

**MERCED COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD  
2019 BIENNIAL MODIFICATION TO 2017-2021 LOCAL PLAN**

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

<b>PRINCIPAL NARRATIVE</b>		<b>Page</b>
I.	<b>Collaboration with the CalFresh Employment and Training Program and Strengthened Partnership with Merced County Human Services Agency</b>	4
A.	Braiding Resources and Coordinating Service Delivery for People Receiving CalFresh to Participate in Workforce Services, Sector Pathway Programs, Supportive Services and Retention Efforts	4
B.	Workforce System Collaboration with Community Organizations Serving Specific CalFresh Populations	5
C.	Workforce Services Available to People Receiving CalFresh That Are Funded by Local/Regional Partners.	5
D.	Coordination among Partners to Provide Supportive Services to this Population and Facilitate Program Completion	5
E.	Strategies to Retain Participants in Regional Sector Pathway Programs and Employment	5
F.	Braiding Resources and Coordinating Service Delivery for People Receiving CalFresh to Participate in Workforce Services, Sector Pathway Programs, Supportive Services and Retention Efforts	6
II.	<b>Partnership with Merced County Department of Child Support Services</b>	
A.	Existing Workforce and Education Program Partnerships	7
1.	Partners' Collaboration to Provide Supportive Services to Enhance Job Retention	7
2.	Comprehensive Services to Facilitate Labor Market Success and Career Advancement	7
3.	Impact of WIOA Eligibility Criteria on Serving the Target Population	7
4.	Other Obstacles to Serving the Child Support Program Population	7
5.	Strategies to Motivate and Support Participation	7
6.	Opportunities for and Obstacles to Local Partnerships	8
B.	Plans for Building Successful Partnerships or Scaling up Existing Successful Partnerships	8
1.	Strategies to Support Participant Retention in Training Programs	8
2.	Existing, New, and Prospective Workforce and Training Partnerships	8
3.	Braiding Resources and Coordinating Service Delivery	8
4.	Coordination with Community-Based Organizations to Serve the Target Population	8
5.	Referral Processes and Systems	8
C.	Working with Merced County Department of Child Support Services to identify incentives to increase the success of NCPs' sustained participation in local workforce programs	9
III.	<b>Partnerships and Engagement to Support Greater Opportunities for Competitive Integrated Employment</b>	9
A.	AJCC Staff Knowledge and Training Needs about Serving Individuals with Intellectual or Developmental Disabilities and about Programs and Resources Available for the Target Population	9
B.	Planned Coordination with DOR Point of Contact Regarding Services and Resources for the Target Population Who Are Vocational Rehabilitation Consumers	10
C.	DOR Collaboration in Outreach to Employers and Partners to Support Opportunities for Individuals with Intellectual or Developmental Disabilities to Achieve Competitive Integrated Employment	10

IV.	<b>Collaborative Strategies to Strengthen Services for English Language Learners, Foreign Born Individuals and Refugees</b>	10
A.	Sharing Resources and Coordinating Services for the Target Population	10
B.	Increasing Access to Sector Pathway Programs	10
C.	Ensuring the Availability of Support Services	11
D.	Promoting Retention in Training, on the Job and in Career Path Progression	11
E.	Coordination and Alignment with Other Plans and Planning Partners	11
F.	Coordination with the National Farmworker Jobs Program	11
G.	Recognizing and Replicating Best Practices	12
V.	<b>Other Modifications to Merced County WDB's 2017-2021 Local Plan</b>	12
<b>SUPPLEMENTAL NARRATIVE</b>		<b>Page</b>
<b>Attachment A: Stakeholder and Community Outreach and Involvement in the Two-Year Review of the Local Plan</b>		14
1.	<b>Overall Strategy for Community Outreach and Stakeholder Engagement to Support Modification of the Local Plan</b>	14
A.	Approach to Conducting Population/Partnership-Specific Input Sessions	14
B.	Use of an Experienced Facilitator to Guide and Support Discussion	15
C.	Capturing Community and Stakeholder Input	15
D.	Harnessing Intelligence from On-Going Stakeholder Engagement	15
E.	Strengthening Communities of Support around Key Populations and Partnerships	16
2.	<b>Specific Efforts to Outreach to the Community and Engage Stakeholders in Discussions on Merced County WDB's New Partnership with CalFresh</b>	16
A.	Outreach Activities	17
B.	Efforts to Engage Required CalFresh Partners	17
C.	Communication with the State Board regarding CalFresh Forum	17
D.	Documentation of Efforts	17
3.	<b>Specific Efforts to Outreach to the Community and Engage Stakeholders in Discussions on Merced County WDB's New Partnership with Merced County Department of Child Support Services</b>	17
A.	Outreach Activities	18
B.	Efforts to Engage Required Child Support/Non-Custodial Parent Partners	18
C.	Communication with the State Board regarding Child Support/Non-Custodial Parent Forum	18
D.	Documentation of Efforts	18
4.	<b>Specific Efforts to Outreach to the Community and Engage Stakeholders in Discussions on Merced County WDB's New and Enhanced Partnership with Competitive Integrated Employment Initiative Partners</b>	18
A.	Outreach Activities	19
B.	Efforts to Engage Competitive Integrated Employment Partners and Key Stakeholders	19
C.	Communication with the State Board regarding Competitive Integrated Employment Forum	19
D.	Documentation of Efforts	19
5.	<b>Specific Efforts to Outreach to the Community and Engage Stakeholders in Discussions on Merced County WDB's New and Enhanced Partnership with Organizations Serving English Language Learners, Foreign Born Individuals and Refugees</b>	19
A.	Outreach Activities	20
B.	Efforts to Engage Partners and Key Stakeholders in Improving Services to English Language Learners, Foreign Born Individuals and Refugees	20
C.	Communication with the State Board regarding Forum on English Language Learners, Foreign Born Individuals and Refugees	20
D.	Documentation of Efforts	20

6.	<b>Efforts to Outreach to the Community and Engage Stakeholders in Discussions on Merced County WDB's Overall Approach to Workforce Programming and Planning through a General Community Forum</b>	20
	A. Outreach Activities	21
	B. Efforts to Engage Partners and Key Stakeholders in Providing Input on General Workforce System Planning	21
	C. Communication with the State Board regarding General Community Forum on Workforce System Planning	21
	D. Documentation of Efforts	21
7.	<b>Publication of Draft for Public Comment</b>	22
	A. Notice on the Availability of the Draft Plan for Public Review and Comment	22
	B. Opportunities and Mechanisms for Public Comment	22
	C. Results of Invitation for Public Comment	22
	D. Documentation of Efforts	22
<b>Attachment B: CalFresh Participants – Background and Assessment of Need</b>		23
1.	Overview of the Size and Characteristics of the Total CalFresh Recipient Population	23
2.	Overview of the Size and Characteristics of CalFresh E&T Participants	23
3.	Types of Workforce Services Needed by the Target Population	24
4.	Employment Barriers Experienced by the Target Population and Resources Available to Address Barriers	24
5.	Collaboration between the WDB and Merced County Human Services Agency	24
6.	Quality and Level of Intensity of Partner Services	25
7.	Information Sharing among Partners	25
<b>Attachment C: Unemployed, Underemployed and Payment Delinquent Non-Custodial Parents – Background and Assessment of Need</b>		26
1.	Areas of High Concentration	26
2.	Percentage of Noncustodial Parents Who Are Unemployed	26
3.	Percentage of Noncustodial Parents Who are Ex-Offenders	26
4.	Other Demographic Information	26
5.	Types of Services Needed by the Targeted Population	26
6.	Services Currently Being Provided and How the Workforce-Child Support Partnership Will Modify Types and Quantity of Services Provided	27
7.	Barriers Experienced by Child Support Program Participants and Resources to Address Barriers	27
8.	Planned Information Sharing to Evaluate Need	27
<b>Attachment D: Engagement with Local Competitive Integrated Employment Partners</b>		28
1.	Engagement with Local Partners to Increase Competitive Integrated Employment for Jobseekers with Intellectual or Developmental Disabilities	28
2.	Competitive Integrated Employment Partners (List)	28
3.	Planned Coordination with the CIE Local Planning Agreement Partners	29
<b>Attachment E: English Language Learners, Foreign Born Individuals and Refugees – Background and Assessment of Need</b>		30
1.	Overview of Target Population Demographics	30
2.	Barriers to Employment and Specialized Needs of the Target Population	30
3.	Identified Gaps in Workforce System Services for the Target Population	30
4.	Outreach and Recruitment Strategies for the Target Population	31
5.	Coordination and Alignment among Partners in Serving the Target Population	32
<b>Attachment F: Public Comments in Disagreement with Local Plan</b>		33
<b>Exhibits</b>		34

**MERCED COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD  
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PRINCIPAL NARRATIVE**

**I. COLLABORATION WITH THE CALFRESH EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING PROGRAM AND STRENGTHENED PARTNERSHIP WITH MERCED COUNTY HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY**

The Merced County Human Services Agency (HSA) is responsible for CalWORKS and other public welfare programs. HSA is a one-stop partner and, therefore, is part of the network of agencies that comprise the local workforce development delivery system. CalFresh participants are diverse. They include families, some led by single parents, and individuals. Many are unemployed, while others are low wage earners. Because the group consists of individuals with many distinct needs, participants are served by all types of education, social services and support organizations in the county, including the AJCC. Engagement with HSA leadership and staff during the recent planning process revealed the status of CalFresh Employment and Training (E&T) programs in Merced County. Representatives of HSA indicated that the County had not yet implemented a CalFresh E&T program. However, the County has examined and considered adopting the California Bridge Academies model. Prior to implementing the program, Merced County would be required to submit an annual CalFresh E&T Plan to the State Department of Social Services for approval. While a final decision to adopt the Bridge Program has not been made by HSA, there is ample evidence to suggest that the model, or one like it, would benefit CalFresh participants in Merced County. Madera, Fresno and San Joaquin counties have all implemented a CalFresh E&T Program, utilizing a third-party provider model that uses the Bridge Academy design. The three programs all leverage non-federal funds to access the 50% "rebate" for dollars spent on authorized activities. Social services agencies in Fresno and Madera counties contract with Reading and Beyond, a Fresno-based non-profit organization that was an early implementer of CalFresh E&T programs. In San Joaquin County, the Community Partnership for Families operates the Bridge program. Reading and Beyond created the Bridge Academy model, which is an 18-month voluntary program. Individuals and families are under no obligation to enroll in the program, and once enrolled, they are under no obligation to continue the program. Therefore, the one characteristic all participants have in common is a degree of motivation to improve prospects for themselves and their families. As evidenced by the following statistics, most participants must surmount significant challenges to succeed: 100% of families have incomes below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level; 24% of heads of household have not earned high school diplomas or GEDs; 18% have criminal records; 8% are single mothers; 2% are veterans; and 25% begin the program with no employment history. Although most participants obtain jobs long before the end of the 18-month program, they remain in the program because the objective is to ensure that positive outcomes are sustained. The program design is flexible and provides basic education, supportive services and training in demand occupations with the goal of the participant moving into a job, then a better job and, ultimately, a career. CalFresh E&T Programs in the three counties access training provided by local adult education programs and the community college system. In addition, these CalFresh E&T programs have all established linkages with their local workforce systems and AJCCs. Bridge Academy outcomes include the following: more than 80% of the primary wage-earners in enrolled families gain employment or attain material wage growth; more than 80% of them retain employment one year later; and about 30% achieve full self-reliance within just 18 months from enrollment. No matter Merced County's decision on how, ultimately, to implement the program, the Bridge Academy model demonstrates that a CalFresh E&T program could be implemented using a third-party model capable of accessing the program's 50% reimbursement of non-federal funds.

With regard to topics concerning alignment, coordination and integration, the responses below address approaches for the general CalFresh population, as the CalFresh E&T program has not yet been implemented. For additional information concerning background and needs assessment of participants in CalFresh and the CalFresh E&T Program in Merced County, please refer to descriptions provided in Attachment B.

**A. Braiding Resources and Coordinating Service Delivery for People Receiving CalFresh to Participate in Workforce Services, Sector Pathway Programs, Supportive Services and Retention Efforts:** Given the size and diversity of the population that participates in the CalFresh Program, individuals in this target group are served by many of the workforce system partners and allied stakeholders. Services begin with an assessment of participants' needs and evaluation of their background, experience and circumstances. A service strategy is customized to meet education, training and support needs. When CalFresh participants seek services through the AJCC, they are oriented not just to the services provided under WIOA, but to programs and resources available through the one-stop partners and other service agencies. A service plan is developed that addresses their full range of needs, but which has skills development and employment as primary goals. Many CalFresh participants are referred to education partners for training ranging from adult basic education to career

technical education courses that prepare them for jobs in local and regional target sectors. Linking participants to community-based resources for housing, medical, legal and other services is part of a braided strategy to ensure participants are equipped to complete training and succeed in the workplace.

**B. Workforce System Collaboration with Community Organizations Serving Specific CalFresh Populations:** For CalFresh participants, a wide range of strategies are used by the workforce system to coordinate and leverage resources from stakeholders of all types. Individuals with particular circumstances and barriers (e.g. job seekers with disabilities, formerly incarcerated individuals, migrant and seasonal farmworkers) will often qualify for specific types of funding and programs, and, in some cases, are referred by those programs to the AJCCs and other workforce system providers. County and state justice system agencies, WIOA Section 167 Farmworker programs, the State Department of Rehabilitation (DOR) and other disabilities services agencies, veterans' services programs, refugee support agencies and other organizations with a unique, population-specific focus are part of the workforce system's extended network. Referrals, co-enrollments and coordinated service delivery are commonplace among stakeholders. Stakeholders communicated that the linkages between HSA are particularly strong with the AJCC and with the Central Valley Opportunity Center (CVOC), the WIOA Section 167 grantee that serves Merced and adjacent counties.

**C. Workforce Services Available to People Receiving CalFresh That Are Funded by Local/Regional Partners:** The types of services available to CalFresh participants are outlined above. Again, the diversity of the population suggests that needs vary significantly. Stakeholders indicate that many in this target group have low levels of educational attainment and few skills with which to compete in the current labor market. The local education agencies that make up the Gateway Adult Education Network offer a wide array of basic education, literacy, ESL and career technical education programs to which CalFresh participants will be referred. Most organizations serving CalFresh individuals do not use CalFresh enrollment status as a basis for eligibility/participation and do not record this data. Therefore, baseline service levels for most education, training and support programs are not available. Some programs and providers do collect information regarding their participants' CalFresh status.

Even without the availability of baseline service levels, recent Biennial Modification planning and the community and stakeholder engagement process have made clear that there is potential to serve a greater number of CalFresh participants in workforce development and career technical education programs by the partners' working together to promote services to this population. Under the WDB's leadership, the one-stop partners will work together with HSA to identify and develop strategies to specifically market workforce and training programs for CalFresh participants.

**D. Partners' Roles in Helping Provide Services to and Integrating People Receiving CalFresh into Sector Pathway Programs:** The WDB, HSA and the full range of local workforce system partners are all committed to ensuring that participants' training and employment preparation are focused on demand occupations within priority sectors that hold promise for career advancement, wage gains and a family supporting income. Over the last several years, Merced County WDB has been intensively focused on providing career exploration, service planning, career guidance, case management, work-based learning and referrals to training that are sector pathway-focused, concentrating on demand industries that are creating jobs and are stimulating economic growth throughout the region. The WDB has begun a process of intensively engaging with businesses in key sectors with the goal not only to meet supply-side demand, but to create new employment opportunities for priority populations, such as individuals enrolled in CalFresh. Participants benefit from this focus by participating in services designed to qualify them for jobs that will lead to careers with good wages and benefits. Merced County WDB continues to lead discussions among the workforce system stakeholders, including our education partners, regarding the development of coursework and work-based learning strategies focused on regional sector pathways. Career pathway training available to CalFresh participants includes, but is not limited to, courses designed to meet changing needs in manufacturing; training to prepare workers for jobs in the growing transportation/logistics sector in the county; and a wide range of programs to prepare students for entry-level and higher positions in healthcare. As discussed in Section V of this narrative, pathways programs in addiction counseling and entrepreneurship are in development. Other providers in the county, such as CVOC, offer training for jobs in priority sectors, such as transportation, reporting starting wages of \$25/hr. or higher for truck drivers.

**E. Coordination among Partners to Provide Supportive Services to this Population and Facilitate Program Completion:** WIOA, CalFresh, the Rehabilitation Act and many other programs for which some CalFresh participants may qualify allow a portion of funds to be used to provide a variety of support that enables participation in services and training and successful transition to employment. For individuals needing supportive services (e.g. housing, transportation, childcare) that may exceed the resources available through public workforce and education programs, referrals are made to public and non-profit providers throughout the county. As described above, the delivery of services to CalFresh and other workforce system participants begins with assessment and service planning. These services are critical in determining support needs

and form the basis for designing a program of support that will ensure a participant's success. Additional information on supportive services is provided in Attachment B.

***F. Strategies to Retain Participants in Regional Sector Pathway Programs and Employment:*** AJCC staff and representatives of our workforce services partners (e.g. EDD, DOR, local education agencies) orient all prospective candidates to workforce, education and training services that are available to support their career goals. This is followed by assessment and service planning that not only ensure that suitable workforce services are identified, but that customers understand the actions required to advance on a career path that will pay family sustaining wages. These include gaining work experience in an occupation and, frequently, continuing education and training to secure credentials that businesses recognize and value. Services, including counseling and case management, provide encouragement to motivate participants to complete training and pursue their career objectives.

## **II. PARTNERSHIP WITH MERCED COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SUPPORT SERVICES**

The workforce system's partnership with the Merced County Department of Child Support Services (DCSS) represents the enhancement of an existing relationship among the WDB, the AJCCs and Child Support. Referrals are made from Child Support to the AJCCs during a "payment delinquent" non-custodial parent's early stage of arrears. While this approach is yielding some success, as a result of the WDB's recent stakeholder engagement process, DCSS and the WDB have developed an MOU that outlines a structured relationship for cross-referrals. The WDB, DCSS and the entire network of one-stop and community partners that comprise the workforce system are all fully committed to building a strong partnership to improve employment outcomes for NCPs with child support orders. For background information on the target group and an assessment of need, please refer to descriptions provided in Attachment C.

### ***A. Existing Workforce and Education Program Partnerships***

1. Partners' Collaboration to Provide Supportive Services to Enhance Job Retention: The population comprising non-custodial parents with child support orders, who are unemployed, underemployed or payment delinquent, is extremely diverse and experiences a vast array of circumstances. Some individuals are completely disconnected from the labor market, having never worked a traditional job and possessing few marketable skills. Others may be formerly incarcerated individuals, including those who are recently released and, therefore, unemployed. Still others may be English language learners, persons with disabilities, disconnected youth or older workers. Some, as a result of their circumstances, are homeless, lack transportation, and need a combination of services to meet basic needs. The common thread among them is their status with regard to child support payments, employment and the ability to command family supporting wages within the marketplace. Given the diversity of the population and the spectrum of support needs that is likely to exist, AJCC staff will work individually with each non-custodial parent to determine supportive service needs. Staff is experienced in assessing needs at various levels and in surveying the community for resources. Foremost on the list of support services to be addressed are those corresponding to fundamental needs such as food, housing and clothing. While WIOA and other federally-funded programs that comprise the one-stop partners may be able to make support funds available on a one-time basis or for short-term interventions to meet these needs, AJCC staff work to develop linkages with local organizations, many of which are faith-based, to address these needs. AJCC and workforce system partner staff will also work with NCP customers to determine if there may be resources within their personal networks (e.g. family members, friends) that may be able to assist with fundamental support needs. Other "stabilizing" services may include counseling and health services, which can be obtained through referrals to a wide range of agencies, including behavioral and other public health services and private, non-profit and community resources, including a network of community clinics. Support services that enable participation in training and a successful transition to employment generally include assistance with transportation, child care, work-related clothing, tools and similar services. Such services are available from WIOA, through other one-stop/AJCC partners (when NCPs are co-enrolled in these programs) and through various community agencies, such as the D Street Shelter and the Merced County Rescue Mission. To build a stronger network of support for this population, case managers from all organizations will confer regularly to ensure that the full range of customers' support needs continue to be met throughout program participation and in the months following employment. The WDB will lead these efforts.

2. Comprehensive Services to Facilitate Labor Market Success and Career Advancement: As indicated above, AJCC staff and representatives of our workforce services partners (e.g. EDD, DOR, local education agencies) orient all prospective candidates to workforce, education and training services that are available to support their career goals. This is followed by assessment and service planning that not only ensure that suitable workforce services are identified, but that customers understand the actions required to advance on a career path that will pay family sustaining wages. These include gaining work experience in an occupation and, for many, continuing their education and training after starting a job to secure

credentials that businesses recognize and value. Staff will work with each NCP to develop short-, mid- and long-range employment goals. Based on the child support obligations of targeted NCPs, the partners recognize that they have a need to identify employment paying wages sufficient to meet these obligations and provide enough remaining income so that the NCP can support him/herself. DCSS and other stakeholders and allies strongly emphasized the need to concentrate on jobs paying a living wage. Therefore, staff may recommend that NCPs consider employment options where an entry-level worker can earn relatively good wages after minimal training or while learning on the job. Among the regional priority industries offering such opportunities are construction, manufacturing and transportation and logistics. Once the NCP is working and meeting support obligations, s/he can take advantage of training programs that will offer opportunities for even higher wages in these industries or in other sectors, such as healthcare. Providers offering training at little or no cost include the educational institutions that comprise the Gateway Adult Education Network: Dos Palos Oro Loma Joint Unified School District; Gustine Unified School District; Le Grand Union High School District; Los Banos Unified School District; Mariposa County Unified School District; Merced Community College District; Merced County Office of Education and Merced Union High School District.

3. Impact of WIOA Eligibility Criteria on Serving the Target Population: Merced County DCSS and other system partners that serve targeted NCPs (e.g. social services, workforce development) indicated that two features of WIOA eligibility criteria may impact the ability of NCPs to participate in federally-funded workforce services. These are registration for selective service and documentation of right to work. With regard to selective service, local boards can review circumstances and have the authority to “forgive” the non-compliance with registration requirements, allowing non-registrants to participate in WIOA. The state has recently published guidance on required collection of right to work documentation for various services under WIOA. While NCPs lacking documentation could use resource information at the center and be referred to non-federally-funded programs for assistance, the AJCC would be unable to provide such individuals WIOA individualized services.

4. Other Obstacles to Serving the Child Support Program Population: Local Child Support professionals and others that work with the NCP population have indicated that the only significant obstacle to providing workforce services to the Child Support Program population is individual NCPs themselves. Based on workforce-child support pilots that have been implemented elsewhere (such as Los Angeles County) and on their own experience working with this population, stakeholders anticipate that many NCPs referred to WIOA/AJCC services will be interested in the opportunity to prepare for jobs that can lead to family-supporting wages and in DCSS “incentives,” which are described below. Still, others will not initially be convinced that any “public program” to which Merced County DCSS is making referrals would be beneficial, as they have a negative perception of the agency. According to stakeholders, many individual that are in significant arrears on child support payment are so distrustful of Child Support Services and “the government” in general that they work exclusively in the underground economy, where they pay no taxes and their funds, however limited, remain out of reach. All agree on the long-term ill effects this has on NCPs.

Key to making the new partnership work will be the stakeholders’ developing and promoting messages to NCPs that are benefits-focused and clearly demonstrates that workforce services offer a path to in-demand jobs, careers and good wages. Merced County DCSS leadership and staff acknowledged that perceptions and messaging are core issues and that altering perceptions about the child support agency is critical. Child Support officials indicated that the department is working diligently to address perception problems affecting NCPs. A critical element of new, more positive messaging is DCSS’s focus on providing resources to assist NCPs in meeting their child support obligations and in improving their own quality of life. The enhanced partnership with the workforce system will be a feature of this new benefits-oriented messaging.

