



REPUBLIC OF PALAU

WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT TITLE I

ANNUAL STATEWIDE PERFORMANCE
REPORT NARRATIVE

For the Period July 01, 2019 to June 30, 2020

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Introduction

Each state that receives an allotment under WIOA Section 127 (Youth activities) or Section 132 (Adult and Dislocated Worker activities) must prepare and submit a WIOA Annual Statewide Report Narrative of performance progress to the Secretary of Labor in accordance with the in accordance with the “WIOA Common Performance Reporting – OMB Control 1205-0526”. The WIOA Annual Statewide Performance Report Narrative serves as a complement to the WIOA Annual Statewide Performance Report (ETA 9169) requirements as defined in OMB Control 1205-0526 and in Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) 10-16, Change 1.

STRATEGIC VISION

President of Palau Tommy E. Remengesau, Jr.’s vision for Palau is to ‘work together to make tomorrow better’ and for all to adopt ‘Innovative Learning and Excellence’ to meet new challenges within Palau’s limited resources, and to think outside the box, taking into account Palau’s special circumstances, and to develop appropriate medium and long-term plans for continued development. There must be developed strong, creative and innovative planning to improve the capacity of Palau’s people and its government and partnership with the private sector.

WIOA Formula Funded Programs

Palau receives Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funds based on a formula established by the Act. These funds are commonly referred to as WIOA “State Formula Funds”. The Palau Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Title I Office/American Job Center is the designated administrative entity for WIOA State Formula Funds of Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth.

For WIOA purposes, Palau is a single-delivery state, meaning that there is only one Workforce Development Board for the entire area. The President of the Republic of Palau, as the chief elected official, structured its State Workforce Development Board to consist of all community stakeholders from the private and public sector of the Republic. He increased the number of members in the Executive Committee from the State Board to act as State Board Liaison/Local Board and the WIOA Grant Subrecipient. He also increased the number of members in the Youth Council from the State Board whose responsibilities are to assist the State Board’s Executive Committee in the development of the State Plan relating to youth activities, recommend eligible providers of youth activities; conduct oversight and other relevant youth activities under the workforce investment system.

The State Board’s Executive Committee and the Youth Council undertook a comprehensive planning initiative to set a new strategic direction for the Board to build a highly competitive workforce in Palau. As a single state workforce area, Palau has been operating its workforce investment system on a collaborative partnership with education toward a better developed, improved, and sustainable economy.

Formal agreements have been developed and signed by all workforce partnership with the WIOA Office and the State Board that include Palau Community College, the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Belau Employers and Education Association. The agreements set forth collaborative services offered by each partner agency to all workforce customers.

WIOA Four Year Unified State Plan

In Program Years 2018 and 2019, programs were carried out in accordance with the strategies outlined in the Republic of Palau Four Year Workforce Strategic Plan for Title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act for Program Years 2016-2020.

Identify each waiver that the state has had in place for at least one program year.

Palau recently requested for Youth Program Waiver for Program Year 2020 and has been conditionally approved pending actual program activities report.

Identify the two approaches that the state has chosen for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers performance indicator pilot.

Palau does not have a pilot for Effectiveness in Serving Employers, however, as a single state service delivery area, the State Board and WIOA Office utilizing the VOS System, identifies workforce customers as both employers and job seekers.

Include brief descriptions of: (a) current or planned evaluation and related research projects, including methodologies used; (b) efforts to coordinate the development of such projects with WIOA core programs, other state agencies and local boards; (c) a list of completed evaluation and related reports and links to where they were made accessible to the public electronically; (d) State efforts to provide data, survey responses, and timely site visits for Federal evaluations; and (e) any continuous improvement strategies utilizing results from studies and evidence-based practices evaluated.

Again, Palau as a small and single state service delivery area, has not developed evaluation or related research projects and uses the VOS system for its workforce delivery to both employers and job seekers.

Describe the state's approach to customer satisfaction, which may include such information used for one-stop center certification, in accordance with 20 CFR 678.800. This description should include: 1) the state's methodologies; 2) the number of individuals/employers who were provided customer satisfaction outreach, the response rate, and efforts made to improve the response rate; 3) the results and whether the results are generalizable to the entire population of customers; and 4) a description of any continuous improvement processes for incorporating the customer satisfaction feedback.

Palau as a small and single state service delivery area, uses the VOS system for its workforce delivery to both employers and job seekers, and surveys have not been undertaken to include customer satisfaction at this time.

WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs

As a small and single service delivery area, services to adults and dislocated workers are offered through Palau Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Office (Palau WIOA Office)/American Job Center (AJC). Programs and services to adults continue to focus on eligible adults and dislocated workers customers must receive at least one career services in the three categories of Basic Career Services, Individualized Career Services, and Follow-Up Services.

Eligibility of individuals to workforce services funded under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Title I programs are stated in established state workforce policies. The State Board has incorporated the policies to include veterans and their spouses who meet the WIOA eligibility requirement, to fall under the category of priority customers of workforce services. All state workforce policies have been adopted and certified by the State Board.

