



SOUTH DAKOTA
DEPT. OF **LABOR**
& **REGULATION**

**WORKFORCE INNOVATION
AND OPPORTUNITY ACT**

Program Year 2020
Annual Narrative Report

Federal Guidance: TEGL 5-18

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PROGRAM YEAR IN REVIEW

The agility of the South Dakota Department of Labor and Regulation (DLR) was challenged during Program Year 2020 (PY20) due to the COVID-19 pandemic. DLR shifted focus away from workforce programs to help lift the burden the Reemployment Assistance (RA) Divisionⁱ was forced to carry. By April 1, 2021, DLR job service officesⁱⁱ, or One-Stop Career Centers, re-opened to walk-in traffic. At that time, South Dakota had a 2.8% unemployment rate and businesses were desperate for a skilled workforce. In response, DLR tested new methods to reach and serve customers, which laid the foundation for sustainable models and a bright future for workforce development in South Dakota.

DLR staffing changes in our job service officesⁱⁱ resulted in vacancies filled by many new faces eager to serve our state, which resulted in the need for training. From November 2020 through June 2021, staff had opportunities to attend 36 training sessions related to workforce program delivery. Nine policy memos, detailing policyⁱⁱⁱ and procedural changes, were released during PY20. To assist staff in adjusting to these edits, statewide review sessions were held to talk through changes in addition to the training sessions offered.

In July 2020, DLR developed and launched **SD UpSkill** in partnership with the Board of Technical Education (BoTE) as a response to the increased unemployment resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. The goal was to engage those who had lost their jobs in a training program leading to short-term credentials in high-demand industries. In the 2020 – 2021 school year, 100 individuals engaged in UpSkill training programs with 64% earning a certificate. All participants were enrolled and case managed virtually in the Fall Semester of 2020.

In November 2020, DLR opened "doors" to a **Virtual Job Service**, starting with an Enrollment Team. Using technology already available and teamwork, DLR created a space for customers to submit paperwork online, complete the orientation and enrollment into workforce programs remotely, and virtually receive case management or attend Job Search Workshops. At this point in the Program Year, job service officesⁱⁱ were open to our customers by appointment only.

On March 31, 2021, in preparation for **walk-in traffic**, a “2021 Vision” presentation launched a challenge to job service office teams to be intentional with engaging with businesses to meet their needs, intertwining DLR services within processes of our partners, and engaging veterans in need of workforce services.

Each job service office team spent the remainder of PY20 establishing a **2021 Action Plan** for implementation the following program year. In June 2021, job service office managers and South Dakota Workforce Development Council (WDC) members met to review the action plans and collaborate on ideas for each plan.

Also in June 2021, a **Business Engagement and Services Team (BEST)**, comprised of a representative from each office throughout the state, was developed and began onboarding. The BEST will build staff capacity and confidence to create transformational relationships with businesses. These relationships will allow DLR staff to learn more about the workforce needs of businesses to identify strategic solutions through DLR programming or other available resources.

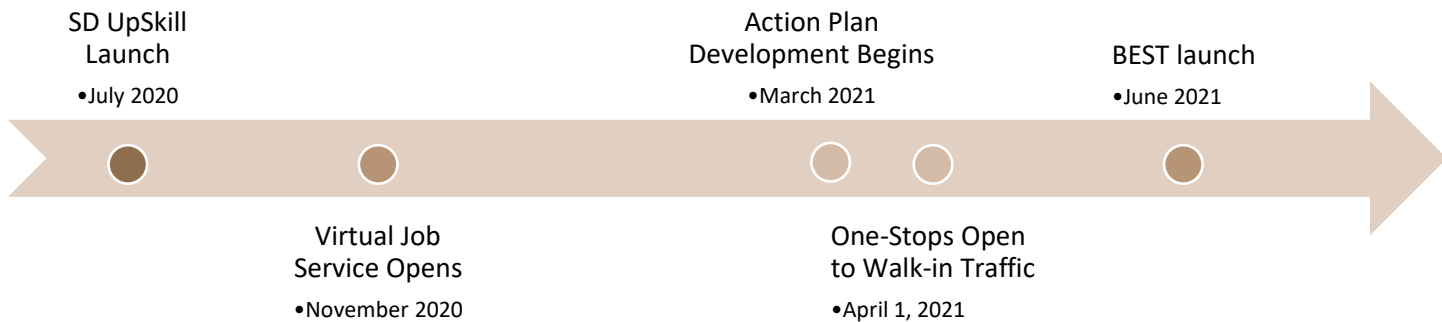


Figure A: Timeline of Events in PY20

Please note: The following section is based on data from calendar year 2020.

POPULATION AND POPULATION PROJECTIONS

South Dakota's population has been steadily increasing since 1990, growing by nearly 200,000 (29%) between 1990 and 2020. According to estimates published by the U.S. Census Bureau, our population increased by 77,000 or 9.4% between 2010 and 2020, exceeding the U.S. population increase of 6.5% over the same period.

Much of the growth has taken place in our two Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs), Rapid City and Sioux Falls. Population in those two metro areas increased by 13.7% and 19.4%, respectively, over the last 10 years. Nearly half (427,100, 47.8%) of South Dakota's population resides in either the Sioux Falls or Rapid City MSAs.

Population projections for 2010-2035 released by the South Dakota State Data Center show South Dakota's total population will reach 922,748 by the year 2025. This reflects an increase in the core potential workforce (age 16-64) of approximately 16,600 (3.2%).

Although most of the counties in South Dakota are expected to show population declines, the Rapid City (Custer, Meade, and Pennington counties) and Sioux Falls (Lincoln, McCook, Minnehaha, and Turner counties) Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs) will be the fastest-growing areas in the state.

LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION

Current Population Survey (CPS) figures from the Bureau of Labor Statistics show South Dakota's labor force participation rate was 68.9% in 2020. In other words, nearly 70% of all (non-institutionalized) residents 16 years old and older were in the labor force, either working or looking for work. This compares to a 2020 national average of 61.7%. Historically, South Dakota consistently has higher rates of labor force participation than the nation as a whole.

South Dakota's participation rate of 68.9% is the fourth-highest rate of all states and the District of Columbia. Nebraska had the highest rate at 70.1%, followed by the District of Columbia at 69.5% and Minnesota at 69.2%.

Youth in South Dakota were also very active labor force participants. In 2020 64.6% of the state's young population (age 16-24 years) were in the labor force, compared to the national rate of 53.9%. At the other end of the age spectrum, South Dakota's labor force participation rate of 65 and over is 27.8% compared to the national average of 19.4%.

Labor Force and Unemployed

South Dakota's labor force continues to grow, indicating a healthy labor market. The number of unemployed began to increase in March 2016 and continued this movement until October 2017 when it began to decrease for the next eleven months. Another upward trend began in November 2018, which continued until September 2019.

In 2020 unemployment had stabilized until the COVID-19 pandemic hit South Dakota's economy in April, sending the number of unemployed to unprecedented levels. South Dakota was quick to recover after the initial shock of COVID; by the end of 2020, the number of unemployed was close to pre-pandemic levels.

The unemployed data series consists of more than those people who have lost a job. It includes those who have quit their jobs to look for other employment, workers whose temporary jobs have ended, individuals looking for their first job, and experienced workers looking for jobs after an absence from the labor force (for example, stay-at-home parents who return to the labor force after their children have entered school).

The level of employment also took a big hit in April of 2020 when the COVID-19 pandemic began, but by the end of 2020, the number of employed South Dakotans exceeded 2019 levels.

The 2020 annual unemployment rate was 4.6% in South Dakota, compared to the national rate of 8.1%. South Dakota's unemployment rate peaked at 5.0% in 2010 following the 2008-2009 recession and remained low through March 2020. After the unemployment rate spiked to 9.2% in April 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it declined rapidly and was back to 3.3% by December 2020.

Unemployment rates by educational attainment level indicate the highest unemployment rates in South Dakota correlate with residents who have an educational attainment level of high school graduates, no college (4.0 %), and less than a high school diploma (8.8 %). In contrast, the lowest unemployment rates are for those residents which have an educational attainment level of bachelor's degree and higher (2.9 %). Higher levels of educational attainment also correlate with higher earnings levels.

Not in the Labor Force

Another helpful metric to consider in workforce development is data on those people who are not working but are also not looking for work—so not in the labor force. There can be several reasons why South Dakota civilians are not in the labor force, a few of which include specific barriers to employment, such as discouragement and poor job prospects.

Using special tabulations of unpublished Current Population Survey (CPS) data from BLS, we can get statistics on the reasons why 211,200 South Dakota civilians were not in the labor force in 2020. The largest group was those who did not want a job, at 195,700. Of the 15,500 individuals who indicated they wanted a job, 11,900 indicated they had not searched for work within the last year. It is important to remember the work search requirement for those receiving unemployment benefits was waived for several months in 2020 during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Workforce Demand

The most complete and detailed indicator of workforce demand is occupational demand projections. This data provides an estimate of the number of workers who will be needed to fill job openings created by employment growth within industries where the occupation is found, as well as those needed to fill openings created by workers who will leave the labor force (for reasons including retirement) and by those who will transfer to other occupations. Including all three of these demand indicators, South Dakota is projected to need an average of 62,664 workers a year across all occupations by 2028.

Hot Careers

DLR encourages the use of occupational demand data and wage estimates to help education and training program planners make better-informed decisions about the feasibility of programs offered. This helps ensure an adequate return on investment – Not only with the greater likelihood of a trainee or graduate finding employment in an occupation related to the program but also of being able to increase his or her earning potential.

To this end, the Labor Market Information Center (LMIC) identifies high-demand high-wage occupations as “Hot Careers.” To be a hot career, an occupation must meet three criteria:

- Be projected to show employment growth;
- Have projected annual openings (a measure of demand for workers) greater than the average across all occupations (85) for 2018-2028;
- Have an average/mean wage greater than the median wage across all occupations in 2020 (\$34,754).

