80.0%	87.0%
Improper Payment Rate (Unemployment Insurance) <sup>27</sup>	10.61%	9.17% <sup>28</sup>	18.71%	14.00%	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
Lower Authority Appeals Promptness (Unemployment Insurance) <sup>29</sup>	90.1%	74.0%	22.5%	60.0%	60.0%	TBD	TBD	TBD
Reemployment Rate in the 2nd Quarter after Program Exit Quarter (Unemployment Insurance)	--	--	--	Base	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD

<sup>26</sup> The FYs 2020 and 2021 results for First Payment Timeliness were significantly impacted due to the unprecedented increase in claim volume due to the impact of COVID. First Payment Timeliness is the acceptable level of performance that states are expected to meet and regulations include a target for this measure of 87 percent (see Standard for Benefit Payment Promptness — Unemployment Compensation at 20 CFR part 640).

<sup>27</sup> Targets and results for this measure are for the 12 month periods ending June 30. For example, the 2021 result is for June 30, 2021. In FY 2022, ETA set a target of 14.0 percent, which is above the statutory set goal of less than 10 percent but still significantly below the program's current performance level. The requirement to reduce improper payments in the UI program is established in the following laws and guidance: Payment Integrity Information Act of 2019; Improper Payment Information Act of 2002, as amended by the Improper Payment Elimination and Recovery Act of 2010; Improper Payment Elimination and Recovery Improvement Act of 2012; and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-123, Management's Responsibility for Enterprise Risk Management and Internal Control, Appendix C, Requirements for Payment Integrity Improvement (OMB Memorandum M-21-19, issued on March 5, 2021), and subsequent updates.

<sup>28</sup> The 2020 improper payment rate result reflects only the period of July 2019 through March 2020, as the UI Benefit Accuracy Measurement program was suspended for the April 2020 through June 2020 quarter due to the pandemic. Therefore, the result reflects only pre-pandemic activity.

<sup>29</sup> The FYs 2020 and 2021 results for Lower Authority Appeals Promptness were significantly impacted due to the unprecedented increase in claim volume due to the impact of COVID. The target for Lower Authority Appeals Promptness is the acceptable level of performance that states are expected to meet and is in regulation (see Standard for Appeals Promptness — Unemployment Compensation at 20 CFR part 650).

## Strategic Goal 4

### Statistical Goal – Produce Gold-Standard Statistics and Analyses

#### Strategic Objective 4.1

**Provide timely, accurate, and relevant information on labor market activity, working conditions, price changes, and productivity in the U.S. economy.**

##### Agency Driving this Objective

Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS)

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) supports public and private decision making by publishing measures of labor market activity, working conditions, price changes, and productivity in the U.S. economy.

BLS adheres to a set of values and principles that guide it in fulfilling its mission, including:

- Executing its mission with independence from partisan interests;
- Striving to meet the needs of a diverse set of customers for accurate, objective, relevant, timely, and accessible information;
- Protecting the confidentiality of its data providers;
- Employing innovative methods to keep pace with the rapidly-changing economy; and
- Hiring and maintaining a professional, highly-skilled workforce and being good stewards of the taxpayers' money.

#### LEARNING AGENDA

The DOL Evidence-Building Plan for FY2022-2026 highlights several activities BLS will undertake in support of Strategic Objective 4.1, including exploring improvements to Consumer Price Index measures and updating supplements to the Current Population Survey.

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#### Risks

To produce its economic data, BLS uses sensitive information collected from businesses, governments, and individuals under a pledge of confidentiality. BLS mitigates the risk of data disclosures by having in place robust Information Technology system controls, data handling policies and staff training to protect survey respondent data and assure that respondents remain willing to voluntarily share their data. BLS protects all data and information consistent with the requirements of the Confidential Information Protection and Statistical Efficiency Act (CIPSEA), and a host of other cybersecurity and information technology security requirements.

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## BLS Performance Goal 4.1

BLS data influence many aspects of Americans' lives because they inform and support public and private decision-making. For example, the Consumer Price Index is used to adjust Social Security payments and federal income tax brackets while the Employment Cost Index is one of several BLS sources used to adjust Medicare reimbursements.

