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| EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ADMINISTRATION ADVISORY SYSTEM U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR Washington, D.C. 20210 | CLASSIFICATION SCSEP |
| | CORRESPONDENCE SYMBOL OWI |
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ADVISORY : TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT GUIDANCE LETTER NO. 16-15

TO: ALL SENIOR COMMUNITY SERVICE EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM
(SCSEP) GRANTEES

FROM: Portia Wu 
Assistant Secretary

SUBJECT: Four-Year SCSEP State Plan Requirements for Program Years 2016-2019

1. **Purpose.** To inform all SCSEP state and national grantees about the requirements for the SCSEP State Plan as mandated by the 2006 Older Americans Act (OAA) Amendments. Due to the requirements of the Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014, there have been some changes to the submission process for the SCSEP State Plans. This Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) provides guidance for the SCSEP portion of the State Plan.

2. **References.**

- Section 503 of the 2006 OAA Amendments, Pub. L. 109-365, October 17, 2006;
- 20 CFR Part 641, SCSEP Final Rule (September 1, 2010);
- WIOA P.L. 113-128 (July 22, 2014);
- Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 14-15 “WIOA State Plan Submission Requirements”

3. **Background.** In order to receive SCSEP funds, the OAA requires the Governor of each State, or his or her designee, to submit a State Plan that includes a four-year strategy for the statewide provision of community services and other authorized activities for eligible individuals under the SCSEP. The Governor, or his or her designee, must also describe the planning and implementation process for SCSEP services in the State, taking into account the current relative distribution of eligible individuals and employment opportunities within the State (OAA Section 503(a) and SCSEP regulations at 20 CFR 641.300-365).

WIOA, which supersedes the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998, provides an opportunity for federally funded job training programs across the country to ensure that all Americans obtain necessary skills and training needed for self-sufficiency. In order to obtain funding, both state and national grantees must identify the needs of businesses and workers in their region to ensure that workforce solutions and local boards are

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accountable to the communities in which they are located. Grantees must also ensure that American Job Centers provide customer service to both jobseekers and employers, focus on continuous system improvement, support strong regional economies, and play an active role in community and workforce development.

WIOA state grantees also have state planning responsibilities, and must submit at minimum a Unified Plan covering the title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, title II Adult Education, title III Wagner-Peyser Employment Services, and title IV Vocational Rehabilitation programs. WIOA state grantees have the option to submit a Combined Plan, which includes the programs mandated in the Unified Plan, plus other employment and training programs including SCSEP. SCSEP state grantees may choose to submit a Combined Plan with the WIOA grantee in their state, or a SCSEP Stand-Alone State Plan.

The Combined State Plans and WIOA Unified Plans are due April 1, 2016; SCSEP stand-alone state plans will be due April 15, 2016. The Department has issued guidance in TEGL 14-15 on the WIOA Unified and Combined Plan submittal process. State grantees may submit either a four-year SCSEP Stand-Alone Plan or Combined State Plan for Program Years 2016-2019. National grantees also have planning responsibilities, and must coordinate with state grantees in the states where they operate except as provided at 20 CFR 641.320(b). All State Plans must include actions taken and/or plans to coordinate activities of SCSEP grantees in the State with activities carried out in the State under title I of WIOA.

Attachment A of this TEGL is a list of the items that must be included in all state grantees' SCSEP Stand-Alone Plan or the SCSEP portion of the Combined State Plan.