The list of Hot Careers and several resources for each one, including a link to current job openings, are available on the LMIC website (dlr.sd.gov/lmic/menu_hot_careers.aspx).

For more economic and workforce information on South Dakota, view the 2020 South Dakota Workforce Report at dlr.sd.gov/lmic/publications/labor_market_reports/workforce_report_2020.pdf.

The remaining sections review program activity by program year, July 1, 2019, through June 30, 2020, unless noted otherwise.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

The South Dakota Workforce Development Council (WDC) convenes quarterly with focused meeting agendas comprised of participant testimonials, industry tours, and required items for board approval. The Council met virtually during the first, second, and third quarters of Program Year 2020 (PY20), with the fourth and final in-person meeting. Topics for the year included ETPL policy [iii](#) review, Title II Adult Education and Literacy funding, One-Stop Career Center re-certifications, career exploration activities, and South Dakota Labor Market Information.

After a shorter virtual agenda with smaller attendance in the first quarter, a virtual WDC meeting was held in the second quarter with nearly 50 in attendance in December 2020. Along with regular business items, the Council was introduced to the DLR strategic virtual service delivery plan and then heard from a live panel of three SD UpSkill participants who shared about their virtual experience, program benefits, and plans for the future (see [NDWG](#) section).

The Council met in person in June 2021 for the first time since December 2019. After a business meeting in the morning that included a virtual option, a series of small group discussions were led by DLR job service office [ii](#) Managers and Labor Program Specialists. Topics of discussion surrounded strategies in three focus areas of PY21 Action Plans: Partner Development, Business Engagement, and Veterans Outreach for Program Year 2021 (see [Strategic Service Delivery](#) section). This meeting was the first of its kind as DLR continues to meet the expectations of engaging in in-person meetings. Managers benefited from discussions with colleagues and state business leaders, but multiple WDC members expressed excitement about the day and a desire to take part in more meetings of this format:

"I have learned more this afternoon about what DLR does than 4 years as a Council Member." - Chris Houwman, Malloy Electric

TITLE I YOUTH

DLR job service offices [ii](#) have doubled down on their commitment to reach youth wherever they are by introducing the concepts of virtual enrollment, intensive case management, and strategic service delivery. Out of the 258 Title I Youth participants served during PY20, 160 were new enrollments during this period. Of these 160, 53 were In-School Youth and 107 Out-of-School Youth (see [Figure B](#)). Participation in the Title I Youth program can be attributed to:

- Approval of two federal waivers (see [Federal Waivers](#) section);
- Closer relationships with the South Dakota Department of Education (DOE), including the Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG) program and Career Launch partnership (see [Youth Engagement](#) section);
- Partnership with South Dakota Department of Social Services (DSS) Foster Care;
- Collaboration with the Board of Technical Education to provide short-term credential programs through the SD UpSkill program (see [NDWG](#) section);
- Emphasis on coordination with WIOA partners, including WIOA Title II Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) providers;
- Increased outreach and case management training for job service offices; and
- Encouragement and resources from DLR leadership to get out in the community.

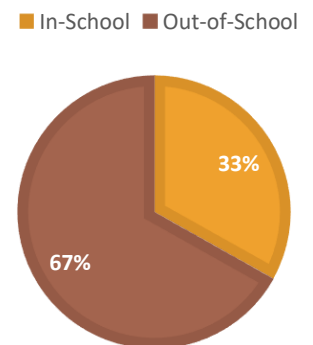


Figure B: Title I Youth Enrollments

During the last quarter of PY20, Title I Youth and Title II AEL Program Specialists began working on the development of a service model called **Participants Reaching Employment Potential (PREP)**. This coordinated effort reinforces collaboration between Adult Education providers and job service offices [ii](#) with wraparound services, including incentives, Support Services, and work-based learning opportunities for those seeking their High School Equivalency. PREP further promotes the benefits and available services for education, training, and career readiness beyond the GED® credential.

Cage's Success Story

Cage was a 20-year-old Title I Youth participant who had lost his job as a short-order cook and dishwasher at a casino during the COVID-19 pandemic. Cage learned about the short-term credentials offered through the SD UpSkill program and completed enrollment. Cage was eligible for the Title I Dislocated Worker, Adult, and Youth programs.

Cage attended school online to earn a certificate from Southeast Technical College and became a Certified Professional Medical Coder. While taking his classes, Cage participated in a Disaster Relief Work Experience through the National Dislocated Worker Grant. His duties included remote contact tracing with the South Dakota Department of Health. As graduation neared, Cage entered into a Title I funded remote Work Experience with a medical coding company, SIDECAR, Inc. Cage was able to complete 25 hours of coding each week until his graduation, providing an income as well as a meaningful employment experience.

Cage impressed the production manager and the Work Experience was transferred into an On-The-Job Training (OJT) opportunity with SIDECAR. Cage has been working remotely, full-time at SIDECAR since.

Words from Cage:

"You are the person that helped me completely turn my life around and showed me an opportunity for growth when I thought there was none. That one time when I was thinking about quitting the medical coding classes and you met up with me to talk about it was awesome and I'm glad you talked me out of it man. I've been able to outgrow my former self in ways I didn't know possible."

TITLE I ADULT AND DISLOCATED WORKER

The Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker programs ensure each person has a comprehensive plan to identify their goals with outlined steps necessary to achieve them. Strengths and barriers are assessed comprehensively to help build an employment plan for case management, training and education, Support Services, and Integrated Resource Team^{iv} service delivery through robust partnerships with other state agencies and community organizations.

DLR enrolls all individuals 18 years old and older interested in receiving individualized career services into the **Title I Adult program** and the Title III Wagner-Peyser program. Due to budget concerns prior to COVID-19, South Dakota narrowed the eligibility criteria for Title I Adults. As of July 1, 2020, Title I Adult funds are reserved for those who are low-income, on public assistance, are basic skills deficient, have a disability, are an ex-offender, or are a high school dropout. During PY2020, 64.12% of participants in the Title I Adult program met Priority of Service. While the goal of 75% was just out of reach, DLR made significant strides towards the goal as the year progressed with increased partnerships, data entry training for staff, and reporting process adjustments in SDWORKS.^v

All **Title I Dislocated Workers** are co-enrolled into the Title III Wagner-Peyser and the Title I Adult programs. DLR served 672 dislocated workers in PY20. This demographic often comes to DLR with varying work and educational backgrounds. To match the current needs of the labor market, DLR partners with training providers to offer Registered Apprenticeships and Occupational Skills Training through the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). These opportunities allow individuals to re-train and gain sustainable employment.

TITLE II ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY

As the responsible, pass-through state agency for the WIOA Title II program, DLR has long been committed to serving adults who are most in need of literacy services. These individuals may perform at lower educational levels (below the 9.0grade level equivalency) and generally demonstrate a need for reading, writing, and math skills to obtain or retain employment. Demographics of those served include:

- Adults who are low-income or have minimal literacy skills
- Learners with disabilities
- Single parents
- Displaced or dislocated workers

- Those with limited English proficiency
- Unemployed and underemployed persons
- Young adults
- Offenders in correctional institutions
- Ex-offenders

Improving the literacy, numeracy, and oracy skills of our workforce leads directly to a stronger economy. The instruction, activities, and services provided by the Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) programs promote family literacy, obtainment of a high school diploma equivalency, employment, and self-sufficiency. Language instruction methodologies, such as workplace literacy, and action-research projects were again priorities for the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program. These efforts support our non-native speakers, immigrants, and former refugees in achieving linguistic, economic, and civic integration.

In PY20, WIOA Title I supported again AEL’s **Distance Education Special Project** as an allowable employment and training activity under WIOA Section 134(a)(3)(A)(viii)(II)(dd). In its fifth year, the Distance Education Program was well poised to serve as a proper medium for online learning, as differentiated from various efforts of Emergency Remote Teaching in response to the crisis of the COVID-19 pandemic. While such Emergency Remote Teaching is meant to be temporary, the AEL Program now seeks to find some balance in a post-vaccination environment as it relates to capacity and offering high-quality remote, in-person, and hybrid instructional services. Ongoing consideration must be given to physical-space constraints, students’ digital-literacy levels, as well as to hardware and broadband accessibility.

The restrictions of COVID-19 accelerated AEL instructors’ and administrators’ personal Digital Literacy competencies and forced Adult Education to reconsider who can truly participate and what content can be delivered remotely. Furthermore, the Distance Education Program was able to reach a certain segment of learners who previously did not participate with such persistence: single parents, stay-at-home parents and other caregivers, incumbent workers with demanding or unorthodox schedules, and individuals with health-related barriers. The shift to remote instruction also saw a return of prominence for Family Literacy as a program type. Adult Education was able to help families and single parents better navigate the exigencies of food insecurity, Unemployment Insurance’s Reemployment Assistance, and Google Classrooms (or other learning-management systems at local K – 12 systems).

TITLE III WAGNER-PEYSER

The primary function of the Wagner-Peyser Act is to provide universal access to labor exchange services from South Dakota’s businesses to job seekers. Labor exchange services are considered a type of career service under WIOA and are available to all individuals legally authorized to work in the U.S. with no further eligibility criteria.

PY20 focused on delivering services not only in-person but also providing the option to receive services virtually. This option has increased access to services for those living in rural areas of our state and provides our customers with a choice of service delivery.

Wagner-Peyser served 3,396 participants with career services in PY20. Those exiting Wagner-Peyser services had median earnings of \$5,073, meeting the target of \$4,900, \$173 above negotiated goal (See Figure D). The Employment 2nd Quarter after exit and Employment 4th Quarter after exit negotiated goals were not met (See Figure C). The goals for employment rate for 2nd Quarter after Exit and 4th Quarter after Exit were narrowly missed, by less than 7% and 5% respectively.