BLS will prioritize six strategies to achieve its strategic objective:

1. **Production.** Produce objective statistics and analyses that are accurate and released on time;
2. **Valued and Trusted Data.** Advance the measurement of BLS statistics to ensure they remain relevant in describing the dynamic U.S. economy;
3. **Source Data Innovation.** Reengineer data sources and collection methods to balance statistical quality with survey costs, including respondent burden, and to ensure transparency;
4. **Organizational Excellence.** Provide visionary leadership that upholds and improves its standing as a dynamic, world-class statistical agency;
5. **Seamless Customer Experience.** Provide information in ways that are easy for a broad customer base to access, understand, and use; and
6. **DOL as a Model Workplace.** Engage BLS employees in building a modernized workforce and develop a diverse, equitable, and inclusive organization in alignment with the Administration's goals of recognizing the value of the federal workforce.

BLS considers environmental and external factors when achieving its objective. BLS follows a series of laws, regulations, and guidelines on statistical policy, including the Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act; OMB Statistical Policy Directives; *Principles and Practices for a Federal Statistical Agency*; and the Interagency Council on Statistical Policy's quality dimensions. BLS works to ensure its programs remain current and its data products relevant. BLS is researching and leveraging new technologies to help implement alternative data sources and collection methods that could supplement its traditionally-collected data and replace its traditional collection methods. Alternative data can mitigate the effects of declining response rates on data quality, ensuring that BLS data products remain of high-quality with sufficient detail for stakeholders while lessening respondent burden and that BLS continues to be able to provide data for a variety of demographic groups.

### Valued and Trusted Data

BLS uses input from stakeholders to address demands for new and additional data. For example, as mentioned in the FY 2022 President's Budget, BLS is advancing efforts to better project the impacts of technology and automation on the workforce through several of its statistical programs. BLS regularly identifies structural shifts in the economy that translate into

## Strategic Goal 4

different, and sometimes new, demands for data as industrial sectors supersede others, and as consumer goods replace others. For example, BLS will develop a new Contingent Worker Supplement (CWS) to collect information on workers with contingent jobs and on various types of alternative employment arrangements, including platform workers, an emerging form of work in which workers connect with clients using websites or mobile devices.

### Data Sharing

BLS continues to promote the sharing of existing economic data among BLS, the Census Bureau, and the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA), and to improve the nation's economic statistical system by aligning each agency's data outputs and developing new ways to track emerging economic trends. For example, during the COVID-19 pandemic, BLS created special tabulations of the Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration weekly reports of initial claims, by industry. These special tabulations were shared across federal agencies (i.e., BLS, BEA, and the Federal Reserve) in order to improve estimates of essential economic data, including GDP, productivity, and industrial production. BLS also is working across the statistical agencies to implement the Standard Application Procedure to facilitate researcher access to confidential data. BLS will continue to explore and support avenues through which data can be shared.

BLS – Provide timely, accurate, and relevant information on labor market activity, working conditions, price changes, and productivity in the U.S. economy.								
Performance Measure	2019 Result	2020 Result	2021 Result	2022 Target	2023 Target	2024 Target	2025 Target	2026 Target
Percentage of timeliness targets achieved for the Principal Federal Economic Indicators (PFEIs) <sup>30</sup>	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Percentage of accuracy targets achieved for the PFEIs	100%	100%	95%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Percentage of relevance targets achieved for the PFEIs	75%	86%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Percentage of time the BLS public website is available for data dissemination <sup>31</sup>	--	--	99.98%	99.50%	99.50%	99.50%	99.50%	99.50%
Customer satisfaction with the BLS website through the Verint Experience Index (Mission Achievement) <sup>32</sup>	75	75	76	76	76	76	76	76

<sup>30</sup> PFEI programs are Current Employment Statistics, Current Population Survey, Consumer Price Index, Producer Price Index, International Price Program, Employment Cost Index, and Major Sector Productivity.

