

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act



Program Year 2018 Annual Report for Ohio

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Introduction



In accordance with Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Sections 136 and 185, each state that receives a funding allotment under WIOA Section 127 (Youth Activities) or Section 132 (Adult and Dislocated Worker Activities) must prepare and submit an annual report of performance progress to the U.S. Secretary of Labor. This narrative provides an opportunity for Ohio to describe progress toward its strategic vision and goals for the workforce system.

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)



The federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) replaced the Workforce Investment Act of 1998. It was signed into law on July 22, 2014, and enacted on July 1, 2015. WIOA is designed to help job seekers access employment, education, training and support services so they can succeed in the labor market and to match employers with the skilled workers they need to compete in the global economy. It also establishes the structure and relationship between national, state and local workforce investment activities to increase occupational skill

attainment, employment, retention and earnings while improving the quality, productivity and competitiveness of the workforce and reducing welfare dependency.

One of the objectives of WIOA is to support the alignment of workforce investment, education and economic development systems. WIOA also provides the opportunity to enhance the service delivery system by coordinating activities and promoting consistency of services among the core programs. During program year (PY) 2018, Ohio worked to fully integrate the WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker programs with the Wagner-Peyser Employment Services program within the state's OhioMeansJobs centers. The purpose of Wagner-Peyser program as first established in 1933 and most recently enhanced as part of WIOA, is to provide universal access to an integrated array of labor exchange services to both employers and job seekers.

This PY 2018 WIOA Annual Report (for the time period July 1, 2018, through June 30, 2019) provides a summary of how Ohio used workforce integration to support the goals of each program.

Statewide Workforce Development Initiatives

OhioMeansJobs Centers

Eighty-eight local OhioMeansJobs centers, one in each Ohio county, provide services to local businesses, as well as to individuals who are employed, underemployed and unemployed. OhioMeansJobs centers work with county departments of job and family services and other partners to deliver a variety of employment and training services to meet the needs of their communities.



Ohio's Workforce Mission

In January 2019, Ohio welcomed Gov. Mike DeWine. Under his leadership, the Governor's Office of Workforce Transformation (OWT) is working with the Departments of Education, Higher Education, Job and Family Services (ODJFS), and the Development Services Agency to close the gap between growing workforce needs and the goals of job seekers. OWT's mission is to connect Ohio's business, training and education communities to build a dynamically skilled, productive and purposeful workforce. Under the leadership of Lt. Gov. Jon Husted, a new office called

InnovateOhio is advancing the DeWine Administration's commitment to leading an aggressive, innovative path toward a better and stronger Ohio. InnovateOhio's mission is to use technology in government to improve services, reduce cost and spur a culture of innovation in Ohio. The InnovateOhio Platform provides integrated and scalable capabilities that enable state agencies to become more customer-centric and data-driven, delivering on InnovateOhio's vision to better serve Ohioans.

Path of OhioMeansJobs Center Customers/InnovateOhio

InnovateOhio, OWT and ODJFS are partnering with g2o, an innovative high-tech company, to conduct a holistic review and redesign of **OhioMeansJobs.com**. Changes will be made to the site's mission, tailoring to various audiences, delivery effectiveness, information architecture, site and content heuristics, and overall format. In addition, **OhioMeansJobs.com** will move to the InnovateOhio Platform. These changes will improve the ability of employers and job seekers to use this state resource and better support ongoing improvements and new requirements.

During calendar year 2020, g2o will conduct a series of workshops, interviews and focus groups with stakeholders to gather information regarding their experience with the website, content that they view as essential and suggested improvements. The goal is for the redesigned website to launch on July 1, 2020.

In-Demand Occupations

Ohio's efforts to reform its workforce development system are driven by a focus on meeting employers' current and projected needs. To identify those needs, OWT, in coordination with InnovateOhio, developed a methodology using three key sources: state labor statistics and projections, electronic job posting trend data, and business responses to an online job forecasting tool. Hundreds of employers have used this tool to indicate their projected workforce needs.