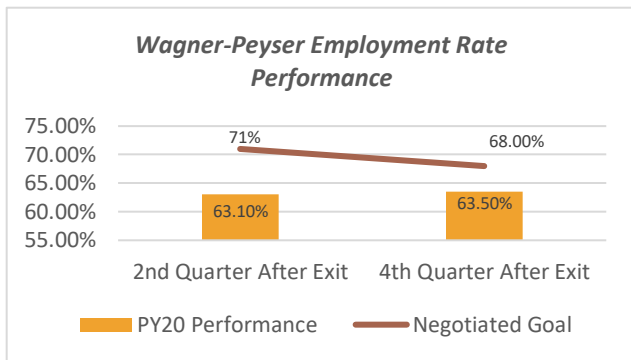


Figure C

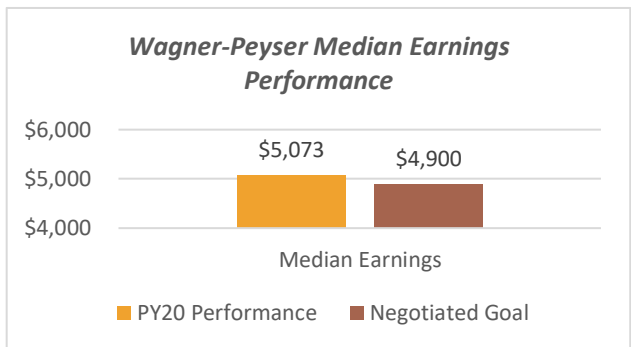
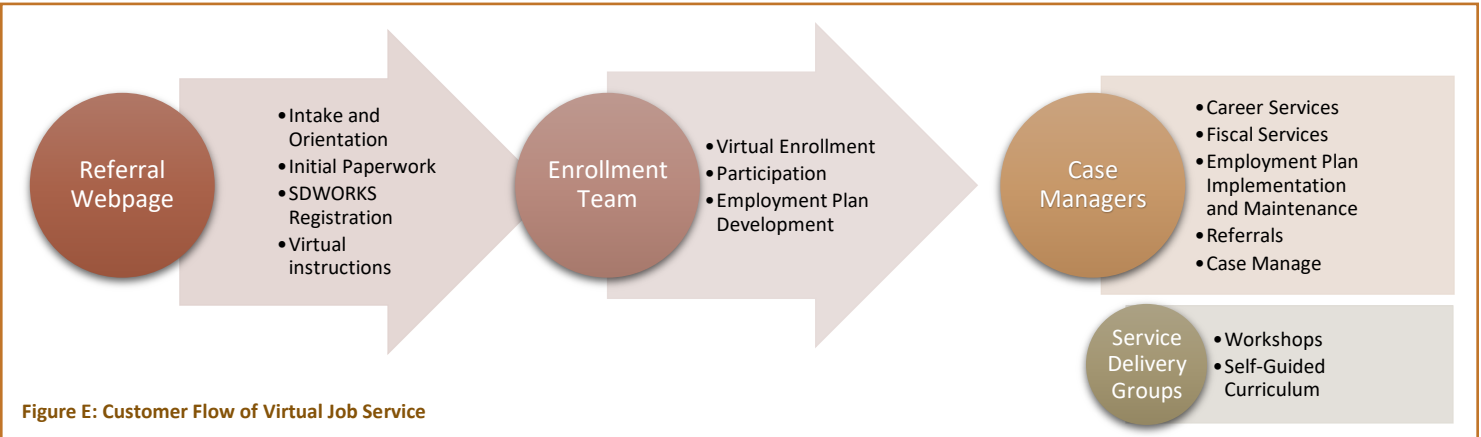


Figure D

VIRTUAL JOB SERVICE

DLR dynamically adjusted to the landscape of the COVID-19 pandemic. After a trial period of virtual service delivery with the SD UpSkill program (see [NDWG](#) section), DLR opened the Virtual Job Service in November 2020. Before opening, the DLR Workforce Development team visited each office in September and October 2020 for an in-person presentation to communicate the importance of the shift and the benefits to customers and staff. At inception, the Virtual Job Service included an Enrollment Team and a Virtual Job Search Workshop service delivery group with ideas for expansion.



Enrollment Team

Using teamwork, creativity, and available technology, in only a few months DLR created a digital space for customers to submit paperwork online, complete the orientation and enrollment into workforce programs, and virtually receive case management. South Dakota citizens with a desire to receive DLR services can visit the landing page on the DLR website at dlr.sd.gov/localoffices/virtual.aspx and complete four steps, anywhere and anytime it is convenient. The individual will then receive a call from a DLR specialist to schedule an appointment, virtually or in person as desired by the customer. During the virtual meeting an enrollment is completed, an initial Employment Plan developed, and the customer is connected to their case manager (see *Figure E*).

The Enrollment Team roster, comprised of up to 12 staff from across the state, rotates every few months depending on the number of referrals. The team handles enrollments into Title III and Title I, as well as all workforce programs offered by DLR, and is led by two statewide Lead Employment Specialists. The duration of time spent on the team varies based on the need of the staff member. Each Enrollment Team member receives training, repetition of the enrollment process, support, and timely feedback on enrollment files.

Virtual Workshops

DLR has a long-standing in-person Job Search Workshop offering, usually delivered in person in one 6-hour or two 3-hour sessions by a staff member in each of the 12 DLR job service offices ⁱⁱ. The Virtual Job Service now allows anyone enrolled in Title III Wagner-Peyser to register for any of the three modules, held virtually every week. Job Search Workshop is offered by four instructors located in different offices throughout the state. Instead of multiple DLR staff offering the same workshop across the state, a smaller team can offer the same curriculum more often. The instructors change twice per calendar year offering staff an opportunity to focus and improve their virtual delivery styles during their time on the workshop team. Modules are broken into sessions that allow customers to choose workshops by topic:

- Resume, Cover Letter, and Application
- Assessments and Job Search
- Interview and Job Retention

Virtual learning opportunities for our customers were expanded in July 2020 through Family First Initiative courses, including soft skills, financial literacy, and digital safety (see [Family First Initiative + Bring Your 'A' Game](#) section). Regardless of their physical location, individuals and participants can develop these skills to prepare for sustained, gainful employment.

DLR seeks to expand service delivery group offerings beyond workshops in the coming program year.

BUSINESS SERVICES AND ENGAGEMENT

Training DLR job service office [i](#) staff on business services continues to be a priority. A statewide **Business Services** training session was offered virtually by the DLR Workforce Development Division in March of 2021. This training reviewed the various definitions for business services per federal reporting, the importance of identifying business services in SDWORKS [v](#), and the use of case notes to support these services.

Based on employer feedback from customer satisfaction surveys, **business engagement** was identified as a statewide need. A team of employment specialists from job service offices [ii](#) was created to form the Business Engagement and Services Team (BEST). Onboarding and orientation for this team occurred virtually in June of 2021. BEST provides job service office staff with a platform to share resources, understand programs, build relationships, and assist in creating a unified message for DLR. As we move into PY21, the BEST members will gain a greater understanding of the business approach to workforce programs and learn to put the needs of the business at the center of conversations. BEST will develop and utilize the process of a customer-centered approach and create outreach and relationship-building resources to launch to all job service office staff statewide.

RAPID RESPONSE

South Dakota's Rapid Response team consists of job service office [ii](#) staff across the state. This team provides services to workers, employers, and communities facing business closures and layoffs. Notification of possible layoffs or business closures are received through RA benefits [i](#) claims, direct contact from impacted employers and workers, media announcements, and notifications from the Worker Adjustment and Notifications Act (WARN). Rapid Response events provide an opportunity to share information regarding DLR services and referral opportunities. These events also allow for immediate answers to questions about the services, benefits, and resources.

Rapid Response activities are monitored at the state level and delivered at the local level by the Rapid Response team. Members of the team represent the Title I Dislocated Worker program, Title III Wagner-Peyser, and the RA Division [i](#). Depending on the characteristics of the layoff or closure, DLR staff representing Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) may also be present.

As part of the Rapid Response process, DLR supplies informational handouts from all four of the technical colleges to encourage awareness and consumer choice related to re-training. Health insurance is always a concern when there is a layoff, so DLR has included a Retirement and Health Care Coverage booklet produced by U.S. DOL during each Rapid Response event.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, technology automations were implemented for DLR staff to submit Rapid Response information to the state coordinator to improve reporting and awareness of layoff events.

NATIONAL DISLOCATED WORKER GRANTS + SD UPSKILL

DLR applied for funding through the National Dislocated Worker Grant (NDWG). With these funds, SD Upskill was developed in partnership with the Board of Technical Education (BoTE) as a response to the continued need for workforce training during the COVID-19 pandemic. NDWG funding combined with Governor Emergency Education Relief funding brought opportunities to South Dakotans eligible for RA benefits [i](#) who were dislocated from their job.

BoTE approved 24 programs, approximately 18 credits each, for the fall 2020 semester based on high demand predictions according to data provided by the DLR Labor Market Information Center. All programs were embedded within existing academic programs, allowing a pathway for students to continue their studies to receive an Associate of Applied Science degree. Programs were offered in the areas of agriculture, finance, health sciences, information technology, manufacturing, and marketing.

Classes started only three weeks from the date the program was announced, but 106 dislocated workers took part in the UpSkill Certificate program, and 64 of those graduated in May of 2021. All students were enrolled in WIOA virtually using a triage method that would later serve as a pilot for the now fully functional Virtual Enrollment Team. DLR case managers followed student progress, assisted with support services when necessary, and coordinated referrals for virtual tutoring and mentoring. Figure G shows the positive effects on Occupational Skills Training (OST) enrollments in South Dakota from the implementation of the SD UpSkill program, as enrollment numbers were steadily declining.