5. Strategies to Motivate and Support Participation: Merced County Department of Child Support Services, like local child support agencies (LCSAs) throughout the state, acknowledges that its first priority is to ensure that the county’s children are financially supported and well cared for. To this end, LCSAs have at their disposal a series of “enforcement tools,” such a revocation of drivers’ and professional licenses, attachment of wages, and imposing liens. Conversely, there are several “motivation tools” that Merced County DCSS is willing to utilize to encourage NCPs to take advantage of workforce programs and services. Among these are: restoration of licenses; revisiting support orders to ensure they reflect the current circumstances of the NCP; and deferring or lessening the requirement for payment during the time in which NCPs are engaged in workforce services, training and job search. Officials from Merced County DCSS have repeatedly emphasized the department’s willingness to assist NCPs in meeting their obligations. Child Support Services is prepared to use the “incentives” described above to encourage NCP’s efforts to gain skills, engage in job search, and be successful in their careers.

The WDB, Child Support Services and other stakeholders all agree that the best tool to motivate and support NCPs’ engagement with the workforce system is providing good and accurate information about child support obligations; payment options; labor market and employment opportunities; and services that can lead to well-paying jobs with career ladder

potential. Again, under the newly enhanced partnership with the workforce system, creating clear, positive messaging will be of paramount importance. The other major factor that may serve as an incentive is ensuring a warm hand-off between the two systems. Under a new MOU, opportunities and procedures for directly connecting NCPs to the AJCCs and community-based organizations are being clearly defined.

6. Opportunities for and Obstacles to Local Partnerships: No significant obstacles have been identified to the stakeholders' engaging in a meaningful and productive partnership.

***B. Plans for Building Successful Partnerships or Scaling up Existing Successful Partnerships***

1. Strategies to Support Participant Retention in Training Programs: Communication and the ability to make referrals from the workforce system currently exist, but these fall short of a comprehensive and unified approach. Under a more structured partnership, Merced County WDB and DCSS have developed and are preparing to execute a MOU that will frame roles, responsibilities and processes associated with their enhanced partnership. Among the provisions of the agreement is a commitment to maintain communication on the services and outcomes of participants, thereby encouraging both agencies to support participants in achieving their employment and wage goals. Providing supportive services and leveraging "incentive tools" from Child Support Services will be key strategies to encourage participants' retention in training and services. As we do with other job seekers, AJCC staff and partners will assist customers in devising long-range career plans, which may include multi-year, multi-step processes to gain work experience and develop high-demand technical skills. The planning process will provide a "road map" for participants to progress along a career path on which experience and attainment of skills and credentials will increase their earning power and enable them to earn family sustaining wages. The partners have examined existing models, such as one successfully implemented in Los Angeles County, to inform the content and provisions of the MOU, along with processes for achieving successful referrals.

2. Existing, New, and Prospective Workforce and Training Partnerships: As described above, a working referral relationship already exists between the workforce system and DCSS. However, a newly draft MOU provides structure and establishes processes that that will improve the effectiveness of the relationship. The MOU outlines the purpose of the agreement, roles of each department, shared responsibilities and confidentiality requirements. Incorporated into the agreement are: provisions for referrals of NPCs from Child Support to the AJCC and from the AJCC to Child Support; a consent and release form pertaining to sharing specific types of information between the two agencies; and mechanisms for AJCCs to report workforce program activities and employment outcomes to Child Support. The Merced County partners project that the MOU will be finalized and executed no later than March, 2019.

3. Braiding Resources and Coordinating Service Delivery: By entering into a partnership with the WDB, the Child Support system immediately becomes connected to the entire workforce system, including the WIOA-mandated one-stop partners and a host of local government programs, community agencies, and faith-based organizations that are stakeholders in and contributors to workforce service delivery. AJCC staff will function as the principal case managers for NCPs enrolled in workforce programs, but will make referrals and promote co-enrollments, as appropriate and necessary, to training and service partners, thereby accessing additional resources.

4. Coordination with Community-Based Organizations to Serve the Target Population: Given the diverse nature of the target population and the fact that NCPs generally do not identify themselves as such, local CBOs are not aware of the number individuals from this population that they are serving. This is true of the WDB itself, as AJCC staff is often unaware that a customer has an order for payment of child support. Staff indicates that an issue signaling payment delinquency is a customer having a suspended drivers' license. The most prominent local resource for male NCP's is Operated through Merced County HAS. The "All Dads Matter" fatherhood program provides a variety of counseling and support services. These include a "boot camp for dads," which is a one-day, three-hour workshop for first time or expectant dads. Using a unique man to man approach, veteran dads and their babies orient rookie dads who are expecting a new baby. Topics include: perspectives on fatherhood; supporting mom in her role as a new mother; crying baby checklist; baby safety; managing "New Daddy Stress"; and self-care. Also available is "Leadership for Life" series of workshops where men will develop skills to navigate, communicate, and advocate for themselves and their children. Dads are invited to: receive honest information and peer support; join other dads at "Hands-on Applications" sessions; view interactive videos and practice communicating in a safe and supportive environment; take field trips with other dads; and build one's own resource "tool box." A fathers' support group meets weekly. Merced County is also home to a companion "All Moms Matter" support group.

5. Referral Processes and Systems: The Merced County partners plan to implement a structured referral process and forms like the ones used elsewhere in the state. The parties to the MOU will follow a referral process where Child Support communicates with a designated single point of contact (liaison) at the AJCC about customers being referred. Child Support will also assign a liaison as a single point of content. Child Support will provide customers a referral form that identifies them to AJCC staff as Child Support participants. When a referred customer enrolls at the AJCC, center staff will notify Child

Support by email of the enrollment and workforce activities, providing updates no less than quarterly. This email notification will include information that communicates that the referred individual has registered or enrolled and the services he or she is participating in. It will also include a consent and release form signed by the participant. While it is anticipated that most referrals will come from Child Support to the AJCC, referrals from the center to Child Support may also occur (in a case, for instance, where a participant needs to get a drivers' license reinstated). Staff will email referral forms to DCSS for enrolled customers only. The role of the court system in the referral process has yet to be determined.

***C. Working with the Local Child Support Agency to Identify Incentives to Increase the Success of Non-Custodial Parents Sustained Participation in Local Workforce Programs***

Tools and incentives to promote participation and retention are those described under item II.A.5, above.

### **III. PARTNERSHIPS AND ENGAGEMENT TO SUPPORT GREATER OPPORTUNITIES FOR COMPETITIVE INTEGRATED EMPLOYMENT**

During the course of reviewing and modifying our 2017-2021 Local Plan and as a result of our community and stakeholder engagement process, Merced County WDB and partners within the local workforce system have developed a clear understanding of the goals set at the state level by the State Department of Rehabilitation (DOR), the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) and the State Department of Education (DOE) in connection with their agreement to increase competitive integrated employment (CIE) opportunities for individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities. We became familiar with the CIE Blueprint and with the guidance the state agencies have provided to their local counterparts with regard to the development of Local Partnership Agreements (LPAs) to support the expanded use of CIE throughout California. In October 2018, the Merced County WDB convened stakeholders from the disability services community and other interested parties in a forum focused on use of CIE. Among those invited were representatives of the local agencies that represent the state CIE partners: the Merced Branch of the San Joaquin Valley DOR District Office; the Central Valley Regional Center, which serves Merced County; and the Merced County Office of Education, along with other local education agency core partners. An LPA for Merced County has been completed. An LPA has been executed for Merced County. The Competitive Integrated Employment LPA has been established for the purpose of improving service levels and employment opportunities for individuals with intellectual disabilities (ID) and developmental disabilities (DD) through focusing on person-centered planning, streamlining the provision of services for the target population, and building creative collaborations among the core LPA partners (signature parties to the agreement), community partners (such as the WDB, CVOC and the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce) and businesses. The local LPA has been built on a strong foundation. More than 30 years ago, the Merced County Transition Council (MCTC) was established as a platform for communication among agencies in the disability services network, including all of the current LPA core partners and many of the LPA's community partners. The group meets eight times per year to share information and identify resources and solutions that will achieve better labor market results for individuals with disabilities. The LPA advances the MCTC's work, which has focused on education and employment programs. The LPA defines the roles and responsibilities of all partners, including community partners. Referral processes among partners and stakeholders are described in detail, including the process by which referrals can be made to the AJCC. In addition, the LPA specifies services that WorkNet of Merced County offers to individuals with disabilities, ages 18 and older (e.g. career guidance; skills training; job readiness skills; job placement assistance). The LPA does not specifically state the role of the WDB, the AJCCs or the workforce system in supporting DOR's business outreach efforts in connection with the CIE initiative. For additional information on the LPA partners and anticipated plans to increase the availability of CIE in Merced County, please refer to descriptions provided in Attachment D.

***A. AJCC Staff Knowledge and Training Needs about Serving Individuals with Intellectual or Developmental Disabilities and about Programs and Resources Available for the Target Population:***

Both Merced County WDB/AJCC staff and managers and staff representing the system partners have expressed interest in training from the LPA partners about the workforce-related needs and barriers of individuals with ID and DD, as the workforce system, overall, has limited experience working with this target group. While the local board and its partners have significant experience serving individuals with disabilities, they acknowledge the need for CIE-specific training. While much of the training and information needed by stakeholders will likely come through the MCTC, the partners identified issues concerning mental health as a topic for additional training. State guidance on the CIE initiative indicates that DOR and State Board leadership will ensure that training is available for AJCC staff and that the DOR District Office will assign a point of contact to support the workforce system's CIE activities. Once this occurs, Merced County WDB will work with state and local CIE partners to secure training for AJCC frontline staff and system stakeholders.

**B. Planned Coordination with DOR Point of Contact Regarding Services and Resources for the Target Population Who Are Vocational Rehabilitation Consumers:** Merced County WDB has not yet been assigned a DOR point of contact for the CIE expansion initiative. We intend to work closely with our DOR-assigned contact to engage with contractors that serve the target population and to coordinate our services with the LPA partners.

**C. DOR Collaboration in Outreach to Employers and Partners to Support Opportunities for Individuals with Intellectual or Developmental Disabilities to achieve Competitive Integrated Employment:** Merced County WDB and AJCC staff currently collaborates with DOR to serve customers with disabilities. Supporting DOR's and the LPA's business outreach efforts to expand the use of CIE would be a natural extension of our current, productive working relationship. While DOR has not communicated to the WDB its goals or its approach to increasing CIE opportunities through the LPA, we envision being able to support DOR's efforts in several ways. WorkNet Merced currently serves many individuals with disabilities, including some with ID/DD. Based on this experience, the AJCCs are prepared to work in partnership with DOR and the LPAs partners in developing a comprehensive messaging strategy to inform local businesses about the advantages of hosting work-based learning and hiring employees within a competitive integrated employment framework. The WDB has been effective in engaging local businesses within priority sectors in discussions on how the AJCC, local education providers and the entire workforce system can be more responsive to the needs of companies to secure job ready talent. As a result of this engagement with employers, the system has become more business-responsive and key sectors are coming to rely more on the public workforce system to meet their hiring and training needs. The same strategies utilized to target employers in key industries can be used to engage with business of all types and sizes on hiring individuals with ID/DD and the expansion of CIE. For example, business champions would be used to promote the initiative. The Merced County WDB is also prepared to assist the LPA partners in outreaching directly to local businesses to promote CIE. This process may include contacting the corporate offices of larger companies to educate and inform human resources decision-makers about CIE. It will also include expanded efforts to work with small- and medium-sized businesses that are local to Merced County. Frank and clear information on expectations in working with the target group will be crucial to building trust among businesses, as will explanations of how job coaches and other supports can help to ensure that placements are successful. Following DOR's assignment of a CIE liaison, which we anticipate will occur in early 2019, the Merced County WDB will work with DOR and the LPA partners to define our specific role in the CIE business outreach process.

#### **IV. COLLABORATIVE STRATEGIES TO STRENGTHEN SERVICES FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS, FOREIGN BORN INDIVIDUALS AND REFUGEES**

In Merced County, of the approximately 272,673 people who call the county home, nearly sixty percent is Hispanic or Latino and one in every four individuals is foreign-born, including not only immigrants from Mexico and Central America, but immigrants from Southeast Asia, such as the Hmong. English language learners (ELLs), foreign-born individuals, refugees and immigrants comprise a significant portion of the county's population and of its current and future workforce. They are critical to every aspect of the local economy, working across all key industries and providing the foundation for the agriculture industry, which remains crucial to the local and regional prosperity. Investments in this target group are essential to the well-being and economic vitality of the county. The WDB understands that ELLs are a diverse population with a wide range of needs. Some individuals are just learning English, while others have developed a level of fluency that enables them to take advantage of training and upskilling opportunities that will make them candidates for jobs in the region's priority sectors, which often provide better wages and career advancement potential than jobs in other industries. For background information on the target group and an assessment of need, please refer to descriptions provided in Attachment E.

**A. Sharing Resources and Coordinating Services for the Target Population:** The narrative that follows describes the various ways that stakeholders in Merced County work in collaboration and partnership to address the workforce needs of immigrants, refugees and English language learners. Merced County WDB plays a central role in coordinating agencies, programs and resources.

**B. Increasing Access to Sector Pathway Programs:** Stakeholders continue to emphasize the importance of English language skills acquisition and the positive effects of English fluency on one's earning potential and ability to advance in a career path. English-as-a-Second Language (ESL) training is available through agencies that comprise the adult education consortium and through local community-based organizations. While assisting English language learners in improving their fluency and attaining academic credentials is fundamental to increasing their prospects for well-paid jobs, for most in this target group, the need to earn a family-supporting income is critical. Merced County workforce system partners (including the AJCC, education providers and CBOs) recognize that this target group needs long-term interventions that will include on-ramps and off-ramps from education to better jobs and careers. While many immigrants in Merced County have worked

in agriculture, workforce system partners are successful in assisting job seekers find entry-level employment in other priority sector careers. Industries where immigrants and those learning English are experiencing the most success include construction, manufacturing, and transportation/logistics, all of which offer a path to good wages with minimal time spent in formal training. Stakeholders cited jobs in transportation/trucking and the building trades as providing good opportunities to earn family-supporting wages.

**C. Ensuring the Availability of Support Services:** The AJCC staff assesses each participant's need for services to support their participation in training and job search and their success on the job. The target population is diverse, ranging from refugees who completed college in their home countries, to immigrants with low literacy in their native languages. And, while economic circumstances may vary, the vast majority of individuals in the target group are low income and they generally have limited skills with which to compete in the labor market. Because of limited resources and the frequent need to participate in multiple activities and services, access to various forms of support can be critical. In addition to utilizing a portion of Merced County's WIOA Title I allocation to provide a variety of support, AJCC staff works closely with partners to secure support services for customers. Central Valley Opportunity Center (CVOC), the local WIOA Section 167 grantee, is a principal provider of support services to address basic individual and family-sustaining needs for workforce program participants. CVOC's services are described under item F below. Other forms of support (e.g. translation, resettlement, specialized services for refugees) may be provided by various organizations with which Merced County WDB, the AJCCs and workforce system partners collaborate, such as the International Rescue Committee, Golden Valley Health Center, Merced County Community Action Agency, and the Mexican Consulate. Many of the one-stop partner programs (e.g. Rehabilitation Act, Older Americans Act) also offer a range of supportive services to individuals enrolled in their programs. For those who qualify and need services from those programs, referrals resulting in co-enrollment may be made.

**D. Promoting Retention in Training, on the Job and in Career Path Progression:** As suggested above, the keys to promoting the progression of ELL and immigrant job seekers into self-sustaining and family-supporting careers are: career information; career planning; and the availability of flexible and modular services offering a variety of on- and off-ramps. Collaborating across organizations and disciplines, the workforce system partners and allied stakeholders all recognize the need to balance the immediate income needs of the target group with their need to build language and technical skills that will qualify them for well-paid jobs. Developing this balance starts by making available comprehensive information about the labor market and careers in the region. Using this information, stakeholders assist customers in devising long-range career plans, which may include multi-year, multi-step processes to gain work experience and develop technical skills. The more flexible and diverse services are, the greater the likelihood that participants will remain engaged or periodically re-engage over the long-term. Community-based and education partners offer strategic resources for such engagement. The availability of training and services during the evening, on weekend, during agricultural "slow-down" periods and at remote locations all contribute to customers taking advantage of services over time.

**E. Coordination and Alignment with Other Plans and Planning Partners:** The local workforce services plan most closely aligned to the mission and objectives of the Merced County WDB and the local workforce system is the Three Year Plan of the Gateway Adult Education Network, which serves Merced and Mariposa counties. The Consortium's plan update provides the following information with regard to the ELL and immigrant target population:

- A priority for the region is meeting students' needs for basic education services, including ESL, GED instruction and programs leading to a high school diploma.
- The majority of districts in the consortium offer ESL classes to enhance English language learners' proficiency and allow them to advance in their careers.
- Programs for immigrants in citizenship, ESL and workforce preparation are a regional priority.

**F. Coordination with the National Farmworker Jobs Program:** Central Valley Opportunity Center (CVOC) is the WIOA 167 Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker (MSFW) Program grantee for a three-county region including Madera, Merced and Stanislaus counties. CVOC receives funding from several major federal and state funding sources. The organization's services address an extensive list of priorities for the farmworker population and others who need assistance. These include, but are not limited to: vocational training, ESL, GED instruction, on-the-job training, job placement assistance, training-related support services, counseling, case management, a Summer Migrant Youth Project, rental assistance, emergency shelter, emergency food assistance, translation services, referrals for immigration services, assistance in applying for social services, transportation, and energy assistance. Merced County WDB has executed an MOU with CVOC, outlining processes for the mutual referral of customers and agreement with regard to the sharing of data, as appropriate and permissible. The MOU also acknowledges that participants may be co-enrolled into workforce development, training and support programs offered by the AJCC and CVOC and identifies processes to address opportunities for co-case management. In addition to working together to serve and co-case manage job seekers, CVOC leadership and staff are

connected to the local workforce system by participating in partner meetings, staff development and cross-training events, workshops, and other events to ensure that eligible MSFW participants have access to the full array of available AJCC services.

**G. Recognizing and Replicating Best Practices:** While strong, effective practices for collaboration and service delivery exist throughout the county and among many providers, Merced County WDB is committed to continuously improving workforce and support services for the immigrant community. As a result of the community and stakeholder engagement process, several opportunities for improvement were identified. These include the following efforts: making available a broader array of support services, as the target population has extensive and wide ranging needs, spanning basic services, such as housing and transportation, to multi-shift childcare to immigration and acculturation support; developing services that address the mindset and perspective of immigrants that will enable them to understand available opportunities and to set goals to take advantage of them; and promoting the availability of training, employment and support services through the use of success stories that feature role models and champions that represent the immigrant community. The partners will address these issues as part of their work on meeting local plan goals.

## V. OTHER MODIFICATIONS TO MERCED COUNTY WDB 2017-2021 LOCAL PLAN

In conducting the biennial review of Merced County WDB's 2017-2021 Local Plan, the leadership team carefully examined the goals and priorities that were expressed in the plan. While significant progress has been made on many of the goals and the general focus of the plan remains the same, as a result of this review, we have reorganized our goals and priorities so that the more closely align with state and regional goals. Updated goals and priorities are as follows:

**Build Cross-System Data Capacity:** Through a partnership with the California Central Valley Economic Development Corporation to develop a business-centered web portal, the local boards of the Central Valley will be able to interact more effectively with both businesses and with our economic development counterparts. The system creates shared marketing around business attraction and layoff aversion by serving as a single "point of entry" for economic and workforce development information and services, including best practices. Access to all services in the San Joaquin Valley and Associated Counties Regional Planning Unit's ten counties will be available via the portal. Business services strategies and outcomes will be shared through interactions on the portal.

**Focus on Career Pathways:** Merced County has concentrated on working with businesses, education, economic development and other partners on building and expanding career pathway programs that address employment opportunities linked to local and regional priority sectors. Needs within these sectors are ever-evolving and continue to drive our efforts in developing and implementing career pathway strategies. A current priority is our focus on addressing the opioid crisis through a U.S. Department of Labor grant that is providing resources for training counselors to serve those affected by the crisis. Counselors will be trained and follow a career pathway to elevate from entry-level positions to ones requiring additional education and experience. Yet another innovative approach to career pathways is Merced County's entrepreneurship and microenterprise training. Through partnerships with economic development, adult education, and the Small Business Development Center in Merced, the WDB will lead the process to develop curriculum that takes potential entrepreneurs from concept to a functioning business and, possibly, beyond to further investments. Merced County has applied for state grant funding to support the development of this unique pathway approach. A sub-set of this pathway strategy would be to promote entrepreneurial options for individuals with disabilities.

**Emphasize Earn and Learn Strategies to Connect Job Seekers to Employment and Training Opportunities:** In our 4-year plan, Merced County set goals with regard to using work-based learning/earn and learn strategies more effectively. We have exceeded these goals by reaching high levels of performance using on-the-job training (OJT), expanded subsidized employment (ESE), pre-apprenticeship training and apprenticeship models. In the current program year, Merced County WorkNet has already matched the previous full year's number of OJTs, as staff has developed effective messaging and service strategies to communicate to both job seekers and businesses the unique value of this training modality. In our partnership with the Merced County Human Services Agency, WorkNet has, in the first half of the program year, used all available ESE funds to link CalWORKS customers to employment. Significant progress has been made toward increasing the use of pre-apprenticeship training and apprenticeships to prepare job seekers for careers in the construction trades. In collaboration with Merced College, the WDB is operating training programs to introduce jobseekers to opportunities in the trades. By continuing to develop our relationship with the Building Trades Council and the local Laborer's Union, we are working to fill needs for apprentices, as construction projects rise in the valley. Such projects include the creation of one of the largest solar farms in the world outside of Los Banos and the reengineering of the former Castle Air Force Base into the inland Port of California as part of an agreement with the Port of Los Angeles.

**Enhance Service Integration and Braid Resources:** In addition to our business-focused web portal, Merced County WDB is focused on several initiatives aimed at greater integration and alignment with local and regional stakeholders. These include, but are not limited to:

- Partner with HSA, EDD, and economic development to develop single point of entry for businesses into the workforce system. To reduce duplication of effort and achieve a more unified approach, the partners will: create common marketing materials; use a common CRM tool; align case management processes; use a common referral portal; utilize Econovue to spot troubling trends with local businesses; and develop procedures and teams to assist struggling businesses to avert potential layoffs.
- Hold biweekly meetings with Merced College and other education partners to maintain momentum in the development and implementation of sector pathway training.
- Convene a partner workgroup to develop and adopt common referral and assessment forms and processes.
- Create an annual report directed to members of the Workforce Development Board and Merced County Board of Supervisors that provides “year in review” highlights and communicates expectations for the year ahead.
- Provide more resources and information for small businesses. These will include five webinars a year, hosted by the California Employers Association, to help guide budding and established entrepreneurs on a variety of topics that affect their businesses. The WDB will also promote SBDC workshops.
- Lead the Disability Task Force for Merced County, a goal of which is the development of a directory of services available for those with disabilities.
- Implement community access points at partner facilities, focusing initially on libraries.
- Incorporate greater use of technology into the delivery of services, including the use of LRNG to develop an assessment and training tool for basic skills that can be accessed anywhere, not just in career centers.
- Participate more actively in chamber of commerce activities throughout the county.
- Partner with County Probation to serve re-entry clients
- Incorporate Ticket to Work in the local workforce system, bringing Social Security recipients back into the workforce

**Ensure Area-Wide Coverage and Engagement:** Outside the city boundaries of Merced and a couple other main population centers, many Merced County residents live in small towns and rural communities. The WDB is committed to increasing awareness in these communities about workforce services as well as improving their accessibility. Our efforts in support of this goal will include hosting local “town hall forums,” reaching out to rural CBOs, and hosting job fairs throughout the county. The WDB plans to hold annual town hall forums in each of the five supervisorial districts to ensure constant community feedback from every corner of the county. In addition, we intend to meet with partners serving rural communities, such as representatives of the Central Valley Occupational Center, to work together on meeting the workforce needs of rural residents, including migrant and seasonal farmworkers. The WDB will also work with local partners in communities outside those served by our two AJCCs to reach out to local businesses and hold job fairs in remote areas of the county.

**Expand Business Engagement to Support Sector Strategies:** A central goal of the Merced County WDB is to work with industry and public partners regarding their key concerns and to maintain an ongoing dialog. In late 2018, the WDB convened leaders from the healthcare industry to discuss their pressing needs, including, but not limited to, those concerning workforce development. Based on the success of this engagement, in 2019, the WDB will host industry summits with leaders from other priority sectors including: manufacturing, construction and agriculture.

