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Title 20: Employees' Benefits

PART 676—UNIFIED AND COMBINED STATE PLANS UNDER TITLE I OF THE WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT**Contents**

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AUTHORITY: Secs. 102, 103, and 503, Pub. L. 113-128, 128 Stat. 1425 (Jul. 22, 2014).

SOURCE: 81 FR 55597, Aug. 19, 2016, unless otherwise noted.

[↑ Back to Top](#)**§676.100 What are the purposes of the Unified and Combined State Plans?**

(a) The Unified and Combined State Plans provide the framework for States to outline a strategic vision of, and goals for, how their workforce development systems will achieve the purposes of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

(b) The Unified and Combined State Plans serve as 4-year action plans to develop, align, and integrate the State's systems and provide a platform to achieve the State's vision and strategic and operational goals. A Unified or Combined State Plan is intended to:

(1) Align, in strategic coordination, the six core programs required in the Unified State Plan pursuant to §676.105(b), and additional Combined State Plan partner programs that may be part of the Combined State Plan pursuant to §676.140;

(2) Direct investments in economic, education, and workforce training programs to focus on providing relevant education and training to ensure that individuals, including youth and individuals with barriers to employment, have the skills to compete in the job market and that employers have a ready supply of skilled workers;

(3) Apply strategies for job-driven training consistently across Federal programs; and

(4) Enable economic, education, and workforce partners to build a skilled workforce through innovation in, and alignment of, employment, training, and education programs.

[↑ Back to Top](#)**§676.105 What are the general requirements for the Unified State Plan?**

(a) The Unified State Plan must be submitted in accordance with §676.130 and WIOA sec. 102(c), as explained in joint planning guidelines issued by the Secretaries of Labor and Education.

(b) The Governor of each State must submit, at a minimum, in accordance with §676.130, a Unified State Plan to the Secretary of Labor to be eligible to receive funding for the workforce development system's six core programs:

(1) The adult, dislocated worker, and youth programs authorized under subtitle B of title I of WIOA and administered by the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL);

(2) The Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) program authorized under title II of WIOA and administered by the U.S. Department of Education (ED);

(3) The Employment Service program authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act of 1933, as amended by WIOA title III and administered by DOL; and

(4) The Vocational Rehabilitation program authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA and administered by ED.

(c) The Unified State Plan must outline the State's 4-year strategy for the core programs described in paragraph (b) of this section and meet the requirements of sec. 102(b) of WIOA, as explained in the joint planning guidelines issued by the Secretaries of Labor and Education.

(d) The Unified State Plan must include strategic and operational planning elements to facilitate the development of an aligned, coordinated, and comprehensive workforce development system. The Unified State Plan must include:

(1) Strategic planning elements that describe the State's strategic vision and goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce under sec. 102(b)(1) of WIOA. The strategic planning elements must be informed by and include an analysis of the State's economic conditions and employer and workforce needs, including education and skill needs.

(2) Strategies for aligning the core programs and Combined State Plan partner programs as described in §676.140(d), as well as other resources available to the State, to achieve the strategic vision and goals in accordance with sec. 102(b)(1)(E) of WIOA.

(3) Operational planning elements in accordance with sec. 102(b)(2) of WIOA that support the strategies for aligning the core programs and other resources available to the State to achieve the State's vision and goals and a description of how the State Workforce Development Board (WDB) will implement its functions, in accordance with sec. 101(d) of WIOA. Operational planning elements must include:

(i) A description of how the State strategy will be implemented by each core program's lead State agency;

(ii) State operating systems, including data systems, and policies that will support the implementation of the State's strategy identified in paragraph (d)(1) of this section;

(iii) Program-specific requirements for the core programs required by WIOA sec. 102(b)(2)(D);

(iv) Assurances required by sec. 102(b)(2)(E) of WIOA, including an assurance that the lead State agencies responsible for the administration of the core programs reviewed and commented on the appropriate operational planning of the Unified State Plan and approved the elements as serving the needs of the population served by such programs, and other assurances deemed necessary by the Secretaries of Labor and Education under sec. 102(b)(2)(E)(x) of WIOA;

(v) A description of joint planning and coordination across core programs, required one-stop partner programs, and other programs and activities in the Unified State Plan; and

(vi) Any additional operational planning requirements imposed by the Secretary of Labor or the Secretary of Education under sec. 102(b)(2)(C)(viii) of WIOA.