Ohio has identified 236 in-demand occupations with more than 17,000 related job titles. The results have been reported on **OhioMeansJobs.com** and disseminated to interested parties. Workforce

development board directors have received these reports and are required to spend at least 85 percent of their occupational skills training funds on training that leads to employment in these occupations. In addition, the Ohio Department of Higher Education and Ohio's two- and four-year colleges can use these reports to analyze occupational supply and demand, plan curriculums and training programs, and determine appropriate class offerings.

Ohio's in-demand occupations are identifiable by a "thumbs up" sign on **OhioMeansJobs.com**. When job seekers take the Career Profile assessment, they are given a list of occupations they may be suitable for, with in-demand occupations listed first to improve their chances of finding a job quickly.

National Dislocated Worker Grants

Trade and Economic Transition

Ohio received an \$8 million Trade and Economic Transition (TET) National Dislocated Worker Grant from the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) to address the disruption in skill and labor availability and serve dislocated workers within the 16 counties hit hardest by the opioid crisis. These counties are within the following seven local workforce areas: 1, 7, 12, 13, 17, 18 and 20. The goals of the TET grant are as follows:

- Provide training for in-demand industries, career services and supportive services to dislocated workers, including those impacted by the opioid crisis;
- Provide supportive services to eligible participants such as health, mental health and addiction outpatient treatment and help purchasing work clothes, transportation assistance, or referral to housing and other social services;
- Build the substance-abuse treatment, mental health and pain management workforce through education and training;
- Utilize peer recovery specialists to support individuals in recovery during treatment, training and employment; and
- Establish collaborative partnerships across social service agencies assisting with the opioid epidemic.

This grant is available from Oct. 1, 2018, through Sept. 30, 2020.

Opioid Emergency Disaster Recovery

Ohio received an \$11 million Opioid Emergency Disaster Recovery Dislocated Worker Grant from the USDOL. It is intended to serve eligible dislocated workers and long-term unemployed individuals within all 88 Ohio counties. Counties are grouped into nine "communities" with the same combination of one or more of the following four key impacts related to the opioid crisis:

- Overdose deaths of 13 per 100,000 or higher
- Costs per capita of opioid abuse of \$500 or more
- Limited or no access to medication-assisted treatment
- 9% or higher of children entering children services custody due to parental opioid use

Ohio identified the humanitarian, health care, treatment and training needs specific to the key impacts and will implement the following strategies: provide temporary disaster relief employment of up to 2,040 hours (jobs must alleviate issues caused by opioid crisis); build the skilled workforce in professions that could impact the causes and treatment of the opioid crisis; reintegrate into

employment individuals who have a history of opioid use or who have a friend or family member with a history of opioid use; and engage employers to become recovery-friendly workplaces.

This grant is available from April 1, 2019, through March 31, 2021.

Reemployment and System Integration Grant

In October 2016, ODJFS received a \$1.1 million Reemployment and System Integration Grant from the USDOL to enhance existing case management systems. Enhancements will support the ability of front-line staff to better connect dislocated workers, Wagner-Peyser Employment Services participants, and unemployment insurance claimants with services needed to secure full-time in-demand jobs. Two information technology tools will be implemented. The first is an **OhioMeansJobs.com** self-scheduling tool that permits customers to assign themselves to open slots for workforce events and meetings. The second tool is a mobile application that allows OhioMeansJobs center customers to swipe their drivers' licenses or other ID cards for identification and tracking purposes. This grant expired Sept. 30, 2019.

Flooding/Severe Storms – Disaster Grant



Following severe storms, landslides and mudslides that occurred between Feb. 14 and 25 in 2018, and a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Disaster Declaration on April 17, 2018, ODJFS applied for and received two USDOL Disaster Recovery National Dislocated Worker Grants. The first, a \$7.86 million grant, was for the time period June 1, 2018, through Dec. 31, 2019. The second, for more than \$8.8 million, was for the time period April 1, 2019 through March 31, 2020. As of November 2019, the first increment, of more than \$2.9 million, had been received.

Six Ohio local workforce areas, totaling 15 counties, have benefited from these discretionary awards. They have allowed Ohio and local workforce areas to hire up to 300 eligible dislocated workers to work up to 2,080 hours each assisting with clean-up, recovery and humanitarian efforts for disaster victims and/or helping with the demolition, deconstruction, cleaning, repair and re-construction of public structures, facilities, waterways and lands within the disaster area.