**Increase Support Services Capacity for Targeted Populations:** To make services more accessible to the many immigrants residing in Merced County, the WDB plans to make translation services more readily available for customers whose primary languages are Spanish, Hmong, Thai, Laotian, Portuguese or French. These services will be provided by WDB staff or other county resources.

## SUPPLEMENTAL NARRATIVE

### STAKEHOLDER AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND INVOLVEMENT IN THE TWO-YEAR REVIEW OF THE LOCAL PLAN

Merced County WDB initiated a process for the biennial review and modification of our local plan that involved not only management and staff of our agency, but a wide range of workforce system partners, local stakeholders and representatives of the communities that we serve. The content of Merced County WDB's Local Plan Modification has been significantly influenced by organizations and individuals that are committed to developing and maintaining a well prepared and capable workforce.

#### 1. **Overall Strategy for Community Outreach and Stakeholder Engagement to Support Modification of the Local Plan**

The primary method of obtaining community and stakeholder input on the Local Plan Modification was to invite participation in a series of five public forums. Four of the forums were focused on the principal partnerships and populations to be addressed by the Plan Modification and the fifth was a general community forum, during which participants were asked to share ideas and recommendations on priorities that should shape workforce development service delivery in Merced County.

At the opening of each forum, participants were informed of the session's objectives, which were:

- To give stakeholders and the community the opportunity to weigh in on the needs of the target group being discussed;
- To learn from providers, stakeholders and customers about best practices in meeting service needs;
- To identify gaps in services; and
- To hear recommendations for improving the content, availability and quality of services for the target group under consideration.

#### A. ***Approach to Conducting Population/Partnership-Specific Input Sessions:***

For each of the five (5) forums, an agenda was published in advance to inform stakeholders and members of the community what, specifically, would be discussed. The sessions were, generally, scheduled for two hours. The forums addressed the following topics:

1. Collaborating with CalFresh Employment and Training Programs
2. Improving Services to Individuals with Disabilities through Competitive Integrated Employment

3. Improving Coordination and Collaboration among Stakeholders to Strengthen Services to English Language Learners, Foreign Born Individuals and Refugees
4. Strengthening Partnerships with Local Child Support Agencies to Serve Non-Custodial Parents
5. Community Forum on Local Workforce Planning

The general community forum was held after regular work hours to enable members of the community to participate. The session was held in the evening at the Merced Adult School facility near downtown Merced. As the event was coupled with a well-publicized mini job fair, the WDB was able to attract a large group of individuals from the general public and secure participation in the forum of individuals that were actually looking for work and of representatives of local businesses that were hiring.

***B. Use of an Experienced Facilitator to Guide and Support Discussion***

To promote neutrality and encourage open input during the forums, Merced County WDB engaged David Shinder to serve as facilitator. David has more than 35 years of experience in the field of workforce development and has facilitated hundreds of forums and planning sessions in his career. He is the principal author of the Merced Valley and Adjacent Counties (SJVAC) 2017-2021 Regional Plan and has extensive past experience working in Merced County and throughout the Central Valley.

***C. Capturing Community and Stakeholder Input:***

To promote contribution to the planning process by a wide range of organizations and points of view, Merced County WDB used several methods to inform stakeholders and the community about the forums. These included:

- Direct email to partners and a broad array of stakeholders, including organizations listed in the State Board's Directory of Planning Partners
- Posting of meeting notices in the AJCCs
- Posting of the agenda and meeting notices on the Merced County WDB website
- Posting of meeting announcements on the State Board's website (following e-mail notification to designated State Board staff)

The forums were audio recorded and the recordings were used as the basis for developing summary notes for each forum. Meeting notes are attached as exhibits to this Plan Modification.

***D. Harnessing Intelligence From On-Going Stakeholder Engagement***

The forums held as part of the process to modify and update Merced County WDB's 2017-2021 Local Plan represent just a small part of the many ways in which the local board gathers stakeholder input on an on-going basis. Examples of other stakeholder engagement activities include individual meetings with leadership from partner agencies (e.g. HSA, DCSS) regarding opportunities for collaboration and changes in requirements; participation in a variety of meetings, events and on workgroups taking place throughout the county.

***E. Strengthening Communities of Support around Key Populations and Partnerships***

The forums held as part of the process to update and modify the Local Plan produced the ancillary benefit of fostering extensive dialog (both during the sessions and in the weeks that have followed) and support around priority populations and issues. While the Merced County WDB brings together the mandated partners in meetings the one-stop operator, the forums have served to foster and/or strengthen partnerships on specific issues. These gatherings have included stakeholders that have not worked with one another in the past and created not only the opportunity to network, but to discuss strategies for better serving key target populations.

**2. Specific Efforts to Outreach to the Community and Engage Stakeholders in Discussions on Merced County WDB's New Partnership with CalFresh**

A community and stakeholder forum on the CalFresh Employment and Training Program was held at the Department of Child Support Services in Merced on September 19, 2018 from 9:00 a.m. until 11:00 a.m.

To promote dialog and secure feedback and recommendations from stakeholders and members of the community that participated in the forum, the following questions/talking points were presented for the group's consideration:

- Are CalFresh Employment and Training programs currently available in the local area? If so, what services are provided and which organizations are providing them?
- What types of workforce services are needed to help people receiving CalFresh succeed in the local labor market?
- What barriers to employment are faced by CalFresh recipients and what resources are available to help assist them to overcome those barriers?
- What partnerships currently exist or could be developed among the local workforce system, the county agency that manages CalFresh, and other organizations that provide or could provide services to CalFresh recipients? How do the partners work with one another and how do they share information?
- Are CalFresh recipients being referred to programs that prepare them for high demand jobs in the region's priority sectors? What services or systems are in

place that could help CalFresh recipients succeed in such programs and on the job?

- A. Outreach Activities:** In September 2018, a notice regarding the forum was placed on the Merced County WDB website. A printed notice was posted at the Merced County WorkNet Centers in Merced and Los Banos.
- B. Efforts to Engage Required CalFresh Partners:** In September 2018, direct emails were sent to CalFresh stakeholders, including those on the State Directory.
- C. Communication with the State Board regarding CalFresh Forum:** In September 2018, email notification about the forum was sent to the designated contact persons at the State Board.
- D. Documentation of Efforts:** Attached are the following items that document outreach and engagement efforts on this topic.
  - Exhibit A-1-a: Sample flyer and promotional information
  - Exhibit A-1-b: Sample outreach-related email communication
  - Exhibit A-1-c: Email list invited to participate in forums from local area
  - Exhibit A-1-d: Forum agenda
  - Exhibit A-1-e: Forum presentation (PowerPoint)
  - Exhibit A-1-f: Meeting notes summarizing the content of forum discussions

### **3. Specific Efforts to Outreach to the Community and Engage Stakeholders in Discussions on Merced County WDB's New Partnership with Merced County Child Support Services**

A community and stakeholder forum on Partnership with Child Support to Serve Non-Custodial Parents was held at the U.C. Merced Downtown Campus Center in Merced on October 5, 2018 from 9:30 a.m. until 11:00 a.m.

To promote dialog and secure feedback and recommendations from stakeholders and members of the community that participated in the forum, the following questions/talking points were presented for the group's consideration:

- What barriers to employment are most common among targeted NCPs?
- What are NCPs' service needs (particularly with regard to job skills and employment) and what services are currently available?
- What organizations collaborate locally to promote skills development, employment and career advancement for targeted NCPs?
- Among the NCP service partners, (e.g. Child Support, Family Court, AJCCs, training providers and community-based organizations), what referral and information sharing systems are in place?

- What strategies and tools are used to motivate and incentivize NCPs' acting on referrals, participating in training/skills development and retention in employment?
- How can local organizations work better to ensure positive employment and career outcomes for NCPs?

**A. Outreach Activities:** In September 2018, a notice regarding the forum was placed on the Merced County WDB website. A printed notice was posted at Merced County WorkNet Centers in Merced and Los Banos.

**B. Efforts to Engage Required Child Support/Non-Custodial Parent Partners:** In October 2018, direct emails were sent to Child Support Program/NCP stakeholders, including those on the State Directory.

**C. Communication with the State Board regarding Child Support/Non-Custodial Parent Forum:** On October 2018, email notification about the forum was sent to the designated contact persons at the State Board.

**D. Documentation of Efforts:** Attached are the following items that document outreach and engagement efforts on this topic.

- Exhibit A-1-a: Sample flyer and promotional information
- Exhibit A-1-b: Sample outreach-related email communication
- Exhibit A-1-c: Email list invited to participate in forums from local area
- Exhibit A-2-a: Forum agenda
- Exhibit A-2-b: Forum presentation (PowerPoint)
- Exhibit A-2-c: Meeting notes summarizing the content of forum discussions

#### **4. Specific Efforts to Outreach to the Community and Engage Stakeholders in Discussions on Merced County WDB's New and Enhanced Partnerships with Competitive Integrated Employment Initiative Partners**

A community and stakeholder forum on Improving Services to Individuals with Disabilities through Competitive Integrated Employment was held at the Merced County Behavioral Health facility in Merced on October 24, 2018 from 9:00 a.m. until 11:00 a.m.

To promote dialog and secure feedback and recommendations from stakeholders and members of the community that participated in the forum, the following questions/talking points were presented for the group's consideration:

- How are DOR and the workforce system (i.e. the local Board and the AJCCs) currently working together with local partners (such as regional centers, special education and Workability programs, among others) to support the employment goals of individuals with intellectual disabilities and developmental disabilities?

- Are efforts underway for the partners to collaborate on the use of CIE for job seekers with ID/DD?
- Have discussions begun on the development of a Local Partnership Agreement to create more CIE opportunities? If not, how can this be accelerated?
- Have workforce system staff received training in serving individuals with ID/DD and are they knowledgeable about programs and services available to assist this target group? What additional training and information is needed?
- How are DOR and the local workforce system working together to outreach to employers and partners to support individuals with ID/DD in achieving CIE? If efforts are not yet underway, what will be done?
- Have recruitment, referral and employer engagement strategies been defined? If not, what is planned?

**A. Outreach Activities:** In September 2018, a notice regarding the forum was placed on the Merced County WDB website. A printed notice was posted at the Merced County WorkNet Centers in Merced and Los Banos.

**B. Efforts to Engage Competitive Integrated Employment Partners and Key Stakeholders:** In October 2018, direct emails were sent to the CIE partners and disability services stakeholders, including those on the State Directory.

**C. Communication with the State Board regarding Competitive Integrated Employment Forum:** In October 2018, email notification about the forum was sent to the designated contact persons at the State Board.

**D. Documentation of Efforts:** Attached are the following items that document outreach and engagement efforts on this topic.

- Exhibit A-1-a: Sample flyer and promotional information
- Exhibit A-1-b: Sample outreach-related email communication
- Exhibit A-1-c: Email list invited to participate in forums from local area
- Exhibit A-3-a: Forum agenda
- Exhibit A-3-b: Forum presentation (PowerPoint)
- Exhibit A-3-c: Meeting notes summarizing the content of forum discussions

**5. Specific Efforts to Outreach to the Community and Engage Stakeholders in Discussions on Merced County WDB's New and Enhanced Partnerships with Organizations Serving English Language Learners, Foreign Born Individuals and Refugees**

A community and stakeholder forum on Improving Services for English Language Learners, Foreign Born Individuals and Refugees was held at the Merced County Behavioral Health Facility in Merced on October 3, 2018 from 2:00 p.m. until 4:00 p.m.

To promote dialog and secure feedback and recommendations from stakeholders and members of the community that participated in the forum, the following questions/talking points were presented for the group's consideration:

- What are the needs of individuals in this category?
- What are the principal barriers to employment faced by these individuals?
- What partnerships and collaborative efforts exist that enable local organizations to provide services to meet these needs?
- What outreach and recruitment strategies are effective in connecting individuals from these target groups to skills training and livable wages?
- What strategies are in place to provide these individuals with job skills and training that will enable them to progress into livable wage jobs and careers?
- Where do gaps in services exist for this target population and what can we do to bridge these gaps?

**A. Outreach Activities:** In September 2018, a notice regarding the forum was placed on the Merced County WDB website. A printed notice was posted at the Merced County WorkNet Centers in Merced and Los Banos.

**B. Efforts to Engage Partners and Key Stakeholders in Improving Services to English Language Learners, Foreign Born Individuals and Refugees:** In October 2018, direct emails were sent to ELL and immigrant stakeholders, including those on the State Directory.

**C. Communication with the State Board regarding Forum on English Language Learners, Foreign Born Individuals and Refugees:** In October 2018, email notification about the forum was sent to the designated contact persons at the State Board.

**D. Documentation of Efforts:** Attached are the following items that document outreach and engagement efforts on this topic.

- Exhibit A-1-a: Sample flyer and promotional information
- Exhibit A-1-b: Sample outreach-related email communication
- Exhibit A-1-c: Email list invited to participate in forums from local area
- Exhibit A-4-a: Forum agenda
- Exhibit A-4-b: Forum presentation (PowerPoint)
- Exhibit A-4-c: Meeting notes summarizing the content of forum discussions

**6. Efforts to Outreach to the Community and Engage Stakeholders in Discussions on Merced County WDB's Overall Approach to Workforce Programming and Planning through a General Community Forum**

A general community forum on Local Workforce Planning was held at the Merced Adult School in Merced on October 23, 2018 from 6:00 p.m. until 7:30 p.m. To encourage attendance, a Job Fair was held immediately following the Community Forum, where 14 businesses who were actively hiring were in attendance. Those employers also were in attendance and provided input during the Community Forum. Jobseekers who attended the Job Fair were also a part of the audience during the Forum, and provided feedback as well.

To promote dialog and secure feedback and recommendations from stakeholders and members of the community that participated in the forum, the following questions/talking points were presented for the group's consideration:

- What services and support do job seekers need to help prepare for and find work?
- What types of training are most needed in the area?
- Do people in the community have a good understanding of the programs and services that are available to assist them? If not, what is the best way to get the word out?
- Are there specific gaps between the services that are available and the services that people need? If so, how can we bridge those gaps?
- If you were writing the local workforce plan, what would your priorities be and why?

**A. Outreach Activities:** In September 2018, a notice regarding the forum was placed on the Merced County WDB website. A printed notice was posted at the Merced County WorkNet Centers in Merced and Los Banos.

**B. Efforts to Engage Partners and Key Stakeholders in Providing Input on General Workforce System Planning:** In October 2018, direct emails were sent to stakeholders, including those on the State Directory.

**C. Communication with the State Board regarding General Community Forum on Workforce System Planning:** In October 2018, email notification about the forum was sent to the designated contact persons at the State Board.

**D. Documentation of Efforts:** Attached are the following items that document outreach and engagement efforts on this topic.

- Exhibit A-1-a: Sample flyer and promotional information
- Exhibit A-1-b: Sample outreach-related email communication
- Exhibit A-1-c: Email list invited to participate in forums from local area
- Exhibit A-5-a: Forum agenda
- Exhibit A-5-b: Forum presentation (PowerPoint)
- Exhibit A-5-c: Meeting notes summarizing the content of forum discussions

## 7. Publication of Draft for Public Comment

On February 1, 2019, the Merced County WDB opened a 30-day public comment period on the Local Plan Modification that concluded on March 2, 2019. The 30-day public comment period was run in tandem with the comment period for the Biennial Modification to the SJVAC RPU's Regional Plan.

- A. *Notice on the Availability of the Draft Plan for Public Review and Comment:*** On February 1, 2019, Merced County WDB placed a notice in the Merced Sun Star, informing the community of the 30-day public comment period and the availability of the plan electronically on the WDB's web site or in print at the offices of the Merced County WDB.

Email notices about the availability of the draft were also sent to all stakeholders invited to participate in the community forums. In addition, notification on the public comment process was emailed to the designated State Board contacts.

- B. *Opportunities and Mechanisms for Public Comment:*** To ensure that comments to the plan are captured accurately, the WDB requested that all comments be made in writing. Written comments could be submitted by email to [comments.localplanupdate@gmail.com](mailto:comments.localplanupdate@gmail.com) or in print by mail or hand delivery to the Merced County WDB at 1205 W. 18<sup>th</sup> Street, Merced, CA 95340. Attn: Nick Loret de Mola.

- C. *Results of Public Comment:*** At the conclusion of the public comment period, a total of 1 comments were received. Based on these comments, the following adjustments were made to the draft Local Plan Modification:

- Data change on Attachment 3. No material change to the final Modification product.

- D. *Documentation of Efforts:*** The following items document the public comment process:

- Exhibit A-6-a: Copy of notice in Merced Sun Star
- Exhibit A-6-b: Sample Email Message to Stakeholders

SUPPLEMENTAL NARRATIVE

**CALFRESH PARTICIPANTS – BACKGROUND AND ASESSSMENT OF NEED**

The information below supplements content provided in Section II of the principal narrative.

**1. Overview of the Size and Characteristics of the Total CalFresh Recipient Population**

Representatives of the Merced County Human Services Agency (HSA) reported that there are 7,944 active CalFresh cases in Merced County. Characteristics of the population include:

Gender	Female	4,765
	Male	3,179
Age	18-24	491
	25-34	1,542
	35-54	4,346
	55-64	892
	65+	673
	Ethnicity/Country of Origen	American Indian or Alaskan Native
Asian Indian		57
Black or African American		4
Cambodian		2
Chinese		8
Cuban		1
Filipino		3
Guamanian		0
Guatemalan		12
Japanese		1
Korean		5
Laotian		62
Mexican		5,594
Native Hawaiian		0
Other		249
Puerto Rican		8
Salvadoran		26
Unknown		58
Vietnamese	5	
White	1,362	

*Note: Ethnicity/country of origin and formerly incarcerated data is not available.*

**2. Overview of the Size and Characteristics of CalFresh E&T Participant Population**

As the CalFresh E&T program has not yet been implemented, there is no information to report concerning participant characteristics.

### **3. *Types of Workforce Services Needed by the Target Population***

The tremendous diversity of the CalFresh population makes it difficult to generalize about the workforce services they need. However, stakeholders engaged in the planning process provided a number of examples of services that segments of the target group likely need. These fall, generally, into three broad categories: basic education and remediation; job/technical skills training; and supportive services to enable training. In the first category, literacy and numeracy skills, GED/high school equivalency and English-as-a-Second Language (ESL) were all identified by stakeholders as needed workforce services. With regard to job skills, there was substantial agreement that both classroom-based and work-based programs have value. In the supportive service category, stakeholders highlighted the need for transportation and childcare services. In addition to the one-stop partners, stakeholders agree that grassroots and faith-based partners are effective resources for addressing support needs.

### **4. *Employment Barriers Experienced by the Target Population and Resources Available to Address Barriers***

Again, the diversity of the population suggests that virtually every type of employment barrier would be experienced by some portion of the CalFresh population. However, during the stakeholder engagement process, representatives from HSA, education, the WDB, AJCCs, and other stakeholder organizations and programs identified the following as significant barriers affecting the CalFresh population and the county as a whole: lack of educational attainment and insufficient job skills; lack of information about programs and services; language barriers; cultural barriers; insufficient access to broadband; generational poverty; issues pertaining to substance abuse; affordable/transitional housing; childcare; and transportation. The organizations listed in the following responses provide the education, training and support services required to address and minimize or eradicate these barriers.

### **5. *Collaboration between the WDB and Merced County HSA***

The partnership among the local board, the AJCCs and HSA is strong. HSA is a one-stop partner. An MOU has been executed between the WDB and the HSA. Referrals between the agencies occur on a regular basis and co-enrollments are not uncommon.

Other organizations that collaborate with HSA, the AJCC and CalFresh include: Merced College; CVOC; Merced County Office of Education; Gateway Adult

Education Network; various local education agencies; and CBOs such as MSA VIPER, a violence prevention program aimed at youth.

**6. *Quality and Level of Intensity of Partner Services***

As described throughout the principal narrative, the CalFresh population is extremely diverse and participants in the program are served by the broadest possible range of public, non-profit and faith-based agencies in and around Merced County. Most organizations serving CalFresh individuals do not use CalFresh enrollment status as a basis for eligibility/participation and do not record this data. Some programs and providers do collect information regarding their participants' CalFresh status.

As suggested in the preceding response, stakeholders believe that many effective services are available for individuals receiving CalFresh benefits. These include those provided by the WDB, HSA, Merced County's adult education and community college systems, other one-stop partners and community-based organizations.

**7. *Information Sharing among Partners***

MOUs developed among the one-stop partners describe a referral process and provide for the sharing of service information between organizations assisting the same customer, when the customer provides authorization. Such information may include results of skills assessments or other evaluation of training and workforce service needs. As with all public programs, confidentiality laws prevail with regard to sharing customer-identifying data.

**SUPPLEMENTAL NARRATIVE**

**UNEMPLOYED, UNDEREMPLOYED AND PAYMENT DELINQUENT NON-CUSTODIAL PARENTS – BACKGROUND AND ASESSMENT OF NEED**

The information below supplements content provided in Section II of the principal narrative.

1. ***Areas of High Concentration***
2. ***Percentage of Noncustodial Parents Who Are Unemployed***
3. ***Percentage of Noncustodial Parents Who Are Ex-Offenders***
4. ***Other Demographic Information***

Merced County Department of Child Support Services (DCSS) representatives report that, as of January, 2019, the agency’s caseload is 14,989. Other data and information about the target group includes:

Percentage of non-custodial parents that are unemployed	49%
Percentage of non-custodial parents that were formerly incarcerated	47% (10% currently incarcerated)
Non-custodial parents’ gender	85.8% male; 12.8% female
Non-custodial parents’ race/ethnicity	53.48% Hispanic, 24.4% white, and 11.69% black, 8.07% Southeast Asian, and the remainder falling into other categories or not declaring

5. ***Types of Services Needed by the Targeted Population***

As described in the principal narrative, those identified as unemployed, underemployed and payment delinquent NCPs have diverse backgrounds and circumstances. Therefore, the services they require would include those that are most needed by the full range of job seekers who utilize the workforce system’s services. These include good information (provided via a structured orientation process) about WIOA and other workforce services and the benefits they offer; access to and support with labor market analysis and career exploration; development of service plans and career planning support; information on and referrals to training programs; assistance in accessing supportive services; individualized guidance and counseling; and job placement assistance. The relative importance of each service will vary from participant to participant, depending on individual background and circumstances.

**6. *Services Currently Being Provided and How the Workforce-Child Support Partnership Will Modify Types and Quantity of Services Provided***

Within the principal narrative, it is clarified that, although a process exists to make referral from DCSS to the AJCCs, added structure is needed for referrals to be more effective and result in NCPs enrolling in services and becoming employed. Therefore, the enhanced workforce-child support partnership described in this Local Plan Modification and the associated MOU will drastically increase the number of individuals served and the workforce and support services available to them from the workforce system partners.

**7. *Barriers Experienced by Child Support Program Participants and Resources to Address Barriers***

As stated above, there is no specific set of barriers faced by targeted NCPs, as they come from diverse backgrounds and have a wide range of challenges. Each individual will be assessed as to his/her unique circumstances and as barriers are identified so too will resources to address them. For example, individuals with disabilities may be referred to DOR representatives for additional assessment and access to unique support services, such as assistive technology or help with other workplace accommodations. Individuals with basic skills deficits will be referred to local adult education agencies or other partners, and participants lacking work skills may be referred to classroom or work-based programs where they can acquire such skills.

**8. *Planned Information Sharing to Evaluate Need***

The MOU developed by the WDB and Merced County DCSS describes confidentiality requirements associated with the administration of Child Support Title IV-D Programs. Representatives of DCSS acknowledge that provisions of California's Family Code prohibit the agency's providing information about DCSS customers to outside programs other than HHSA. Therefore, we will seek to implement a process, whereby, once participants sign an NCP Consent and Release Agreement, Child Support Services and AJCC representatives can exchange information about participant needs, services and outcomes, including employment resulting from participation.

**SUPPLEMENTAL NARRATIVE**  
**ENGAGEMENT WITH THE LOCAL**  
**COMPETITIVE INTEGRATED EMPLOYMENT PARTNERS**

The information below supplements content provided in Section III of the principal narrative.

