

WDB

Kern, Inyo & Mono

**WORKFORCE
DEVELOPMENT
BOARD**



2017-2021 Biennial Modification

**WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
BOARD OF KERN, INYO,
AND MONO COUNTIES**

LOCAL PLAN



Amendment to Local Plan

A. CalFresh Employment and Training Partnerships

- i. *Explain how Local Board will engage and work with the county Human Service agencies and other CalFresh E&T partners to serve their local CalFresh population.*

The Kern, Inyo and Mono Workforce Development Board (KIM WDB), by and through its administrative and fiscal agent, Employers' Training Resource (ETR) will partner with Kern County Department of Human Services (DHS) to identify ways to increase communication and reduce barriers with shared customers. In addition, ETR will continue to work with community based organizations (CBOs), service providers, community colleges, and representatives of DHS to increase employment rates and wage gains for all individuals who receive CalFresh with the common goal to help low skilled, low income or low wage individuals find sustainable employment.

- ii. *How will Local Boards partner with community based organizations, service providers, community colleges and representatives from County Human Service agencies for individuals in their local area.*

ETR will partner with CBOs, service provides, community colleges and DHS with an emphasis on sharing information through access to their respective programs, and braiding resources and blending services at each of their locations; which includes physical co-location of staff, cross training of staff, virtual access through phones or websites, distribution of printed materials and establishing a process for reciprocal referrals to appropriate services offered through the partnering agency.

- iii. *Provide an overview of the size and characteristics of both the total CalFresh recipient populations in the local/area region and the CalFresh E&T participant populations.*

Kern County Department of Human Services (DHS) CalFresh Participant Demographics (2017)	
Cases	68,976
Individuals Participating	159,900
Elderly (Age +60)	9,898*
Under Age 18	107,711
English Second Language (ESL)	46,483
Estimated CF Employment and Training Participants	2,328

*Estimate 30% participation increase due to SSI/SSP Cash regulation changes in 6-2019.

- iv. *Assess the types of workforce services needed to help people receiving CalFresh succeed in the regional and local labor market, including those services that are eligible for 50% federal reimbursement from CalFresh E&T.*

Workforce services must be developed to improve employment rates and wage gains for all individuals who receive public benefits and create a service delivery flow which is seamless between DHS and its CalFresh E&T partners. These unemployed or underemployed individual's workforce services should: (i) increase job placements, retention and able to increase wages to "a living wage"; (ii) increase CalFresh E&T participation across a dynamic mix of people, communities and cultures; (iii) increase employability by removing barriers to employment; (iv) increase skills to attainment and credentialing; and (v) braid funding streams to maximize budgets. Examples of these services include, but are not limited to: On-the-job training; Work experience (including paid apprenticeships); Educational programs (including ESL Classes); Job Search skills; Job Club; Vocational training; Career/technical programs; Job retention for up to 90-days post-employment; and Providing supportive services that directly help participants succeed in E&T components. Making these E&T services accessible to these targeted individuals will assist them in eventually getting a "good job", which will provide them "a wage sufficient to support a family adequately, and, over time to save for emergency expenses".

- v. *Describe the employment barriers experienced by people receiving CalFresh in your local area/region, including potential barriers faced by people with disabilities, and resources that can be utilized to assist with overcoming these barriers, including those resources eligible for 50% federal reimbursement from CalFresh E&T (e.g. job readiness, child care, criminal history).*

CalFresh E&T focuses on serving a population that traditionally have not had their workforce needs met by other federal workforce programs: low-income individuals with significant barriers to success. Many CalFresh (public assistance) participants need more education and training to succeed in advancing to middle-skill jobs compared to other job seekers. For example, a majority of Kern County CalFresh households include an adult caretaker without a high school diploma. The

barriers these individuals face may include a lack of knowledge about training program options, lack of child care or transportation, low basic skills (literacy/numeracy), basic English language proficiency, homelessness or housing instability, psychological issues and/or criminal backgrounds.

The current E&T resources available to CalFresh individuals by DHS include:

- Job Search Assistance – access to the ‘Jobs First Rooms’ which are located in all DHS offices. The Jobs First room allows these individuals to utilize the room’s computers and telephones to search and apply for jobs, complete a resume, get job opening alerts, and provides staff who are available to answer general questions regarding employment or available training.
- Job Readiness Workshop – consist of training on how to search for jobs, job interview skills, guidance on completing job applications, instructor lead training on job retention skills and techniques and how to dress for interviews.
- Transportation Funds – participants of the Employment and Training program are provided with funds to purchase bus passes to be able to travel to the designated areas required to complete training workshops or seek employment, and attend interviews.
- Job Fest (Fairs) – DHS organizes and hosts several job fairs throughout Kern County (Bakersfield, Lake Isabella, Taft, Ridgecrest, Shafter, Mojave, Lamont and Delano, and Wasco). Over a hundred potential employers from the private and public sector participate and at times, may interview and hire on-site.