General Motors – Lordstown Layoff

In April 2018, General Motors issued a Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) announcing the layoff of second-shift production operations at its Lordstown facilities. In addition, several auto industry suppliers in the same area issued WARN notices indicating layoffs would occur in their businesses between June and September 2018. These layoffs were projected to impact 1,686 potential workers.

To help impacted workers become reemployed as quickly as possible, ODJFS applied for and received a two-year \$1.75 million National Dislocated Worker Grant from USDOL. The grant is making it possible for up to 337 affected participants to receive needs-related payments, career plan development assistance, access to workshops and assessments, and individualized career services, such as case management and counseling. Services are provided at a nearby transition center.

The grant is available from Sept. 1, 2018, through June 30, 2020.

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

Research has shown that individuals with non-occupational back, knee and/or shoulder injuries who work in the manufacturing industry are at high risk of becoming unemployed. To determine whether providing intensive return-to-work coordination hastens their recovery and improves their chances of remaining employed, ODJFS applied for and received a \$2.5 million RETAIN grant from the USDOL. This grant will allow Ohio to develop and pilot a model that, if successful, can be replicated across the state.

Who will receive services? 18- to 65-year-old workers in Columbiana, Mahoning and Trumbull counties who have non-occupational musculoskeletal injuries primarily to the back, knee and/or shoulder.

What services will be provided? At the time they seek treatment, eligible individuals will be given the opportunity to participate. If they agree, their treatment will be facilitated by a health services coordinator, who will communicate with the individual's employer, health care provider and insurer. When needed, the coordinator will refer the individual to OhioMeansJobs center partners for additional assistance. In addition, a nurse hotline will be available to all participants.

When will this demonstration project take place? Planning will take place through March 30, 2020. If the pilot is successful, additional funding and services will be provided for a 42-month period.

This cooperative agreement is fully funded by the USDOL Office of Disability Employment.

How will the project be evaluated? A third-party evaluator will use rigorous methodology to identify program outcomes. In addition, throughout the project, a RETAIN Roundtable comprised of medical, industry and government stakeholders will identify and share best practices.

The project's leadership team will include representatives from the Governor's Executive Workforce Board, Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation, Ohio Department of Health, Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities, Bon Secours Mercy Health and Workforce Development Boards in Areas 17 and 18. Additional key partners include the Mahoning Valley Manufacturers Coalition, Ohio Manufacturers' Association, Ohio Department of Medicaid, and the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services.

Integrated Workforce Programs

WIOA and Wagner-Peyser Employment Services Programs

Starting in October 2018, the ODJFS Office of Workforce Development (OWD) began integrating the WIOA Title III Wagner-Peyser Employment Services program with the WIOA Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker programs to seamlessly serve both business and job-seeking customers at the state's OhioMeansJobs centers.

Unique local workflows were established to ensure collaboration between partners and to reduce duplication. In addition, OWD hired Wagner-Peyser Employment Service workforce specialists to provide services to businesses in partnership with established local business services teams. The restructuring has improved efficiency, streamlined services and given local staff flexibility to meet customers' needs.

The effectiveness of this approach was exemplified by a Morrow County recruitment event conducted in May 2019 for Dollar Tree Stores, Inc. A team was formed that included a workforce specialist, a delegate from JobsOhio and an OhioMeansJobs Morrow County representative.

Dollar Tree needed 300 distribution workers, including office workers, material handlers, packers, pullers, maintenance workers and supervisors.

OhioMeansJobs Morrow County provided computers for online applications and office space for open interviews, drug testing and new hire group orientations. The center also assisted in marketing the event by posting advertisements in Morrow and surrounding counties on websites, social media, **OhioMeansJobs.com**, OhioMeansJobs centers, area libraries, job boards and community events. Because of this grass-roots, community effort, 652 people applied for jobs, including 377 from OhioMeansJobs centers and 275 from job boards, and Dollar Tree made 281 offers of employment.

WIOA Youth Program and Temporary Assistance to Needy Families



Ohio's Comprehensive Case Management and Employment Program (CCMEP) is designed to help low-income young adults ages 14 to 24 build career paths, find employment and break the cycle of poverty. CCMEP integrates funding from both the WIOA Youth Program and the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program to offer more coordinated, individualized services.