**1. *Engagement with Local Partners to Increase Competitive Integrated Employment for Jobseekers with Intellectual or Developmental Disabilities***

As described in the principal narrative, Merced County WDB convened stakeholders from the disability services community as part of the process to modify and update the Local Plan. Among those participating in this discussion were the LPA core partners. The WDB and the one-stop system are recognized in the LPA as community partners. The partners agreed that increased participation from the WDB and the AJCCs would bring valuable resources to the partners' efforts to increase the use of CIE.

AJCC staff already collaborates with the LPA partners individually in serving clients and as a group in connection with the well-established Merced County Transition Council. During the WDB's community and stakeholder forum on competitive integrated employment, the partners discussed various ways their efforts could leverage the WDB's connections with business and industry to expand CIE in the county. WDB and AJCC representatives have expressed both willingness and desire to participate in marketing and direct outreach in support of the CIE initiative.

The WDB will work with the LPA partners to develop and implement a plan for the WDB's support for CIE expansion. This plan will be finalized no later than June, 2019.

**2. *Competitive Integrated Employment Partners***

The parties to the LPA are the following partners:

DOR District Office	San Joaquin Valley District Office (Merced Branch)
Regional Center	Central Valley Regional Center (Merced Branch Office)
Local Education Agencies (core partners)	Merced County Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA) agencies Merced County Office of Education Merced Union High School District Dos Palos-Oro Loma Joint Unified School District Los Banos Unified School District

### **3. *Planned Coordination with the CIE Local Planning Agreement Partners***

As described throughout the principal narrative and in the preceding responses, Merced County WDB is fully committed to participating as a stakeholder in the efforts of the CIE LPA. We anticipate being actively involved working with DOR, its service providers, the regional center and local education agencies' Workability I programs to provide career services to job seekers with ID/DD; supporting DOR in using an assets-based approach to promoting CIE to local businesses through a messaging campaign and direct contacts; and working with DOR and other stakeholders to encourage businesses to take advantage of work-based learning strategies to initially integrate individuals with ID/DD into their workforce.

As indicated, the WDB is awaiting the following critical messages from the DOR District Office relative to our support for the CIE initiative:

- Assignment of a DOR Liaison/point of contact to connect the workforce system to its community of service providers;
- Information on how DOR, in coordination with its CIE Blueprint partners, DDS and CDE, will provide CIE technical assistance to the local boards, partners, and employers to assist in filling potential knowledge gaps.
- Information on how DOR and State Board executive staff will work collaboratively to ensure that resources are available for disability expertise and cross-training of frontline staff in the AJCCs.

Once the foregoing information is available, Merced County WDB will complete our plan to support the LPA partners in increasing CIE opportunities.

**SUPPLEMENTAL NARRATIVE**

**ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS, FOREIGN BORN INDIVIDUALS AND REFUGEES – BACKGROUND AND ASESSSMENT OF NEED**

The information below supplements content provided in Section IV of the principal narrative.

**1. Overview of Target Population Demographics**

The following workforce-related data for Merced County’s immigrant and ELL population is excerpted from current U.S. Census Bureau estimates.

County population (est.)	272,673
<b>Race and Hispanic Origin</b>	
White Alone percent	82.0%
Black or African American alone, percent	3.9 %
American Indian and Alaska Native alone, percent	2.5 %
Asian alone, percent	8.0 %
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone, percent	0.4 %
Two or More Races, percent	3.1 %
Hispanic or Latino, percent	59.6 %
White alone, not Hispanic or Latino, percent	27.7 %
Foreign born persons, percent (2013-2017)	25.5 %
Language other than English spoken at home, percent of persons age 5 years + 2013-2017)	52.3 %

**2. Barriers to Employment and Specialized Needs of the Target Population**

Among the target populations’ principal barriers to employment identified by systems stakeholders, community-based organizations and workforce staff are: limited English proficiency; low cultural competency; immigration status vulnerabilities; lack of or low literacy in one’s native language; limited knowledge of and access to benefits; difficulty navigating resources; mental health; lack of familiarity with goal setting; lack of educational attainment, vocational skills and credentials; insufficient digital literacy; and lack of access to affordable options for childcare and transportation. For some immigrant and refugee customers, the inability to secure credit for prior learning and educational attainment from another country is a significant barrier to employment.

**3. Identified Gaps in Workforce System Services for the Target Population**

One of the principal gaps in delivering workforce, education, training and related services in Merced County results from where people live. While more than half of the county’s residents live within the boundaries of the county’s two largest cities (Merced and Los Banos), where most services are located, the remaining

population of more than 100,000 people is dispersed across a large area comprised of a few towns and many very small rural communities and census designated places. People tend to live where they have work, so most are unable to travel long distances to services during non-work hours. The workforce partners most directly involved in serving the ELL and immigrant communities (described below) have developed and are continuing to design strategies to bridge this gap. Among them are mobile services, where staff and resources are deployed on a scheduled or per request basis to remote locations and the use of web-based and distance learning modalities. While a lack of digital literacy among many in the target group can make the latter approach challenging, the availability of technology training and access to wireless devices is making this method of service delivery increasingly more feasible. A related gap in service is a lack of personal and public transportation. Again, a practical response to this gap is bringing services – physically or virtually – to customers. CVOC, the WIOA Section 167 grantee, and EDD’s Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker representatives both provide services at community locations where many in the target population live and work.

Stakeholders also identified the need for more bilingual services; greater cultural awareness and cultural responsiveness; increased digital literacy; increased focus on acculturation; assistance in navigating American society and government institutions; and more training programs.

#### **4. *Outreach and Recruitment Strategies for the Target Population:***

Because the population of Merced County includes such a large number of foreign born individuals and English language learners, outreach can be done in a variety of ways, from mass media, including television and radio, to one-on-one interactions, using methods that rely on making individual contact. Stakeholders indicated that the most effective way to recruit individuals from the target group to participate in workforce development programs is to leverage the trust, reputation and goodwill of community- and faith-based organizations that provides services to immigrants where they live and work. Items sent home with children from school can also be very effective, particularly with regard to getting adults to seek information on training. Stakeholders also acknowledged that there are media outlets that are trusted sources in the immigrant community and that using these outlets can be effective in communicating employment, training and service opportunities to the target group. Representatives of the Hmong community emphasized the importance of the “trusted source” in the culture, and identified television, radio and internet-based media that should be targeted. Others indicated that social media (particularly Facebook and Whatsapp) is increasingly effective in broadcasting time sensitive information, such as hiring events. As frequently heard, stakeholders discussed the effectiveness of one-on-one contacts and word of mouth referrals.

**5. *Coordination and Alignment among Partners in Serving the Target Population***

Principal workforce partners and relationships focused on the serving immigrants and ELL customers are described throughout the modification narrative. These include the WDB; the county's two comprehensive WorkNet centers (AJCCs); EDD's programs serving farmworkers; CVOC; and key education partners, including Merced College and adult education programs located throughout the county.

SUPPLEMENTAL NARRATIVE

PUBLIC COMMENTS IN DISAGREEMENT WITH LOCAL PLAN

This is where we will post comments in disagreement with the draft plan, listed in the order in which they were received.

1.	Commenter:	Holly Newlon
	Date Received:	2/15/19
	Method By Which Comment Communicated:	Email
	Comment:	Notification of a needed data correction on Attachment E.  Data change was made.

## EXHIBITS

		Page
Exhibit A-1-a	Sample flyers and promotional Information	35
Exhibit A-1-b	Sample outreach-related email communication	37
Exhibit A-1-c	Email list invited to participate in forums	42
Exhibit A-1-d	Forum agenda	48
Exhibit A-1-e	Forum presentation (PowerPoint)	49
Exhibit A-1-f	Meeting notes summarizing the content of forum discussions	60
Exhibit A-2-a	Forum agenda	65
Exhibit A-2-b	Forum presentation (PowerPoint)	66
Exhibit A-2-c	Meeting notes summarizing the content of forum discussions	75
Exhibit A-3-a	Forum agenda	81
Exhibit A-3-b	Forum presentation (PowerPoint)	82
Exhibit A-3-c	Meeting notes summarizing the content of forum discussions	94
Exhibit A-4-a:	Forum agenda	97
Exhibit A-4-b	Forum presentation (PowerPoint)	98
Exhibit A-4-c	Meeting notes summarizing the content of forum discussions	106
Exhibit A-5-a	Forum agenda	113
Exhibit A-5-b	Forum presentation (PowerPoint)	114
Exhibit A-5-c	Meeting notes summarizing the content of forum discussions	122
Exhibit A-6-a	Copy of notice in Merced Sun Star	126
Exhibit A-6-b	Sample Email Message to Stakeholders	127



## LOCAL PLANNING FORUMS

Worknet Merced County will be hosting public forums addressing the five session topics below. Discussions will assist with the modification of the Worknet Merced County’s Local Plan, which outlines the vision, goals, and strategies for the serving the community’s workforce needs. These forums give the community an opportunity to provide their feedback on how Worknet Merced County can serve the County. Your input is critical to the development of the Local Plan that will allow Worknet Merced County to better serve the needs of our community.

**Public Welcome - all meetings open to the public!**

Session Topic	Date & Time	Location	RSVP
Collaborating with CalFresh Employment and Training Programs	September 19, 2018 9:00am-12:00pm	Department of Child Support Services Suite I 3368 N. Hwy 59 Merced, CA 95348	COMPLETED
Improving Services to English Language Learners, Immigrants, And Foreign Born Individuals	October 3, 2018 2:00pm-4:00pm	Behavioral Health & Recovery Services 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor Room C207 301 E. 13th Street Merced, CA 95340	TODAY OCTOBER 3, 2018
Partnerships with Local Child Support Agencies to Serve Non-Custodial Parents	October 5, 2018 9:30am-11:00am	UC Merced Downtown Campus Center Rooms 105/106 655 West 18th Street Merced, CA 95340	<a href="http://bit.ly/WMCLPchildsupport">http://bit.ly/WMCLPchildsupport</a>
Community Forum on Local Workforce Planning	October 23, 2018 6:00pm-7:30pm	Merced Adult School Gym 50 East 20th Street Merced, CA 95340	<a href="http://bit.ly/WMCPLcommunity">http://bit.ly/WMCPLcommunity</a>
Serving Persons with Disabilities through Competitive Integrated Employment	October 24, 2018 9:00am-11:00am	Behavioral Health & Recovery Services 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor Room C207 301 E. 13th Street Merced, CA 95341	<a href="http://bit.ly/WMCLPdisabilities">http://bit.ly/WMCLPdisabilities</a>

\*Please send all inquiries to Ruby Awesome: [Ruby.Awesome@countyofmerced.com](mailto:Ruby.Awesome@countyofmerced.com)



Equal Opportunity Employer/Programs. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. Funding provided by the U.S. Department of Labor.





Input to a brighter future

## COMMUNITY FORUM ON LOCAL PLANNING

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 23RD, 2018

**MERCED ADULT SCHOOL**

50 E. 20TH STREET MERCED, CA

**5:00 PM - 8:30 PM**

REFRESHMENTS WILL BE SERVED

- ◆ ENGAGE WITH EMPLOYERS
- ◆ ADDRESS YOUR WORKFORCE IDEAS
- ◆ LEARN ABOUT OUR SERVICES AT WORKNET
- ◆ WHAT ARE THE BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT?
- ◆ HIRING EVENT WILL BE HELD AFTER THE FORUM

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE EMAIL US AT  
[RUBY.AWESOME@COUNTYMERCED.COM](mailto:RUBY.AWESOME@COUNTYMERCED.COM)

**WORKNET**

MERCED COUNTY

America's **JobCenter**  
of California<sup>SM</sup>



MERCED ADULT SCHOOL

Equal Opportunity Employer/Programs. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.  
Funding provided by the U.S. Department of Labor.

## Loret De Mola, Nick

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**From:** Loret De Mola, Nick  
**Sent:** Tuesday, October 2, 2018 5:25 PM  
**To:** Awesome, Ruby  
**Subject:** Thank you for your attendance

Good afternoon,

Worknet Merced thanks you in advance for your attendance at tomorrow's convening, where we will discuss improving services to English Language Learners, Immigrants, and Foreign-Born Individuals for the purposes of the county's local workforce development plan.

As a reminder, the event will be from 2-4pm at the following address:

Behavioral Health & Recovery Services – C207 (room change)  
301 E. 13<sup>th</sup> Street  
Merced, CA 95340

Please park around the back of the building in the 15<sup>th</sup> Street parking lot. We are in building C. There will be a Worknet Merced staffperson at the door to sign you in.

Thanks, and see you tomorrow!

Nick Loret de Mola  
Deputy Director  
Worknet Merced County  
1205 West 18th Street  
Merced, California 95340  
Ph: 209.724.2041  
Fax: 209.725.3592



## Loret De Mola, Nick

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**From:** Her, See  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 4, 2018 3:51 PM  
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**Subject:** Workforce Community Engagement Conference -English Language Learner  
**Expires:** Wednesday, October 3, 2018 4:00 PM

Hello,

Worknet Merced County will be hosting a public Community Engagement Conference on the topic of **English Language Learner**. We want to welcome our community to participate in this regional planning efforts. Your participation and input is critical to developing a plan that is responsive to the needs of our workforce community.

Worknet Merced County is committed to assist the business community to keep pace with new growth, the emerging economy, and their ever-changing needs by creating a better-educated and skilled workforce. Worknet Merced County assists employers with recruitment, skills assessment, job fairs and hiring.

The event will be held at **Merced County Department of Behavioral Health on 301 E. 13<sup>th</sup> Street, Merced, CA, room C207** on **October 3, 2018 from 2pm to 4pm.**

**\*\*Parking is available in the back parking lot (by 15<sup>th</sup> Street).**

Please RSVP on our eventbrite link below.. Feel free to share this email and link to any partners or staff interested in the event. We hope to see everyone there.

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/workforce-community-engagement-conference-english-language-learner-tickets-49873874100>

Please send all inquiries to Ruby Awesome, Special Project Manager.

Ruby.Awesome@countyofmerced.com

P (209) 724-2042 | F (209) 725-3592



## Loret De Mola, Nick

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**From:** Worknet Merced County <noreply@eventbrite.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, October 1, 2018 2:01 PM  
**To:** Loret De Mola, Nick  
**Subject:** Reminder for Improving Services to English Language Learners, Immigrants, & Foreign Born Individuals  
**Attachments:** 49873874100-825759741-ticket.pdf

**Eventbrite**

Find events My Tickets

### Improving Services to English Language Learners, Immigrants, & Foreign Born Individuals is Wednesday at 2:00 PM

Organized by [Worknet Merced County](#)

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Don't forget your tickets



**Mobile Tickets**

...or...



**Paper Tickets**

Open the email attachment  
or [download here](#)

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Questions about this event?

Contact the organizer at [see.her@co.merced.ca.us](mailto:see.her@co.merced.ca.us)

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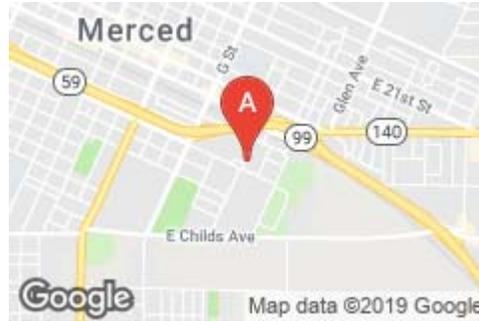
## About this event



Wednesday, October 3, 2018  
from 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM  
(PDT)



Merced County Behavioral  
Health & Recovery  
Services-Room C222  
301 E. 13th Street  
Merced, CA 95340



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This email was sent to [NLoretDeMola@countyofmerced.com](mailto:NLoretDeMola@countyofmerced.com)

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'Angelica.Martinez@dor.ca.gov'; 'LDOWNUM-HANZAL@RICV.ORG'; 'SGAMEZ@RICV.ORG';  
'CTOKASH@RICV.ORG'; 'LWANGER@RICV.ORG'; 'shobbs@muhsd.org'; Ceccoli, John  
<JCeccoli@co.merced.ca.us>; 'ATW/ExecAssistant@bop.gov'; 'jdenava@cvoc.org';  
'elaine.craig@mccd.edu'; 'terry.w.nichols@dor.ca.gov'; 'cove4u@gmail.com'; 'Rosa.M.Garcia@ssa.gov';  
'abby.melissa@jobcorps.org'; 'smorgan@ricv.org'; 'JJepson@cvoc.org'; 'Cheryl@dhsc.org';  
'brenda@mercedcaa.org'; Gutierrez, Linda <Linda.Gutierrez@co.merced.ca.us>; Espinoza, Reyna  
<Reyna.Espinoza@co.merced.ca.us>; Mirrione, David <DMirrione@co.merced.ca.us>;  
'tjohnson2@ucmerced.edu'; Moran, Jessica <jessica.moran@mccd.edu>; McDaniel, Daron  
<DMcDaniel@co.merced.ca.us>; Lor, Lee <Lee.Lor@countyofmerced.com>; Espinoza, Rodrigo  
<Rodrigo.Espinoza@countyofmerced.com>; O'Banion, Jerry <jobanion@co.merced.ca.us>; Pareira,  
Lloyd <Lloyd.Pareira@countyofmerced.com>; Brown, James <JBrown@co.merced.ca.us>;  
'amie@amiesseniorecare.com'; 'dcaris83@yahoo.com'; 'dgd@cruzio.com'; 'gregv@local442.com';  
'jack@smccsv.com'; 'jlepper@ncdcliu.org'; 'lmcgowan@visitlch.org'; Hendrickson, Mark  
<MHendrickson@co.merced.ca.us>; 'mike@agrec.com.net'; 'pschuerman@ucmerced.edu';  
'sdwyer@lckinsurance.com'; 'sroussos@ucmerced.edu'; 'stietjen@mcoe.org'; 'tim@imagemasters.com';  
'twrobertson@gmail.com'; 'VThengvall@labeltech.com'; 'sschiber@aesd.edu';  
'bboesch@ballicocressey.com'; 'amelara@delhiusd.org'; 'rjimenez@elnido.k12.ca.us';  
'bballenger@gustineusd.org'; 'icjohnson@hilmar.k12.ca.us'; 'dalley@lghs.k12.ca.us';  
'mtorresp@livingstonusd.org'; 'paulenos@losbanosusd.k12.ca.us'; 'rhurtado@lgelm.org';  
'srosa@mcswwain.k12.ca.us'; 'ecastro@mcsd.k12.ca.us'; 'mtmoua@mcoe.org'; 'rlopez@msd.us';  
'apeterson@muhsd.org'; 'kkingston@plainsburg.k11.ca.us'; 'jgonzalez@planada.org';  
'akahl@snellingschool.org'; 'rheller@winton.k12.ca.us'; 'costadistrictschedule@mail.house.gov';  
tslaton@bgcmerced.org; Villalta, Mike <mike.villalta@losbanos.org>; Faria, Tom  
<tom.faria@losbanos.org>; deborah.lewis@losbanos.org; daronica.johnson-santos@losbanos.org;  
scott.silveira@losbanos.org; Kivley, Kathy <citymanager@atwater.org>;  
citymanager@livingstoncity.com; Bcota@livingstoncity.com; mdheri@livingstoncity.com;  
jsoria@livingstoncity.com; alex@alexmcabe.com; jaguilarjr@livingstoncity.com;  
asicairos@livingstoncity.com; city@dospalos.org; CarriganS@cityofmerced.org;  
DietzS@cityofmerced.org; Mayor@Cityofmerced.org; MurphyM@Cityofmerced.org;  
BelluominiM@Cityofmerced.org; BlakeK@Cityofmerced.org; PedrozoJ@Cityofmerced.org;  
MartinezA@Cityofmerced.org; McLeodJ@Cityofmerced.org; SerrattoM@Cityofmerced.org;  
District5@Cityofmerced.org; District3@Cityofmerced.org; District1@Cityofmerced.org;  
District6@Cityofmerced.org; District4@Cityofmerced.org; District2@Cityofmerced.org;  
jprice@atwater.org; cityinfo@atwater.org; srahn@atwater.org; jmartin@atwater.org;  
jvineyard@atwater.org; pcreighton@atwater.org; braymond@atwater.org; cvierra@atwater.org;  
cturner@cityofgustine.com; Oliveira, Joe <joliveira@cityofgustine.com>; Nagy, Pat  
<pnagy@cityofgustine.com>; moliveira@cityofgustine.com; Doug Dunford  
<ddunford@cityofgustine.com>; mcorrea@cityofgustine.com; ccisneros@lgelm.org; sborba@lgelm.org;  
lhernandez@lgelm.org; msmith@lgelm.org; rpargaduran@mcsd.k12.ca.us; dbottjer@mcsd.k12.ca.us;  
DSaich@mcsd.k12.ca.us; RAlvarado@mcsd.k12.ca.us; chernandez@mcsd.k12.ca.us;  
levang@mcsd.k12.ca.us; jnunez@mcsd.k12.ca.us; kcooper@mcsd.k12.ca.us; vvilla@mcsd.k12.ca.us;  
jarista@mcsd.k12.ca.us; yher@mcsd.k12.ca.us; dcherf@mcsd.k12.ca.us; tpevsner@mcsd.k12.ca.us;  
jpedrozo@mcsd.k12.ca.us; mlee@mcsd.k12.ca.us; banderson@mcsd.k12.ca.us;  
jsettera@mcsd.k12.ca.us; smedlin@mcsd.k12.ca.us; smendez@mcsd.k12.ca.us;