DHS also collaborates and provides referrals to several community agency partners to assist with CalFresh participant’s barriers, some partners include:

- America’s Job Centers – employment and training services.
- Child Support Department – custodial and non-custodial parent referrals to obtain assistance with information on their child support payments being received or required to pay.
- Community Connection for Childcare- subsidized and unsubsidized child care referrals for individuals in need of child care.
- Housing Authority – assistance with housing for low-income individuals.
- Veteran’s Department – assistance in seeking VA benefits that individuals or their dependents might be entitled to receive.
- Community Action Partnership of Kern- assistance with paying housing costs and income tax preparations (Federal and State EIC).
- Kern Behavioral Health – assistance with mental health services.

There are also several opportunities that can be developed to assist these targeted individuals with the outlined barriers above by leveraging the CalFresh Employment and Training 50/50 federal funding and partnering with third parties to deliver and provide the resources and services needed to achieve the goal of obtaining a “good job”.

vi. Explain current and prospective local partnerships, including partnerships with local workforce development boards, local Human Service Agencies, and other CalFresh E&T providers, including those that are eligible for 50% federal reimbursement from CalFresh E&T. Describe the quality and level of intensity of services provided by these partners.

DHS partners with several agencies to assist individuals with overcoming barriers to employment. In the upcoming year, DHS will reach out to CBOs to potentially expand the E&T program and utilize the 50% federal reimbursement.

vii. Describe the ways in which program partners will facilitate information sharing to evaluate need.

Partner information sharing is accomplished by providing access to their respective programs, service locations; which includes physical co-location of staff, cross training of staff, virtual access through phones or websites, distribution of printed materials and establishing a process for reciprocal referrals to appropriate services offered through the partnering agency.

viii. Describe how local partners will braid resources and coordinate service delivery to people receiving CalFresh, including by leveraging 50% federal reimbursement from CalFresh E&T for workforce services, sector pathway programs, supportive services and retention efforts described below.

With the common goal to help low skilled, low income or low wage individuals find sustainable employment, DHS could seek third-party partners (AJCCs, Community and Technical Colleges, and/or CBOs) to deliver Employment and Training (E&T) services, including partners who can assist with removing employment barriers.

The goal is to coordinate services in which braiding of funds can be utilized to pay for E&T services and achieve a blending of services (combine and eliminate duplicate services to the same population) to provide these individuals with a customized plan that meets their needs. The braiding of resources to achieve the coordination of service delivery could be achieved by leveraging the CalFresh E&T's 100% Federal and 50/50 matching funds, WIOA (Adult Low Income and Dislocated Worker) funds and Non-federal matching funds such as, AB 109 and County general funds. The operating costs to provide these services would be shared upon the partners under a Memorandum of Understanding agreement. The E&T partners would enter into a referral agreement which could be a reciprocal referral procedure that would do the following: (i) Individuals seeking employment or training resources at AJCCs, Community Based Organizations(CBOs), Community Colleges, or Educational institutions could be referred to DHS to apply for CalFresh and be approved; DHS would refer these individual to E&T partners which would then enroll the individuals in the necessary services; or (ii) Individuals receiving CalFresh could be referred by DHS to partners which could then enroll the individual in the necessary services.

- ix. Explain how local/regional partners will identify and partner with local/regional organizations that serve specific types of CalFresh populations (i.e. formerly incarcerated individuals, non-custodial parents, etc.) and strategies for leveraging existing resources in the community.*

DHS currently partner with several agencies to assist these individuals with overcoming their barriers to employment. Some partners and blending of services include: (i) America's Job Centers – employment and training services; (ii) Child Support Department – custodial and non-custodial parent referrals to obtain assistance with information on their child support payments being received or required to pay; (iii) Community Connection for Childcare - subsidized and unsubsidized child care referrals for individuals in need of child care; (iv) Housing Authority – assistance with housing for low-income individuals; (v) Veteran's Department – assistance in seeking VA benefits that individuals or their dependents might be entitled to receive; (vi) Community Action Partnership of Kern - assistance with paying housing costs and income tax preparations (Federal and State EIC); and (viii) Kern Behavioral Health – assistance with mental health services.