The intent of CCMEP is to deliver comprehensive, effective services in a manner that ensures the vigorous engagement of participants by establishing trust and understanding. Case managers and participants work together to develop individual service strategies (called individual opportunity plans). The goal is not only workforce preparation, but also the removal of barriers to employment to help participants achieve successful outcomes.

CCMEP engages participants in meaningful employment and training activities that help build lifelong, sustainable and in-demand careers. These services include work experiences, career coaching, occupational skills training, tutoring, supportive services, financial literacy, leadership development, and comprehensive guidance and counseling. It focuses on people, not programs, and gives case managers the flexibility to offer more constructive services that build on participants' strengths, increase their skills, and meet their unique needs.

As CCMEP integrates both WIOA and TANF funding, it requires communication and collaboration between Ohio's county departments of job and family services and the 20 local workforce development boards. CCMEP aims to leverage WIOA and TANF funds to serve more youth, moving case management to person-centered, goal-oriented coaching, and reducing the benefits gap that often keeps young adults from becoming self-sufficient.

Using approximately \$90 million in TANF and \$30 million in WIOA Youth funding, CCMEP served approximately 25,634 participants during PY 2018, with 16,151 participants funded only through TANF, 4,322 participants funded only with WIOA Youth, and 5,161 participants co-funded with TANF and WIOA Youth. Since its inception in PY 2016, the program has served 14,779 participants identified as basic skills deficient, including 9,585 participants who were pregnant or parenting.

Approximately 65% of participants are female, and 24% lack of transportation.

As of November 2019, Ohio was engaged in piloting the Goal4It™ coaching model and career pathway strategy in four counties. The goal of this model is to increase case management quality. If successful, Ohio hopes to eventually implement it throughout the state.

One recent example of the program's many successes occurred in Stark County. A young woman was referred as a potential WIOA youth participant. She had earned a state tested nursing assistant certification in high school and was working part-time at a local nursing home, but as she became

older, she felt nursing was not the right fit. Her passion was working on trucks with her brother.

Through CCMEP, the case manager worked with this participant to identify potential careers, and she ultimately chose to become trained in welding. CCMEP helped this participant obtain training and create a resume. Soon after she completed her training, she found employment earning \$15 an hour.

Rapid Response, WIOA and Trade

Between July 2018 and June 2019, 77 WARNs were filed with Ohio's Rapid Response Unit, impacting 9,402 workers across the state. One-third of those potentially affected were surveyed utilizing Ohio's Rapid Response Workforce Survey. The Rapid Response Unit also received seven Rapid Response Emergency Assistance and Layoff Aversion funding requests totaling just over \$1 million. All seven applications were approved, and funding was allocated to the local workforce areas.

Throughout PY 2018, Ohio's Rapid Response team embraced new partnerships and collaborations both inside and outside the agency. For example, in April 2018, General Motors issued a WARN announcing the layoff of second-shift production operations at its Lordstown facilities, effective July 2018. This would potentially impact approximately 1,400 individuals. In November 2018, Lordstown issued another WARN stating the entire Lordstown facility was closing. This closure would impact an additional 1,600 individuals by March 2019. Ohio was ready to serve this workforce with both Rapid Response and Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) services. The first-ever hybrid Rapid Response Reemployment Session and TAA Benefit Rights Information (BRI) Session was presented to this group. Time was optimized, and the most up-to-date information was dispersed immediately.

An on-site Transition Center located at the Local 1112 UAW Union Hall was made available for services. To date, over 3,000 individuals have utilized an array of services, including resume writing assistance, job interview assistance, **OhioMeansJobs.com** assistance, help filing for unemployment benefits, and TAA, to name a few.

The Rapid Response Unit also partnered with the ODJFS Office of Information Systems to design a more robust Rapid Response Workforce Survey tool, and it partnered with the ODJFS Office of Unemployment Insurance Operations to identify ways to improve communications and co-promote programs such as SharedWork Ohio.

Trade and WIOA

In early March 2019, ODJFS learned that AES Ohio Generation LLC (formerly Dayton Power & Light) would be closing three locations in Adams and Brown counties near the Ohio-Kentucky border. All were slated to close by June 1, 2018, impacting approximately 640 individuals. The majority of those individuals lived in Kentucky, making them eligible for services in both states.