(e) All of the requirements in this part that apply to States also apply to outlying areas.

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§676.110 What are the program-specific requirements in the Unified State Plan for the adult, dislocated worker, and youth programs authorized under Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act title I?

The program-specific requirements for the adult, dislocated worker, and youth programs that must be included in the Unified State Plan are described in sec. 102(b)(2)(D) of WIOA. Additional planning requirements may be explained in joint planning guidelines issued by the Secretaries of Labor and Education.

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§676.115 What are the program-specific requirements in the Unified State Plan for the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act program authorized under Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act title II?

The program-specific requirements for the AEFLA program in title II that must be included in the Unified State Plan are described in secs. 102(b)(2)(C) and 102(b)(2)(D)(ii) of WIOA.

(a) With regard to the description required in sec. 102(b)(2)(D)(ii)(I) of WIOA pertaining to content standards, the Unified State Plan must describe how the eligible agency will, by July 1, 2016, align its content standards for adult education with State-adopted challenging academic content standards under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended.

(b) With regard to the description required in sec. 102(b)(2)(C)(iv) of WIOA pertaining to the methods and factors the State will use to distribute funds under the core programs, for title II of WIOA, the Unified State Plan must include—

(1) How the eligible agency will award multi-year grants on a competitive basis to eligible providers in the State; and

(2) How the eligible agency will provide direct and equitable access to funds using the same grant or contract announcement and application procedure.

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§676.120 What are the program-specific requirements in the Unified State Plan for the Employment Service program authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act title III?

The Employment Service program authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act of 1933, as amended by WIOA title III, is subject to requirements in sec. 102(b) of WIOA, including any additional requirements imposed by the Secretary of Labor under secs. 102(b)(2)(C)(viii) and 102(b)(2)(D)(iv) of WIOA, as explained in joint planning guidelines issued by the Secretaries of Labor and Education.

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§676.125 What are the program-specific requirements in the Unified State Plan for the State Vocational Rehabilitation program authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act title IV?

The program specific-requirements for the vocational rehabilitation services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan are set forth in sec. 101(a) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended. All submission requirements for the vocational rehabilitation services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan are in addition to the jointly developed strategic and operational content requirements prescribed by sec. 102(b) of WIOA.

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§676.130 What is the development, submission, and approval process of the Unified State Plan?

(a) The Unified State Plan described in §676.105 must be submitted in accordance with WIOA sec. 102(c), as explained in joint planning guidelines issued jointly by the Secretaries of Labor and Education.

(b) A State must submit its Unified State Plan to the Secretary of Labor pursuant to a process identified by the Secretary.

(1) The initial Unified State Plan must be submitted no later than 120 days prior to the commencement of the second full program year of WIOA.

(2) Subsequent Unified State Plans must be submitted no later than 120 days prior to the end of the 4-year period covered by a preceding Unified State Plan.

(3) For purposes of paragraph (b) of this section, “program year” means July 1 through June 30 of any year.

(c) The Unified State Plan must be developed with the assistance of the State WDB, as required by §679.130(a) of this chapter and WIOA sec. 101(d), and must be developed in coordination with administrators with optimum policy-making authority for the core programs and required one-stop partners.

(d) The State must provide an opportunity for public comment on and input into the development of the Unified State Plan prior to its submission.

(1) The opportunity for public comment must include an opportunity for comment by representatives of Local WDBs and chief elected officials, businesses, representatives of labor organizations, community-based organizations, adult education

providers, institutions of higher education, other stakeholders with an interest in the services provided by the six core programs, and the general public, including individuals with disabilities.

(2) Consistent with the “Sunshine Provision” of WIOA in sec. 101(g), the State WDB must make information regarding the Unified State Plan available to the public through electronic means and regularly occurring open meetings in accordance with State law. The Unified State Plan must describe the State's process and timeline for ensuring a meaningful opportunity for public comment.

(e) Upon receipt of the Unified State Plan from the State, the Secretary of Labor will ensure that the entire Unified State Plan is submitted to the Secretary of Education pursuant to a process developed by the Secretaries.

(f) The Unified State Plan is subject to the approval of both the Secretary of Labor and the Secretary of Education.

(g) Before the Secretaries of Labor and Education approve the Unified State Plan, the vocational rehabilitation services portion of the Unified State Plan described in WIOA sec. 102(b)(2)(D)(iii) must be approved by the Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration.