<sup>31</sup> Measure reflects the availability of the BLS website: bls.gov, data.bls.gov, and download.bls.gov.

<sup>32</sup> Previously known as the ForeSee Experience Index.

## Management Goal

### A Department Grounded in Innovation, Evidence, and Employee Engagement

#### Management Objective M.1

#### Drive innovation in administrative, management, and financial services.

##### Partner Agencies Driving this Objective

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Administration and Management (OASAM)

Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO)

Administration, management, and financial services are the backbone of the Department, providing the critical infrastructure required to support the Department’s core mission work. Ensuring these services are operating efficiently allows for more resources to go toward the programs that impact America’s workers every day.

The Office of the Assistant Secretary for Administration and Management (OASAM) and the Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO) will focus on improving service delivery through modern, streamlined processes and IT infrastructure. Over the next four years, OASAM and OCFO will work together to implement programs which promote fiscal integrity and the effective and efficient use of resources, optimize the Department of Labor’s administrative services, and modernize Information Technology systems.

##### LEARNING AGENDA

The DOL Evidence-Building Plan for FY2022-2026 includes 7 research projects related to the Department’s Management Goal, such as **OASAM Diversity and Inclusion Barrier Analysis** to identify barriers in recruitment and retention in underrepresented groups in the DOL workforce.

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##### Risks

OASAM’s Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) faces the challenge of implementing the President’s Executive Order 14028 to improve cybersecurity. OCIO has a strategy to 1) incorporate risk-based cybersecurity prioritization for DOL information assets and align with comportsing security controls; 2) incorporate cybersecurity activities and functions from cradle-to-grave in all IT-related projects, initiatives, procurements, and functions; and 3) standardize security controls, inventory management, and architecture for information assets and technologies.

DOL’s OCFO is working with the UI Integrity Center to encourage state participation in and use the Integrity Data Hub to cross-match public and private sources of data that will help prevent Improper Payments (IP), which have increased along with record numbers of UI claims due to employment instability resulting from the pandemic.

## **OASAM Performance Goal M.1**

### **Optimize the Department of Labor's Enterprise Services.**

OASAM provides the infrastructure and support that enables the U.S. Department of Labor to perform its mission. OASAM provides leadership and support for information technology, human resources management, procurement, business operations, safety and health, space management, civil rights, emergency management, security, budget, and performance.

#### **Enhance the Customer Experience of Enterprise Services**

While OASAM strives to enhance the customer experience of all DOL customers, this goal focuses on information technology and procurement services. OASAM will streamline administrative services to improve the efficiency and quality of service delivery with an emphasis on continuous improvement. Additionally, OASAM will engage with its client agencies to adequately plan for administrative services in support of their mission priorities. OASAM will regularly obtain feedback from its customers through a variety of sources, including a semi-annual Customer Satisfaction Survey, semi-annual feedback on OASAM leaders, and governance board feedback.

#### **Modernize Information Technology to Drive Innovation in How the Department Achieves its Mission**

OASAM's Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) will identify opportunities for efficiencies and improved platform capabilities through current and future strategic IT initiatives. By digitizing specific workflows, OCIO plans to improve efficiencies by reducing the Department's IT footprint through establishing an enterprise cloud environment, and consolidating traditional data centers. These updates promote the use of Green IT, reducing the cost of data center hardware, and will ensure a 99.9% network availability throughout the organization. This pursuit of improved data capabilities and tools, that promote evidence-based decisions, will allow the Department to address mission-critical challenges and to deliver customer-driven services efficiently, effectively, and at lower cost.

By digitizing specific workflows, the Department's reliance on paper-based resources will be reduced through a phased approach. The office will also strive to reduce the size of the application portfolio and increase system efficiencies by providing application platform solutions and interconnectivity/ compatibility between applications, including transitioning 20 applications per year to the simplified sign on capability. OCIO's push to transform and modernize DOL's IT will lower burdensome operations and maintenance (O&M) costs, reallocating funds to modernization and providing mission enhancing capabilities. To accomplish this shift, OCIO will strengthen the federal oversight of contractor performance to ensure mission application development is on track by enforcing agile methods and by federalizing the project management function. OCIO will collaborate with agencies to align IT

Management Goal

solutions to meet agency needs and will identify opportunities for reuse through innovation and enterprise capabilities.