When seeking partners to braid resources and blend services or collaborating with CBOs, the following objectives would have to be met: (i) Work jointly to identify models of workforce services based on one-stop partnerships that meet the baseline federal expectations and evaluate service delivery to improve outcomes; (ii) Work together to implement WIOA program strategies through a value-added partnership in which partners contribute to the basis of their programmatic expertise. The WIOA strategies would be as follows: subsidized employment, sector strategies, career pathways, and providing supportive services, "earn and learn" training models, including apprenticeships, integrating service delivery and braiding resources, and creating cross-system data capacity; (iii) Provide access to their respective programs, service locations by means to be determined, which may include physical co-location of staff, cross training of staff, virtual access through phones or websites, distribution of printed materials and establish a process for reciprocal referrals to appropriate services offered through the partnering agency; and (iv) Work to identify & implement best practices & model partnerships that encourage program coordination & alignment meeting federal standards for workforce service delivery models.

- x. Describe the types of workforce services available to people receiving CalFresh that are and can be funded by local/regional partners, the baseline level of service, and how the local/regional plan will modify the types and quantity of workforce services provided to this population.*

The following E&T services that DHS currently makes available to CalFresh individuals are: (i) Job Search Assistance – access to the 'Jobs First Rooms' which are located in all DHS offices. The Jobs First room allows individuals to utilize the computers and telephones to search and apply for jobs, complete a resume, get job opening alerts, and provides staff who are available to answer general questions regards to available employment or training; (ii) Job Readiness Workshop – consist of training on how to search for jobs, job interview skills, guidance on completing job applications, instructor lead training on job retention skills and techniques and how to dress for interviews; (iii) Transportation Funds – participants of the Employment and Training program are provided with funds to purchase bus passes to be able to travel to the designated areas required to complete training workshops or seek employment, and attend interviews; (iv) Job Fest (Fairs) – DHS organizes and hosts several job fairs throughout Kern County (Bakersfield, Lake Isabella, Taft, Ridgecrest, Shafter, Mojave, Lamont and Delano, and Wasco). Over a hundred potential employers from the private and public sector participate and may interview and hire on-site with over 2,200 individuals seeking employment attended.

When seeking third-party partners to braid resources and blend services the following objectives would have to be met: (i) Work to identify models of workforce services based on one-stop partnerships that meet the baseline federal expectations and evaluate service delivery to improve outcomes; (ii) Work to implement WIOA program strategies through a value-added partnership in which program partners contribute to the basis of their programmatic expertise. The WIOA strategies would be as follows: subsidized employment, sector strategies, career pathways, and providing supportive services, “earn and learn” training models, including apprenticeships, integrating service delivery and braiding resources, and creating cross-system data capacity; (iii) Provide access to their respective programs, service locations by means to be determined, which may include physical co-location of staff, cross training of staff, virtual access through phones or websites, distribution of printed materials and establish a process for reciprocal referrals to appropriate services offered through the partnering agency; and (iv) Work together to identify and implement best practices and model partnerships that encourage program coordination and alignment to meet federal required standards pertaining to workforce service delivery models.

- xi. Describe the role of local/regional partners in helping provide services to and integrating people receiving CalFresh into sector pathway programs, including participation in program development, outreach, and the provision of specialized supportive services.*

The following policy objectives of the state plan would need to be met by potential local partners to help provide services to CalFresh participants: (i) Fostering demand-driven skills attainment. Workforce and education programs need to align program content with the state’s industry sector needs so as to provide county business and employers with the skilled workforce it needs to compete in the state’s economy; (ii) Enabling upward mobility for all Kern County residents, including populations with barriers to employment. Workforce and education programs need to be accessible for all county residents and ensure that everyone has access to a marketable set of skills and able to access the level of education necessary to ensure economic self-sufficiency and security; (iii) Aligning, Coordinating, and Integrating Programs and Services to economize limited resources while providing the right services to clients, based on each client’s particular needs, including individuals with disabilities; and (iv) Serving Individuals with Barriers to Employment. This may include remedial education and English language literacy services.

Ultimately, the goal of the E&T partners would be to work together to identify and implement best practices and model partnerships that encourage program coordination and alignment to meet federal required standards pertaining to workforce service delivery models.

- xii. Describe the ways in which local/regional partners will work together to provide supportive services to this population and facilitate program completion.*

E&T partners would ensure that target populations have access to employment services, supportive services, training, and education programming that will help these individuals eventually get a “good job”. This includes developing principles of common programs information, participant information sharing and common reporting through electronic mechanisms, including shared technology.