(h) The Secretaries of Labor and Education will review and approve the Unified State Plan within 90 days of receipt by the Secretary of Labor, unless the Secretary of Labor or the Secretary of Education determines in writing within that period that:

(1) The plan is inconsistent with a core program's requirements;

(2) The Unified State Plan is inconsistent with any requirement of sec. 102 of WIOA; or

(3) The plan is incomplete or otherwise insufficient to determine whether it is consistent with a core program's requirements or other requirements of WIOA.

(i) If neither the Secretary of Labor nor the Secretary of Education makes the written determination described in paragraph (h) of this section within 90 days of the receipt by the Secretaries, the Unified State Plan will be considered approved.

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§676.135 What are the requirements for modification of the Unified State Plan?

(a) In addition to the required modification review set forth in paragraph (b) of this section, a Governor may submit a modification of its Unified State Plan at any time during the 4-year period of the plan.

(b) Modifications are required, at a minimum:

(1) At the end of the first 2-year period of any 4-year State Plan, wherein the State WDB must review the Unified State Plan, and the Governor must submit modifications to the plan to reflect changes in labor market and economic conditions or other factors affecting the implementation of the Unified State Plan;

(2) When changes in Federal or State law or policy substantially affect the strategies, goals, and priorities upon which the Unified State Plan is based;

(3) When there are changes in the statewide vision, strategies, policies, State negotiated levels of performance as described in §677.170(b) of this chapter, the methodology used to determine local allocation of funds, reorganizations that change the working relationship with system employees, changes in organizational responsibilities, changes to the membership structure of the State WDB or alternative entity, and similar substantial changes to the State's workforce development system.

(c) Modifications to the Unified State Plan are subject to the same public review and comment requirements in §676.130(d) that apply to the development of the original Unified State Plan.

(d) Unified State Plan modifications must be approved by the Secretaries of Labor and Education, based on the approval standards applicable to the original Unified State Plan under §676.130. This approval must come after the approval of the Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration for modification of any portion of the plan described in sec. 102(b)(2)(D)(iii) of WIOA.

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§676.140 What are the general requirements for submitting a Combined State Plan?

(a) A State may choose to develop and submit a 4-year Combined State Plan in lieu of the Unified State Plan described in §§676.105 through 676.125.

(b) A State that submits a Combined State Plan covering an activity or program described in paragraph (d) of this section that is, in accordance with WIOA sec. 103(c), approved or deemed complete under the law relating to the program will not be required to submit any other plan or application in order to receive Federal funds to carry out the core programs or the program or activities described under paragraph (d) of this section that are covered by the Combined State Plan.

(c) If a State develops a Combined State Plan, it must be submitted in accordance with the process described in §676.143.

(d) If a State chooses to submit a Combined State Plan, the plan must include the six core programs and one or more of the Combined State Plan partner programs and activities described in sec. 103(a)(2) of WIOA. The Combined State Plan partner programs and activities that may be included in the Combined State Plan are:

(1) Career and technical education programs authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2301 *et seq.*);

(2) Temporary Assistance for Needy Families or TANF, authorized under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 601 *et seq.*);

(3) Employment and training programs authorized under sec. 6(d)(4) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2015(d)(4));

(4) Work programs authorized under sec. 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2015(o));

(5) Trade adjustment assistance activities under chapter 2 of title II of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2271 *et seq.*);

(6) Services for veterans authorized under chapter 41 of title 38 United States Code;

(7) Programs authorized under State unemployment compensation laws (in accordance with applicable Federal law);

(8) Senior Community Service Employment Programs under title V of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3056 *et seq.*);

(9) Employment and training activities carried out by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD);

(10) Employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9901 *et seq.*); and

(11) Reintegration of offenders programs authorized under sec. 212 of the Second Chance Act of 2007 (42 U.S.C. 17532).

(e) A Combined State Plan must contain:

(1) For the core programs, the information required by sec. 102(b) of WIOA and §§676.105 through 676.125, as explained in the joint planning guidelines issued by the Secretaries;

(2) For the Combined State Plan partner programs and activities, except as described in paragraph (h) of this section, the information required by the law authorizing and governing that program to be submitted to the appropriate Secretary, any other applicable legal requirements, and any common planning requirements described in sec. 102(b) of WIOA, as explained in the joint planning guidelines issued by the Secretaries;

(3) A description of the methods used for joint planning and coordination among the core programs, and with the required one-stop partner programs and other programs and activities included in the State Plan; and

(4) An assurance that all of the entities responsible for planning or administering the programs described in the Combined State Plan have had a meaningful opportunity to review and comment on all portions of the plan.