Ohio filed a Trade petition, which the USDOL certified on April 18, 2018. As a result, the workers were eligible for WIOA training funds, TAA reemployment and training funds, and training funds that AES/DPL had set aside to be administered by the Adams/Brown County Commissioners.

To coordinate services between states and ensure that workers would have every reemployment resource available to them, ODJFS Trade and Rapid Response staff reached out to Local Workforce Area 1, Adams/Brown Commissioners and the Kentucky Career Center. As a result, the ODJFS Rapid Response Unit established a transition center to offer reemployment sessions, TAA Benefit BRI sessions, WIOA eligibility and co-enrollment, and a career fair. A total of 298 workers engaged in Trade-related services.

Following the BRI sessions, the ODJFS Trade, Local Workforce Area 1 and the Kentucky Workforce/Trade teams held monthly calls to ensure successful outcomes with all parties. Ohio

Trade and Kentucky TAA completed assessments and reemployment plans and shared reports regarding all approved training contracts for co-enrollment, as well as individual employment plans. As of November 2019, 68 AES/DPL impacted workers were enrolled with Ohio training providers, and all of them were making successful strides in their reemployment endeavors.

ApprenticeOhio, Veterans Program and WIOA

During PY 2018, ApprenticeOhio collaborated with multiple ODJFS offices, Ohio state agencies and workforce areas. The program's key stakeholders include the Ohio State Apprenticeship Council, Ohio Department of Higher Education, Ohio Association of Community Colleges, Ohio Department of Education and the Ohio Department of Commerce.



In 2019, ApprenticeOhio developed a new role: the veteran apprenticeship service provider (VASP). Four regional veteran apprenticeship service providers (VASPs) work to reestablish relationships with various partners and stakeholders, including workforce development boards, business service networks, individual employers, employer organizations, economic development committees, employment service professionals and Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP) specialists. The goal is to promote the ApprenticeOhio program to employers seeking to train veteran apprentices and coordinate with service providers to streamline the process for veterans seeking apprenticeship. A referral process was put into place for local DVOP specialists to send job-ready veterans interested in the program to the VASP.

Area 7 became the first local workforce area in Ohio to become a Registered Apprenticeship program sponsor in April 2018. It registered its first apprentice on July 8, 2018, through a collaboration with area employers.

ApprenticeOhio partnered with the ODJFS Office of Families and Children to bring Registered Apprenticeship sponsors to the annual Fostering Pathways to Success conference for young people in foster care. Participants were given the opportunity to experience "Apprenticeship Row," with hands-on demonstrations and simulations, such as virtual reality construction equipment, to experience a day in the life of an apprentice.

ApprenticeOhio continued to promote ongoing partnerships with nine Ohio community colleges to expand Registered Apprenticeship opportunities in non-traditional occupations. Through this collaboration, Ohio developed Registered Apprenticeship opportunities in advanced manufacturing, information technology and health care industries. As of November 2019, 246 community college students were active registered apprentices.

The Ohio Department of Administrative Services (DAS) – which serves state agencies, boards and commissions, as well as local governments and state universities – registered as a sponsor on May 16, 2019. DAS registered two occupations: cyber security support technician and information technology specialist.

ApprenticeOhio is encouraging other state agencies to sponsor IT apprenticeships, as well. It also is continuing its partnerships with the Ohio Department of Education, Ohio Department of Veterans Services, Ohio Department of Commerce, Ohio Department of Youth Services, Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections, and the Ohio State Highway Patrol.

Veterans and WIOA



OhioMeansJobs centers offer a full range of individualized employment and training services for veterans and eligible spouses who are unable to obtain employment through basic career services at the centers. Maximum emphasis is placed on meeting the employment needs of veterans who are disabled and economically or educationally disadvantaged, including homeless veterans and those with barriers to employment. The Veterans Program is also building a strong social media presence with OhioMeansVeteranJobs via @OMVetJobs to promote

OhioMeansJobs centers services, including job fairs, events and veteran community resource information.

Through the efforts of the DVOP specialists, the Veterans Program served close to 2,500 veterans in PY 2018, with over 60% participant placement and average earnings of \$28,188. Many other veterans entered training and obtained disability benefits or other compensation.