- xiii. Describe the process Local Boards and their partners will use to retain this population in regional sector pathway programs as they progress into livable wage jobs and careers.*

Partners could have success in retaining these individuals in E&T programs by participating in joint program planning, plan development and modification of activities to accomplish the following: (i) Continuous partnership building; (ii) Continuous planning in response to state and federal requirements; (iii) Responsiveness to local and economic conditions, including employer needs, and (v) Constantly reviewing the individuals E&T plan to ensure that any barrier is identified and services are available and provided to overcome the barrier.

B. Department of Child Support Services Partnership

- i. How will Local Boards partner with CBOs, service providers, community colleges, and representatives from LCSAs and county Human Service agencies for individuals in their local area.*

The KIM WDB will partner with Kern County Department of Child Support Services (KCDCSS) to identify ways to increase communication and reduce barriers with shared customers. Providing immediate and direct communication with customers at the time of service ensures customers have the necessary information to make educated decisions. Specifically, KCDCSS will provide video-conferencing equipment to be placed in strategic America’s Job Center locations to provide face-to-face

interviews to discuss their specific child support case, educate the non-custodial parent on what to expect once they are employed, and review their case to ensure the order accurately reflects their current earning situation.

ii. *Provide an overview of the size of the Child Support Program population in your local area.*

As of September 2018, KCDCSS manages 51,057 open cases. Most families receiving services are living in poverty or are income instable. Of the total caseload, 83.6% families are currently receiving (28.3%) or have received (55.4%) TANF benefits through the Department of Human Services. For these families, child support is a critical safety-net as consistent reliable child support payments help provide for the basic needs of the children in their care. Parents in these cases can have multiple cases and, depending on the situation, the person may be a custodial parent in one case and a noncustodial parent in another. Noncustodial parents in these cases can live throughout the state of California and nation, and in some cases internationally. Of the total number of open cases, 16,366 noncustodial parents have some form of incarceration history. 84.13% of noncustodial parents are male, while 13.52% are identified as female. 44% of noncustodial parents are identified as Hispanic, 28% are White, and 14% are Black. Of the cities within the County of Kern, Bakersfield has the largest number of both custodial and noncustodial parents with a total of 24,770 people. The four other top Kern County cities include: Delano, Ridgecrest, Shafter, and Wasco with an average of 1026 case participants in each location. Noncustodial parents make up 44% of the parents who live in Kern County. Additional data on noncustodial parents, such as unemployment figures, has been requested and is pending from the California Department of Child Support Services.

iii. *Provide an assessment of the types of services needed for each targeted group challenged with meeting their parental responsibilities.*

Parents face a wide variety of challenges in meeting their parental responsibilities. Some of these challenges can be attributed to two different reasons. This first of which is reliable, consistent employment. Many parents struggle in finding full-time employment at a sustainable living wage. Formerly incarcerated and low skilled workers face greater challenges in securing full-time work as they are competing with higher skilled and more educated people entering the job market. Often, they rely on seasonal or part-time work without benefits to just sustain themselves, with nothing left for their children. To be successful, parents need help with increasing their marketable skill sets making them more attractive to potential employers. Additionally, parents need available reliable jobs where they could earn livable incomes. Even if the person has the skills needed by employers and there are available job opportunities, access to available employment becomes the second area of difficulty. If the parent has additional challenges such as being an English language learner or not having reliable transportation, these challenges are exponentially more difficult to overcome. As Kern County geographically spans over large distances, parents may live a considerable distance away from available employers making reliable transportation a necessity. The second challenge is private transportation costs, including purchasing of a vehicle, gas, and vehicle maintenance. All of these expenses can be detrimental for those living in both the larger cities as well as in neighboring towns. Public transportation is limited, can be difficult to use or access, and may not fit the family needs relating to childcare. For these parents to succeed in the labor market, they need assistance with overcoming these barriers.

iv. *Describe the relative importance of the types of services needed to help program participants succeed in their labor market.*

Job preparation and training are critical for non-custodial parents to obtain meaningful and sustainable employment. Custodial Parents need to be able to depend on consistent monthly child support payments to successfully manage their budget. Non-Custodial Parents need to be prepared for the workforce which will provide them with enough wages to support themselves as well as their children

v. *Describe the types of baseline services that are currently being provided in the local area to individuals from the Child Support Program population and how the regional and/or local plans will modify the types and quantity of services provided.*