cgentry@mcsd.k12.ca.us; ahernandezavalos@mcsd.k12.ca.us; DGarza@mcsd.k12.ca.us;  
KBarrigar@mcsd.k12.ca.us; jhamel@mcsd.k12.ca.us; aalexander@mcsd.k12.ca.us;  
layala@mcsd.k12.ca.us; csalas@mcsd.k12.ca.us; ssilvafagundes@mcsd.k12.ca.us;  
aascencio@mcsd.k12.ca.us; jpulido@mcsd.k12.ca.us; fshelton@mcsd.k12.ca.us;  
mcolburn@mcsd.k12.ca.us; mrosson@mcsd.k12.ca.us; mable@mcsd.k12.ca.us;  
jrivard@mcsd.k12.ca.us; jmunoz@mcsd.k12.ca.us; jsigala@mcsd.k12.ca.us; TBright@mcsd.k12.ca.us;  
ANatividadLopez@mcsd.k12.ca.us; dwalker@mcsd.k12.ca.us; csagonramirez@mcsd.k12.ca.us;  
jgarst@mcsd.k12.ca.us; dcrane@mcsd.k12.ca.us; cdubois@mcsd.k12.ca.us; director@daycare.com;  
sledesma@mcsd.k12.ca.us; vdescoto@mcsd.k12.ca.us; NBarber@mcsd.k12.ca.us;  
aruiz@mcsd.k12.ca.us; RGutierrez@mcsd.k12.ca.us; TLawrence@mcsd.k12.ca.us;  
jhaycraft@mcsd.k12.ca.us; lrohrback@muhsd.org; mhammar@muhsd.org; tjohnson@muhsd.org;  
rschroeder@muhsd.org; lorrow@muhsd.org; khaygood-floriano@muhsd.org; mknott@muhsd.org;  
lshaw@muhsd.org; kaustin@muhsd.org; drogers@muhsd.org; kswartwood@muhsd.org;  
aolivares@muhsd.org; jeuker@muhsd.org; mballenger@muhsd.org; nrose@muhsd.org;  
aparle@muhsd.org; kkollmann@muhsd.org; jsebastian@muhsd.org; jmcauley@muhsd.org;  
cjolly@muhsd.org; bluker@muhsd.org; mbliss@muhsd.org; pbristow@muhsd.org;  
apellissier@muhsd.org; SBravo@aesd.edu; JQuintana@aesd.edu; DSTONGE@AESD.EDU;  
MHendrickson@aesd.edu; KellyFincher@aesd.edu; ScottLee@aesd.edu; LarryWhitney@aesd.edu;  
DaleWilson@aesd.edu; jgarcia@delhiusd.org; amelara@delhiusd.org; diana@delhiusd.org;  
sgomes@delhiusd.org; vgonzalez@delhiusd.org; gbuchanan@delhiusd.org; kmalhi@delhiusd.org;  
rdiaz@delhiusd.org; francisca@delhiusd.org; jcjr7777@yahoo.com; f\_coronado7@yahoo.com;  
mjcox1940@yahoo.com; efontana@dospalos.org; rhogue@hughes.net; bvanworth@gmail.com;  
wspalding@dpol.net; dhernandez@dpol.net; monica@iem-solutions.com; Allen, Daryl  
<DAllen@co.merced.ca.us>; dallen@act-1.com; De Cocker, Laura <ldecocker@hsa.co.merced.ca.us>;  
Pal, Rakesh <rpal@hsa.co.merced.ca.us>; Pettygrove, Scott <spettygrove@hsa.co.merced.ca.us>; Anhar,  
Mitchell <manhar@hsa.co.merced.ca.us>; Basra, Amardip <abasra@hsa.co.merced.ca.us>; Chavez,  
Freddie <fchavez@hsa.co.merced.ca.us>; Kisling, Nora <nkisling@hsa.co.merced.ca.us>; Peterson,  
Jennifer <jpeterson@hsa.co.merced.ca.us>; Gomez, Maria <mgomez22@hsa.co.merced.ca.us>;  
Sayaovang, Hoyu <hsayaovang@hsa.co.merced.ca.us>; Alvares, Wendy <WAlvares@co.merced.ca.us>;  
Jensen, Christopher <Christopher.Jensen@co.merced.ca.us>; Ornelas, Sophia  
<SOornelas@co.merced.ca.us>; Mendonca, Sharon <SMendonca@co.merced.ca.us>; Hoskins, Betty  
<BHoskins@co.merced.ca.us>; Manuel, Isabel <IManuel@co.merced.ca.us>; Eslinger, Lila  
<LEslinger@co.merced.ca.us>; Medina, Patricia <PMedina@co.merced.ca.us>; Smyth, Lanetta  
<LSmyth@co.merced.ca.us>; Porta, Robert <RPorta@co.merced.ca.us>; Jones, Sharon  
<SJones@co.merced.ca.us>; Butler, Sabrina <SButler@co.merced.ca.us>; Jones, Jennifer M.  
<Jennifer.Jones@co.merced.ca.us>; Deshpande, Smruti <smruti.deshpande@mercedcountylibrary.org>;  
Brown, Sara <Sara.Brown@co.merced.ca.us>; Haygood, Caitlin <CHaygood@co.merced.ca.us>;  
VongChang@tpcp.org; TRivera@sierravistacares.org; Santos, Anna <asantos@aspiranet.org>;  
namimerced2@gmail.com; fgranados@SVCFS.ORG; mderose@aspiranet.org; rhubbard@aspiranet.org;  
sroussos5@gmail.com; janderson@sierravistacares.org; info@mercedcaa.org; vlerer@ucmerced.edu;  
jmccra@yrsscu.s; info@mercedfoundation.org; jeremy@unitedwaymerced.org;  
dripley@unitedwaymerced.org; Sol@unitedwaymerced.org; Claudia@unitedwaymerced.org;  
Jmartinez@unitedwaymerced.org; Elva@unitedwaymerced.org;  
INFORMATION@MISSIONMERCED.ORG; info@csmainc.org; nhtrc@polarisproject.org;

info@mercedchamber.com; lbcofc@comcast.net; ella@umcmerced.org; revschlantz@gmail.com;  
joel@umcmerced.org; larry@umcmerced.org; laura@umcmerced.org; Ryan.Heller@asm.ca.gov;  
sarancibia@mcoe.org; saveouryouthdslaton@aol.com; maccboard@mymaccc.com;  
slflinspach@gmail.com; sterry67@sbcglobal.net; mhofwriter@aol.com; mckamjj5@hotmail.com;  
chaokm@aol.com; jhmccollu@gmail.com; serendipity.ramp@gmail.com; jean.smith0522@gmail.com;  
amavizca.o@mccd.edu; ginnyfarmer63@yahoo.com; rubenviolantesr@hotmail.com;  
fotlbl\_calendar@yahoo.com; iescola47@gmail.com; aschaap@gatewaymerced.org;  
mhumphreys@gatewaymerced.org; kborges@gatewaymerced.org; ksinger@gatewaymerced.org;  
sschance@gatewaymerced.org; iparra@gatewaymerced.org; jbaker@gatewaymerced.org;  
jgrasley@gatewaymerced.org; aflores@gatewaymerced.org; sdunn@gatewaymerced.org;  
aphillips@gatewaymerced.org; cashlock@gatewaymerced.org; clearinghouse@loveincmerced.com;  
school@stpaulmerced.com; irisusapr@aol.com; choopperdave55@ymail.com; noruts@comcast.net;  
pastormike@clcmrcc.com; woofylb@gmail.com; beachsuz71@yahoo.com; allwilliesimmons@att.net;  
jimlolamitchell@sbcglobal.net; pfrene@gmail.com; lbpastor44@yahoo.com;  
g68tiscareno@yahoo.com; jon6544@sbcglobal.net; dan@bethelcommunitychurch.net;  
radioactivesoul38@yahoo.com; joseph@bethelcommunitychurch.net;  
christian@bethelcommunitychurch.net; faithmisioninc@gmail.com; LepantoInstitute@gmail.com;  
denny\_mima@hotmail.com; vdiaz@cvapinc.org; aght1399@gmail.com;  
KAO.thun@iumiencommunityservices.org; mienembroidery@iumiencommunityservices.org;  
farm.salee@iumiencommunityservices.org; Kimberly@mercedarthop.org;  
admin@sierrasavinggrace.org; customerservice@mercedthebus.com; info@gatewaymerced.org;  
newlifetoday@sbcglobal.net; merced2030@yahoo.com; Justin@fpofamerica.com;  
contact@stalbanlsb.org; aceovercomers@sbcglobal.net; dreger5@aol.com; exa.moua@gmail.com;  
MERCEDCJM@GMAIL.COM; office@fbcmerced.com; kamb@celebrationradio.com;  
pastor@ccmerced.org; tporter@ccmerced.org; kingdomradio@ccmerced.org; Luis, Norbela  
<nluis@hsa.co.merced.ca.us>; info@olmstpatrick.org; info@stnicholasatwater.org;  
info@mercedepiscopal.org; HGSP@vva.org; jnb Brooks@gmail.com; orders@diamondprintsonline.com;  
matt@andersonandsonsflooring.com; anythingthatplugsin@electronicbrothers.com;  
sampena@excellpest.com; robpryor@extremesolarsolutions.com; Sal@mercadowinton.net;  
sandy.rflores1@farmersagency.com; sprado@farmersagent.com; Hoffarman@gmail.com;  
jamsat209@gmail.com; larissarebroker@gmail.com; Ldasher@sbcglobal.net; raysgolf@yahoo.com;  
michael.riddle@cancer.org; catrinamar75@gmail.com; dleblanc@solarcity.com;  
store5927@theupsstore.com; website@lifelinecdc.org; cocliv@gmail.com; Azevedo, Maria  
<MAzevedo@co.merced.ca.us>; lovejoyson@hanmail.net; pastordoug70@sbcglobal.net;  
pastorbrucewm@gmail.com; greggbernheisel@gmail.com; pastorguerrero23@yahoo.com;  
bassattacker@charter.net; nogan@sbcglobal.net; firstbaptistchurch809@yahoo.com;  
mchlrvrsn@gmail.com; pastorabel56@sbcglobal.net; trussell777@hotmail.com;  
pastorkeith.ps23@yahoo.com; euriostegui70@gmail.com; ramonehyde@creekpointe.org;  
jerryhuey@sbcglobal.net; revmyke@comcast.net; exa.mous@gmail.com; VHCofmerced@yahoo.com;  
gmartin@wintonchurch.org; amadorg10@yahoo.com; jodi@challengedfrc.org;  
info@atwaterchamberofcommerce.com; mamauthor@sbcglobal.net; mrgb@mrgb.org;  
info@mercedcfm.com; wil@chevroletofmerced.com; garzamendi@gmail.com; lalmeida@samfg.com;  
mike@agrecom.net; deanna.alvarado@fosterfarms.com; bbdlosbanos@gmail.com;  
gvalleyplumbing@att.net; carlappleby@comcast.net; armstrongpetworld@yahoo.com;

kassia@citizenoffit.com; joseph.baldazo@awireless.com; elisa@lairdmfg.com; Diana@deanstaff.com; maria@istaff.biz; david.chavez@bristolhospice.com; ichavez@fldusd.org; mchavez@morningstarco.com; mercedpm@evolvefitness.com; clarkl@villara.com; oneweststeelbuilders@gmail.com; eve@teasolar.com; jan@greatspacesusa.com; PLUMBINGBB@GMAIL.COM; michelle.correa@searshc.com; chase.coyle@target.com; tomdagostino@live.com; sdadisho@s3sanitation.com; kdavisandassociates@yahoo.com; none@none.com; sroberts@modernair.biz; rdiaz@acecashexpress.com; ldowns@ccah-alliance.org; dedwards@sanluispump.com; je8736@att.com; stephanie.enojado@pandarg.com; cens@anberry.com; danielf@big-creek.com; anahi.fernandez@exclusivewireless.net; figueroatires12@gmail.com; florencevethospital@gmail.com; rosa.a.flores@wellsfargo.com; kfonseca@greatvalleyimaging.com; kforeman@samfg.com; yfranco@harborfreight.com; ejfranksconstr@aol.com; agabriel@labeltech.com; hortencia@ingomar.com; dgalzarza@radiomerced.com; gamboae@villara.com; f1201@aarons.com; ricki\_j\_garcia@homedepot.com; walkinfamilyclinic2016@gmail.com; GATEWAYFIREEQUIP@GMAIL.COM; fiofamilyamusements@gmail.com; ralph@centralvalleyconcrete.com; tygibson@richwoodmeat.com; amber.ginorio-dean@usace.army.mil; jesse.gist@awireless.com; alejandra.godinez@fosterfarms.com; ALLAMERICANPHA@ATT.NET; egomez@mercedhcc.com; ismael.gomez1.mil@mail.mil; chris@valleycommercialservices.com; grecia.guerra@olamnet.com; rene@sjjpa.com; gwen.hagaman@gmail.com; hargravefamilyenterprises@gmail.com; amy.hatcher@kagomeusa.com; Patricia.hawkins@mclaneco.com; familyhealthmedicalcenter@gmail.com; gina.hayes@bobcatcentral.com; jheiser@rotoplas.com; jeffrey.a.hernandez@uscg.mil; m1701@petsmart.com; tomhighbywfg@comcast.net; shobbs@muhsd.org; matth@alarmwatch.com; mhoops@holtags.com; lisabetschart@me.com; fencebuilders@sbcglobal.net; anaj@njfco.com; smjimenez@gvhc.org; bannertransmissioncenter@gmail.com; ppdkimdiv1@yahoo.com; mcurry-johnsonfarms@outlook.com; kasonkhan087@yahoo.com; pking@northstarsl.com; feliciak@njfco.com; pkoop@jainsusa.com; lbaoffice@sbcglobal.net; summer@nstractor.com; chad@aceairinc.net; elimon@republicservices.com; klobo@jcp.com; jlopez@maleko.com; care@lamersonlandycare.com; don@mackeyandsons.com; samantha.mahon@avalonhealthcare.com; corinam@donsmobileglass.com; amie@amiesseniorecare.com; carina.marshall@ibpceu.com; angelica.martinez@dor.ca.gov; cmartinez@picknpull.com; mmartinez@josephfarms.com; amart7@jcp.com; shelley.mcgee@pinnaclweb.com; lmcneil.s02039.us@walmart.com; lmcneil.s02039.us@wal-mart.com; medinai@cfjcinc.org; jglassett@rppins.com; maty@dammfinepizza.com; noelia@vistacellars.com; jennifer@aps-hr.com; LARRY@TRI-PHASE.NET; Steve.Miyamoto@wildlife.ca.gov; jmontarb@starbucks.com; marie@mercedsignguys.com; libtax.losbanos@gmail.com; lori.csma@att.net; Ramirez, Britney <BRamirez@co.merced.ca.us>; tim@imagemasters.com; jesus.orozco@mausergroup.com; natalie.ortega@target.com; jortiz@sundownrv.com; autorepairvp@yahoo.com; passadoris@passadoris.comcastbiz.net; lepeeler@qg.com; carie@blaineco.com; mbiconcrete@machadobackhoe.com; richs4120@sbcglobal.net; eporges@primeshine.com; kpowell@childrensdentalasc.com; ramireztrk@att.net; losbanos225@habitburger.com; admin@trifresh.com; familyincometax12@yahoo.com; matthew.a.reed@store.lowes.com; arthurreyes@locknstitch.com; tcmarketmanager1@gmail.com; anna@avitekrecruit.com; crufus@bop.gov; rumin@att.net; raquel\_r\_runyan@homedepot.com; steven.russell@inshape.com; slouiempt@hotmail.com; trussell@sleepfit.com; jessica@mmigconstruction.com; anniesaetern@youthlegalservices.com; miguels@ggconcrete.com;

lindsey.salcido@phi.org; michael.salvatore@pepsico.com; angelafaitth.sanchez@lasieracarecenter.com;  
felice.sanchez@doleintl.com; jan@bestelectric.us; wvanhorn@bop.gov; steph@kirbymfg.com;  
scotobros@hotmail.com; lbcemetery@att.net; sonya.servero@riggsems.org;  
mikestowing24hr@comcast.net; asilva@dorevaproduce.com; htoor@toorinc.com;  
ssiville@blackoakcasino.com; cslayter@smcbyme.com; gsmith@west-mark.com;  
justi.smith.u0oe@statefarm.com; nicksmith@ronsmithbuick.com; ksonnenberg@youngsair.com;  
miguelso209@yahoo.com; booking@nobleplumbers.com; jstephens@fleetcareinternational.com;  
kscott@cornerstone-staffing.com; htakhar@mcoe.org; cindy.tanner87@aol.com;  
david.tapiz@exclusivewireless.com; m64712bo@6franchise.com; m6029bo@motel6.com;  
atisdell@greatvalleyimaging.com; roy@toddenenergycorporation.com; jandrtacos@jandrtacos.com;  
admin@mercedwellness.com; mainoffice@aceairinc.net; rturner4@ucmerced.edu;  
PMARLETTDOOR@CCCCO.EDU; kvoss2780@gmail.com; wakeconstruction@comcast.net;  
kurt.west@hobbylobby.com; robinwestrope@hotmail.com; dwhitemore@modbee.com;  
ttabdist02@gmail.com; laguardia.security@hotmail.com; swilliams@shivhospitality.com;  
andrea.s.winters@erac.com; bcregina@comcast.net; ryan@kyhns.com; rsgm346@tatravelcenters.com;  
everett.yockey@advanced.edu; alsremodeling@hotmail.com; ezuniga@chp.ca.gov; Test Email  
<TEmail@co.merced.ca.us>; Mike Pierick <mpierick@bgcmerced.org>; Lori Waterman  
<lwaterman@atwater.org>; Heather Flores <HFLORES@cvrc.org>; Castro, Elena  
<ecastro@mcsd.k12.ca.us>; Pamela S Branch <pamela.branch@mccd.edu>; Janet Riley  
<JRiley@mcoe.org>; May T Moua (Educational Services) <mtmoua@mcoe.org>; Michelle Joseph  
<michelle.joseph@mccd.edu>; twrobertson@gmail.com; Tim Adam <tadam@missionmerced.org>;  
Marty Christman <marty@mercedchamber.com>; Margaret Buchmann-Garcia <cove4u@gmail.com>;  
Shelly Conner <shelly.conner@mccd.edu>; Eddie Castaneda <ecastaneda@maleko.com>; Maria Coria  
<mcoria@mercedcaa.org>; Paul Enos <PaulEnos@losbanosusd.k12.ca.us>; dalley@lghs.k12.ca.us; John  
Magneson <JMagneson@mcoe.org>; ldownum-hanzal@ricv.org; Susan Coston <SuCoston@mcoe.org>;  
Melissa Abby <Abby.Melissa@jobcorps.org>; Steve Tietjen <STietjen@mcoe.org>; Peter Schuerman  
<pschuerman@ucmerced.edu>; Jill R. Cunningham <jill.cunningham@mccd.edu>;  
icjohnson@hilmar.k12.ca.us; Rachal, MeShan@EDD <MeShan.Rachal@edd.ca.gov>; Vinton Thengvall  
[VThengvall@labeltech.com](mailto:VThengvall@labeltech.com)

Merced Office  
1205 W. 18<sup>th</sup> Street  
Merced, CA 95340  
(209) 724-2100



Los Banos Office  
800 7<sup>th</sup> Street  
Los Banos, CA 93635  
(209) 710-6140

**David Mirrione** – *Director*

<https://www.worknetmerced.com>

**Community and Stakeholder Forum on:**

**Improving Services to Collaborating with  
CalFresh Employment and Training Programs  
September 19, 2018**

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**AGENDA**

- I. Call to Order
- II. Overview of 4-Year Local Workforce Plans and Requirements for Biennial Review and Modification
- III. Overview of the CalFresh Employment and Training Program
- IV. State Requirements and Guidance on Workforce System Partnerships with the CalFresh Employment and Training Program
- IV. Objectives of the Community and Stakeholder Forum
- V. Consideration of and Discussions on:
  - A. Are CalFresh Employment and Training programs currently available in the local area? If so, what services are provided and which are the organizations providing them?
  - B. What types of workforce services are needed to help people receiving CalFresh succeed in the local labor market?
  - C. What barriers to employment are faced by CalFresh recipients and what resources are available to help assist them to overcome those barriers?
  - D. What partnerships currently exist or could be developed among the local workforce system, the county agency that manages CalFresh, and other organizations that provide or could provide services to CalFresh recipients? How do the partners work with one another and how do they share information?
  - E. Are CalFresh recipients being referred to programs that prepare them for high demand jobs in the region's priority sectors? What services or systems are in place that could help CalFresh recipients succeed in such programs and on the job?
- VI. Adjournment





# **Collaborating with CalFresh Employment and Training Programs**

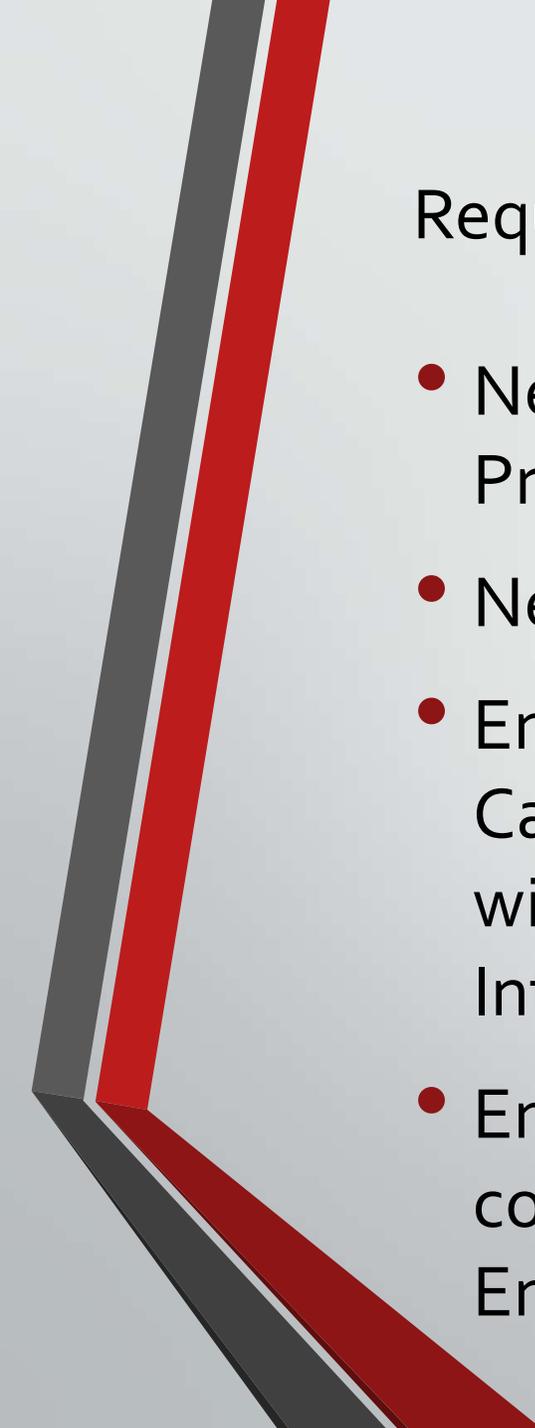
**Merced County**

**Workforce Development Board**

**September 19, 2018**

# Local Workforce Planning and Biennial Updates

- Workforce development programs operated under the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) are administered in California by 45 distinct Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs).
- In 2017, the LWDBs submitted 4-year Local Workforce Plans to the Governor, all of which were, ultimately, approved.
- In accordance with WIOA requirements, a biennial review of the 4-year Local Plans is required.
- California has established specific guidelines for the biennial review of Local Plans, including updates and addenda to bring the plans into alignment with California's 2018 update of the State Workforce Plan.



Required modifications to local plans must address:

- New partnerships with CalFresh Employment and Training Programs
- New Partnerships with Local Child Support Agencies
- Enhanced Collaboration with local representatives of the California Department of Rehabilitation and other agencies within the disability services network to implement Competitive Integrated Employment models
- Enhanced partnerships with local education agencies, community-based organizations and other stakeholders to serve English language learners, foreign born individuals and refugees<sup>3</sup>

# What is the CalFresh Employment and Training Program

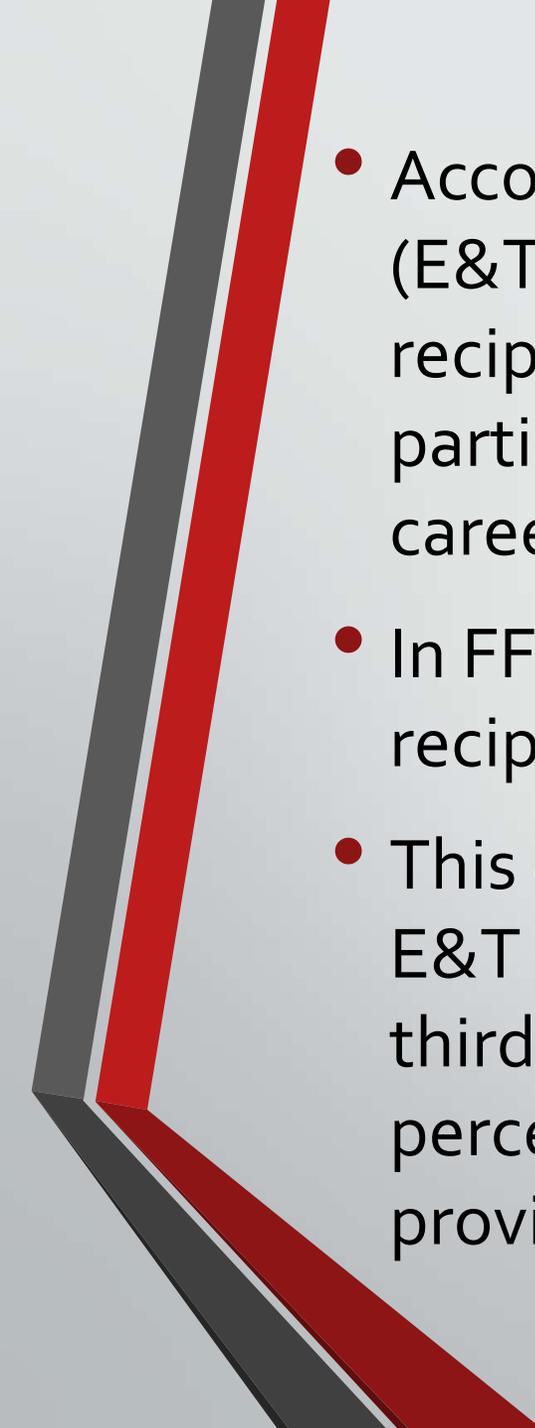
CalFresh is California's version of the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly known as Food Stamps). It is part of the Nutrition Title of the national Farm Bill.

Under SNAP, Employment and Training (E&T) Programs were created to help food stamp recipients gain skills, training, or experience and increase their ability to obtain regular employment.