Finally, as cybersecurity remains a top priority, OCIO plans to enhance the DOL posture by employing a Zero Trust security model to aggressively mitigate security risks and apply the appropriate cybersecurity standards and technologies to address evolving network, infrastructure, and data security needs in addition to maintaining less than 5% of past due Open Plan of Action and Milestones (POA&M). Compliance with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act will also be prioritized.

**Promote Innovative Procurement Practices to Streamline the Acquisition Process and Support Small, Disadvantaged, and Women-Owned Businesses**

The OASAM Office of the Senior Procurement Executive (OSPE) will ensure the efficient and effective procurement of goods and services, resulting in reduced procurement time, reduced cost, best value, and improved quality of goods and services procured. OSPE plans to streamline the acquisition process by leveraging robotic process automation, templates and guides for program and contracting activities, and training. By using the OMB Category Management principles where feasible and applicable, OSPE will leverage the government’s buying power as a single enterprise and buy smarter, including using Best in Class vehicles and other Government-Wide Acquisition Contracts. Further, OSPE will continue to use its proven *Department-wide small business approach* to the maximum extent practicable to meet and exceed its small business goals, which include contracts to small businesses, small disadvantaged businesses, small women-owned businesses, service-disabled veteran-owned small businesses, and HUBZone small businesses.

OASAM – Optimize the Department of Labor’s Enterprise Services.								
Performance Measure	2019 Result	2020 Result	2021 Result	2022 Target	2023 Target	2024 Target	2025 Target	2026 Target
OASAM Customer Satisfaction Survey Result	--	--	--	Base	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
Percentage of Scheduled Network Availability	--	99.98%	99.96%	99.90%	99.90%	99.90%	99.90%	99.90%
Number of DOL applications with simplified sign-on capability	--	--	--	95	115	135	155	175
Percent of Open Plan of Action and Milestones (POA&Ms), assigned to OCIO-managed Information Systems, with a past-due Planned Finish Date	--	--	0%	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%

Management Goal

OASAM – Optimize the Department of Labor’s Enterprise Services.								
Performance Measure	2019 Result	2020 Result	2021 Result	2022 Target	2023 Target	2024 Target	2025 Target	2026 Target
Category Management: Cumulative percent of addressable spend through Best In Class solutions	40.65%	109.70%	97.20%	13.00%	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
Category Management: Cumulative percent of common spend that is under management, aligned to category management principles	31%	90%	86%	56%	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
Percent of contracts awarded to small businesses (SB)	40.07%	40.63%	43.47%	40.00%	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
Percent of contracts awarded to small disadvantaged businesses (SDB)	26.06%	27.07%	31.43%	28.00%	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
Percent of contracts awarded to small women owned businesses (WO)	12.62%	12.80%	14.13%	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%

## OCFO Performance Goal M.1

### Promote fiscal integrity and the effective and efficient use of resources through innovation.

The Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO) provides financial management leadership, direction, and guidance to the Office of the Secretary of Labor and all DOL agencies on matters arising from financial statutes, as appropriate. OCFO oversees DOL-wide accounting, financial management, and budget execution processes; manages DOL’s financial system; and leads the Department’s annual audit of the Consolidated Financial Statements. Additionally, OCFO leads efforts to examine, identify, and implement administrative cost reduction initiatives; improve efficiencies; and promote financial integrity across DOL.

#### Demonstrate Financial Stewardship

OCFO leads an effort that supports the Department’s goal to minimize its appropriations that go unused and forfeited to Treasury, while being good stewards of taxpayer dollars. OCFO provides guidance to program management on the design and implementation of strong internal controls over all financial resources in DOL. OCFO leads the Department’s annual financial audit, efforts to eliminate findings resulting from the audit, and eliminating or reducing improper payments.