(f) Each Combined State Plan partner program included in the Combined State Plan remains subject to the applicable program-specific requirements of the Federal law and regulations, and any other applicable legal or program requirements, governing the implementation and operation of that program.

(g) For purposes of §§676.140 through 676.145 the term “appropriate Secretary” means the head of the Federal agency who exercises either plan or application approval authority for the program or activity under the Federal law authorizing the program or activity or, if there are no planning or application requirements, who exercises administrative authority over the program or activity under that Federal law.

(h) States that include employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Act (42 U.S.C. 9901 *et seq.*) under a Combined State Plan would submit all other required elements of a complete CSBG State Plan directly to the Federal agency that administers the program, according to the requirements of Federal law and regulations.

(i) States that submit employment and training activities carried out by HUD under a Combined State Plan would submit any other required planning documents for HUD programs directly to HUD, according to the requirements of Federal law and regulations.

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§676.143 What is the development, submission, and approval process of the Combined State Plan?

(a) For purposes of §676.140(a), if a State chooses to develop a Combined State Plan it must submit the Combined State Plan in accordance with the requirements described below and sec. 103 of WIOA, as explained in the joint planning guidelines issued by the Secretaries of Labor and Education.

(b) The Combined State Plan must be developed with the assistance of the State WDB, as required by §679.130(a) of this chapter and WIOA sec. 101(d), and must be developed in coordination with administrators with optimum policy-making authority for the core programs and required one-stop partners.

(c) The State must provide an opportunity for public comment on and input into the development of the Combined State Plan prior to its submission.

(1) The opportunity for public comment for the portions of the Combined State Plan that cover the core programs must include an opportunity for comment by representatives of Local WDBs and chief elected officials, businesses, representatives of labor organizations, community-based organizations, adult education providers, institutions of higher education, other stakeholders with an interest in the services provided by the six core programs, and the general public, including individuals with disabilities.

(2) Consistent with the “Sunshine Provision” of WIOA in sec. 101(g), the State WDB must make information regarding the Combined State Plan available to the public through electronic means and regularly occurring open meetings in accordance with State law. The Combined State Plan must describe the State's process and timeline for ensuring a meaningful opportunity for public comment on the portions of the plan covering core programs.

(3) The portions of the plan that cover the Combined State Plan partner programs are subject to any public comment requirements applicable to those programs.

(d) The State must submit to the Secretaries of Labor and Education and to the Secretary of the agency with responsibility for approving the program's plan or deeming it complete under the law governing the program, as part of its Combined State Plan, any plan, application, form, or any other similar document that is required as a condition for the approval of Federal funding under the applicable program or activity. Such submission must occur in accordance with a process identified by the relevant Secretaries in paragraph (a) of this section.

(e) The Combined State Plan will be approved or disapproved in accordance with the requirements of sec. 103(c) of WIOA.

(1) The portion of the Combined State Plan covering programs administered by the Departments of Labor and Education must be reviewed, and approved or disapproved, by the appropriate Secretary within 90 days beginning on the day the Combined State Plan is received by the appropriate Secretary from the State, consistent with paragraph (f) of this section. Before the Secretaries of Labor and Education approve the Combined State Plan, the vocational rehabilitation services portion of the Combined State Plan described in WIOA sec. 102(b)(2)(D)(iii) must be approved by the Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration.

(2) If an appropriate Secretary other than the Secretary of Labor or the Secretary of Education has authority to approve or deem complete a portion of the Combined State Plan for a program or activity described in §676.140(d), that portion of the Combined State Plan must be reviewed, and approved, disapproved, or deemed complete, by the appropriate Secretary within 120 days beginning on the day the Combined State Plan is received by the appropriate Secretary from the State consistent with paragraph (f) of this section.

(f) The appropriate Secretaries will review and approve or deem complete the Combined State Plan within 90 or 120 days, as appropriate, as described in paragraph (e) of this section, unless the Secretaries of Labor and Education or appropriate Secretary have determined in writing within that period that:

(1) The Combined State Plan is inconsistent with the requirements of the six core programs or the Federal laws authorizing or applicable to the program or activity involved, including the criteria for approval of a plan or application, or deeming the plan complete, if any, under such law;

(2) The portion of the Combined State Plan describing the six core programs or the program or activity described in paragraph (a) of this section involved does not satisfy the criteria as provided in sec. 102 or 103 of WIOA, as applicable; or

(3) The Combined State Plan is incomplete, or otherwise insufficient to determine whether it is consistent with a core program's requirements, other requirements of WIOA, or the Federal laws authorizing, or applicable to, the program or activity described in §676.140(d), including the criteria for approval of a plan or application, if any, under such law.