The Veterans Program team collaborated with local WIOA partners during technical assistance visits to 63 counties across the state. The goal of the visits was to provide feedback on the effectiveness of the implementation of veterans' priority of service. The team developed a Priority of Service training module and shared it with WIOA partners. This module is available online and covers common priority of service scenarios, DVOP duties and responsibilities, and the veteran intake process.

Waiver Usage

Ohio requested and received approval in PY 2017 for two USDOL waivers to support workforce development activities and provide flexibility for individuals using WIOA programs. In PY 2018, Ohio requested and received approval for an additional waiver pertaining to the collection and reporting of eligible training provider performance data for students. These waivers were consistent with key guiding principles that improve outcomes through cross-program alignment, increase streamlined services, increase accountability and accessibility, promote state and local flexibility, and strengthen Ohio's delivery system by easing administrative burdens.

Ohio tracks waiver usage for reporting and evaluation purposes. Listed below are the approved waivers with supporting documentation collected from the state's database and fiscal reports.

Waiver: Allow Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funds to count toward the 75 percent expenditure requirement for out-of-school youth and allow the expenditure requirement to be calculated on a statewide basis.

This waiver supports the implementation of CCMEP by using both WIOA and TANF funding sources to support the unique needs of the same customer while easing administrative burdens associated with managing two federal funding streams. The large infusion of TANF dollars allows WIOA Youth dollars to have a greater impact, and it also allows more disconnected youth to be served. Additionally, by allowing the expenditure rate to be calculated statewide, the waiver gives local workforce areas more flexibility to address the unique needs of participants in their communities.

To recognize the TANF dollars invested in WIOA out-of-school youth (OSY) under CCMEP, ODJFS includes the amount of TANF dollars spent on co-enrolled WIOA out-of-school youth during a program year in both the numerator and denominator of the OSY rate calculation. The formula below defines the alternative calculation.

OSY Rate Calculation Under Waiver Authority			
\$17,968,020.28 (WIOA OSY)	+	\$8,210,144.09 (TANF co-enrolled OSY)	= \$26,178,164.37
\$22,946,454.11 (WIOA ISY+ OSY)	+	\$8,210,144.09(TANF co-enrolled OSY)	= \$31,156,598.20

Using this waiver, the out-of-school youth expenditure statewide rate is 84%.

Waiver: Allow the use of individual training accounts (ITAs) for in-school youth.

The intent of ITAs for the WIOA out-of-school youth program is to expand training options, increase program flexibility, enhance customer choice and reduce paperwork. Ohio desired the same benefits for the in-school youth program. This waiver encourages in-school youth to explore in-demand occupations and career pathways and to take responsibility for planning their futures.

Ohio is working to achieve the following goals and programmatic outcomes:

- Improve the ability of local workforce development boards, youth program providers and CCMEP lead agencies to respond quickly to the needs of in-school youth;
- Increase the quality of learning opportunities;
- Increase employment and training opportunities;
- Improve coordination by reducing fragmentation of service delivery;
- Improve customer choice and empower youth to make responsible career choices;
- Reduce unnecessary paperwork;
- Develop an emerging workforce of prepared candidates ready for work; and
- Increase accountability.

During PY 2018, ITAs were provided to 523 in-school youth.

Waiver: Waive the requirement to collect and report student counts and performance data on all individuals participating in training programs listed on the state's eligible training provider list.

In calendar year 2019, Ohio implemented additional Workforce Inventory for Education and Training (WIET) system enhancements to begin collecting the number of individuals enrolling in and completing each program of study. WIET is the automated system that houses Ohio's eligible training provider list (ETPL). Despite efforts to streamline and modernize the ETPL system and to achieve the WIOA vision of informed customer choice, some training providers reported that they were struggling to provide the performance data required for all students in all programs. Their challenges fell within the following categories:

- Excessive administrative costs associated with tracking former students, surveying their employment outcomes, and reporting the data for each training program;
- Concerns with the protection of sensitive information (i.e., Social Security numbers) that would need to be gathered on all students to conduct wage record matches; and
- Questionable accuracy of performance data if it is based on self-reported student surveys, anecdotal data and potentially low response rates.