Figure F: SD UpSkill Logo and Branding

At the end of the school year, four DLR staff attended the Lake Area Technical College graduation ceremony where DLR Cabinet Secretary Marcia Hultman gave the commencement address emphasizing the tenacity of the South Dakota workforce.

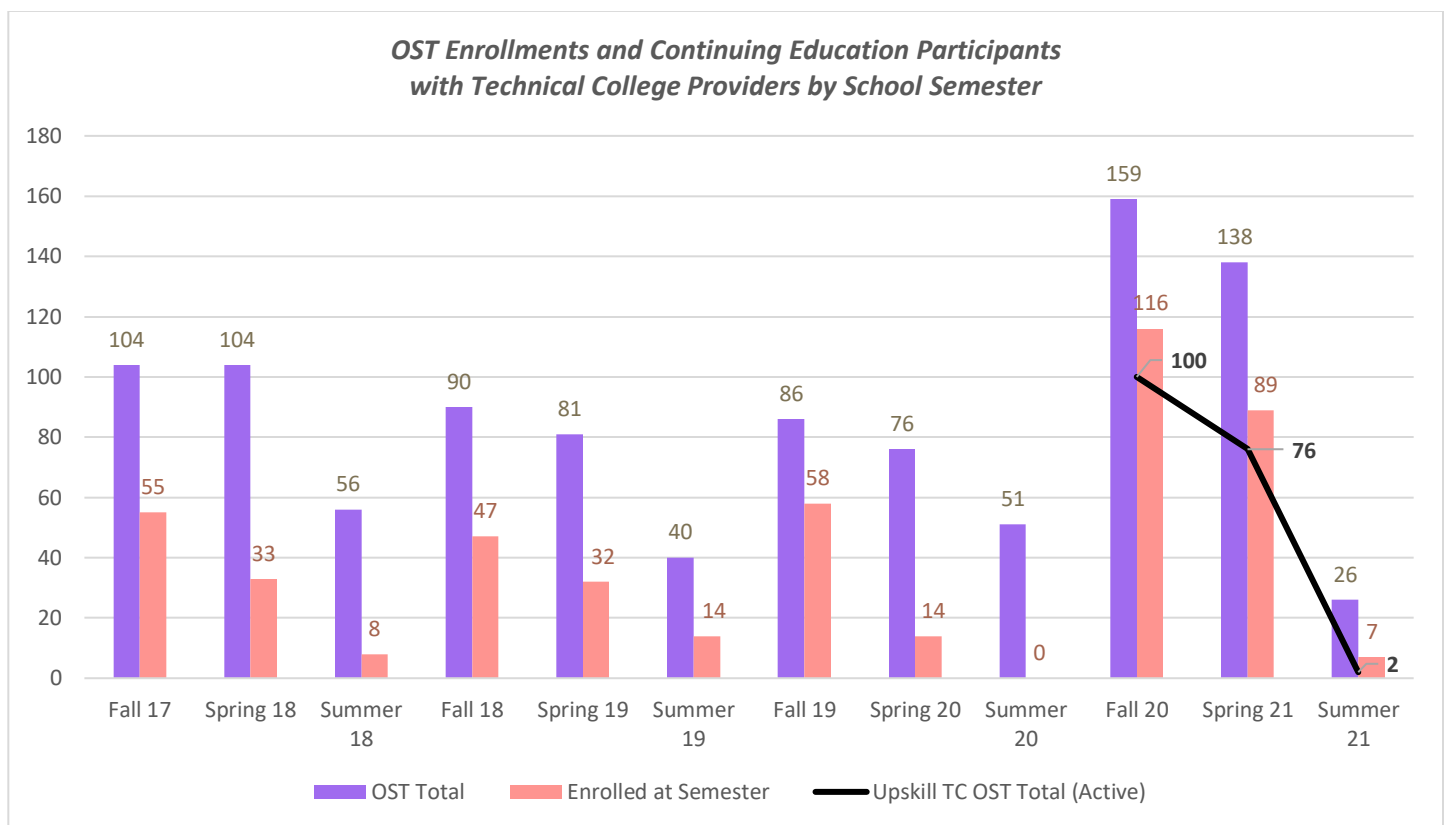


Figure G

Two NDWG modifications were submitted in the spring of 2021. The first was to accurately reflect the staff costs associated with UpSkill program administration. The second modification was submitted to request an additional \$798,246 to continue and expand UpSkill in the 2021-2022 school year and increase engagement with tribal colleges in the state. The full amount was awarded. DLR anticipates seeking a no-cost extension for this grant.

TRADE ADJUSTMENT ASSISTANCE

Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) is a federal program that assists U.S. workers who have lost their jobs as a result of foreign trade. Through partnerships with states, U.S. DOL investigates business layoffs and closures to determine eligibility for TAA. If approved, the TAA program offers benefits and services to impacted workers that will help them receive training and obtain new employment.

In PY20, DLR has taken measures to increase business' awareness of the TAA program. A TAA brochure was developed to help businesses better understand how trade could potentially impact their organization and how to react. In partnership with DLR job service office staff ⁱⁱ, state TAA leadership meet with economic development organizations throughout the state to increase awareness of this program in the event the need arises.

TAA Eligibility	PY2017	PY2018	PY2019	PY2020
Petitions Filed	2	2	6	10
Petitions Approved	3	0	3	6
No. of Certified Workers	321	0	591	564
TAA Participation				
Current TAA Participants	98	77	120	90
New TAA Participants	26	6	91	34
Training Recipients	55	2	36	50
TAA Outcomes				
Employed Participants who changed Industry	80.70%	82.50%	82.50%	82.50%
Credential Attainment	No data	50%	71.40%	79.00%
Employment Rate Q2	56.60%	82.40%	87.50%	87.90%
Employment Rate Q4	58.30%	73.70%	89.30%	92.70%
Measurable Skill Gain	No data	40.50%	25.00%	88.00%

Table 1: TAA data by program year

Changes to DLR policy ⁱⁱⁱ and procedure from the TAA Final Rule will be implemented, and in-person and virtual training sessions will take place early in PY21. These training sessions are recorded for easy access and ongoing review.

Carol's Success Story

Carol was laid off from her job of almost eight years. The company where she worked was certified for TAA. Carol's longevity at her position made it difficult to find suitable or similar employment with the wages she was accustomed to. Through assessments, she was determined to have the interest and aptitude to become a Medical Laboratory Technician. Labor market information confirmed this would be a good field to pursue.

Carol enrolled in a technical college that was reasonable in cost and proximity to her residence. She was able to test out of algebra which reduced the number of credits she would need to complete her program. Carol was co-enrolled in Title III Wagner-Peyser, Title I Dislocated Worker and Adult, and TAA. She received Support Services for required uniforms and transportation assistance to travel to and from training.

While enrolled, Carol was able to take advantage of the array of services under the TAA program, including paid tuition, fees, and books. TAA also assisted with her background check, drug test, and immunization fees required for her to enter the program. Carol also was determined eligible to receive Trade Readjustment Allowance (TRA) while attending training to help maintain the family's fiscal balance while in training.

Carol completed her training and successfully obtained her Associate of Science for a Medical Laboratory Technician. Carol's success has been attributed to her desire to move into a high-demand profession, her abilities as a student, and the blending and braiding of resources of both the TAA and Title I programs.

REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM

Through a Registered Apprenticeship grant from U.S. DOL, DLR implemented an incentive to employers in South Dakota for each new apprentice hired. While minimal, this financial investment can assist with the vitality of existing Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAPs) by allowing businesses to use this funding on program-related costs.

Dan, Practice Manager with Dells Veterinary Services, discussed the benefits of the 2019 Incentive funding:

"I would like to thank [DLR] for first making me aware of training opportunities for new staff and then follow up with me, helping me with paperwork, and walking me through the process with Alexis – 2020 was a challenging year for everyone. The

program was awesome as it allowed me to take a chance with a young person who seemed very motivated but lacked the applicable experience to our position as a Veterinary Assistance – previously working convenience store retail. The program removed some of my risks as hiring and training a new (expensive) and fill a big need in the Veterinary Community for qualified, trained staff. As for Alexis – we have been blown away and would hire 10 more of her all day long. With the grant, we doubled down; we're able to work with a college and get her degree as a Certified Veterinary Assistant and are using the remaining part of the grant as scholarship money and have Alexis is currently enrolled in an online college where she will receive her Associate's Degree as a Certified Veterinary Technician!"

In South Dakota, SDWORKS^v collects all necessary data elements required by WIOA programs and now includes a **Registered Apprenticeship module** funded through the SAE Building State Capacity Grant. The module will improve the data collection, integrity, and reporting of RAPs. New Registered Apprentices are also enrolled in the Title I Adult and/or Youth programs, to offer the greatest opportunity for success through access to additional supports. DLR developed policyⁱⁱⁱ and an SDWORKS data entry guide to support job service officeⁱⁱ staff as they assist businesses and apprentices. Title I funding offers workshops for retention and employability, Support Services, and training services to apprentices, supporting the apprentice and decreasing RAP sponsor costs.

DLR awarded three organizations funding to launch the **Pathway Partnership** program to offset the cost of implementing a RAP. Through this model, students earn high school credit, post-secondary credit, and Registered Apprenticeship credit. Upon graduation from high school, a student in a Pathway Partnership program can decide to complete their RAP and/or continue their post-secondary education. Recipients of this funding included businesses, associations, and post-secondary institutions. The Pathway Partnership program engaged a total of 40 youth apprentices throughout the state.