#### Enhance DOL Financial Performance, Operations, and Systems

Accurate and timely financial information is essential to DOL’s accountability to stakeholders and facilitates data-driven operational, budget, and policy decisions. OCFO supports DOL’s programs and operations by providing reliable, relevant, and timely financial information and analysis. OCFO is in the middle of upgrading its financial management system that will support and capture new requirements, while eliminating customization, thus saving staff time. Additionally, OCFO will work with OMB and Treasury to ensure that DOL systems and services drive innovation and comply with federal policies through standardization and automation.

OCFO – Promote fiscal integrity and the effective and efficient use of resources through innovation.								
Performance Measure	2019 Result	2020 Result	2021 Result	2022 Target	2023 Target	2024 Target	2025 Target	2026 Target
Number of material weaknesses	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of discretionary appropriations returned to Treasury	1.69%	1.60%	1.60%	1.50%	1.45%	1.40%	1.40%	1.40%
Percentage of payments made without incurring prompt payment interest	100.00%	99.22%	99.73%	98.00%	98.00%	98.00%	98.00%	98.00%

## Management Objective M.2

### Strengthen the Department’s commitment and capacity for evidence-based decision-making.

#### Partner Agencies Driving this Objective

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Administration and Management (OASAM)

Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO)

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Policy (OASP)

Decisions should be based on evidence – especially those that affect the employment, safety and health, and retirement and benefits security of the American worker.

The Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act (Evidence Act) outlines major government-wide reforms for making data more accessible and useful for decision-making. To meet this objective, DOL must first strengthen its internal capacity, both in ensuring transparency and availability of data, and by advancing the framework that supports the decision making process.

Over the next four years DOL will take significant steps to make evidence-based decision making a part of the culture by improving the integration of budget and performance with evaluation and risk management.

A strong culture of evidence-based decision making will result in improved policies and programs that support and protect America’s workers.

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#### *Risks*

The Department must invest in providing access to high-quality data, and integrating evidence into policy, planning, budget, operational, and management decision making, or else it could fail to create policy and programs suited to changing environmental needs.

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## OASAM Performance Goal M.2

### Integrate budget and performance with evaluation & risk management to improve decision-making.

DOL is committed to improving decision-making by integrating the management disciplines of budget formulation and execution, performance management, evaluation, and risk management. The Office of the Assistant Secretary for Administration and Management’s (OASAM) Departmental Budget Center (DBC) and the Performance Management Center (PMC) will build on past successes in integrating budget and performance disciplines. PMC and DBC will also coordinate with the recently formalized roles of the Evaluation Officer and the Chief Data Officer, as well as the Office of the Chief Financial Officer, who manages the Enterprise Risk Management function. The Department will continue to use performance, evidence, and risk information to inform budget decisions. Through integration of budget, evidence, and key risks into DOL internal management plans, DOL agencies will develop and execute strategies and activities to achieve their mission and management priorities.

OASAM – Integrate budget and performance with evaluation and risk management to improve decision-making.								
Performance Measure	2019 Result	2020 Result	2021 Result	2022 Target	2023 Target	2024 Target	2025 Target	2026 Target
Percent of DOL agencies rating the Budget Formulation process “effective”	--	--	--	Base	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
Percent of DOL agencies rating Agency Management Plans “effective”	--	--	--	Base	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD

## OCFO Performance Goal M.2

### Integrate risk-based decision-making to enhance the Department’s operations.

#### Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) in Strategic and Operational Planning

ERM provides an enterprise-wide, strategically aligned portfolio view of organizational challenges and opportunities to more effectively prioritize and manage risks to mission delivery. DOL integrates ERM into agency operations planning, performance management, and budget processes to make strategic, risk-based decisions to render the Department more resilient, effective, and efficient. Incorporating risk-based decision-making in the strategic planning, organizational performance management, and budget processes enables the Department to better allocate scarce resources to address the highest priority risks, enhance performance, drive efficiencies, and promote cost savings. This includes advocating for and aligning resources for the highest impact on the programs that foster, promote, and develop the welfare of the wage earners, job seekers, and retirees of the United States.