4. **Delegation of Responsibility.** The Governor may delegate responsibility for developing and submitting the SCSEP State Plan, provided that any delegation is consistent with state law and regulations. To delegate responsibility, the Governor must submit to the Department a signed statement indicating the individual and/or organization that will be submitting the State Plan on his or her behalf. The Department will honor the delegation as long as the Governor remains in office.
5. **State Plan Requirements.** As provided at OAA sec. 503(a)(1), the SCSEP portion of the State Plan must include a four-year strategy for the statewide provision of community service employment and other authorized activities for eligible individuals under the SCSEP. The four-year strategy requirement mandates that grantees operating within a state take a long-term view of the SCSEP program to include how it can be combined or enhanced with the coordination of WIOA programs. State grantees must include all elements provided in Attachment A in their four year State Plan strategies.
6. **Solicitation and Collection of Public Comments.** The Governor, or his or her designee, should follow established state procedures to solicit and collect public comments on the State Plan and must seek the advice and recommendations of the following organizations and individuals with expertise in older workers issues:

- Representatives of the State and area agencies on aging;
- State and local boards under WIOA;
- Public and private nonprofit agencies and organizations providing employment services, including each grantee operating a SCSEP project within the State, except as provided under section 506(a)(3) of OAA and 20 CFR 641.320(b);
- Social service organizations providing services to older individuals;
- Grantees under Title III of OAA;
- Affected communities;
- Unemployed older individuals;
- Community-based organizations serving older individuals;
- Business organizations; and
- Labor organizations.

The State Plan must describe the procedures used to obtain such advice and public comments (20 CFR 641.350 and 20 641.325(f)).

7. **Requirements for Modification of the State Plan.** Pursuant to 20 CFR part 641.345, modifications to the State Plan are required at any time when:

- There are changes in Federal or state law or policy that substantially change the assumptions upon which the State Plan is based;
- There are significant changes in the state's vision, strategies, policies, performance goals, or organizational responsibilities; or
- There is a change in a grantee or grantees.

8. **Frequency of Submission.** The Governor, or his or her designee, must review the State Plan at least once every two years, and submit an update to the Department for consideration and approval. States are encouraged to review their State Plan more frequently than once every two years, making adjustments and submitting updates as circumstances warrant (20 CFR 641.340 and 20 CFR 641.345). Prior to submission of the updates to the State Plan, the Governor must seek the advice and recommendations of the individuals and organizations identified in OAA sec. 503(a)(2) about what, if any, changes are needed, and publish the changes to the State Plan for public comment.

DOL considers the State Plan to be a living document that will guide the strategic and ongoing operations of the SCSEP within the state.

9. **Submission and Schedule.** Grantees must provide the PY 2016-2019 SCSEP stand-alone State Plan to the Department by April 15, 2016. Required appendices to the State Plan are identified in Attachment A. States submitting a Combined Plan must do so through the WIOA State Plan Portal by April 1, 2016. Instructions for portal submissions were published in the WIOA State Plan TEGL 14-15. Grantees may access the webinar discussing features of the State Plan portal at <https://www.workforce3one.org/view/5001606445321933913/info>. Submission dates are validated at the time of submission through the portal.

SCSEP grantees submitting Stand-Alone State Plans should submit plans directly to scsep.stateplans@dol.gov with a copy to the appropriate Federal Project Officer. SCSEP Stand-Alone State Plans submitted via email are date stamped by the date and time the submission is sent. Grantees should use the “return receipt” function in their email for verification of receipt.

10. **Action Required.** For PY 2016, all states should submit responses to the questions in Sections I-III of Attachment A by the dates specified above.
11. **Inquiries.** Please direct questions to the appropriate SCSEP Federal Project Officer.
12. **Attachments.**
Attachment A: Required Content of the SCSEP State Plan

ATTACHMENT A – Required Content of the SCSEP State Plan

At minimum, in the SCSEP stand-alone submission and the SCSEP portion of the Combined State Plan, States should comprehensively cover the following elements.

- I. Economic Projections and Impact. States must:
 - A. Discuss long-term projections for jobs in industries and occupations in the State that may provide employment opportunities for older workers. (20 CFR 641.302(d)). Alternately, States may discuss this in the economic analysis section of strategic plan, if submitting a Combined State Plan.
 - B. Describe how the long-term job projections discussed in the economic analysis section of strategic plan relate to the types of unsubsidized jobs for which SCSEP participants will be trained and the types of skills training to be provided. (20 CFR 641.302(d))
 - C. Discuss current and projected employment opportunities in the State (such as by providing information available under §15 of the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 491-2) by occupation), and the types of skills possessed by eligible individuals. (20 CFR 641.325(c)).