Margaret, Director of Workforce Development, Associated General Contractors of South Dakota:

"Having the opportunity to receive funding to create a Youth Apprenticeship through the Pathway Partnership program has been a wonderful experience for the AGC. What was unexpected was the collaboration and support that I personally have received from DLR. It has almost been like getting additional team members to help drive the success of this program, and their willingness to assist and responsiveness to me has been welcome and refreshing. In all honesty, COVID-19 threw us a serious curveball to the launch of this program, but even with that, I feel it has been a success. First and foremost, it has pushed our association to embrace the concept of youth apprenticeships which was a hard sell for many of our members to embrace. We currently have 17 students either enrolled or preparing to enroll in the program. It has literally opened the door for high schools to immerse students into the construction industry, which I believe has previously been overlooked, underappreciated, and impossible to experience first-hand due to FLSA regulations. Thank you for giving us the chance to run with this and change our ability to connect with youth in a meaningful way!"

In South Dakota, apprentices are generally between the ages of 16 and 34. Figure H illustrates new apprentices by age. The Pathway Partnership initiative will continue to increase the number of younger generations entering apprenticeships.

In recognition of the **2020 National Apprenticeship Week**, DLR requested video submissions from Registered Apprenticeship sponsors and apprentices to share their apprenticeship stories. The response was well-received, and DLR developed a video library highlighting the benefits of a RAP from those who know best: sponsors and apprentices. These videos can be found at StartTodaySD.com.

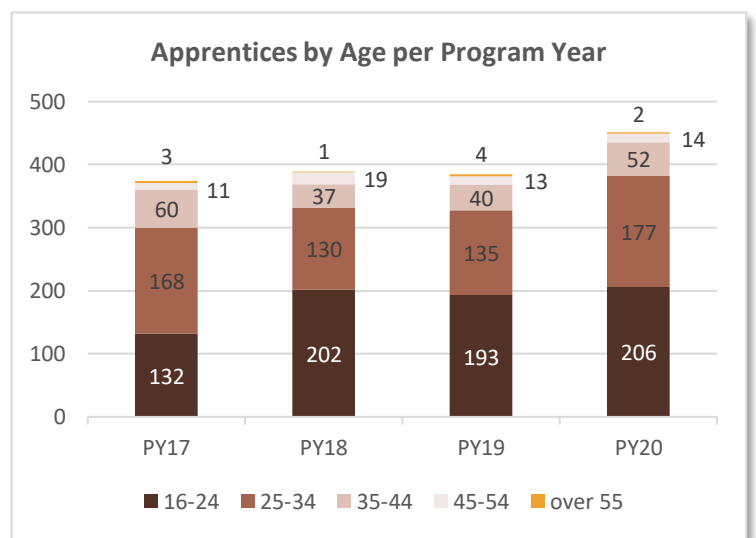


Figure H

And finally, recognizing the need to support businesses as they build relationships in their workforce, DLR utilized grant funding to develop a **Workplace Mentoring Toolkit**. The toolkit includes training for mentors to build their skills to coach and develop apprentices and new employees and is available on StartTodaySD.com.

GENERAL EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

In PY20, 439 South Dakotans earned a General Educational Development (GED®) credential. While the national pass rate during the program year was 77%, South Dakotans had a pass rate of 84% for completers. Table 2 reflects all testers even if they did not earn a credential.

	Math	RLA	Science	Social Studies
State pass rate	83%	89%	92%	88%
National pass rate	78%	86%	92%	86%
College ready*	10%	12%	15%	14%
College ready + credit**	4%	2%	3%	5%

* Scores reflect tester has demonstrated skills to start college-level classes and may be exempt from placement tests or remedial (non-credit) courses in college.

** Scores reflect tester has demonstrated skills being taught in college-level courses and could earn credit/bypass certain required classes.

Table 2: GED pass rates by test subject

The Online Proctored (OP) version of the GED® test continues to offer flexibility and greater opportunity for testing for those who qualify to take that version. In PY20, 83 testers took at least one test using the online system.

Outreach to those who need to earn a credential is vital: while 2,025 individuals created GED accounts, only 932 of them took at least one test. White males ages 20-24 who have completed their junior year of high school make up the largest group of those who have shown interest in earning a GED credential.

Math continues to be the subject area that keeps many testers from earning a credential. While South Dakota testers score well when they do complete the math test, of the 499 testers who passed three of the four tests in PY20, only 67 of them had passed math (see Table 3).

Time since last passed a test	Number of people with one test left
<1 year	123
1-2 years	168
3-4 years	120
5-7 years	88
Total	499

Table 3: Incomplete GED credentials with one test remaining

For a South Dakotan who does not have a high school diploma, possessing a GED credential remains a viable path to advancing education, expanding job opportunities, and increasing earning potential (see Figure 1).

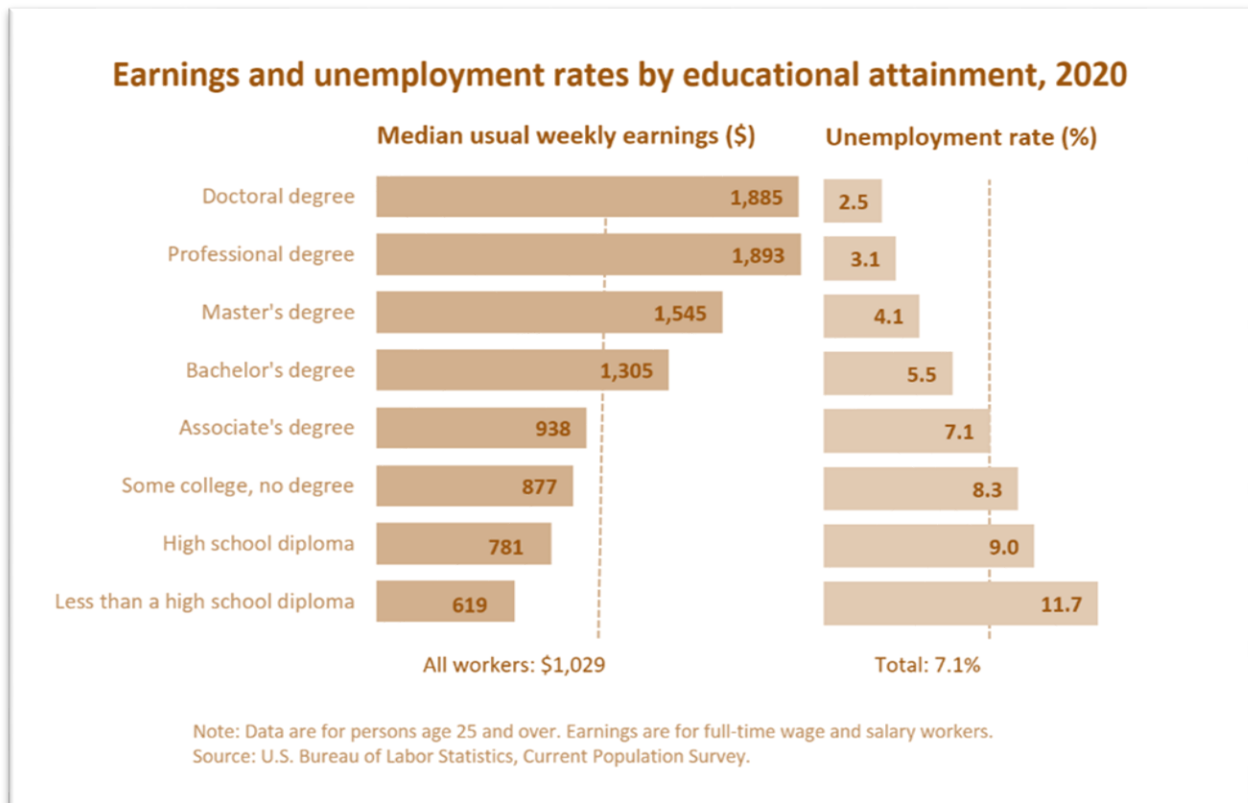


Figure 1

RE-EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

South Dakota's Re-employment Services (RES) program referral profiling re-started on January 4, 2021, after being halted in March of 2020 in response to COVID-19. After an initial influx of RES claims, referral numbers leveled in the second quarter of the calendar year. Throughout the profiling and referral process, job service office [i](#) teams and the [Virtual Job Service](#) work collaboratively to enroll RES referrals into Title III Wagner-Peyser, Title I Adult, and Title I Dislocated Worker programs. Participants have the option to receive RES and individualized services in-person or virtually. DLR teamwork and a customer-centered design improve accessibility, participation, and overall outcomes.

RES underwent two notable changes in PY20. First, the re-addition of the subsequent review and follow-up service, which aligned DLR with stated objectives in the annual RES State Plan. Next, automation of the Eligibility Review and Follow-up Form was implemented to full production in June 2021. This process automates communication of potential issues identified during eligibility or follow-up review between the DLR case manager and the RA Division.¹

Also in June, statewide training was provided to staff to review RES procedures, the re-addition of the subsequent review and follow-up service, and the automation of the Eligibility Review and Follow-up Forms. The training was conducted by RES program specialists in conjunction with the RA Division¹, DLR's Data and Evaluation Manager, and DLR Technology Development Division.

Forest's Success Story

Forest was laid off when the department store he worked at closed due to a companywide bankruptcy. He attended a Rapid Response meeting provided by the DLR. His goal was to become a police officer and wanted to take advantage of WIOA services.

DLR assisted Forest with Re-Employment Services activities and WIOA eligibility. Forest was co-enrolled into Title I Adult, Youth, and Dislocated Worker programs, and Title III Wagner -Peyser. His Employment Plan was developed to meet his goals with specific objectives, including a meeting with the head of the Law Enforcement program at a technical college, completing FAFSA with assistance from his case manager, necessary steps to receive rent assistance, and completing assessments related to training.

Forest began an OST to study Law Enforcement in the fall of 2019, working close to full time in retail while attending school. WIOA Title I assisted him with tuition, books, and required uniforms for his program. Forest was very serious about his studies and his monthly monitors were excellent, stating "He is a pleasure to have in class. Forest is hard-working, dependable, reliable, getting good grades, and has 100% attendance."