OCFO – Integrate risk-based decision-making to enhance the Department’s operations.								
Performance Measure	2019 Result	2020 Result	2021 Result	2022 Target	2023 Target	2024 Target	2025 Target	2026 Target
Percent of agencies that find that ERM practices better inform strategic and operational decision-making	--	--	--	Base	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD

## OASP Performance Goal M.2

### Invest in strategic and evidence-based decision-making, policy and regulatory development.

The Office of the Assistant Secretary for Policy (OASP) is the principal policy, regulatory, data governance, and evaluation office for the Department. To that end, OASP plays a crucial role in helping design and execute evidence-based strategies across the Department. Broadly, OASP will contribute to achieving Strategic Objective M.2 by: 1) Conducting new policy-relevant evaluations and research for agencies and department leadership, building a base of evidence and data for further policy development and program administration; 2) Incorporating evidence-based strategies into the policy and regulatory development process, including conducting rigorous economic analysis to inform regulations; engaging external researchers; and producing reports, among other activities; and 3) Investing in new infrastructure to increase agencies' ability to store and leverage data as a strategic tool. Anticipated work in category three includes ensuring the consistency, content, format, and quality of data collected by DOL (e.g., address standardization, validation, and geocoding services for location data). OASP has included a specific measure for FY 2022 and out years establishing targets for leading DOL component programs towards implementation and integration of these centralized data services and helping to ensure data are fit for purpose. OASP will work closely with agencies across the Department as it pursues the activities described above. Importantly, this collaboration will ensure that the investments OASP makes will also support the Department's work under other Strategic Objectives.

OASP – Invest in strategic and evidence-based decision-making, policy and regulatory development.								
Performance Measure	2019 Result	2020 Result	2021 Result	2022 Target	2023 Target	2024 Target	2025 Target	2026 Target
Number of public data sets available through Application Programming Interface (API)	39	39	55	56	75	100	125	150
Percent of DOL data sets using a shared service for data validation	--	--	--	5%	15%	30%	60%	90%
Number of Data Sets Available for Research	--	--	--	4	6	8	10	12
Number of short briefs published based on research/evaluation products distilling potential policy implications	--	--	--	8	8	12	12	14

## Management Objective M.3

### DOL as a model workplace

#### Agency Driving this Objective

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Administration and Management (OASAM)

Many factors contributed to the Department’s success in carrying out its mission during the pandemic – investments in modern technology, use of workplace flexibilities, and new and innovative approaches to conducting our work – but no factor contributed more than the dedication, perseverance, and ingenuity of the DOL workforce. As we seek to turn the page on the pandemic and build America back even better than before, so too will we capitalize on this moment to advance the Department of Labor’s future.

The Department will be rebuilding the size of its workforce after several years of decline and developing the skills and capacity of its staff. We will also not reflexively return to the way we worked pre-pandemic. Instead our staff test new ways of working, will likely be more remote and virtual than before, and will use modern technology to execute our mission. And we will do all of this with the overarching goal of increasing diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility throughout the Department. A DOL that harnesses the unmistakable benefits of a diverse workforce will not only make DOL a model workplace, but will set a foundation to address inequity for our Nation’s workers.

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#### *Risks*

The Department is faced with a transformational opportunity to define the future of our work. With lessons learned from the pandemic, the Department must not reflexively return to the way it worked pre-pandemic. Instead, we must implement innovative, worker-friendly ways of working that effectively execute our mission.

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## OASAM Performance Goal M.3

### **Rebuild the Department's Workforce**

The Department is undertaking a historic hiring surge to restore the capacity of its workforce. Over the past several years, many DOL agencies have lost a significant number of staff, which has hindered the Department's ability to carry out investigations, inspections, and other mission critical activities. The OASAM Office of Human Resources (OHR) will provide policy and guidance on all human capital matters leading the Department's hiring efforts. Through DOL agency engagement and recruitment planning, OHR will support the Administration's plans to rebuild the American economy and workforce. The OASAM Security Center will utilize its personnel security program to ensure efficiency in the vetting process and afford transparency to client agencies.