KCDCSS currently works with all parents by proactively reaching out throughout the establishment and enforcement of their child support order. During these interactions, parents are educated about the child support process and the specific impacts to their case. Throughout the life of the case and as personal situations change, court ordered child support amounts are reviewed and modified to reflect current circumstances. Staff are also educated about other available community resources and actively share this information with customers when appropriate. To serve customers efficiently, KCDCSS Representatives are able to handle most customer needs by phone, including making payments. For those who would prefer to speak to someone in person, there are two offices available for customers to access a case manager directly. The Bakersfield office serves as the main office location. The Ridgecrest branch office provides services in the East Kern area. To provide services at a time and place that works best for them, customers have 24/7 access to review their accounts, make and

receive payments, review child support resources, and submit questions to their case manager through a free mobile app for Android and Apple devices and Customer Connect Website on their personal computer. KCDCSS is committed to providing services for non-English speaking customers. The department created a dedicated caseload for customers whose primary language or language of preference is Spanish. Staff assigned to this team are proficient in both English and Spanish, so customers can talk directly with a child support professional in their own language. For additional languages, KCDCSS utilizes language interpretation services and most forms are available in a variety of languages.

vi. *Describe barriers experienced by Child Support Program participants in your local area, including potential barriers faced by people with disabilities.*

KCDCSS also attempts to minimize any challenges customers with disabilities may face in accessing or utilizing services. Most, if not all, services provided by the KCDCSS can be handled telephonically or through the mail minimizing the need for customers to come into the office. For those who need additional assistance, customers can authorize someone they trust to receive information and act on their behalf. Unfortunately, the State Department of Child Support Services has not approved the use of text messaging as a means of communicating with customers. Another challenge for KCDCSS's customers accessing services is that some people have apprehension, fear and distrust of government which creates a barrier that prevents people from seeking services, disclosing information, and overall cooperation.

vii. *Describe the existing resources that can be utilized to assist with overcoming these barriers.*

One communication tool that can be utilized more is email. While email is available to customers to initiate a question or discussion with a Child Support professional, it is not frequently used to by Child Support staff to initiate a conversation with customers. This option will be explored more to provide an additional way to communicate with customers.

KCDCSS is also relocating the main Bakersfield office to a new building. As a stand-alone building in which KCDCSS is the only tenant, the department is working to create an environment more comfortable and inviting to customers. This move allows the department to re-brand themselves to their customers, further enhancing their image and reducing customer fear and apprehension of accessing services. Additionally, for those traveling by bus, there is a more convenient bus access with a bus stop steps from the property. For those traveling by motor vehicle, the building is easily accessible from the freeway and there is plenty of convenient customer parking.

viii. *Describe the ways in which program partners will facilitate information sharing to evaluate need.*

Program partners can reduce some challenges faced by parents through gaining greater understanding of services each partner provides and increasing accessibility to each other's services. Staff at all levels should be knowledgeable of the available resources in their community to assist customers. In addition, staff must be able to identify barriers each customer is facing and refer him/her to the appropriate agency with the subject matter expertise to assist in eliminating that barrier. Program partners must work together to streamline processes for customers needing services who already have so many other challenges to overcome.

ix. *Describe the ways in which the program partners work together to provide supportive services to noncustodial parents to support job retention.*

When noncustodial parents fail to make consistent monthly child support payments, they are subject to a variety of enforcement tactics which are designed to encourage payment. One of these enforcement measures is suspensions of driver and/or professional license(s). As employers often require an active California driver's license at the time of hire and an active professional license is required for a variety of positions, a suspended driver's license or professional license may prevent someone securing employment. To assist with securing employment and job retention, KCDCSS works with noncustodial parents to release licenses to allow them to work upon the promise of employment by the employer. KCDCSS also works with a variety of community partners to reduce barriers to support noncustodial parent job retention, by assisting:

- Incarcerated noncustodial parents through a partnership with the Kern County Sheriff- Lerdo Detention Facility to educate incarcerated parents about the child support process while they are incarcerated and what they can expect once released. Case Managers ensure child support amounts are accurate based on their current circumstances and build relationships with the parents that will continue post-incarceration. Specifically, this partnership includes an on-site video-conferencing kiosk which allows the inmate to have a direct face-to-face discussion with a Child Support Case Manager during regular business hours Monday through Friday and answer any questions they have about their case directly. To provide additional education and support, weekly in-person presentations are also provided to inmates to learn more about child support. Case Managers are available at that time to talk with inmates about their specific circumstances and immediately handle any actions needed in their case.