Therefore, waiver authority is needed for WIOA participants to continue to be served by eligible training providers that prepare trainees for high-wage, in-demand occupations but are unable to provide outcome data on all students.

Ohio continues to work with eligible training providers, the Ohio Department of Higher Education (which oversees state-funded post-secondary education institutions), and the Ohio Department of Education (which oversees state-funded vocational institutions) to develop mechanisms to allow eligible training providers to accurately report data on all students.

Effectiveness in Serving Employers

In accordance with WIOA sec. 116(b)(2)(A)(i) (VI), the USDOL and the U.S. Department of Education are required to establish a primary indicator of performance for effectiveness in serving employers. The departments have determined that this indicator will be measured as a shared outcome across all six core programs within each state to ensure a holistic approach to serving employers.

As described in the Joint WIOA Final Rule and the Joint WIOA Performance ICR (OMB Control No. 1205-0526), the departments have developed three approaches for measuring effectiveness in serving employers, while only two approaches are required. Ohio has selected two: Retention (retention with the same employer) and Repeat Business Customers (percentage of repeat employers using services within the previous three years).

The Retention approach is useful in determining whether the core programs are serving employers effectively by improving the skills of their workforce and decreasing employee turnover. The Repeat Business Customers approach is useful in determining whether employers who receive services from the core programs are satisfied with those services and become repeat customers.

This approach also assesses the workforce system's ability to develop and maintain strong relationships with employers over extended periods of time.

Data Validation

Data validation is essential for an accurate reflection of state and grantees' experiences. As a result, for PY 2018, the ODJFS Office of Fiscal and Monitoring Services' Bureau of Monitoring and Consulting Services (BMCS) will undertake a collaborative validation process.

This review will be conducted in two stages: Phase 1 and Phase 2. In Phase 1, the review will be combined with the PY 2018 Comprehensive Programmatic Monitoring Review. The WIOA and CCMEP samples will include 900 PY 2018 participants from all 20 local workforce areas. It also will include a sample of counties within those areas. Participants will be randomly selected from a list of open and closed cases located in the Ohio Workforce Comprehensive Case Management System (OWCMS). The elements targeted for validation will consist of those noted in WIOA Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) 7-18 and will be reported through the Programmatic Monitoring Report issued by BMCS. Areas of significant concern will require the local workforce areas to respond with continuous improvement plans.

In Phase 2, BMCS will select an additional 300 files from a list of PY 2017 exited participant files housed within OWCMS. Again, the elements targeted for validation will be those noted in TEGL WIOA No. 7-18.

Additionally, BMCS will train state staff and provide training resources on the methodology and process for monitoring and the completion of data validation reviews. Training venues will include discussions and presentations at various conferences.

The monitoring tools utilized by BMCS staff will be made available to local workforce areas and may be referenced or adopted for use in their data validation reviews. Data validation monitoring efforts and reviews will be verified during Ohio's regularly scheduled Comprehensive Programmatic Monitoring Reviews. OWD's Program Measures and Performance Outcomes Unit will be responsible for resolving any issues identified within the reports issued by BMCS. They will also provide any training and/or technical assistance deemed appropriate.

Evaluative Studies

Workforce Innovation Fund (WIF) Grant

In 2015, Ohio learned that it would receive a \$6 million federal Workforce Innovation Fund grant from the USDOL to develop a new approach to increasing in-demand employment opportunities for low-income, young adults with barriers to employment. The grant was used to create the Wage Pathway program for Ohio's CCMEP participants at OhioMeansJobs centers in Cuyahoga, Summit, Ashtabula, Hamilton and Ottawa counties.

As a requirement of the grant, ODJFS procured an independent evaluator – The Ohio State

University's (OSU) Center for Human Resource Research – to study program outcomes from 2016 through 2019. Wage Pathway participants were placed in jobs immediately to gain transferrable skills and work toward achieving wage and advancement goals; other CCMEP participants pursued education and degree attainment first.

The evaluation focused on determining whether adding the Wage Pathway program to the CCMEP program improved earnings for participants. The analysis was a "difference-in-difference" evaluation and included three studies: an implementation study, an outcomes study and a cost study. A data-sharing agreement allowed OSU access to the Ohio Longitudinal Data Archive, which helped provide the bulk of administrative data necessary for the evaluation. OSU supplemented this data with survey information collected from participants. Ohio provided quarterly narrative and performance reports to DOL throughout the program.