- II. Service Delivery and Coordination . States must:
 - A. Provide a detailed description of what actions will be taken to coordinate SCSEP with other programs. Alternately, States may discuss this in the State strategies section of the strategic plan, but regardless of its placement in document, this section must include plans for:
 1. Actions to coordinate activities of SCSEP grantees with WIOA Title I programs, including plans for using the WIOA one-stop delivery system and its partners to serve individuals aged 55 and older. (20 CFR 641.302(g), 641.325(e))
 2. Actions to coordinate activities of SCSEP grantees with the activities to be carried out in the State under the other titles of the OAA. (20 CFR 641.302(h))
 3. Actions to coordinate SCSEP with other private and public entities and programs that provide services to older Americans, such as community and faith-based organizations, transportation programs, and programs for those with special needs or disabilities. (20 CFR 641.302(i))
 4. Actions to coordinate SCSEP with other labor market and job training initiatives. (20 CFR 641.302(j))
 5. Actions the State will take to ensure that SCSEP is an active partner in the one-stop delivery system and the steps the State will take to encourage and improve coordination with the one-stop delivery system. (20 CFR 641.335)
 6. Efforts the State will make to work with local economic development offices in rural locations.

 - B. Describe the long-term strategy for engaging employers to develop and promote opportunities for the placement of SCSEP participants in unsubsidized employment. (20

CFR 641.302(e)) (Alternately, the State may discuss this in the State strategies section of strategic plan if submitting a Combined Plan.)

- C. Describe the long-term strategy for serving minorities under SCSEP. (20 CFR 641.302 (c))
- D. Provide a list of community services needed and the exact places where these services are most needed. Specifically, the plan must address the needs and location(s) of those individuals most in need of community services and the groups working to meet their needs. (20 CFR 641.330)
- E. Describe the long-term strategy to improve SCSEP services, including planned long-term changes to the design of the program within the State, and planned changes in the use of SCSEP grantees and program operators to better achieve the goals of the program. This may include recommendations to the Department as appropriate. (20 CFR 641.302(k))
- F. Describe a strategy for continuous improvement in the level of performance for SCSEP participants' entry into unsubsidized employment, and to achieve, at a minimum, the levels specified in OAA Section 513(a)(2)(E)(ii). (20 CFR 641.302(f))

III. Location and Population Served, including Equitable Distribution. States must:

- A. Describe the localities and populations for which projects of the type authorized by title V are most needed. (20 CFR 641.325 (d))
- B. List the cities and counties where the SCSEP project will take place. Include the number of SCSEP authorized positions and indicate if and where the positions changed from the prior year.
- C. Describe any current slot imbalances and proposed steps to correct inequities to achieve equitable distribution.
- D. Explain the State's long-term strategy for achieving an equitable distribution of SCSEP positions within the State that:
 - 1. Moves positions from over-served to underserved locations within the State in compliance with 20 CFR 641.365.
 - 2. Equitably serves both rural and urban areas.
 - 3. Serves individuals afforded priority for service under 20 CFR 641.520. (20 CFR 641.302(a), 641.365, 641.520)
- E. Provide the ratio of eligible individuals in each service area to the total eligible population in the State. (20 CFR 641.325(a))
- F. Provide the relative distribution of eligible individuals who:
 - 1. Reside in urban and rural areas within the State.
 - 2. Have the greatest economic need.
 - 3. Are minorities.
 - 4. Are limited English proficient.
 - 5. Have the greatest social need. (20 CFR 641.325(b))
- G. Describe the steps taken to avoid disruptions to service for participants to the greatest extent possible, when positions are redistributed, as provided in 20 CFR 641.365; when new Census or other reliable data becomes available; or when there is over-enrollment for any other reason. (20 CFR 641.325(i), 641.302(b))