- Customers with transportation issues by providing services at a time and place most convenient for customers. Case Managers provide direct services to customers throughout the county through various partnerships. Staff bring computers and printers to event, so they are able to access the person’s information, update case information, print documents, and take any necessary action immediately. KCDCSS has partnered with: (i) Family Resource Centers in Delano, Shafter and Lamont; (ii) Kern County Veterans Stand Down for veterans; (iii) Kern County Homeless Collaborative for homelessness at their events; and (iv) City of Bakersfield’s Safe Streets Partnership-Gang Call-In for parents who are at risk of gang violence.
 - For customers visiting the Department of Human Services, KCDCSS has placed an informational kiosk in the lobby. Through this kiosk, customers are able to easily access a variety of information and resources, including job search sites, such as Indeed and CalJobs.
 - For customers in domestic violence crisis, KCDCSS has a video-conferencing kiosk stationed at the Family Justice Center to provide face-to-face services to parents interested in learning more about the child support program and the service provided. KCDCSS has also partnered with and provides referrals to the Kern County Family Law Facilitator to assist customers with other legal matters outside of child support. In addition to the referral system, throughout the year, the Kern County Family Law Facilitator will also co-locate staff in the KCDCSS lobby to help customers directly with any legal matters they need assistance with relating to child support.
 - KCDCSS has an area in the lobby available to customers for job searching and community resources. The “Kids Count Resource Room” provides a variety of resources, including public computer access and employer hiring information free of charge. Community members can access hiring websites, gain knowledge of those who are hiring, and submit applications. Staff are knowledgeable about community resources and able to assist customers with additional needs.
 - Each month community partners are invited to present and share information about their programs and services to staff. This information is then actively shared with customers as needs arise.
- x. *Discuss the steps to be taken to ensure that a comprehensive provision of services is provided to noncustodial parents to facilitate successful labor market outcomes and progression into livable wage jobs and careers.*

As a comprehensive provision of services to noncustodial parents, KCDCSS is able to release driver and professional licenses of those participating in the program thereby reducing barriers to employment and improving outcomes.

- xi. *Discuss how eligibility criteria for workforce services impacts the Local Board’s ability to provide workforce services to the Child Support Program population.*

Workforce services eligibility criteria may impact the ability to provide services to the Child Support Program population if it excludes those most difficult to serve. The families in the child support program need consistent monthly child support payments for their long-term success. Noncustodial parents who have persistent long-term challenges may not be successful in completing programs initially. They may need additional support and resources before successfully entering the workforce. Additionally, as custodial parents are often unemployed or under-employed, they may also benefit from workforce services.

- xii. *Explain obstacles to providing services to the Child Support Program population.*

Overwhelming challenges in the job market have led to apathy by some noncustodial parents. Unable to fully support themselves, parents are frequently not able to provide additional support to their children. They often want to support their children, but are frustrated with the lack of employment opportunities and disappointed with the on-again, off-again nature of the work they are able to find. Another obstacle in providing services to the custodial parent population is the mandatory obligation of child support. As a result of the noncustodial parent not applying for child support services, there is often resistance to comply or cooperate with KCDCSS. Noncustodial parents may be unwilling or unable to pay causing the family to apply for TANF benefits. Along with noncustodial parents, custodial parents also struggle with consistent employment. In addition to the previously identified barriers they share with noncustodial parents, such as inconsistent work and transportation issues, custodial parents have additional challenges. Unreliable, limited, and expensive child care often prevents custodial parents from obtaining sustainable employment. Addressing these concerns for the custodial parent would also help to secure financial independence from government assistance for the family. Custodial parents could benefit from the workforce services collaborative approach.

- xiii. *Explain additional tools that can be explored to motivate and support participation and any legal or regulatory barriers to utilizing these tools.*

KCDCSS is currently exploring the use of mandated work searches for those noncustodial parents who are not compiling with their court ordered child support obligation and do not have verified employment. Another tool which could be explored is the use of technology to provide on-demand services outside of normal business hours.

xiv. Explain obstacles to meaningfully engaging in local partnerships.

One obstacle to meaningfully engaging local partnerships is the strict confidentiality rules within the Department of Child Support Services. These rules are mandated by the state and federal government and strictly prohibit sharing of customer information with anyone outside of the program.

xv. Describe the process Local Boards and LCSAs will use to retain individuals in relevant workforce and education training programs to support progression into livable wage jobs and careers.