CalFresh E&T funds can be used to provide enhanced individualized services to program participants and are a potential food stamp outreach tool for low-income working families.

# Overview of Local Plan Guidance on Workforce Partnerships with CalFresh and CalFresh Employment and Training Programs

- The California Workforce Development Board has entered into a formal partnership with the California Department of Social Services, the County Welfare Directors Association, and California Workforce Association with the goal of improving labor market outcomes for all recipients of CalFresh.
- Currently in California, 38 county human services agencies offer CalFresh Employment and Training (CalFresh E&T) program services to CalFresh participants on a voluntary basis.

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- According to the California State Employment and Training Plan (E&T Plan), California's CalFresh E&T program helps CalFresh recipients gain skills, training, and work experience that will increase participants' ability to obtain regular employment, advance on a career pathway, and achieve economic self-sufficiency.
  - In FFY 2018, CalFresh E&T expects to serve over 100,000 CalFresh recipients.
  - This growth is supported by a unique funding opportunity. CalFresh E&T providers, including county human services agencies and other third-party partners, are eligible to receive uncapped federal 50 percent reimbursement for costs paid using non-federal funding to provide allowable E&T services to people receiving CalFresh.

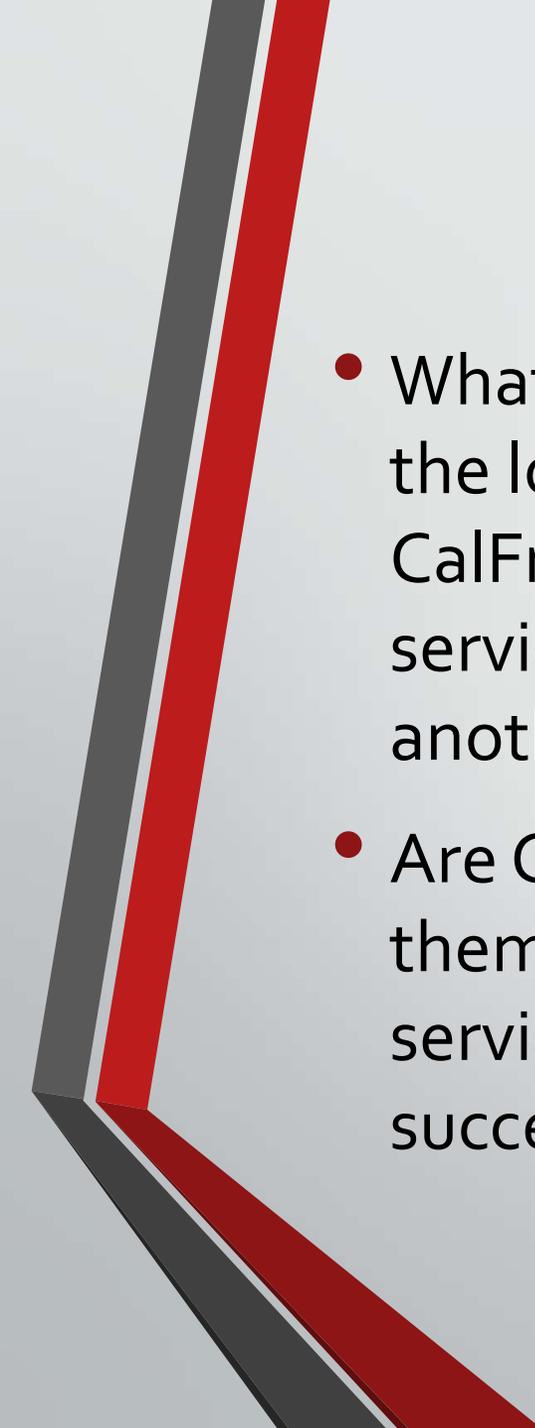
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- CalFresh E&T services are delivered by county human services agencies and a variety of other service providers, including CBOs and community colleges.
  - Local Boards are encouraged to contact county human services agencies and invite them to participate in regional planning efforts.

# Objectives of this Community Forum

- Give stakeholders and the community the opportunity to weigh in on the needs of this target group
- Learn from practitioners about best practices in meeting service needs
- Identify where gaps in services may currently exist
- Hear recommendations on building and/or strengthening partnerships with CalFresh Employment and Training Programs

# For Your Consideration/Input

- Are CalFresh Employment and Training programs currently available in the local area? If so, what services are provided and which are the organizations providing them?
- What types of workforce services are needed to help people receiving CalFresh succeed in the local labor market?
- What barriers to employment are faced by CalFresh recipients and what resources are available to help assist them to overcome those barriers?

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- What partnerships currently exist or could be developed among the local workforce system, the county agency that manages CalFresh, and other organizations that provide or could provide services to CalFresh recipients? How do the partners work with one another and how do they share information?
  - Are CalFresh recipients being referred to programs that prepare them for high demand jobs in the region's priority sectors? What services or systems are in place that could help CalFresh recipients succeed in such programs and on the job?



**Thanks!**

**We greatly appreciate your input.**

Start Time: 9:10 AM, 15 Attendees

- I. Call to Order
  - A. Introduction given by David Mirrione
    1. 1<sup>st</sup> Community Stake Holder Session
    2. What WorkNet is and what we do.
    3. Explanation of what we will do with this convening's
    4. David Shinder introduction as he will do Presentation
- II. Overview of 4-Year Local Workforce Plans and Requirements for Biennial Review and Modification
  - A. David Shinder Presents Slides 2-3
- III. Overview of Cal Fresh Employment and Training Program
  - A. David Shinder Presents Slide 4
- IV. Objectives of the community and Stake Holder Forum
  - A. David Shinder Presents Slides 5-7
    1. Slide 5 Audience Participation Question "How many Counties are there in California?"  
**Khamla Emanivong, H.S.A.:** "58 Counties in California"
- V. Objectives of the Community and Stake Holder Forum
  - A. David Shinder Presents Slide 8
- VI. Consideration of and Discussion on (Slides 9-10):
  - A. Introduction of all Attendees:
    1. Attendee's each stated their name and Organization they belonged to (See Sign in Sheet for details)
  - B. Questions Slide 9-10 Presented by David Shinder with Audience participation
    1. **Are Cal Fresh Employment and Training Programs currently available in local area? If so, what services are provided and which are the Organizations providing them. Does Merced County have a program in Place?**  
**Mary Ellen Arana, H.S.A.:** "We do not have a Program in Place yet, but do have a well employment program. There are plans to implement in future. Over the last year, we were looking to partner with Bridge Program and other partners for example Merced College. We have not applied and moved forward yet since it is not mandated and currently have a waiver. We are exploring and one of the obstacles is limited resources"  
  
**David Shinder:**" How many People are served out of 100,000?"  
  
**Mary Ellen Arana, H.S.A.:** "It is voluntary to participate case load is 7,000 from Cal Fresh"  
(Later in the meeting, she corrected number to 52,500 for June 2018)  
  
**Raul Diaz, Mig Ed MCOE:** Question to Mary Ellen Arana, H.S.A. "Was there an invite to Merced Co. Agencies that might be interested in partnerships for program?"

**Mary Ellen Arana, H.S.A.:** *“There was no formal invite yet because still talking about it” she also mentioned, “This is definitely something to be considered when we look for partnerships”*

**David Shinder:** *“H.S.A. was looking to Fresno Co. because their County Model well known and they contract out to community”*

**Monica Sotelo, MSA Viper:** *Question to Mary Ellen H.S.A. “Do you have a Cal fresh participation number for everyone in need or on waiting List?”*

**Mary Ellen Arana, H.S.A.:** *“There is not a waitlist, there is an eligibility requirement that needs to be met”*

**Monica Sotelo, MSA Viper** *“Do they have to be over the age of 18?”*

**Mary Ellen Arana, H.S.A.:** *“No there is no waiting list, it depends on eligibility”*

**Khamla Emanivong, H.S.A.:** *“Participants of CalWORKs and Cal Fresh get assistance with employment currently. Cal Fresh participants who do not participate in Cal works do not receive assistance with employment”*

**David Shinder:** *summarized CalWORKs and Cal fresh discussion above stating, “Cal Fresh participants who have a non-association with CalWORKs want them to succeed with the right mechanisms in place.”*

## **2. What types of workforce services are needed to help people receiving Cal Fresh succeed in the local Labor Market?**

**David Shinder:** *“Cal Fresh population doesn’t look any different than anyone in the room. Many types of people qualify for example: College students, two working parent families, single mothers, every type of family. What do you suggest?”*

**Monica Sotelo, MSA Viper:** *“Training”*

**David Shinder:** *“How good of a job are we doing in broadcastings available trainings?”*

**Monica Sotelo, MSA Viper:** *“I know there is a job fair tomorrow. The last couple of years this job fair happens quarterly. It is hard to say because we see unemployed people and see opportunity. We don’t know if they are applying and don’t have the skills.”*

**Raul Diaz, Mig Ed MCOE:** *“People might not be aware or people need more information on job and careers, more training quality, not all jobs are created equal. Someone may have a job and still unable to support a family.”*

**Monica Sotelo, MSA Viper:** *“Young people really want to work so not having the proper training they are not being looked at. Maybe getting training and implementing at younger age.”*

**Raul Diaz, Mig Ed MCOE:** *“They may have the skill set, but not able to share them with employers. An example is Migrant Families that are field workers have skills like they are hard workers and etc.”*

**David Shinder:** *shared some skills and traits employers are looking for, mentioned training to allow individuals to market themselves to employers, and mentioned our population in county is roughly 300,000.*

## **3. What barriers to employment are faced by Cal Fresh recipients and what resources are available to help assist them to overcome those barriers?**

**Ray Perez, CVOC:** *“English Language Barriers, their clients use Merced College Classes to help overcome this barrier”*

**David Shinder:** *“California is Schizophrenic about how we communicate, we should do both English and their native language.”*

**Carmen Ponce Perez, MSA:** *“Transportation issues. For example if they take a bus it takes 2 hours and they may not have a car to get to work or trainings.”*

**David Shinder:** *“This is a big deal in rural communities and a real dilemma for a lot of people. They may also have one care for a family.”*

**Raul Diaz, Mig Ed MCOE:** *“Foreign Individual, Having cultural competency, sensitivity. This should begin with the front office. There are biases and people may have certain perception of a person.”*

**David Shinder:** *“our current workforces coordinates job seekers with employers based on strengths and promotions.”*

**Ieisha Sanders, Public Health:** *“Ethnic Names may implicate biases. County can use method of when scanning resumes covering names and focusing on qualifications. Use Diverse hiring panels and increase diversity.”*

**Khamla Emanivong, H.S.A:** *“Lack of education and lack of training. Having a career pathway for opportunity. Example get education, get training, get job.”*

**David Shinder:** *“Why do think so many people don’t utilize resources.”*

**Khamla Emanivong, H.S.A:** *“Maybe they are not aware of resources.”*

**Monica Sotelo, MSA Viper:** *“Some only serve ages 18 and over. She asked Empowerment and asked for younger ages.”*

**Raul Diaz, Mig Ed MCOE:** *“Illegal Status in this country a national stigma. Some people would apply because think it will put them on ICE radar.”*

**Ieisha Sanders, Public Health:** *“Child Care Barrier.”*

**David Mirrione, WorkNet:** *“There is a severe shortage for child care even if you want it there is limited spots available.”*

**Naly Thao, Merced Lao Family:** *“Children Priorities, In some cases Father finds a job and Mother stays home to take care of child. To Piggyback off of English Language Barrier 48 % report stress or signs of depression because of unemployment. Training is not provided in Mong language at WorkNet.”*

**David Shinder:** *Clarified WorkNet is like a Broker and does not provide the training*

4. What partnerships currently exist or could be developed among the local workforce system, the county agency that manages Cal Fresh and other organizations that provide or could provide services to Cal Fresh recipients? How do the partners work with one another and how do they share information?

**David Mirrione, WorkNet:** *“We do serve some folks of Cal Fresh/SNAP. We get some referrals from Kamiko (H.S.A.) and her team. There is always room for improvement.”*

**Carmen Ponce Perez, MSA:** *“Every Monday we do Cafecito and Donuts at 8 am to share information.”*

**Kimiko Vang, H.S.A:** *“Have contracts; because of being as central Cal Fresh place, try to contract with agencies to help. We are always trying to catch up with changing agencies to provide services. If receiving intense services or housing issues its hard to serve. There are systemic issues that need to be addressed.”*

**Monica Sotelo, MSA Viper:** *“Building more environments, information is not available I feel like you must find 1 person that has the “IN.” there is a number of agency’s that can serve only so many people ( meaning they may have a cap amount) and there are technical barriers. Maybe more gatherings to be able learn from each other.”*

**Kimiko Vang H.S.A:** *“Central place with recipients. Cal Fresh has no real system. Resources change all the time and people within community as well. There is no system that we are able to use. Barriers to individuals like substance abuse and housing. Issues with system leads to really be able to serve. Need strategic and tailor to part pants at that point in their lives. Tailoring to each person with a pathway for them to succeed.”*

5. Are Cal Fresh Recipients being referred to programs that prepare them for high demand jobs in the regions priority sectors? What services or systems are in place that could help Cal Fresh recipients succeed in such programs and on the job?

**Raul Diaz, Mig Edu MCOE:** *“I worked in Merced for 4 year, worked in Stanislaus County and knew of certain groups that gather on a monthly basis. I have not found this in Merced County, there is a void.”*

**Ieisha Sanders, Public Health:** *“I will do a shameless plug we have monthly meetings, 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of every month, that focus on Sub-abuse disorder, access care, etc. We have nonprofits there. Tomorrow is our next meeting History of Oppressive Policy’s 11am to 1 pm at BHRS, Lunch will be provided. We talk about other things not just health.”*

**David Shinder:** *”What about the workforce side?”*

**David Mirrione, WorkNet:** *“We do not have a group, but we can look into it.”*

**Ray Perez, CVOC:** *“If Ag/ Cal Fresh not just a qualifier in Training. CVOC is a 167 provider for farm workers and qualify for special funding. To qualify for training must be Cal Fresh. We work with WorkNet, Conmigog group, empower and Phoenix Project.”*

**David Mirrione, WorkNet:** *“Last year we are focusing on priority sectors using big analysis local and regional markets. With WIOA It is a different mindset if we train what the wage and where does this lead. We do not want a repeat cycle.”*

**Ray Perez, CVOC:** *“Good Thing David brought up. He displayed an example. Migrant worker in season earned \$11/hr. and went to truck driving school program now earns \$25/hr. and wage will increase after 30 days.”*

**Monica Sotelo, MSA Viper:** *“What was the time frame?” question to Ray Perez, CVOC*

**Ray Perez, CVOC:** *“One year.”*

**David Shinder:** *“Merced Co. won UC Merced Bid because of capacity of Merced County who have Affordable housing and skilled workforce. I want to ask since Cal Fresh was not implemented. I would like personal opinions/thoughts of implementing the program.”*

**Kimiko Vang, H.S.A.:** *“It is very beneficial to bring and provide ancillary services like transportation/ child care. I think it is a great idea.”*

**Monica Sotelo, MSA Viper:** *“There is a huge need. This will help eliminate those barriers we discussed and it will be justifiable to tax payers. Us having a UC here is beyond a blessing. UC is on their island, but this year I seen more community engagement and will do more with a little more time. Implementing the program here will be great.”*

**David Shinder:** *“Are there any more comments?”*

**David Mirrione, WorkNet:** *“Please keep in mind non Federal Funds need to be brought to the table to match.”*

**Kimiko Vang, H.S.A.:** *“Yes, this is one of the issues we have discussed is matching Funds. There is not a requirement to use non-Federal dollars. If only Federal dollars are used, we will not qualify for 50% rebate. 100% of all monies are split between counties and if more people come in less dollars are available since it is split and will reduce our allocation.”*

**David Shinder:** *“Counties that do the best partner with education because they use state monies have those monies to provide.”*

*David mentions our upcoming forums and encourages everyone to attend. He mentions we are reaching out to everyone and it is an open invite. Last, he give details on our findings after all convening is we will post results on Merced County WorkNet website on Jan 7, 2019. This will be made available for public comment.”*

VII. Adjournment

Merced Office  
1205 W. 18<sup>th</sup> Street  
Merced, CA 95340  
(209) 724-2100



Los Banos Office  
800 7<sup>th</sup> Street  
Los Banos, CA 93635  
(209) 710-6140

**David Mirrione** – *Director*  
<https://www.worknetmerced.com>

**Community and Stakeholder Forum on:**

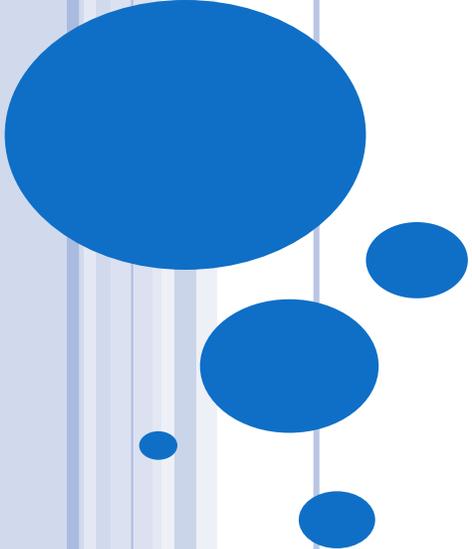
**Strengthening Partnerships with Local Child Support Agencies  
to Serve Non-Custodial Parents  
October 5, 2018**

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**AGENDA**

- I. Call to Order
- II. Overview of 4-Year Local Workforce Plans and Requirements for Biennial Review and Modification
- III. State Requirements for Review and Modification of Plans to Incorporate Collaboration among the Workforce System, the Local Child Support Agency, and Other Organizations Serving Unemployed, Underemployed and Payment Delinquent Non-Custodial Parents (NCPs)
- IV. Objectives of the Community Forum
- V. Consideration of and Discussions on:
  - A. What barriers to employment are most common among targeted NCPs?
  - B. What are NCPs' service needs (particularly with regard to job skills and employment) and what services are currently available?
  - C. What organizations collaborate locally to promote skills development, employment and career advancement for targeted NCPs?
  - D. Among the NCP service partners, (e.g. Child Support, Family Court, AJCCs, training providers and community-based organizations), what referral and information sharing systems are in place?
  - E. What strategies and tools are used to motivate and incentivize NCPs' acting on referrals, participating in training/skills development and retention in employment?
  - F. How can local organizations work better to ensure positive employment and career outcomes for NCPs?
- VI. Adjournment





**Merced County  
Workforce Development Board  
October 5, 2018**

**STRENGTHENING PARTNERSHIPS  
WITH LOCAL CHILD SUPPORT  
AGENCIES  
TO SERVE NON-CUSTODIAL  
PARENTS**

## LOCAL WORKFORCE PLANNING AND THE BIENNIAL UPDATES

- Workforce development programs operated under the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) are administered in California by 45 distinct Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs).
- In 2017, the LWDBs submitted 4-year Local Workforce Plans to the Governor, all of which were, ultimately, approved.
- In accordance with WIOA requirements, a biennial review of the 4-year Local Plans is required.
- California has established specific guidelines for the biennial review of Local Plans, including updates and addenda to bring the plans into alignment with California's 2018 update of the State Workforce Plan.

Required modifications to local plans must address:

- New partnerships with CalFresh Employment and Training Programs
- New Partnerships with Local Child Support Agencies
- Enhanced Collaboration with local representatives of the California Department of Rehabilitation and other agencies within the disability services network to implement Competitive Integrated Employment models
- Enhanced partnerships with local education agencies, community-based organizations and other stakeholders to serve English language learners, foreign born individuals and refugees

# OVERVIEW OF REGIONAL PLAN GUIDANCE REGARDING PARTNERSHIPS WITH LOCAL CHILD SUPPORT AGENCIES (LCSAs) AND SERVICES TO NON-CUSTODIAL PARENTS (NCPs)

- The State Workforce Development Board has entered into a formal partnership with the California Department of Child Support Services (DCSS) with the goal of improving labor market outcomes for unemployed, underemployed, and payment-delinquent non-custodial parents.
- The vision of DCSS is that all parents will be engaged in supporting their children. This is achieved through the interventions including: establishing paternity, locating parents, establishing child and medical support orders, enforcing and modifying child and medical support orders, and collecting and disbursing child support payments.

- The State Board has directed Local Boards to engage and work with LCSAs and specific partner CBOs to serve their local non-custodial parent population.
- Among the processes that are expected to result from workforce-child support network partnerships are referral protocols, including those from LCSAs and family court; enrollment of clients in training programs that will lead to family-sustaining wages; employment opportunities in careers within growth industries; and services that promote retention in training and on the job.

## OBJECTIVES OF THIS COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER FORUM

- Provide stakeholders and the community the opportunity to weigh in on the needs of this target group
- Learn from practitioners about best practices in meeting service needs
- Identify gaps in services
- Hear recommendations for improving the content, availability and quality of services for unemployed, underemployed and payment delinquent non-custodial parents

# FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION AND INPUT

- What barriers to employment are most common among targeted NCPs?
- What are NCPs' service needs (particularly with regard to job skills and employment) and what services are currently available?
- What organizations collaborate locally to promote skills development, employment and career advancement for targeted NCPs?
- Among the NCP service partners, (e.g. Child Support, Family Court, AJCCs, training providers and community-based organizations), what referral and information sharing systems are in place?

- What strategies and tools are used to motivate and incentivize NCPs' in acting on referrals, participating in training/skills development and retention in employment?
- How can local organizations work better to ensure positive employment and career outcomes for non-custodial parents?

Thanks!

We greatly appreciate your input!

# Strengthening Partnerships with Local Child Support Agencies to Serve Non-Custodial Parents – Local Convening

October 5, 2018

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## Start Time:

- I. Call to Order
  - A. Introduction given by David Mirrione
    1. 1<sup>st</sup> Community Stake Holder Session
    2. What WorkNet is and what we do.
    3. Explanation of what we will do with this convening's
    4. David Shinder introduction as he will do Presentation
- II. Overview of 4-Year Local Workforce Plans and Requirements for Biennial Review and Modification
  - A. David Shinder Presents Slides 2-3
- III. Overview of Regional Plan Guidance Regarding Partnerships with Local Child Support Agencies (LCSAs) and Services to Non-Custodial Parents (NCPs)
  - A. David Shinder Presents Slide 4-5
- IV. Objectives of the community and Stake Holder Forum
  - A. David Shinder Presents Slides 6
- V. For Your Consideration and Input (Slide 7 & 8):
  - A. Introduction of all Attendees:
    1. Attendee's each stated their name and Organization they belonged to (Refer to Sign in Sheet for details)
      - Lori Norman, SSA, Child Support
      - Darlene Ingersoll, Asst Director, Child Support
      - Sharon Wardale Wardale, Director, Child Support
      - Nicole Cortez, Program Manager, Child support
      - Reyna Espinoza, Program Manager, Worknet
      - David Mirrione, Director, Worknet
      - Lamar Henderson, All Dads Matter
      - Rashanna, Program Manager for Health Services, CalFresh, Calworks, HSA
      - See Her, SSA, Worknet
      - Linda Gutierrez, SSA, Worknet
      - Michael Conrad, Community Connections
      - Ruby Awesome, Special Project Manager, Worknet
      - Nick Loret De Mola, Deputy Director, Worknet
  - B. Questions Slide 7-8 Presented by David Shinder with Audience participation

1. **What barriers to employment are most common among targeted NCP's?**

**Sharon Wardale:** *“One of the largest barriers to employment we have is the relationships that we have with the substance in our caseload. 15 years ago, transitioned into a family center approach. That message hasn't necessarily gone through and so part of our struggle is building that relationship and building that trust with NCP and when we offer them the support, they will take it as an offer instead of as –what's the catch. Speaking to the demographic, the barrier is the incarceration, potential substance abuse, lack of education, housing, not having high school diploma.”* *there is a perception issue and process hasn't been filtered well. There is a need to build trust to take the service available instead of what's the catch questioning. She mentioned several services available to help parents including Behavioral health, housing, education, and career services and many are not willing to participate in them and it is very challenging.*

**David Shinder:** *“That's a good list. We started with a perception issue. You're right though, many of it is built around enforcement of the law, enforcement of the law. In the slide, it says, “vision of DCSS is that all parents will be engaged in supporting their children this a key through intervention included. Their words were services I read on and it says establishing paternity, establishing support orders. It don't feel like services to me. I'll call it intervention. It's that perception thing.”*

**Sharon Wardale:** *“Years ago, the Department of Child Support Services got a grant to work with EDD and Worknet at the time, for this type of project and we have truck driving school. It was us presenting and we couldn't get them to participate. It was Child support as the messenger which made it challenging.”*

**David Shinder:** *“In a meeting recently, they claim to be, sharing info about rebranding so the people don't see the hammer coming at them as the first thing coming at them. So they see other services.”*

**Reyna Espinoza:** *“What you have is learners that have English as second language . They have high percentage of their cases, Spanish is first language. Barrier to employment. Have to teach the language first before they can gain employment. There is a high percentage of Spanish is their 1<sup>st</sup> language and this causes barriers to employment. English language must be taught before employment.*

**David Shinder:** *“someone who comes to us without English being their first language is not going to start at the same place as someone that speaks that English language.*

**Lamar Henderson:** *“Families are making sophisticated decision on their resources in employment. For example, if I am receiving access or services for my child and now I am making \$20 more and my child can't go to head start because I'm making over \$20 than the amount. Now I'm making a decision on “do I work and lose resources or do I not work and maintain resources.” Families often have to make decision of resources vs employment. He gave an example of family paying for head start. Do they work and lose other*

resources currently receiving because they qualify for them or stay unemployed to be able to still receive resources.