(g) If the Secretary of Labor, the Secretary of Education, or the appropriate Secretary does not make the written determination described in paragraph (f) of this section within the relevant period of time after submission of the Combined State Plan, that portion of the Combined State Plan over which the Secretary has jurisdiction will be considered approved.

(h) The Secretaries of Labor and Education's written determination of approval or disapproval regarding the portion of the plan for the six core programs may be separate from the written determination of approval, disapproval, or completeness of the program-specific requirements of Combined State Plan partner programs and activities described in §676.140(d) and included in the Combined State Plan.

(i) *Special rule.* In paragraphs (f)(1) and (3) of this section, the term "criteria for approval of a plan or application," with respect to a State or a core program or a program under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2301 *et seq.*), includes a requirement for agreement between the State and the appropriate Secretaries regarding State performance measures or State performance accountability measures, as the case may be, including levels of performance.

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§676.145 What are the requirements for modifications of the Combined State Plan?

(a) For the core program portions of the Combined State Plan, modifications are required, at a minimum:

(1) By the end of the first 2-year period of any 4-year State Plan. The State WDB must review the Combined State Plan, and the Governor must submit modifications to the Combined State Plan to reflect changes in labor market and economic conditions or other factors affecting the implementation of the Combined State Plan;

(2) When changes in Federal or State law or policy substantially affect the strategies, goals, and priorities upon which the Combined State Plan is based;

(3) When there are changes in the statewide vision, strategies, policies, State negotiated levels of performance as described in §677.170(b) of this chapter, the methodology used to determine local allocation of funds, reorganizations that change the working relationship with system employees, changes in organizational responsibilities, changes to the membership structure of the State WDB or alternative entity, and similar substantial changes to the State's workforce development system.

(b) In addition to the required modification review described in paragraph (a)(1) of this section, a State may submit a modification of its Combined State Plan at any time during the 4-year period of the plan.

(c) For any Combined State Plan partner programs and activities described in §676.140(d) that are included in a State's Combined State Plan, the State—

(1) May decide if the modification requirements under WIOA sec. 102(c)(3) that apply to the core programs will apply to the Combined State Plan partner programs, as long as consistent with any other modification requirements for the programs, or may comply with the requirements applicable to only the particular program or activity; and

(2) Must submit, in accordance with the procedure described in §676.143, any modification, amendment, or revision required by the Federal law authorizing, or applicable to, the Combined State Plan partner program or activity.

(i) If the underlying programmatic requirements change (e.g., the authorizing statute is reauthorized) for Federal laws authorizing such programs, a State must either modify its Combined State Plan or submit a separate plan to the appropriate Federal agency in accordance with the new Federal law authorizing the Combined State Plan partner program or activity and other legal requirements applicable to such program or activity.

(ii) If the modification, amendment, or revision affects the administration of only that particular Combined State Plan partner program and has no impact on the Combined State Plan as a whole or the integration and administration of the core and other Combined State Plan partner programs at the State level, modifications must be submitted for approval to only the appropriate Secretary, based on the approval standards applicable to the original Combined State Plan under §676.143, if the State elects, or in accordance with the procedures and requirements applicable to the particular Combined State Plan partner program.

(3) A State also may amend its Combined State Plan to add a Combined State Plan partner program or activity described in §676.140(d).

(d) Modifications of the Combined State Plan are subject to the same public review and comment requirements that apply to the development of the original Combined State Plan as described in §676.143(c) except that, if the modification,

amendment, or revision affects the administration of a particular Combined State Plan partner program and has no impact on the Combined State Plan as a whole or the integration and administration of the core and other Combined State Plan partner programs at the State level, a State may comply instead with the procedures and requirements applicable to the particular Combined State Plan partner program.

(e) Modifications for the core program portions of the Combined State Plan must be approved by the Secretaries of Labor and Education, based on the approval standards applicable to the original Combined State Plan under §676.143. This approval must come after the approval of the Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration for modification of any portion of the Combined State Plan described in sec. 102(b)(2)(D)(iii) of WIOA.

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