KCDCSS will identify qualifying noncustodial parents who are currently not compliant with their court order child support obligation. KCDCSS will then develop and implement a pathway for unemployed noncustodial parents to obtain the resources they need to obtain employment through the following: (i) Devoting specific court calendar resources to an Order to Show Cause (OSC) seek-work calendar; (ii) Ensure unemployed noncustodial parents are directly referred as part of the court process to the America's Job Center of California (AJCC) under guidance of the Court; (iii) Monitor noncustodial parent's compliance with the OSC seek-work process; and (iv) Reevaluate the process on a regular basis with the Court and AJCC to determine and implement any process improvements. In addition, to increase the level of customer-centered service, KCDCSS will work towards installing video-conferencing kiosks at the AJCCs around Kern County. Specifically, these kiosks will be located at the comprehensive One-Stop AJCCs at Southeast AJCC (1600 E. Belle Terrace, Bakersfield) and Delano AJCC (1816 Cecil Avenue, Delano) and the affiliate One-Stop AJCC at Oildale AJCC (1129 Olive Drive, Suite H, Bakersfield). Through this video-conferencing kiosk, customers will have direct access with a child support case manager to discuss case specifics and remove any potential barriers that will prevent the customer from successfully obtaining sustainable employment.

xvi. Describe existing, new, and prospective partnerships with stakeholders to coordinate workforce and related training and education service delivery to Child Support Program participants.

KCDCSS is open to attending and/or hosting collaborative one-stop education events in which multiple partners provide education to child support program participants. These events could educate customers and/or employers on a variety of work-related topics and include information on the child support program and what can be expected. KCDCSS will partner with the AJCC and DHS to expand the services provided in the KCDCSS Kids Count Resource Room and receive consistent job information which can be shared directly with customers.

xvii. Describe how local partners, including LCSAs, County Human Service Agencies, Local Boards, community colleges, adult education providers, CBOs, social enterprise, and other stakeholders will braid resources and coordinate service delivery.

For disengaged youth between the ages of 18-24, KCDCSS will collaborate with AJCC and implement a referral process for noncustodial parents who are unemployed and/or under-employed during both the establishment and enforcement of their order. For noncustodial parents of all ages with a court ordered seek-work order, KCDCSS will collaborate with AJCC and the Court to ensure noncustodial parents are compliant with court ordered seek-work orders. For those who are non-compliant, KCDCSS will work with the AJCC and the court to determine next actions for success. As some customers prefer to work with the department face-to-face, but have challenges in coming to the Bakersfield or Ridgecrest offices, KCDCSS will continue to expand direct services to other locations throughout Kern County. The department is currently preparing for an upcoming direct services event in Taft. KCDCSS will also partner with the Department of Human Services to provide shared customers to speak to a Child Support Case Manager through video-conferencing equipment. This will allow for customers to interact face-to-face with a Case Manager who can answer their questions, gather necessary information, and take immediate actions for that family. KCDCSS will continue to partner with the local court and Kern County Family Law Facilitator by increasing the number of located outreach events to shared customers provided each year. These events will provide opportunities for customers to be served by both KCDCSS and Family Law Facilitator at a central location for child support, custody, and/or visitation issues. KCDCSS can create a Child Support Services Orientation Video which could be provided to local partners, including the AJCC and Department of Human Services, so the information can be shared during customer trainings and orientations to learn more about the services provided and who to contact if they have any questions. State child support educational videos will also be shared with local partners, including the DHS, to show in their lobby and anywhere else to educate customers. Partners will also cross-share information and educate customers about the various

services available to them by sharing information and links on their Facebook, Twitter, website, and other social media accounts. KCDCCS is also willing to work with additional workforce partners to ensure information provided through the kiosks located throughout the community provide useful information to customers about the various resources available to them.

xviii. *Describe how local workforce development boards will engage CBOs with a history of serving and working with the targeted populations, such as vocational training providers, in order to offer basic skills and occupational training, job and career search assistance, and supportive services within the local workforce development system.*

KCDCCS supports the KIM WDB by working with CBOs to provide training and offering services. KCDCCS partners with the DHS, Kern County High School District, and California State University Bakersfield to support interns who need practical experience to develop marketable skills and bridge them successfully into the workforce. While at the department, interns assist with various functions throughout the office. Depending on the employment field they are hoping to enter, interns practice and develop various skills such as clerical, marketing, customer service, paralegal, and graphic design. Through this partnership, interns have successfully moved on to permanent positions within the department and with other public and private employers.

xix. *Describe the referral process and forms utilized to track this population as they are referred from LCSA office and Family Court.*

KCDCCS will track noncustodial parents in the OSC seek-work order progress and results, including but not limited to employment success and payment compliance.

xx. *Discuss the tools and incentives that LCSAs can provide to noncustodial parents to promote their participation in workforce development and education training programs.*

In addition to providing customers with voluntary referrals and education of the workforce development and education training programs, KCDCCS will use the OSC seek-work order progress as an incentive to increase marketable skills employers need and secure employment. KCDCCS will also continue to use license suspensions and releases to encourage participation in ETR's workforce programs and as an incentive to obtain meaningful employment.