Forest was able to continue his education online after COVID-19 restrictions halted in-person training. He completed ride-alongs with the local police department for experience in the field. He had exemplary fall and spring semesters and graduated with a 4.0 on May 14, 2021.

Forest started his job three days after graduation with the local police department. Forest had a goal in mind, and with support from DLR and WIOA, he was able to succeed at reaching his goal and now has a promising career ahead of him.

RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

In June of 2020, DLR entered into an agreement with the Government Research Bureau (GRB) at the University of South Dakota to evaluate South Dakota's Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) program. Together, both entities worked to create an evaluation plan designed to evaluate the effectiveness of utilizing WIOA Title I services with RESEA individuals. DLR provided GRB with Participant Individual Record Layout (PIRL), RA ¹ claims data, and RA wage information for the calendar year 2017, 2018, and 2019. Personal Identifiable Information (PII) and Unemployment

Compensation (UC) confidential information, such as Social Security numbers, names, dates of birth, and employer names were removed, and a unique identifier was established for each individual.

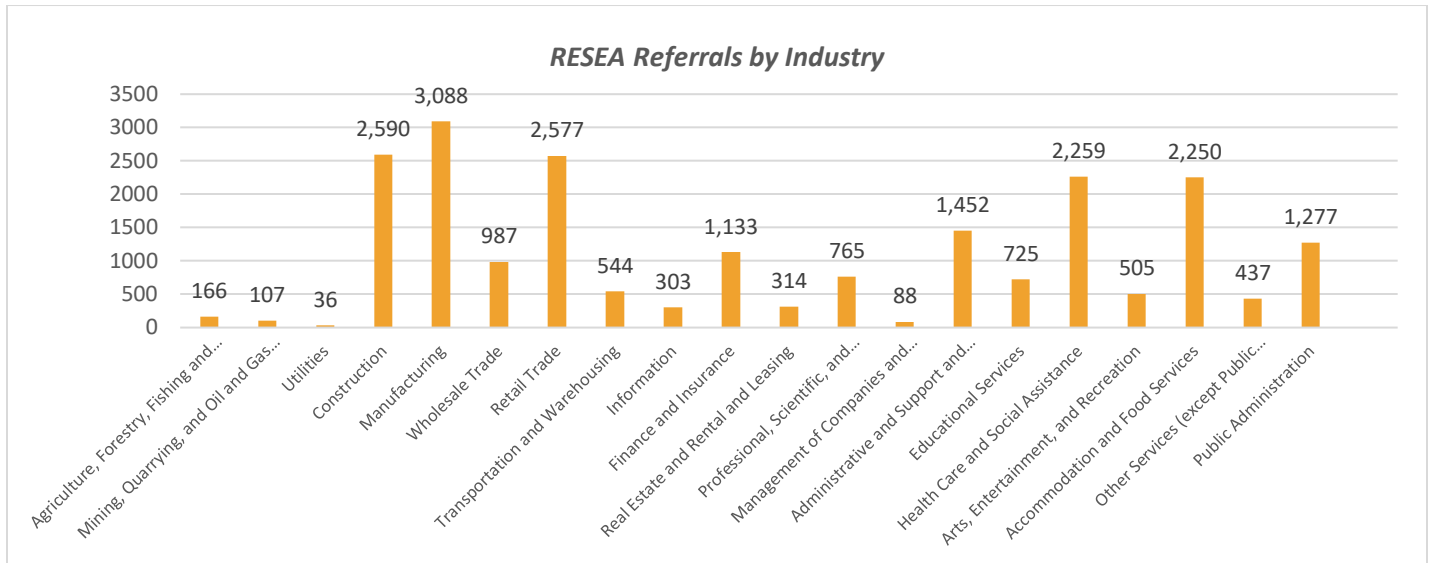


Figure J

GRB established dependent and independent variables and control variables and determined mean benefit duration and the median wage for each WIOA program year to develop statistical models. Additionally, GRB has been able to determine a robust descriptive statistic of individuals who were referred to RESEA. Figure J shows the total RA claimant referrals by industry for PY18, PY19, and P20.

While great strides have been made in establishing South Dakota RESEA evaluation, and GRB has been able to provide some initial results, efforts continue. Based on the current self-selection of RESEA services, GRB was unable to establish definitive results.

DLR and GRB are moving towards the next phase of the evaluation which could potentially lead to a random assignment process. DLR will ensure providing services through random assignment does not inhibit an individual's ability to receive services that can often be life changing. DLR and GRB continue to work together to determine the best way to move forward that is beneficial to both the individuals utilizing DLR services and the program evaluation.

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

In PY20, DLR discontinued using two forms, one for job seekers and another for employers, in Survey Monkey to capture data from customer survey responses. Using Microsoft Forms, DLR developed a single form for both audiences. The survey was adjusted to include service-related questions and is sent to both active and exited individuals instead of only exited. Additionally, survey responses automatically update to a dashboard to allow responses to be seen by staff moments after submission. These modifications were based on feedback from job service staff. Responses were collected and calculated for employers and job seekers. The response rate for PY20 was 4.42% (204 responses to 4,619 surveys sent) for job seekers and 6.75% (364 responses to 5,393 surveys sent) for employers.

Of the total job seeker responses, 213 disclosed they worked directly with an Employment Specialist. 92.9% of those Employment Specialists displayed a high level of professionalism and knowledge, with 92.0% of job seekers reporting all or most of their needs were met. 43.9% of responses indicated their contact with DLR was virtual.

Employers reported 98.3% of Employment Specialists had a high level of professionalism and knowledge, with 96.6% reporting all or most of their needs were met. Additionally, 56.4% of employers reported their contact with DLR was virtual. Using the Likert scale, both job seekers and employers reported an overall satisfaction score of 8 out of 10.

ADDITIONAL STATEWIDE ACTIVITIES

SDWORKS

SDWORKS completed a fourth full program year as DLR's Management Information System. It is still growing in response to the needs of South Dakota job seekers, employers, and DLR staff and programs. SDWORKS serves as the state's premier and most complete job listing board, employer posting site, and case management system. Enhancements continue to improve data entry, reporting integrity, and program data.

ELIGIBLE TRAINING PROVIDER LIST MODULE

DLR continued efforts to build on and improve the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) module that was implemented in PY19. This module allows training providers to submit and update the application and report performance online within SDWORKS. This module has resulted in more comprehensive data collection and reporting so DLR can adjust policy to allow for more inclusion of programs and training options for our customers.

REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP MODULE

DLR implemented the Registered Apprenticeship (RAP) module in SDWORKS in PY20 allowing DLR to meet increased reporting requirements. This module helps to connect job seekers looking to learn new skills with employers looking for qualified workers. This module will also assist staff in preparing and engaging individuals with case management.

STRATEGIC SERVICE DELIVERY

DLR strives to be the workforce services hub for South Dakota citizens and employers. To accomplish this, processes were implemented to put customers at the center of our service delivery design. In PY20, these included:

- Meeting customers where they are with the option of virtual or in-person meetings and services;
- Providing guidance and training for staff to increase comfortability in all programs they are eligible for to increase access to services and funding;
- Creating statewide positions to alleviate the burden of administrative processes and increase staff capacity; and
- Empowering job service offices ⁱⁱ with Action plan development and implementation.

STATEWIDE SUPPORT MODEL

A statewide model of support for DLR customers and staff continued to build in the second half of PY20. In conjunction with the ideas of the **Virtual Job Service** (see [Wagner-Peyser](#) section) to streamline processes and alleviate administrative burdens, DLR elevated two additional statewide Lead Employment Specialist positions to act as a hub of information between job service office ⁱⁱ staff and training providers.

Beginning in March 2021, the Statewide Lead Employment Specialists worked directly with Labor Program Specialists and the fiscal team to improve processes for customers and staff (see *Figure K*). This workflow meets our customers' needs and increases staff



Figure K: Lead Employment Specialist Single Point of Contact for OST

capacity to engage with business, build partnerships, and provide more active case management to their participants. Statewide single-point-of-contact support also allows DLR to collaborate more consistently with the South Dakota BoTE and the technical colleges.

In addition to meeting the social distancing needs of the COVID-19 pandemic, the participants and staff benefit from the virtual **Enrollment Team** (see [Wagner-Peyser](#) section) with a more streamlined process to gather the initial WIOA needs for enrollment with less of a requirement for travel and time, getting services to the customer sooner. Anecdotally, it can take two meetings and two hours or more over the course of a month to complete enrollment before DLR can offer services and supports. Virtual service delivery groups, like **Job Search Workshop** (see [Wagner-Peyser](#) section), provide needed services in a group format for a more engaging experience using less staff time. Previously, a single job service office ⁱ would hold an entire 6-hour class for only a handful of students or cancel the class due to low attendance.

Both the Enrollment Team and virtual workshop service delivery group model were piloted in the summer of 2020. Through a virtual group model and hands-on repetition, DLR customers benefit while DLR staff receive professional development through improved case management knowledge, digital literacy, further relationship building across the state, and overall engagement.

With the addition of the Virtual Job Service and Statewide Lead Employment Specialists, DLR is positioned to distribute the workload more evenly among all offices in the event of a large lay-off or other increased need for services in one geographical area. Additionally, the statewide leads offer supplemental guidance and training, increasing the capacity of Workforce Development Labor Program Specialists to build their programs.