**David Shinder:** *“this is an issue coming up all over the state. Especially near the border and up to Stockton. Trying to encourage young individuals to engage in training and services that will lead to employment and traditional work setting. But when they do, there goes social security and their parents starts to freak out because now we are trying to get Bob, Susan, or Mary to work now. We are doing a good but it’s not that easily to line up and get social security so those parents are petrified.*

**Lamar Henderson:** *“that is the income for some families. That \$800 a month pays the rent. That is the message where we have to be savvy and not go to work because we only get this much.*

**David Shinder:** *“We have to have enough resources and toolkit available to be able to say to a dad and they do gain wages and sufficient resources. But its not going to happen overnight. They can gain good wages. Construction is booming in the valley.”*

**Lori Norman:** *“Taxes, disable adult children have been claimed by their parents and if they work and make more than \$1,000 then their parents can’t claim them anymore. If children work then their parents can’t claim them anymore. Another thing is undocumented. So they are afraid of us (child support) so they don’t want to come to us. taxes are a barrier. She gave the example of a part time disabled parent unable to claim. She has a lot of caseloads of undocumented people.*

**2. What are NCP’s service needs (particularly with regard to job skills and employment) and what series are currently available?**

**Nicole Cortez:** *“One of the biggest skills they need is communication. In a partnership with Probation. One of the biggest challenge is lack of communication and no support. Changing their mind. Communication is the biggest skill needed when in training. Relationship and communication with other partner.*

**David Shinder:** *“Perceptions and attitude towards them of the support comes to mind.”*

**Rashanna:** *“Many of them are without capacity to get basic needs. Making the decisions to get to that next step is challenging. I.e.: housing. Hierarchy of needs. When applying for housing and having to be eligible for the program and having that child support is hard for them. Engage clients to get family to stabilize before they can even get onto the next thing. Working with Child Support.” Outreach to homeless, many don’t have the capacity to look at employment just trying to get to basic needs so going next step is a challenge with them. We need a whole Hollistic environment.*

**David Shinder:** *“Merced County is interesting place because cost a lot more than anyone expect.*

**Rashanna:** *“We have housing assistance. The amount for rent and the public housing will pay does not match. The voucher will not allow the housing to be affordable. There*

*are substance abuse and behavioral health issues with it too so it makes it hard for them to be in a place where they can get employment. Affordable Housing, Rent amounts to what public housing pays doesn't match. Also, lots of substance abuse and Behavioral Health issues.*

**Sharon Wardale:** *“One thing that comes to mind is some not having a Driver License enabling them to not get employed. When a case is open and order is established. A monthly obligation occur. If the obligation is not paid then Child Support arear. Once the accrue then it starts suspending their driver license, professional, business, commercial, passports, bank account levies. Once someone meet that threshold. There is threshold when you're delinquent. Before it's all those things. Now it's like “please call us. We can help you. Please call us and we can work with you.”when someone enters a program and they have work opportunity that is ahead of them, their DL is released to them.*

**David Shinder:** *“When it comes to program, they need license that's why partnerships is important.”*

**Reyna Espinoza:** *“How in partnerships win our agency and toehr agency help them upscale their skills and gain better employment. How is that the NCP be able to pay that support to get more money.”*

### **3. What organizations collaborate locally to promote skills development, employment and career advancement for targeted NCP's?**

**Reyna Espinoza:** *“Locally, we already started partnership in trying to work on this. Started a referral system on their pieces. In early delinquency, 60-90 days. Once they are ordered- they refer those clients to our job center with actual instruction on what they need to do. Specific on what they do or need to do: career specialist, career training, development. Worknet started a partnership with Child Support in which they refer cases with court referrals over to their job center.*

**David Shinder:** *“For those people they are not working at all at this point so could they participate? Would it be in keeping with the court order to go to training during the day instead of going to court.”*

**Reyna Espinoza:** *“The idea to is get them into a job. You either on payroll or get into a program because we want them to pay into taxes. There are training like truck driving.”*

**David Shinder:** *“How long is the truck driving. Its 6 weeks. Once we are done with the truck driving and get a job is after the 90 days. It is 150 days. Is that something that is doable for us to do that? Even if they are not making payments because they don't have a job”*

**Sharon Wardale:** *“When they are cooperative, they will work with them. Goals if for them to be stable & sustainable. We understand that when they are I that program and is participating they don't have a fee to pay so we work with them while they are going through that program. Then after that we will start enforcing.”*

**David Shinder:** *“A procedure for the county to follow. Have nice document with procedurals to follow with instructions for going from child support to workforce. From workforce to AJCC. It happens where we see they will go from one to another and we find out John doesn’t have the driver license”*

**Lamar Henderson:** *“They show up when they’re about to lose their job. That’s when they show up. When they start getting mail or court order.*

**Sharon Wardale:** *“we don’t just take the licenses overnight without ample reasons. There were months and pre advance notices that this was occurring and they fail to resolve the issue. mentioned that they do not take drivers licenses away over night that they give ample notice*

**Lamar Henderson:** *“ when they start getting mail or subpoena from child support, it’s the last thing they want to open. They don’t want to open it. 99% want to provide to their children but they don’t trust the system. Their experience, they go to court they go to jail. No matter what it is. They don’t want to hear what child support have to say. Your champions need to speak about the program and that it worked for them. They don’t want to hear anything child support has to say but they will hear what Michael has to say. Your champions needs to tell the story. If their neighbor says they went over there and guess what they have \$20 in their pocket and was able to walk out with their license.” a few things he has seen come up is that they see incoming mail that they do not want to open. 99% want to support their children and be a good father they just do not trust the system. An example is they think if they go to court, they will go to jail.*

**Sharon Wardale:** *“Highlight these programs. Helps people navigate the people in the program. All Dads Matter and All Moms Matter are agencies where customers come in and they trust them. So when they tell something, the people can do it.”*

**4. Among the NCP service partners, (e.g Child Support, Family Court, AJCC’s training providers and community-based organizations), what referral and information sharing systems are in place?**

**Reyna Espinoza:** *“We used Caljobs- case management where we share that info with Child Support. They can see the notes what Worknet inputted and done with the clients.*

**Sharon Wardale:** *“confidential info protects and prevents from sharing.”*

**Darlene Ingersoll:** *“Court caseworkers have form of release before going to Worknet*

**Reyna Espinoza:** *“We use HSA document in place of our PII and protects from information sharing.”*

**5. What strategies and tools are used to motivate and incentivized NCPS’s in acting on referrals, participating in training/skills development and retention in employment?**

**Michael Conrad:** *“Have something that people earn money at the same time as they go to school. Incarcerated people earn money and learn projects. Have a fair robust tool kit because we have the workforce system and help with resume, pge, and housing.”*

**Darlene Ingersoll:** *“incentivize the program.”*

**David Shinder:** *“what kind of incentives are you looking for to be brought to the table? If we have someone not liking school, they can do a training to learn new skill.”*

**Reyna Espinoza:** *“We have that. Depends on the needs of the clients as they come in. assess based on the needs of the participants.”*

**Sharon Wardale:** *“Key component is communication. Fear of income. Modified the order based on the income and their life.”*

**6. How can local organizations work better to ensure positive employment and career outcomes for non-custodial parents?**

**David Shinder:** *“We as workforce have to modify the plan and use exiting or plan modification, develop an MOU with child support like how we do with other partners that be next step in implementing change.”*

**Lamar Henderson:** *“Want to encourage finding the champion stories and sharing that with beginning of the meetings and trainings.”*

VI. Adjournment



**David Mirrione** – *Director*  
<https://www.worknetmerced.com>  
**Community and Stakeholder Forum on:**

**Improving Services to Individuals with Disabilities  
through Competitive Integrated Employment  
October 24, 2018**

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**AGENDA**

- I. Call to Order
- II. Overview of 4-Year Local Workforce Plans and Requirements for Biennial Review and Modification
- III. Overview of Competitive Integrated Employment
- IV. State Requirements and Guidance on Services for Individuals with Disabilities through Competitive Integrated Employment
- IV. Objectives of Community and Stakeholder Forum
- V. Consideration of and Discussions on:
  - A. How are DOR and the workforce system (i.e. the local Board and the AJCCs) currently working together with local partners (such as regional centers, special education and Workability programs, among others) to support the employment goals of individuals with intellectual disabilities and developmental disabilities?
  - B. Are efforts underway for the partners to collaborate on the use of CIE for job seekers with ID/DD?
  - C. Have discussions begun on the development of a Local Partnership Agreement to create more CIE opportunities? If not, how can this be accelerated?
  - D. Have workforce system staff received training in serving individuals with ID/DD and are they knowledgeable about programs and services available to assist this target group? What additional training and information is needed?
  - E. How are DOR and the local workforce system working together to outreach to employers and partners to support individuals with ID/DD in achieving CIE? If efforts are not yet underway, what will be done?
  - F. Have recruitment, referral and employer engagement strategies been defined? If not, what is planned?
- VI. Adjournment





**Improving Services to  
Individuals with Disabilities  
through Competitive  
Integrated Employment**

- » Workforce development programs operated under the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) are administered in California by 45 distinct Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs).
- » In 2017, the LWDBs submitted 4-year Local Workforce Plans to the Governor, all of which were, ultimately, approved.
- » In accordance with WIOA requirements, a biennial review of the 4-year Local Plans is required.
- » California has established specific guidelines for the biennial review of Local Plans, including updates and addenda to bring the plans into alignment with California's 2018 update of the State Workforce Plan.

## Local Workforce Planning and the Biennial Updates



Required modifications to local plans must address:

- » New partnerships with CalFresh Employment and Training Programs
- » New Partnerships with Local Child Support Agencies
- » Enhanced Collaboration with local representatives of the California Department of Rehabilitation and other agencies within the disability services network to implement Competitive Integrated Employment models
- » Enhanced partnerships with local education agencies, community-based organizations and other stakeholders to serve English language learners, foreign born individuals and refugees

- » Competitive Integrated Employment (CIE) is work performed by a person with a disability (including those with intellectual disabilities and developmental disabilities) within an integrated setting that includes both individuals with and without disabilities.
- » CIE is full- or part-time work that:
  - Compensates individuals at no less than the legal minimum wage and at the same rate as non-disabled employees with the same skills, performing the same work
  - Yields an income comparable to that of similarly situated non-disabled individuals
  - Provides the same benefits available to other employees
  - Is at a location where employees interact with other persons who are not individuals with disabilities
  - Presents opportunities for advancement

**What is Competitive Integrated Employment?**

- » In 2017, the California Department of Rehabilitation (DOR), the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) and the California Department of Education (CDE) formalized a partnership agreement around creating more opportunities for individuals with intellectual disabilities (ID) and developmental disabilities (DD) through CIE and other mechanisms.
- » Local Boards must submit modifications to their local plans that address how they will engage with local counterparts of the three state-level partners to align with the State CIE strategy embedded in its blueprint.

## Overview of Local Plan Guidance regarding Competitive Integrated Employment



- » The state-level CIE partners (DOR, DDS, CDE) have developed a Local Partnership Agreement template to assist local education agencies, DOR districts and DDS regional centers in collaborating more effectively in assisting individuals with ID and DD.
- » Staff at AJCCs are expected to understand the needs of jobseekers with ID/DD and be knowledgeable about programs and resources that can aid in their success.
- » DOR's district staff will designate a point of contact for the Local Boards to help provide linkages to service providers of individuals with ID/DD.

- » DOR district staff will partner with Local Boards to outreach to employers and partners to develop strategies to achieve CIE opportunities for consumers.
- » The State Board recommends that Local Boards support the recruitment, referral, and employer engagement efforts of DOR representatives.

- » Give stakeholders and the community the opportunity to weigh in on the needs of this target group
- » Learn from practitioners about best practices in meeting service needs
- » Identify where gaps in services may currently exist
- » Hear recommendations on implementing competitive integrated employment for individuals with intellectual disabilities and developmental disabilities.

## Objectives of this Community and Stakeholder Forum

- » How are DOR and the workforce system (i.e. the local Board and the AJCCs) currently working together with local partners (such as regional centers, special education and Workability programs, among others) to support the employment goals of individuals with intellectual disabilities and developmental disabilities?
- » Are efforts underway for the partners to collaborate on the use of CIE for job seekers with ID/DD?
- » Have discussions begun on the development of a Local Partnership Agreement to create more CIE opportunities? If not, how can this be accelerated?

**For Your Consideration and Input**

- » Have workforce system staff received training in serving individuals with ID/DD and are they knowledgeable about programs and services available to assist this target group? What additional training and information is needed?
- » How are DOR and the local workforce system working together to outreach to employers and partners to support individuals with ID/DD in achieving CIE? If efforts are not yet underway, what will be done?

» Have recruitment, referral and employer engagement strategies been defined? If not, what is planned?

**Thanks!**  
**We greatly appreciate your input!**

Start Time: 9:10am

- I. Call to Order
  - A. Introduction given by David Mirrione
    1. 1<sup>st</sup> Community Stake Holder Session
    2. David Shinder introduction as he will do Presentation
- II. Overview of 4-Year Local Workforce Plans and Requirements for Biennial Review and Modification
- III. Overview of Competitive Integrated Employment
- IV. State Requirements and Guidance on Services for Individual with Disabilities through Competitive Integrated Employment
- V. Consideration of and Discussions
  - A. Introduction of all Attendees:
    1. Attendee's each stated their name and Organization they belonged to (See Sign in Sheet for details)
  - B. Questions Presented by David Shinder with Audience participation

**1. How are DOR and the workforce system (i.e. the local Board and the AJCCs) currently working together with local partners (such as regional centers, special education and Workability programs, among others) to support the employment goals of individuals with intellectual disabilities and developmental disabilities?**

Rich Citman, \_\_\_\_\_: Merced County has had a Transition Counsel for 30 years. Memberships are from local agencies. Memberships include Department of Rehabilitation, Regional centers, Regional and Local Educational Agencies, WorkNet, and all service providers' work from regional centers. They meet on a monthly basis, which have made job easier for workability projects and programs. As a requirement to have workability content, we have had to implement local plan together, it is complete and is pending signatures.

David Shinder: Is there a council description?

Rich Citman, \_\_\_\_\_: Yes we have description and by laws started back in JTPA days essentially to know where the money is.

Rich to send Cheryl Lewis, worknet a short description of council

David Shinder: At the ground level, what else are we doing to work together?

Craig Freedom, MCOE: We have a grant "We can work" with Dept. of Rehabilitation we are up to 40 Students this year. Students get to work 100 hours in workforce and become clients of Dept. of Rehabilitation afterwards to gain benefits. We had some really good also worked with Cheryl Lewis at a workability job fair. We had a hundred high school students and will be doing it again.

David Mirrione to Craig: Are there any folks in the program that have intellectual disabilities?

Craig, MCOE: Yes, I pull a fair amount from High school district

Rich , \_\_\_\_\_: there are a few of those also hav students from moderate to severe program. 40-50 are ID. We have some dead and hard od hearing.

Steve Hobbs, Merced Adult School: I would like these two to talk about transition program and partners

Dave Wells, Merced Adult School: Our program "Adult Transition" serve population 18-22 with learning disabilities, we have partnerships with local business. Our students come to school each day do a warm up and are trained to ride City bus System. Then they go to work off site for 2-3 hours Monday through Friday. They come back to school and finish the day. We do have a couple that have specialized staff who stay with them at work. It is a Labor of love.

D.S- are these integrated worksites?

Dave Wells: Yes, taco bell and other companies

Lady \_\_\_\_\_: Is this the workability Program

Dave Wells: No this is Adult transition program workability program is after school.

Brian Strong: We get referrals from Cheryl Lewis and Merced College. It is a difficult situation for those students who are not ready to gain employment yet.

Steve Hobbs, Merced Adult School: I have been in Special Education for 15 years I am a father of a child with down syndrome and what I hear from community that you have those that don't qualify for CVRC. I think that is where we are missing the boat. Now what where do they go?

D.S. – yes you are right that is a problem

**2. Are efforts underway for the partners to collaborate on the use of CIE for job seekers with ID/DD?**

- 3. Have discussions begun on the development of a Local Partnership Agreement to create more CIE opportunities? If not, how can this be accelerated?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 4. Have workforce system staff received training in serving individuals with ID/DD and are they knowledgeable about programs and services available to assist this target group? What additional training and information is needed?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 5. How are DOR and the local workforce system working together to outreach to employers and partners to support individuals with ID/DD in achieving CIE? If efforts are not yet underway, what will be done?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 6. Have recruitment, referral and employer engagement strategies been defined? If not, what is planned?**

VI. Adjournment

Merced Office  
1205 W. 18<sup>th</sup> Street  
Merced, CA 95340  
(209) 724-2100



Los Banos Office  
800 7<sup>th</sup> Street  
Los Banos, CA 93635  
(209) 710-6140

**David Mirrione** - *Director*  
<https://www.worknetmerced.com>

## **Community and Stakeholder Forum on:**

### **Improving Coordination and Collaboration among Stakeholders to Improve Services to English Language Learners, Foreign Born Individuals and Refugees October 3, 2018**

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#### **AGENDA**

- I. Call to Order and Welcome
- II. Overview of 4-Year Local Workforce Plans and Requirements for Biennial Review and Modification
- III. State Requirements for Review and Modification of Plans to Serve English Language Learners, Foreign Born Individuals and Refugees
- IV. Objectives of Community Forum
- V. Consideration of and Discussions on:
  - A. What are the needs of individuals in this category?
  - B. What are the principal barriers to employment faced by these individuals?
  - C. What partnerships and collaborative efforts exist that enable local organizations to provide services to meet these needs?
  - D. What outreach and recruitment strategies are effective in connecting individuals from these target groups to skills training and livable wages?
  - E. What strategies are in place to provide these individuals with job skills and training that will enable them to progress into livable wage jobs and careers?
  - F. Where do gaps in services exist for this target population and what can we do to bridge these gaps?
- VI. Adjournment



**IMPROVING COORDINATION AND COLLABORATION  
AMONG STAKEHOLDERS TO IMPROVE SERVICES TO  
ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS, FOREIGN BORN  
INDIVIDUALS AND REFUGEES**

*Merced County Workforce Development Board  
October 3, 2018*

# LOCAL WORKFORCE PLANNING AND THE BIENNIAL UPDATES

- Workforce development programs operated under the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) are administered in California by 45 distinct Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs).
- In 2017, the LWDBs submitted 4-year Local Workforce Plans to the Governor, all of which were, ultimately, approved.
- In accordance with WIOA requirements, a biennial review of the 4-year Local Plans is required.
- California has established specific guidelines for the biennial review of Local Plans, including updates and addenda to bring the plans into alignment with California's 2018 update of the State Workforce Plan.

## Required modifications to local plans must address:

- New partnerships with CalFresh Employment and Training Programs
- New Partnerships with Local Child Support Agencies
- Enhanced Collaboration with local representatives of the California Department of Rehabilitation and other agencies within the disability services network to implement Competitive Integrated Employment models
- Enhanced partnerships with local education agencies, community-based organizations and other stakeholders to serve English language learners, foreign born individuals and refugees

# OVERVIEW OF REGIONAL PLAN GUIDANCE REGARDING ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS, FOREIGN BORN INDIVIDUALS AND REFUGEES

- English language learners, foreign born individuals and refugees comprise a significant percentage of California's workers
- Individuals from this target group face barriers to employment that keep family-supporting wages and entering California's middle class out of reach
- Practices from various regions in California and programs in other states suggest that models exist that are successful in accelerating skills acquisition and wage gains among this target group
- The quality and variety of partnerships, training options, career planning and support services may be key factors in achieving successful outcomes for this target population

# OBJECTIVES OF THIS COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER FORUM

- Give stakeholders and the community the opportunity to weigh in on the needs of this target groups
- Learn from practitioners about best practices in meeting service needs
- Identify gaps in services
- Hear recommendations for improving the content, availability and quality of services for English language learners, foreign born individuals and refugees

# FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION AND INPUT

- What are the unique needs of English language learners, foreign born individuals and refugees?
- What are the principal barriers to employment faced by these individuals?
- What partnerships and collaborative efforts exist that enable local organizations to provide services to meet these needs?

- **What outreach and recruitment strategies are effective in connecting individuals from these target groups to skills training and livable wages?**
- **What strategies are in place to provide these individuals with job skills and training that will enable them to progress into livable wage jobs and careers?**
- **Where do gaps in services exist for this target population and what can we do to bridge these gaps?**

**Thanks!**

**We greatly appreciate your input!**

# Improving Coordination and Collaboration among stakeholders to Improve Services to English Language Learners, Foreign Born Individuals and Refugees

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Start Time: 2:10 AM, 19 Attendees

- I. Call to Order
  - A. Introduction given by David Mirrione
    1. Introduction of David Shinder
- II. Overview of 4-Year Local Workforce Plans and Requirements for Biennial Review and Modification
  - A. David Shinder Presents Slides 2-3
- III. State Requirements Review and Modification of Plans to Serve English Language Learners, Foreign Born Individuals, and Refugees.
  - A. David Shinder Presents Slide 4
- IV. Objectives of Community Forum
  - A. David Shinder Presents Slides 5
- V. Objectives of the Community and Stake Holder Forum
  - A. David Shinder Presents Slide 8
- VI. Consideration of and Discussion
  - A. David Shinder presents Slides 6-8
  - B. Introduction of all Attendees:
    1. Attendee's each stated their name and Organization they belonged to (See Sign in Sheet for details)
  - C. Questions Slide 9-10 Presented by David Shinder with Audience participation

**1. What are the needs of individuals in this category?**

**Tou Lee, Merced Co. Library:** *"I noticed there is not a lot of accessible information. Language might be at a level they do not understand so they do not even bother trying. Accessible information may be at an incomprehensible level"*

**Jorge DeNava, CVOC:** *"Two things come up to me at the top my head is radiation services like English as a second language and high school equivalency preparation. Merced County rural services outside of Merced can be improved."*

**See Her, Worknet:** *"To piggy back off what Tue said Translation Services, we need more people who can translate and bring in the proper translation in. I had a recent experience at Hospital where we had a phone translator was not accurately translating what Dr. was saying. It was frustrating to me knowing both languages and hearing the inaccuracy I had to step in to do the translation. We need more people who are certified."*

# Improving Coordination and Collaboration among stakeholders to Improve Services to English Language Learners, Foreign Born Individuals and Refugees

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**Tou Lee, Merced Co. Library:** *“The general just or government services had some experiences or own county services. They don’t understand fully in getting services or distrust government.”*

**Pang Moua, H.S.A.:** *“Refugees leave everything getting here and basic needs are lacking. Being able to provide food, water, and shelter. As a social worker I an out in the field I see basic needs are lacking. A lot do not want to come in to get the help. County does offers, but there is a stigma to go there and get services.”*

**Amelia Quinn, H.S.A.:** *“There is a need for more vocational training, especially for Spanish speaking clients not a lot of employers work with us. We have 400 English-speaking employers and only 5 employers for Spanish speaking ones. We need more vocational training and more employer engagement.”*

**May Moua, MCOE:** *“Being culturally responsive to different cultural groups who come to ask for services. Being able to work with someone of same culture might be helpful to be able to navigate them through services.*

*Mong culture, many are quiet and do not challenge authority. Employers may feel they are being submissive and cannot take leadership positions because they are not authoritative enough, due to how they are perceived. Interviewing skills are a barrier. You know them outside of interview and know they are hardworking and they do not boast about all their accomplishments something to look at or address.”*

**David Shinder:** Candidate is at a disadvantage. An example is some men do not shake the hand of a woman because of their culture and this is perceived as rude.