The program and evaluation concluded in September 2019. The initial report surmised that the Wage Pathway program appeared to make positive earnings impacts that were economically and statistically significant. OSU's final report to USDOL is forthcoming.

Comprehensive Case Management Employment Program (CCMEP) Study

The OSU Ohio Education Research Center (OERC) was enlisted to evaluate the CCMEP program between 2016 and 2019, with funding from the Laura and John Arnold Foundation. This evaluation assessed the employment, education and human services impacts of participating in services that included comprehensive case management. The complete CCMEP evaluation was comprised of the three studies below, allowing for a comprehensive research design. As of November 2019, all three studies were completed, and the OERC was gathering additional control group data to use in developing a final report.

Implementation Study: The Implementation Study investigated the cross-organization implementation practices of CCMEP during years 1 and 2. It included a statewide survey in years 1 and 2, followed by focus groups in 11 counties and 6 counties, respectively.

Outcomes Study: The Outcomes Study used existing administrative data to understand the education and employment outcomes of early CCMEP participants in years 1 and 2 in comparison to non-participants.

Impact Study: The Impact Study was a randomized control trial with an option of two randomization designs: “traditional” and “encouragement.” It investigated the education and employment outcomes of youth participating in CCMEP versus non-participants in year 3. The traditional design randomized Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program participants into a treatment group who received CCMEP services and a control group who will not receive CCMEP services. The encouragement design randomized sending an encouragement (such as a text message) to assess the rate of participation among those who received encouragement versus those who did not.

Customer Service Satisfaction

Wagner-Peyser Employment Services

OWD developed a customer satisfaction survey to evaluate the impact of reemployment services on Ohio and to identify new ways of providing services to individuals and employers. DVOP specialists, employment professionals, Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) employment professionals and workforce specialists inserted a SurveyMonkey link into their signature blocks on all electronic correspondence. The tag line on the email read: *“To provide us feedback on the customer service you received today, please click here!”*

While the opportunity to take the survey was optional, participation and comments were extremely favorable. Throughout the year, over 1,500 job seekers and employers provided feedback from questions regarding initial or recurring visits, location of services, satisfaction of services, types of services received, probability of return visits, and benefit(s) of service(s). The average satisfaction score throughout the year was 4.49 of 5, with 1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest. The results validated many of the internal processes and procedures already in place and gave state merit staff constructive feedback for their ongoing continuous improvement efforts. Effective and timely feedback, both positive and negative, is critical to improving customers’ experience and employability.

OhioMeansJobs Certification

WIOA requires local workforce development boards (WDBs) to certify OhioMeansJobs centers every three years. The state, in conjunction with chief elected officials and local WDBs, must establish objective criteria and procedures for local WDBs to use for certification. Ohio began this process in January 2017, with Phase 1’s “Must-Meet” standards review. Standards were tied to Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements, such as Civil Rights postings in centers, specialized trainings, and customer service targeted toward individuals with disabilities. All comprehensive and affiliate centers were certified.

Ohio began Phase 2, the Quality Assurance review, in January 2018. Benchmarks with critical success factors were used to review the quality of the OhioMeansJobs system. The local system must meet a certain level of excellence in each of the benchmarks to attain Phase 2 certification.

As part of the Phase 2 certification process, OWD developed a partner assessment feedback survey to collect anonymous responses from partner staff in the OhioMeansJobs centers. The survey was developed to capture feedback relative to how partner programs operate within the OhioMeansJobs centers and workforce system. It was distributed throughout the centers in September and October 2018. The questions on the survey correlated directly with the benchmarks and critical success factors developed for Phase 2 certification. The results and feedback served as a tool for the WDB review team to score their certification scorecard.

The partner assessment survey was emailed to leadership at the Ohio Department of Higher Education (Aspire), Ohio Department of Education, Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (Vocational Rehabilitation), the Ohio Department of Aging, and representatives of the Wagner- Peyser program. Leadership from these core partner areas then distributed the survey to their staff. Survey participants responded through an email link. Approximately 183 responses from OhioMeansJobs partner staff were received. OWD plans to reconvene to discuss methods to improve survey participation for the next certification period.