2021 ACTION PLANS

An increase in staff capacity through statewide support and service delivery left a need for a strategy for action to continue to engage offices and build a reputation as the hub for workforce services in South Dakota. With this intention and in preparation for walk-in traffic to begin in DLR job service offices ⁱⁱ, a *20/21 Vision* presentation was offered to all staff on March 31, 2021. DLR Workforce Development provided a template for a PY21 Action Plan and challenged job service office teams to be purposeful in:

- Learning about the needs of businesses and partnering with them to resolve their workforce needs;
- Intertwining DLR services within partners' processes to reduce duplication and offer a cohesive and comprehensive service delivery;
- Adjusting DLR's service delivery to meet the needs of partners and customers; and
- Identifying and engaging veterans in need of workforce services.

For the remainder of PY20, each job service office team developed their action plan for building partnerships, engaging businesses, and reaching veterans. Plans were implemented on July 1, 2021.

JOBS FOR VETERANS STATE GRANT

The Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG) provides intensive employment services to eligible JVSG veterans and eligible non-veterans in preparing, seeking, obtaining, and retaining employment. These services are provided by a Disabled Veterans' Employment Program (DVOP) specialist. DVOP staff also conduct outreach to seek out eligible veterans and persons for their services. JVSG also has Local Veterans' Employment Representatives (LVER) who reach out to employers to promote the hiring of veterans and assist employers with veteran hiring initiatives and employer toolkits, apprenticeship training, networking, Medallion Award applications, job onboarding information valuable to employers, job retention assistance and information, etc.

In PY20, The Rapid City LVER assisted two South Dakota employers in applying for the prestigious Veterans Medallion Award, given by U.S. DOL to employers who hire veterans. The award was granted to both applicants: Black Hills Service Company, LLC, and Black Hills Asset Protection Group.

JVSG staff assisted the RA Division ⁱ from March through November 2020. Once JVSG duties resumed, virtual and in-person appointments were used to seek out and re-connect with eligible veterans. Although program performance was low, DLR began the process of refocusing the JVSG program to provide a bigger imprint of services for eligible veterans and non-veterans.

During PY20, DLR and Veterans' Employment and Training Service opened discussions about how to best provide JVSG services to the entire state, including rural areas. As a result of discussions, the process began to add new full-time JVSG staff to both Sioux Falls and Aberdeen. Sioux Falls Job Service would hire an LVER and Aberdeen Job Service would hire the very first DLR full-time DVOP/LVER hybrid position, referred to as a Consolidated Position. The **Consolidated Position** was approved at the end of the program year. With the addition of these positions, DLR has identified regional territories to ensure DVOP and LVER coverage throughout the state. This adjustment will provide valuable assistance to DLR job service offices without JVSG staff and improve outreach to both veterans and employers.

TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE FOR NEEDY FAMILIES

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) is a needs-based public assistance work program for families with children under age 18. This federal program is designed to provide temporary cash assistance and promote economic self-sufficiency for families by providing intensive case management, valuable training opportunities, job search assistance, and a variety of meaningful services to assist customers in increasing skills and employment opportunities. The South Dakota Department of Social Services (DSS) determines eligibility for benefits while DLR provides services to assist customers preparing for the workforce.

Through the COVID-19 pandemic, DSS and DLR were able to continue to provide services to families while maintaining health safety protocols by utilizing a virtual service delivery to engage with customers and assist in connecting them with services and resources for their families. It became evident this service delivery model is essential to increase access to services for TANF customers in a rural state our size. Even with the challenges, the Work Participation Rate exceeded the federal requirement of 50%.

A cross-agency workgroup was developed in PY20 to identify program areas in need of attention. Topics included streamlined assessments and forms, co-enrollment in Title III and Title I, increased access for TANF recipients to services available through DLR's workforce programs, and updated policy and procedures. A priority of PY21 will be staff training to enroll TANF participants into WIOA programs. In addition to increasing access to quality services for TANF customers, this co-enrollment model will assist the state in reaching the priority of service threshold for the WIOA Title I Adult program.

SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is a food assistance program administered by DSS. The work program associated, SNAP Employment & Training (E&T), can assist participants in gaining skills, training, or work experience to increase their ability to obtain gainful employment and accomplish self-sufficiency.

After navigating the obstacles of providing services to individuals while social distance was a priority, DSS and DLR began working to re-create SNAP E&T in South Dakota. Through this revitalization of SNAP E&T, DLR will focus on utilizing co-enrollment into Title III and Title I to provide participants with a variety of services and supports to be successful. Emphasis will be placed on OSTs and other short-term training opportunities for skills development which result in enhanced employment options and earning potential. For example, a partnership with Regional Technical Education Center (RTEC) will provide training needed in high-demand occupations in the Yankton community, including welding, Computer Numeric Controlled (CNC) machining, and commercial driver's license courses. DLR will also utilize already established training programs to assist participants.

In addition to building community partnerships and maintaining the partnership with DSS, internal guidance and policies ⁱⁱⁱ for DLR Employment Specialists are being developed. This guidance is new and fully incorporated with Title I efforts. It

has been developed with new Food Nutrition Service guidance and regulations. Staff training is being offered and a Labor Program Specialist has been dedicated to this program to offer ongoing support and continue development.

SENIOR COMMUNITY SERVICE EMPLOYMENT

The Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) is a federal program authorized by the Older Americans Act and administered through DLR. The program offers services to older adults, providing community service and work-based training opportunities to low-income, unemployed adults over the age of 55 years old. The program is designed to help place participants in meaningful unsubsidized employment. SCSEP participants can build relevant skills related to their career goals through a Work Experience at a nonprofit or government organization in their county of residency. All SCSEP participants continue to be enrolled into Title I and Title III to increase their access to a wider variety of career services, such as resume assistance, workshops, and opportunities for Support Services. All SCSEP participants can receive Title I and Title III services either in-person or virtually.

SCSEP operates in three different regions of South Dakota (West River, Central, and East River) and six Employment Specialists help oversee these regions. In PY20, a total of 58 older workers participated in SCSEP (35 transferred over from PY19, and 23 participants were enrolled in PY20). Overall, participants contributed 34,387 cumulative community service hours in a host agency. Related participant training, such as instructor-led and computer-led, courses totaled 448 hours.

This program is committed to helping minority groups and people with significant barriers to employment. Out of the 58 total participants, 28% were Native American, 28% have reported a disability, 31% were veterans (or eligible spouse of a veteran), 21% were either homeless or at risk of homelessness and, 22% were individuals formerly incarcerated.

DLR is continuing to see success in enrolling SCSEP participants into Title I programs. Nine SCSEP participants found unsubsidized employment in PY20 during the Covid-19 pandemic.

NATIONAL CAREER READINESS CERTIFICATE

DLR offers both employers and job seekers the ACT National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC®). As of June 2020, over 41,000 South Dakotans have earned an NCRC, and many businesses in South Dakota recognize the NCRC in their hiring process. Available to all current and potential job seekers in the state, the NCRC can be a key employment tool for all WIOA program participants, high school students, and incarcerated individuals. Whether in the application, the interview, or the probationary training phase, the NCRC provides concrete information for all parties (participants, case managers, employers) in making appropriate workforce decisions.

Through WIOA Title I statewide funding, any job seeker registered in SDWORKS can prepare for and complete the three WorkKeys Assessments required for certification: Applied Math, Graphic Literacy, and Workplace Documents. South Dakota's NCRC scores consistently rank above the national average. DLR also offers ACT WorkKeys® Curriculum, a skill development curriculum, at no cost to all program participants and job seekers interested in earning an NCRC. The use of this curriculum provides a framework to capitalize on skill strengths and to define potential skill training needs during the employment process.

The NCRC program has grown significantly since its 2009 inception. In addition to serving job seekers across the state through the DLR job service offices, developing partnerships has been a key component in expanding the program.

- Over 5,100 high school students earned an NCRC using a streamlined application process that saves staff time. Earning a certificate helps students demonstrate current workplace skills. Additionally, the certificate is utilized for the advanced career endorsement graduation requirement and the Build Dakota scholarship.
- Completing the WorkKeys assessments is a requirement for graduating from the Women's Opportunity and Resource Development (WORD) program at the Women's Prison in Pierre, South Dakota. From December 2020 through June 2021, 72 women took the WorkKeys assessments, with 60 of them (83%) earning a certificate.

- Lake Area Technical College continues to use the WorkKeys assessments as one measure of progress for their students.
- Emphasis on business education and outreach. Currently, approximately 1,250 employers in South Dakota recognize the NCRC in their hiring practices.

FAMILY FIRST INITIATIVE + BRING YOUR 'A' GAME

In 2019, the South Dakota State Legislature appropriated general funds for the Family-First Initiative to help individuals gain meaningful and sustainable employment, retain employment, and further develop a work and life balance. DLR partners with six providers to deliver virtual and in-person family-oriented courses to individuals with diverse economic and educational backgrounds. Individuals build positive relationships and receive guidance in a neutral learning environment. In PY20, providers offered 87 courses to 550 individuals who reside or are employed in South Dakota. These courses are a resource for our job service offices [to](#) connect participants with these services.

During PY20, DLR offered *Bring Your 'A' Game Anywhere*, a self-guided virtual e-learning course, to job seekers, employers, employees, technical colleges, and school districts across South Dakota. The e-learning course is available anytime, anywhere, and on any device to elevate work ethic and soft skills. From October 2020 to May 2021, 278 individuals completed the e-learning modules.

During the 2020-2021 school year, certified DLR job service staff offered the *Bring Your 'A' Game to Work* curriculum in person to 580 students in 35 school districts.

YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

In partnership with the South Dakota Department of Education (DOE), DLR enhances Title I Youth services through youth engagement by connecting DLR staff and employers directly to the K-12 school system.

CAREER LAUNCH SD

Career Launch SD was developed in 2018 through a partnership with the WIOA Title I Youth funding and funding through South Dakota DOE. Through this partnership, DLR has hired Career Advisors who work alongside educators and businesses to increase career exploration and work-based learning opportunities for youth in the K-12 school system. The engagement of DLR staff in the schools offers a funnel of youth into the Title I In-School Youth program.