**Nicolas Loret De Mola, Worknet:** *“Multi-generation Solutions. For example, I grew up in South Sacramento and had a lot of Latino friends who dropped out of school to help families. Educating clients and family together.”*

**David Shinder:** Expectations of boss man going to be a female because they weren’t prepared for them to be a female.

**Steve Hobbs, Merced Adult School:** *“Language barriers in situations we would feel comfortable with for example speak with police officers, Dr. appointments, and parent teacher conferences. They do not know what to say or how to interact. We do mock interviews and they are scared to death and nervous.”*

## 2. What are the barrier to employment faced by these individuals?

**Chris Rodriguez, Merced Adult School:** *“Transportation is a barrier because it is expensive”*

**David Shinder:** One thing we know Immigrants start jobs at low wages. Their ability to afford and maintain automobile is difficult

# Improving Coordination and Collaboration among stakeholders to Improve Services to English Language Learners, Foreign Born Individuals and Refugees

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**Chris Rodriguez, Merced Adult School:** *“Some have only one automobile.”*

**David Shinder:** How about issues with transportation in rural parts? What is the transportation system like?

**Reyna Espinoza, WorkNet:** *“Less than ideal. I grew up in Le Grand, I remember working and having to come to town when my parents only had one vehicle. I took 2.5 hours riding the bus. Services need to be provided; there is a huge Hispanic community there.”*

**David Shinder:** There is Gap between where they live and where jobs are

**Chris Rodriguez, Merced Adult School:** *“Child Care, If they just moved they don’t have someone they trust to take care of their child.”*

**David Shinder:** This County does have child care services. Does this target population take advantage of child care programs easily or is there a barrier?

**Adrian Gonzalez, CVOC:** *“It’s a barrier to take, they don’t want to send their child to just anyone they want to have someone they can trust. They would want to send to someone they know like a family member. It is very unlikely they would leave them with a care provider.”*

**David Shinder:** Other Barriers?

**Tou Lee, Merced Co. Library:** *“Speaking from my own experiences a general complacency to have just enough. Like my parents, they don’t have transferable skills. They came here did the Easiest labor in farmland since this is all they want and it is easy. This probably leave them dependent on the system. They never progressed further into middle class.”*

**David Shinder:** State plan has highlights English Language Learner, Foreign-born Individuals, and Refugees as a priority population because they do not participate in middle class or near it can be primarily rooted in psychology. Psychology is a barrier.

**Jorge DeNava, CVOC:** *“Overall theme is they live in the moment. They don’t plan their lives too far out because they worry about keeping lights or gas in the car. They may be trapped in their own situation. They would like to take classes, but they have responsibilities, they are in survival mode, Generational Challenges.”*

**Pang Moua, H.S.A.:** *“Buses run after 5 pm and buses don’t even go to Adult School. Transportation is not feasible. There are Mental Health Barriers like depression, anxiety, ect.”*

**Nicolas Loret De Mola, Worknet:** *“Political Climate. People show up and say they are going to call ICE. I have Family members don’t like to go walking around if they don’t need to. Some fear government and people”*

## Improving Coordination and Collaboration among stakeholders to Improve Services to English Language Learners, Foreign Born Individuals and Refugees

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### 3. What partnerships and collaborative efforts exist that enable local organizations to provide services to meet those needs?

**Tou Lee, Merced Co. Library:** *“Make sure we are aware of community resources, If they can’t speak enough of English we cannot serve them. Unfortunately, we do not have resources to serve them. If we cannot communicate. In our Adult Literacy program, we prepare GED/Literacy related goals. Examples are Driver’s License and Citizenships. We refer them to Merced Adult School and Worknet for resume writing shops.*

**David Shinder:** *“There was something else that didn’t come up as a barrier so I will bring up. Do we encounter English learner immigrant not literate in there own language? They may very low numeracy skills/literacy/alphabet. His experience no schooling what so ever is a unique battier need to addresss. If someone was not literate in own language could you enroll them in ESL? ”*

**Steve Hobbs, Merced Adult School:** *“Yes, Level 1 no literacy or very basic.”*

**David Shinder:** *“ Are there other partnerships you specifically work with?”*

**Tou Lee, Merced Co. Library:** *“ H.S.A. Funds us . we work with them ”*

**David Shinder:** *“Partnerships community, no partnerships just aware of what resources are available ”*

**Jorge DeNava, CVOC :** *“Dislocated workers, partner with refugee services, immigration, international rescue community, Merced college, Wells Fargo – Financial literacy, Golden Valley Health Centers- Mental Health/ Depression Services, H.S.A., Livingston Community Health, Merced Food Bank, and Merced Community Action Agencies. We handle employment-training challenges, but we need to treat person as a whole before we can apply our services. Immigration mobile event with Mexican Consulate, IRC a 6 week course on how to get citizenship. This is the beauty of being a non-profit. We do not refer out to 3<sup>rd</sup> party independent contractors because they take advantage of those folks.”*

**Vilma Reynoso, Gateway Adult Education:** *“We collaborate with any agency, we are county wide. The consortium 3 years ago state of California chancellor’s office k-12 to play together in the same sandbox as partners Adult education programs almost in every town in Merced Co. ESL/GED/Training/ Citizenships no requirement only need to be 18 years old. Since 2016 the number of attendees decreased because of fear that if they sign up ICE will come and take them back.”*

**Merced Adult School:** *“That is changing with us; we are starting partnerships with H.S.A. and Worknet.”*

**Vilma Reynoso, Gateway Adult Education:** *“If I would have come from Panama to CA I would have never gone to school in California always have someone here. In Washington D.C. I had to learn. If you do not have a need, you will not learn. ”*

# Improving Coordination and Collaboration among stakeholders to Improve Services to English Language Learners, Foreign Born Individuals and Refugees

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**David Shinder:** *“In California we are a bilingual state. Opportunity for them to completely immerse in our process.”*

**David Shinder:** *shared a story of his stay in Madrid where no one spoke English and he had to learn their language in a short period because he had to.*

## 4. What outreach and recruitment strategies are effective in connecting individuals from these target groups to skills training and livable wages?

**Adrian Gonzalez, CVOC:** *“Field workers go out to them. Partnership with EDD to provide laws and etc. and Golden Valley Health. We try to target that population it is hit and miss.*

**David Shinder:** *approach is to go talk to them*

**Tou Lee, Merced Co. Library:** *“Mong listen to YouTube and radio to a particular Mong group. They translate world things and they trust them. Effective strategy go through trusted sources. They are mostly used to oral communication, word of mouth.”*

**May Moua, MCOE:** *“Mong TV, a Mong congregation place.”*

**Nicolas Loret De Mola, Worknet:** *“Champions with in the community.”*

**David Shinder:** *Find and build a champion now to we build?*

**Tou Lee, Merced Co. Library:** *“success stories.”*

**Nicolas Loret De Mola, Worknet:** *“Inviting those people for success stories to go talk to their people. Words from their mouth to community.”*

**Vilma Reynoso, Gateway Adult Education:** *“Last year started sending catalog countywide. First thing, they see success stories. At the center, we have pictures of students all over the county in hopes people see them and say I know them, I can do it too! It adds personal touch and trust. Some people deny services because cousin or comadre told me. We need to look a little deeper as providers. Front office needs empathy, understanding, and be inviting so they come back because they got that personal touch.”*

**David Shinder:** *Increasing all using more media like What up App.*

**Steve Hobbs, Merced Adult School:** *“Technology, Don’t have a lot of background. Those graduated from college in other countries may have PHD in other county, but here different.”*

**Jorge DeNava, CVOC :** *“I seen the opposite. Facebook page testimonials there are more they more apt to act if they can correlate. Every client has a phone and all know how to use Facebook and What’s App. It’s a connection back home. What’s app is the first medium text message for no international fees. We see success. Our demographics 1<sup>st</sup> generation 38 year old Single. We don’t target next generation they come to us. Our*

# Improving Coordination and Collaboration among stakeholders to Improve Services to English Language Learners, Foreign Born Individuals and Refugees

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*Outreach teams are composed of past participants. There are incentives for examples participants referral gives them \$50- \$100*

## 5. What strategies are in place to provide these individuals with job skills and training that will enable them to progress into livable wage jobs and careers?

**Jorge DeNava, CVOC** *“Workforce DWI does a great job to create demands on vocational list. There is no sense to train folks who won’t get job. Training for demand trainings.”*

**David Shinder:** *” how much of population is accessing a lot or a little?”*

**Tou Lee, Merced Co. Library:** *“decent amount is in place. We do not have needs being met by government agencies. Why peruse something better especially higher education.”*

**David Shinder:** *How do we promote that out there?*

**Nick Loret De Mola, WorkNet:** *“ Champions, Role Models”*

**Reyna Espinoza, WorkNet:** *“ Selling the benefits, what does it mean for me or family? On WorkNet’s end we have a lot of training programs. Specially Truck driving them being able to pass DMV test is a barrier. Yearly salary \$35k to 45k or \$55k to 65k long haul starting.*

## 6. Where do gaps in services exist for this target population and what can we do to bridge these gaps?

**David Shinder:** *Labor market is looking for workers. Need to focus on more job trainings and basic interviewing’s skills/Soft skills“*

**May Moua, MCOE:** *“Are there mentorship programs? To move up in their positions, but not comfortable because they have questions?”*

**Nick Loret De Mola, WorkNet:** *“Creating programs with intention. We would be fighting employers that have those people”*

**Reyna Espinoza, WorkNet:** *“In talking with employer we need to talk to them as how it is going to be benefit them.”*

**David Shinder:** *Some Employers now have their non-English speakers*

**Bliss Propes, Ballico-Cressy School District:** *Recruitment at School events great for rural K-8.*

**David Shinder:** *Closing remarks*

# Improving Coordination and Collaboration among stakeholders to Improve Services to English Language Learners, Foreign Born Individuals and Refugees

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VII. Adjournment 3:51 P.M.

Merced Office  
1205 W. 18<sup>th</sup> Street  
Merced, CA 95340  
(209) 724-2100



Los Banos Office  
800 7<sup>th</sup> Street  
Los Banos, CA 93635  
(209) 710-6140

**David Mirrione** – Director  
<https://www.worknetmerced.com>

**Community Forum on Local Workforce Planning  
October 23, 2018**

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**AGENDA**

- I. Call to Order
- II. Overview of 4-Year Local Workforce Plans and Requirements for Biennial Review and Modification
- III. Purpose of the Community Forum
- IV. Objectives of Community and Stakeholder Forum
- V. Consideration of and Discussions on:
  - A. What services and support do job seekers need to help prepare for and find work?
  - B. What types of training are most needed in the area?
  - C. Do people in the community have a good understanding of the programs and services that are available to assist them? If not, what is the best way to get the word out?
  - D. Are there specific gaps between the services that are available and the services that people need? If so, how can we bridge those gaps.
  - E. If you were writing the local workforce plan, what would your priorities be and why?
- VI. Adjournment



**COMMUNITY FORUM ON  
REGIONAL WORKFORCE  
COLLABORATION  
IN THE SAN JOAQUIN  
VALLEY AND ASSOCIATED  
COUNTIES**

# REGIONAL WORKFORCE PLANNING AND BIENNIAL UPDATES

- ◉ Workforce development programs operated under the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) are administered in California by 45 distinct Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs).
- ◉ In 2016, pursuant to “regional coordination” provisions of WIOA, the Governor organized the 45 Boards into 14 Regional Planning Units to address issues that exist at a regional level, affecting areas larger than those covered by a single board.
- ◉ In 2017, all LWDBs and the 14 RPUs submitted 4-year Local Workforce Plans to the Governor, all of which were, ultimately, approved.

- ⦿ In accordance with WIOA requirements, a biennial review of the 4-year Regional and Local Plans is required.
- ⦿ California has established specific guidelines for modifications to the Plans, including updates and addenda to bring the plans into alignment with California's 2018 update of the State Workforce Plan.

# REGIONAL PLANNING TOPICS - 2019 MODIFICATION

The 2019 modification to the Regional Plan for the San Joaquin Valley and Adjacent Counties Regional Planning will address the following topics:

## ***3 Mandatory Topics***

- ⦿ Formalization of a workforce-corrections partnership.
- ⦿ Self-assessment of regional workforce coordination and alignment
- ⦿ Relationships with Building Trades Councils in support of Multi-Craft Core Curriculum (MC3) construction re-apprenticeship programs.

## ***One Optional Matter***

- ⦿ Modification and updates to the existing plan based on changes to labor market or economic conditions or other factors.

# OBJECTIVES OF THIS FORUM

- ◉ Give stakeholders and the community the opportunity to weigh in regional workforce issues
- ◉ Learn from practitioners about best practices in meeting service needs
- ◉ Identify where there are gaps in services
- ◉ Hear recommendations on building and/or strengthening services and programs to address currently unmet needs

## FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION, COMMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- ◉ The Regional Plan suggests that certain groups of job seekers (such as formerly incarcerated individuals, English language learners, persons with disabilities and others) have a difficult time finding work and/or advancing in their careers. In the current strong economy, is this still true?
- ◉ Training and the opportunity to attain industry valued credentials is a central feature of the Regional Plan. Is enough training available to meet demand? For those taking part in training, are they able to earn certificates and find jobs?
- ◉ Digital literacy skills (the use of technology in the workplace) were identified as a priority for workers. Is this training widely available and is it meeting the needs of workers and employers?

- ⦿ Based on a 2016 analysis of labor market and economic data, six major industries (advanced manufacturing, construction/public infrastructure, energy, healthcare, transportation and logistics, and value-added agriculture) were identified as priorities. Are job seekers currently able to easily secure employment in these sectors? If there are gaps, what are they?
- ⦿ If you were writing the Regional Workforce Plan, what would your priorities be and why?

**Thanks!**  
**We greatly appreciate your input.**

Start Time: 5:00 PM,

- I. Call to Order
  - A. Introduction given by David Mirrione
- II. Overview of 4-Year Local Workforce Plans and Requirements for Biennial Review and Modification
- III. Purpose of Community Forum
- IV. Objectives of the Community and Stake Holder Forum
- V. Consideration of and Discussions on:
  - A. Questions Presented by David Shinder with Audience participation:
    1. What Services and support do job seekers need to help prepare for and find work?

Tracy Yoder, Merced Community Action Agency : (Human Resources) Job Seekers need help in preparing Resumes. They cannot get jobs because of first impressions. Interviewing skills are needed for basic etiquette and adding mock interviews.

Vilma Reynoso, GAEN: (Cordinator) They need help with expressing selling themselves. She gave an example of tell me about your self job interview question and dressing in proper attire.

Luis, Gateway: Families often have to make decision of resources vs employment. He gave an example of family paying for head start. Do they work and lose other resources currently receiving because they qualify for them or stay unemployed to be able to still receive resources.

Elaine Craig, Merced College: Soft skills that are essentials workforce skills. Showing up to work on time as well as coming back from lunch on time every day. Working well with others and communication. Everything that makes us successful at workplace.

Bella Prudo, Avitex Recruit: Transportation. There are no resources for people that want to go to work everyday. It is one of our biggest challenges

Lisa Stewart, Volunteer for Merced Community Action Agency : Implementing clothing/Grooming Facility. We see a lot of people at their lowest point and don't have proper attire and may not have essentials

Monica Grasley, Lifeline CDC: mentioned there is a bus boutique that has interview clothing ad

Cheryl Lewis, Worknet: stated Worknet offers services for jobseekers and offer supportive services that allow jobseekers to get proper attire.

Maribel, Merced Adult School : (counselor) Self Esteem boosters to build self confidence workshops. Find out their strengths.

2. What types of training are most needed in the area?

Audience Participation: Communication skills,

Tracy Yoder, Merced Community Action Agency : Diversity Training to get over biases and gave an example of someone having accent and is hard to understand.

Maribel, Merced Adult School: Marketing yourself and being able to sell your self to be able to display your strengths

Sharleen, Job Seeker: have some look at your skills as a person and be able to condense that

David Shinder: Thoughts on needing more digital and technology training?

Perry Espinoza, Job Seeker: Worked for Wyndym in Las Vegas. They use a test to match skills and match people no matter what gender race you are. They came up with a formula not everyone is a computer person . How much computer knowledge is needed to do your job and incorporated these aspects in the computer. Even the position you may not think needs computer literacy does. He gave example of Hotel Housekeepers need to use Ipads to mark off items completed and release rooms for availability.

Shaleen, Job Seeker: Training on google and apple software because there are different softwares used.

Cheryl Lewis, Worknet: uploading resume and uploading time cards

Luis, Gateway: Social media awareness and how it can affect you.

3. Do people in the community have a good understanding of the programs and services that are available to assist them? If not, what is the best way to get the word out?

Tracy Yoder, Merced Community Action Agency : There is a lot of people that do not have a computer and they use old school skills like Newspaper

Monica Grasley, Lifeline CDC: Social Media like Facebook everyone has a cell phone a good way to get word out

4. Are there specific gaps between the services that are available and the services that people need? If so, how can we bridge those gaps?

Monica Grasley, Lifeline CDC: gaps between accepting resources and employment if accepts employment they will be cut off from services( resources) needed. She gave example of Welfare to Work Program participants losing Medi-cal benefits. The need for better coordination with other benefits.

Sharleen, Job Seeker: Gap between employer and employee is Humility. They don't take them to next phase because they lack humility.

Eddie, T-Mobile: Experience – Prior Experience Gap is difficult to overcome starting job with out experience.

David Shinder: mentioned Worknet has work experience programs and mentioned volunteering to get experience.

Sara Corrarubia, Job Seeker: There is isn't a lot of on the job training. We need businesses to offer that.

Luis, T-Mobile: Internships. More is needed so relationship building with employers.

Maribel, Merced Adult School: (counselor) Mentioned she has a lot of student that have the soft skills employers are looking for, but do not have a GED Yet. Would like businesses to be able to work them to be able to obtain GED while working.

Hugo Hernandez, Geil Enterprises: Candidates need to research on the company and job so it leaves an impression. Also keeping track of all the places you applied and do not tell potential employer you have a job lined up.

Jessica, People Ready: Knowing what it takes to look for a job having the perseverance and organization skills to be a successful jobseeker.

5. If you were writing the local workforce plan, what would your priorities be and why?

Hugo Hernandez, Geil Enterprises: Issues encountered is child care and transportation

Eddie, T-Mobile: Technology Training especially older crowds

Maribel, Merced Adult School: Need a team to solve workforce issues

Perry Espinoza, Job Seeker: Technology and Workforce needs to extend program in another side of town. Having a Computer section so community can use.

Mary Whited, Merced Office of Education: Market ourselves better and let people know what we have to offer. A reason is we work in Silos. Breaking down Silos and not duplicate services

Monica Grasley, Lifeline CDC: Clearer pathways. Having a clear outline of steps need to take to career.

Tracy Yoder, Merced Community Action Agency: Partners getting together to have each other information on webpage with link of services offered.

Hugo Hernandez, Geil Enterprises: Educate employers with services offered, maybe give them packets.

V. Adjournment

**Community Forum On Local Planning Event  
Merced Adult School | 50 E. 20th Street, Merced, CA**

<b>Date Confirmed:</b>	<b>Name: First &amp; Last</b>	<b>Company:</b>	<b>Phone:</b>	<b>Email Address:</b>
10/9/2018	Perry Dean	Balance Staffing	209.346.3172	<a href="mailto:perry.dean@balancestaffing.com">perry.dean@balancestaffing.com</a>
10/9/2018	Marbella Prado	Avitek Staffing	209.250.7180	<a href="mailto:mprado@avitekrecruit.com">mprado@avitekrecruit.com</a>
10/9/2018	Jessica Kraft	People Ready Staffing	209.668.5424	<a href="mailto:1518-br@peopleready.com">1518-br@peopleready.com</a>
10/10/2018	Kathleena Keovilay	United Staffing Associates	559.436.4877	<a href="mailto:kathleena.keovilay@unitedweststaff.com">kathleena.keovilay@unitedweststaff.com</a>
10/11/2018	Hugo Hernandez	Geil Enterprises, Inc.	559.495.3022	<a href="mailto:hhernandez@geilenterprises.com">hhernandez@geilenterprises.com</a>
10/11/2018	Ray Lopez	Ray's Equipment Painting	209.538.4762	<a href="mailto:rplopez1954@yahoo.com">rplopez1954@yahoo.com</a>
10/12/2018	Tracy Yoder	Merced County Community Action Agency	209.723.4565 ext.1116	<a href="mailto:tyoder@mercedcaa.org">tyoder@mercedcaa.org</a>
10/12/2018	Denise Huerta	24/7 Hotels - Marriott	559.756.4656	<a href="mailto:gmtpsmc@247hotels.com">gmtpsmc@247hotels.com</a>
10/12/2018	Alice Kieffer	Castle Family Health Centers	209.381.2000	<a href="mailto:kieffera@cfhcinc.org">kieffera@cfhcinc.org</a>
10/12/2018	Maria Ceja	Infinity Staffing	209.710.9515	<a href="mailto:maria@istaff.biz">maria@istaff.biz</a>
10/15/2018	James Nordman	Amie Marchini Senior Care	209.722.3944	<a href="mailto:james@amiesseniorcare.com">james@amiesseniorcare.com</a>
N/A	Ranjeev/Mario	Worknet Table	###	<a href="mailto:rdosanjh@co.merced.ca.us">rdosanjh@co.merced.ca.us</a>
10/15/2018	Susan Martins	Avalon Health Care Group	209.722.6231	<a href="mailto:susan.martins@avalonhealthcare.com">susan.martins@avalonhealthcare.com</a>
10/17/2018	Victar Labansat	T-Mobile	209.384.3400	<a href="mailto:victar.labansat@exclusivewireless.net">victar.labansat@exclusivewireless.net</a>

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

**2019 BIENNIAL MODIFICATION  
TO THE Strategic 2017-2021 Re-  
gional and Local Workforce De-  
velopment Plan for Title I of the  
Workforce Innovation & Opportu-  
nity Act for the Merced County  
Local Workforce Development  
Area**

The Workforce Development Board of Merced County is requesting public comment on the 2019 Biennial modification to the 2017-2021 drafts of the Strategic Regional and Local Workforce Development Plans. Funding for the services to be delivered under the plans is provided through Title I of the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

The plans will be available for review from Friday, February 1, 2019 through Saturday, March 2, 2019. Copies of the plans will be available at the Workforce Assistance Center at 1205 W. 18th Street in Merced between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. The draft plans are also posted on the Workforce Investment - Worknet of Merced County web page at <https://www.co.merced.ca.us/858/Public-Notices>.

For further information please contact Nick Loret De Mola, Deputy Director, Workforce Investment at (209) 724-2041.  
MER/AS/LC/CN/LB- 4057420 2/1, 2, 6

## **Loret De Mola, Nick**

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**Subject:** San Joaquin Valley Regional Workforce Plan open for public comment

Good morning,

The regional planning unit comprising the Workforce Development Boards of the San Joaquin Valley and Associated Counties have officially released their Regional Workforce Plan Update for public comment. We strongly encourage feedback by all stakeholders and the public, and also encourage you to pass this notice on to your mailing lists.

The link to the Regional Plan is located at <https://worknetmerced.com/resources/publications/>

Thank you,

Nick Loret de Mola  
Deputy Director  
Worknet Merced County  
1205 West 18th Street  
Merced, California 95340  
Ph: 209.724.2041  
Fax: 209.725.3592