### **Promote a Diverse, Inclusive, and Engaged Workforce**

DOL's most important asset is its workforce – the employees across the nation who carry out the Department's mission. As part of the Department's historic hiring surge, agencies have developed plan to identify and recruit talent from a diverse talent pool. Additionally, the Department will also stress equity, including in retaining and promoting candidates so that tomorrow's Department of Labor reflects the rich diversity of our nation. DOL will assess exit survey data to identify trends and potential barriers to retaining underrepresented groups and develop recommendations for retention strategies.

To promote inclusion, OHR will invest in raising awareness and promoting discussion in partnership with DOL Affinity Groups and in coordination with Special Emphasis Programs. To further promote inclusion within the Department, OASAM's Civil Rights Center (CRC) will provide training and technical assistance to employees, managers, and supervisors, with particular emphasis on bystander intervention and the proper tools to confront and resolve incidents of discrimination or harassing conduct. CRC will also continue to support new and existing DOL employees with disabilities with individually tailored services/equipment. Additionally, CRC will support leadership's assessment of policies and programs that may contribute to systemic discrimination and racism, and promote effective solutions to create long-term organizational and culture change.

OHR will align employee engagement efforts with Administration priorities and use data such as the annual Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS) results to drive change. The Department will engage with its unions to renegotiate provisions of the Collective Bargaining Agreement to ensure compliance with President Biden's directives in Executive Order 14003. DOL will participate in good faith negotiations and pre-decisional involvement with union partners.

Management Goal

**Reshape the Department of Labor Workplace**

Like so many workplaces across the country, the Department will transition from a pre-pandemic model of work to something different – likely with more workplace flexibilities, more telework, and more opportunities for employees to balance their careers and their personal lives. As *the* U.S. Department of Labor, that transition and future state will not only impact the lives of DOL employees, but will also serve as a model for the American workplace. The Department will demonstrate that a future work model can be both mission-driven *and* worker-centric.

OASAM – DOL as a model workplace.								
Performance Measure	2019 Result	2020 Result	2021 Result	2022 Target	2023 Target	2024 Target	2025 Target	2026 Target
Average Time to Hire	86[r]	90	97	80	80	80	80	80
Hiring Manager Satisfaction Index Score	72%	78%[r]	81%[r]	85%	85%	85%	85%	85%
EVS: DOL Agency Employee Engagement Index (annual)	68%	73%	73%	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
Average number of days to submit a background security investigation request to DOD	11	9	4	14	14	14	14	14
Average number of days to adjudicate a background investigation for suitability	6	6	6	90	90	90	90	90
Average number of days to adjudicate a background investigation for national security	7	17	4	20	20	20	20	20
Reasonable Accommodation: Average number of days for an RA request to be successfully deployed (by items)				37	36	35	34	33
Internal Enforcement: Percent of EEO Counseling Sessions Completed within Regulatory Timeframes	98.0%	99.0%	100.0%	96.5%	97.5%	99.0%	99.0%	99.0%
Internal Enforcement: Percent of Formal EEO Investigations Issued within Regulatory Timeframes	100%	98%	100%	92%	92%	98%	98%	98%
Internal Enforcement: Percent of Final Agency Decisions (FADs) Issued within Regulatory Timeframes	98%	98%	100%	92%	93%	98%	98%	98%

## Evidence-Building Plan

The Department's [Evidence-Building Plan](#), a companion report to the Strategic Plan, describes project-based investments that will be made over the next four years to build new information advancing the Department's mission and strategic planning priorities. The plan organizes projects by short- and long-term strategic and operational questions. It also describes potential methods for developing new credible information to answer the questions. Rigorous analytic approaches encompass statistics, program evaluation, performance measurement, and policy analysis. Across all of these data-driven projects, the Department highlights how its agencies work in partnership inside and outside of the Department, to build and use credible information in service of improving the lives and safety of America's workers.