C. Competitive Integrated Employment Updated Partnership

i. *Explain how your area is engaged or plans to become engaged with local partners to increase CIE for jobseekers with Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities and Developmental Disabilities (ID/DD).*

Kern High School District, Kern Regional Center, ETR and Department of Rehabilitation (DOR) have been meeting and collaborating collective plans to assist individuals with Intellectual Disability and Developmental Disabilities in achieving CIE. Currently we are working on the Local Plan Agreement (LPA) to identify the ways in which Kern, Inyo and Mono Counties will work together in achieving this goal.

ii. *List the names of organizations the Local Board is partnering with to implement these plans.*

Kern High School District, Kern Regional Center, AJCC, ETR and DOR.

iii. *If participating in CIE Local Partnership Agreement template (LPA) as explained above, please describe the level of participation.*

Educational agencies, DOR Branches, Kern Regional Center and AJCCs located in Kern, Inyo and Mono Counties will collaborate by developing Local Partnership Agreements (LPAs). LPA's create frameworks that transcend changes to personnel, funding, and political climates. They are critical in efforts to change the ways mutual consumers of the core partners (LEAs, DOR, AJCC and Kern Regional Center) are served, to better utilize resources, and to produce improved employment outcomes. By taking the time to develop a plan for working together, partners create a shared vision of what's possible.

Over the next five years (2017 through 2022), the goal is to have LPAs developed between DOR districts, regional centers, and 270 LEAs. Kern High School District has been coordinating quarterly LPA meetings. The group has met three times and have developed a draft LPA. Future meetings will be scheduled to complete the LPA within the timeframe noted above.

- iv. *Describe in your plan the ways in which AJCC staff have gained knowledge or training serving individuals with ID/DD and the additional programs and resources available in the area.*

AJCC Staff have been trained in the following areas: (1) Windmills Training (Disability Awareness and Etiquette Training); (2) Working with Individuals with Hidden Disabilities, Including Mental Health Disabilities; and (3) Consumer Self-Disclosure and Related Barriers, How to Address. In addition, DOR assisted ETR by identifying the assistive technology needed for each AJCC site located in Kern, Inyo and Mono Counties.

- v. *Please explain how your area has or will connect with your DOR point of contact who can provide linkages to service providers and/or supportive services (i.e., job coaching) to individuals with ID/DD who are VR consumers?*

AJCC staff will work closely with DOR staff and community partners to expand the pathways to employment in supporting individuals with ID/DD in achieving CIE.

- vi. *Please describe how your DOR district partner is connecting with your area in their work to outreach to employers and partners to support opportunities for individuals with ID/DD to achieve CIE.*

DOR will work with AJCC and other Partners to streamline service delivery, engage the community and increase CIE opportunities for individuals with ID/DD.

- vii. *If your area is developing its own recruitment, referral, and employer engagement strategies, please describe.*

DOR is in the process of developing a plan with its community partners for recruitment, referral, and employer engagement strategies and it is too early in the process to adequately describe the plan.

D. Provisions to English Language Learners, Immigrants, and Refugees

- i. *Describe how local/regional partners will braid resources and coordinate service delivery to people English learners, the foreign born and refugees, including increasing access to sector pathway programs, supportive services and retention efforts.*

The Kern County Adult Ed Programs Consortium (Kern AEP) is open to braiding resources and coordinating service delivery with the KIM WDB. The Kern AEP is serving English learners, the foreign born, and refugees who are in need of adult education services: High School Diploma, English as a Second Language, Older Adults, Re-entry to Work, Adults assisting elementary and secondary school children, Adults with Disabilities, short-term Career and Technical Education, and Pre-Apprenticeships. The Kern AEP is working together on building a referral system between adult education, community college, and KIM WDB to track student progress.

- ii. *Describe the process Local Boards and their partners will use to retain this population in regional sector pathway programs as they progress into livable wage jobs and careers.*

The Kern AEP, a KIM WDB partner, provides needed adult education services to support students' progression toward livable wage jobs and careers in regional sector pathways. The Kern AEP has adopted many of the following retention strategies at Kern AEP members' locations: child care, transportation, tutors, career and college counselors, post-secondary transition specialists, and other individualized supports.

- iii. *Local Boards are required to review and incorporate any workforce or employment service plans developed by stakeholders (e.g. Employment Services Plans developed by County Welfare Departments etc.).*

Kern AEP consortium members will work with KIM WDB' stakeholders' service and employment plans to the extent that this information is provided by the client/student at the time of enrollment in adult education program services. The client/student may provide the KIM WDB or stakeholders with Kern AEP enrollment information.