Priority for services continues to be given to veterans and eligible veteran spouses, disabled individuals, dislocated workers, displaced homemakers, women, training opportunities for non-traditional employment, low income individuals, and individuals with multiple barriers consistent with the WIOA laws and regulations.

Rapid Response

Not more than 25% of the dislocated worker funds will be allocated to statewide rapid response activities. The State Board and its Executive Committee will determine the criteria for awarding funds to rapid response activities, as the needs arise and are identified, through the WIOA Office to provide services that include but not limited to:

- Assistance and training to individuals, whenever applicable, in case of natural disaster, and
- In case of mass layoff, do on-site contact with employers for:
 - Layoff plans and schedule of employer
 - Economic development plans to avert layoff
 - Identify affected dislocated workers and needs

On a given program year, if there are no rapid response activities, due to absence of massive layoffs of workers *for reasons* of plant closure or government closeout, the rapid response funds will be used at the end of each program year as additional dislocated worker funds for displaced homemakers workforce activities including the required percentage for statewide activities.

WIOA Youths

Palau has adopted and added on to the criteria currently being used by the State Board's Executive Committee and the Youth Council the most significant change to the youth formula program under WIOA that focus resources primarily on OSY (Out of School Youth) and that increases the minimum percentage of program funds required to be spent on OSY from 30 to 75 percent includes a major focus on providing youth with work experience opportunities with a requirement that local areas must spend a minimum of 20 percent of local area funds on work experience including the new five program elements of:

1. Financial literacy
2. Entrepreneurial skills training
3. Services that provide labor market and employment information about in-demand industry sectors or occupations available in the local areas
4. Activities that help youth prepare for and transition to postsecondary education and training
5. Education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster.

Additional youth eligibility criteria established by the State Board as a youth who:

- is currently attending an educational program, has previously dropped out of educational program or has poor attendance patterns in educational program during the last school year, and has below average grades;
- is not attending an educational program, has no vocational/employment goal, and has a poor work history or no work history or has been fired from a job in the last six months;
- deficient in basic literacy skills and who cannot compute or solve problems, read, write, or speak English, at or below grade level 4.

The State Board's Executive Committee and the Youth Council determine the criteria for serving youth following required WIOA youth eligibility criteria, the new U. S. DOL youth criteria, and the State Board's additional youth criterion. The membership of these two groups consists of representatives of agencies working with youths or dealing with youth issues on a daily basis. These individuals were instrumental in developing the policies of services to youths. Each agency has their own application forms for their particular program that meets the requirements of their respective funding entity. Through collaborative partnership and periodical meetings of the minds, there has been eliminated duplication of similar assessments and provision of required documents.

State workforce policies were established in latter part of 2014 and early 2015 to incorporate all required youth components, have been adopted and certified by the State Board. The general flow of WIOA youth customers will start at Intake and after all required documents have been submitted to the Intake Staff shall then be certified of their eligibility to workforce activities by the Executive Director. The eligibility determination and certification that follows is inclusive to identified barriers and family income level.

1. Providing an objective assessment of their academic skill levels, skill levels, and service needs, which include a review of basic skills, occupational skills, prior work experience, employability, interests, aptitudes, supportive service needs, and developmental needs, if they have not already received this service from partner agencies;
2. Developing an Individual Service Strategy that shall identify an employment goal, which may not be required if a recent similar document has already been developed by partner agency under another education or training program; and
3. Providing preparation for postsecondary educational opportunities, linkages between academic and occupational learning, preparation for employment, and effective connections to intermediary organizations that provide strong links to the job market and employers.

The State Board, its Committee, and the Youth Council have designed its youth program to follow the youth program components required by WIOA and:

Connecting WIOA with Youth Development

(All youth need help to grow into healthy and productive adults):

PHYSICAL & MENTAL HEALTH -	Guidance and counseling Supportive services
INTELLECTUAL HEALTH	-Tutoring, study skills, dropout prevention Alternative secondary schools Supportive services
CIVIC AND SOCIAL INVOLVEMENT EMPLOYABILITY	-Leadership development -Occupational skills training Work experience Summer employment

Palau does not receive NEG or Trade grants. WIOA participants are tracked using the Hire Palau Virtual One-Stop System (VOS) and submits its quarterly performance report through the WIPS (Workforce Integrated Performance System).

No.	WIOA Indicators Description	Performance Measure	Benchmark / Target	2019
1	Adult			
		Employment 2nd Quarter After Exit	53%	61%
		Employment 4th Quarter After Exit	43%	62%
		Median Earnings in the 2nd Quarter		
		after Exit	\$ 1,660	\$ 1,820
		Credential Attainment Rate	43%	17%
2	Dislocated Worker			
		Employment 2nd Quarter After Exit	53%	50%
		Employment 4th Quarter After Exit	43%	20%
		Median Earnings in the 2nd Quarter		
		after Exit	\$ 1,660	\$ 2,415
		Credential Attainment Rate	43%	0%
3	Youth			
		Education or Training Activities or	53%	100%
		Employment in the		
		2nd Quarter After Exit		
		Education or Training Activities or	43%	65%
		Employment in the		
		4th Quarter After Exit		