Due to limited access to schools and the need for Career Advisors to assist the RA Division [i](#), both agencies paused the Career Advisor efforts through January 2021. Despite these obstacles presented by COVID-19, Career Advisors provided an impressive array of services to schools. Highlights of PY20 include:

- Coordinated four large industry presentations for youth
- Assisted with hosting three Career Fairs
- Offered over 25 presentations to students
- Served over 1,630 youth
- Assisted schools with implementing and celebrating the Week of Work

In the summer of 2021, four DOE staff and 16 DLR staff worked with the National Career Development Association to complete a course allowing them to become Certified School Career Development Advisors.

On an ongoing basis, WIOA supports the Labor Market Information Center (LMIC) to extend their reach with the career exploration and decision-making resources they develop. During 2020, through their Career Launch partnership with the South Dakota DOE, LMIC secured funding to have their K-12 career exploration materials printed for school use. Not only did the funds allow for printing of the materials, a first for many years, but several of the resources were also translated into two additional languages, Spanish and Karen.

WEEK OF WORK

A low unemployment rate and the high workforce participation rate have increased South Dakota employers' interest in working with young adults in their communities. South Dakota middle and high school students were given the opportunity for career exploration during the state's first Week of Work, April 19-23, 2021. Students participated virtually in live panel discussions with South Dakota business and industry professionals, with the ability to choose from a variety of panels offered twice each day.



Figure L: Week of Work Logo

All sessions were filled with great perspectives and can be viewed on-demand at weekofwork.sd.gov. Over 100 panelists from 27 communities represented their businesses in six career clusters serving over 3,200 students in 70 school districts. Panelists represented career fields in agriculture, business, public service, private sector service, science and healthcare, and manufacturing and construction, for a total of 36 live panel discussions. DLR and DOE staff also provided two webinars during the final day of the week with tips for students to continue their career exploration efforts and make informed career decisions.

In addition to the panel replay on-demand option, DLR sourced over 60 pre-recorded videos from South Dakota employers highlighting occupations in our state. Videos were live on YouTube before the Week of Work and continue to be hosted there. Examples of occupation highlighted in these videos:

- A nurse talking about why he loves Emergency medicine and one walking us through the NICU.
- A young man standing with his welding gloves on talking about how the weather affects his job.
- A forensic scientist with a police department talking about what types of post-secondary programs to look for.
- Radio talent, State Trooper, Scientist, Interior Designer, Lineman, and more...

Additionally, the event connected over 100 business leaders, partners, employers, and small business owners to middle school and high school students across the state with a virtual event. Businesses who participated reported feeling connected with their next generation of workforce and many reported a desire for further involvement with similar programs and events. A database is in development to help facilitate connections with South Dakota's future workforce in addition to the annual Week of Work event.

DAKOTA ROOTS

Dakota Roots assists in recruiting out-of-state job seekers by providing local job market insight and personalized job search assistance through DakotaRoots.com and SDWORKS. The State of South Dakota funds this worker recruitment initiative which continued its 14th year of connecting out-of-state job seekers with in-state career opportunities. In addition to grassroots efforts encouraging current South Dakotans to refer family and friends, the digital media outreach campaign "New Year" increased interest and traffic to the websites.

Job search assistance was offered to 733 out-of-state job seekers through direct contact from DLR Job Advisors. During the calendar year 2020, the top three states individuals relocated from were Minnesota, Iowa, and Nebraska. The dominant industries that individuals found employment varied from state to state. Former Minnesotans tended to be employed in the healthcare field, and former Iowans and Nebraskans were hired in Manufacturing. Job advisors assisted individuals with job referrals, resume development, interview preparation, labor market information, community resources, and housing information.

FEDERAL BONDING

The Federal Bonding Program (Fidelity Bonding Program) was established to provide Fidelity Bonds for "at-risk" job seekers that can be difficult to place in employment. The bonds cover the first six months of employment at no cost to the job applicant or the employer.

South Dakota DLR received a \$100,000 Federal Grant to provide our at-risk population, focusing on justice-involved individuals, with Federal Bonds to help secure employment. DLR provided statewide training and created the internal system required to request and track the progress of the program.

The two programs on this page are reported by Federal Fiscal Year, October 1, 2020, to September 30, 2021, instead of WIOA PY20.

WORK OPPORTUNITY TAX CREDIT

The Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) program is a federal income tax credit savings program that encourages employers to hire job seekers in demographics with high unemployment rates due to some type of employment barrier.

The WOTC program runs on Federal Fiscal Years (FFY). During FFY21, October 1, 2020, to September 30, 2021, the WOTC program received a record-breaking number of applications totaling 12,569, a 28.08% increase than previous years. DLR processed a total of 8,356 applications producing 3,343 certifications with a 40% Certification Rate. The WOTC program saved South Dakota employers an estimated \$9,714,800.00 in federal income tax savings.

WOTC Application Fiscal Year Comparisons		
Status	FFY20	FFY21
Certifications	2,984	3,343
Denied Applications	3,500	4,782
Pending Applications	416	231
Total Applications Processed	6,900	8,356
Certification Rate	42.2%	40.0%
Tax Dollar Savings	\$8,261,000.00	\$9,715,800.00

Table 4

In the spring of 2021, DLR was awarded a grant from U.S. DOL to update the WOTC database and processing system. A Request for Proposal was posted and awarded, with development to begin in October 2021. This new system will increase efficiency within the program and allow for a higher volume of processing with the collaboration of partnering state agencies.

FOREIGN LABOR CERTIFICATION

The Foreign Labor Certification (FLC) program processes H-2A visas for temporary, agricultural work and H-2B visas for temporary, seasonal, and nonagricultural jobs. DLR reviews applications for program compliance, posts SDWORKS job orders for both H-2A and H-2B applications, inspects and approves housing for H-2A employers, and communicates changes and information with the National Office in Chicago and the employer or employer's agent. DLR also refers potential U.S. applicants to employers who are resolving their labor shortage with temporary, foreign workers.

In April 2021, comprehensive training was provided to all FLC staff which covered all aspects of the program.

H-2A Application Comparison by Federal Fiscal Year					
Performance Timeframes	FFY20 Oct 2019-Sept 2020		Performance Timeframes	FFY21 Oct 2020-Sept 2021	
	FFY20 Q1	108 Job Orders		42 Housing Inspections	FFY21 Q1
FFY20 Q2	101 Job Orders	133 Housing Inspections	FFY21 Q2	105 Job Orders	188 Housing Inspections
FFY20 Q3	25 Job Orders	29 Housing Inspections	FFY21 Q3	37 Job Orders	16 Housing Inspections
FFY20 Q4	23 Job Orders	13 Housing Inspections	FFY21 Q4	50 Job Orders	21 Housing Inspections
Total	257 Job Orders	217 Housing Inspections	Total	328 Job Orders	324 Housing Inspections

Table 5: FLC H-2A

The FLC program runs on Federal Fiscal Years (FFY). We have just completed FFY21 which ran from October 1, 2020, to September 30, 2021. South Dakota saw a 24.27% increase in H-2A applications and a 55.53% increase in H-2B applications.

H-2B Application Comparison by Federal Fiscal Year			
Performance Timeframes	FFY20 Oct 2019-Sept 2020	FLC Performance Timeframes	FFY21 Oct 2020-Sept 2021
FFY20 Q1	41 Job Orders	FFY21 Q1	53 Job Orders
FFY20 Q2	96 Job Orders	FFY21 Q2	110 Job Orders
FFY20 Q3	1 Job Order	FFY21 Q3	52 Job Orders
FFY20 Q4	9 Job Orders	FFY21 Q4	45 Job Orders
Total	147 job orders	Total	260 Job Orders

Table 6: FLC H-2B

PERFORMANCE AND REPORTING

During PY20, the performance of credentials and measurable skills gains were adversely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result of decreased performance outcomes, a process was implemented during quarter four to reevaluate participant files and improve outcomes. DLR job service office staff reviewed files with performance measures currently unaccounted for. Reports were pulled to determine participants who received services that would require them to be counted in the credential and measurable skills gains performance measures.

DLR job service office staff reviewed and updated participant files in search of indicators. Title I Adult and Youth programs saw the largest increases from this process (See figures M and N). As a best practice and training tool, the process will now be implemented each quarter.

EFFECTIVENESS IN SERVING EMPLOYERS

The two measures selected by South Dakota for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers are Retention with the Same Employer in the 2nd and 4th Quarters After Exit and Repeat Business Customers Rate.

The Retention Rate decreased from 64.7% in PY19 to 61.6% in PY20. This trend is also mirrored in the Repeat Business Customer Rate from PY19 to PY20 (see Figure O).

These decreases could be a result of employers resorting to online recruitment sites such as LinkedIn, Monster, and Indeed, but also utilizing social media outlets, such as Facebook, as a recruitment resource. These platforms make it convenient for employers to directly connect with viable employees.

Additionally, a larger pool of dislocated workers could mean fewer employers were seeking workforce recruitment assistance.

COMMON EXIT POLICY

The Title III Wagner-Peyser and the Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth, NDWG, and TAA programs have a common Exit. Following TEGL 10-16, Change 1, Exit occurs when 90 days have elapsed since the participant received a staff-assisted service. Self-service, information-only, or follow-up services do not apply to common Exit. SDWORKS automatically records the Exit retroactively to the date of the last staff-assisted service, once the 90 days have passed.

While a common Exit is not established in the SDWORKS system for other workforce programs operated by DLR, we have integrated these programs into the Title III Wagner-Peyser and Title I programs whenever possible through a policy of enrollment to the greatest extent possible. For this reason, the Exit of many other workforce programs including SCSEP, TANF, SNAP E&T, JVSG, RAPs, and RES, would align with those programs identified in the Common Exit policy.

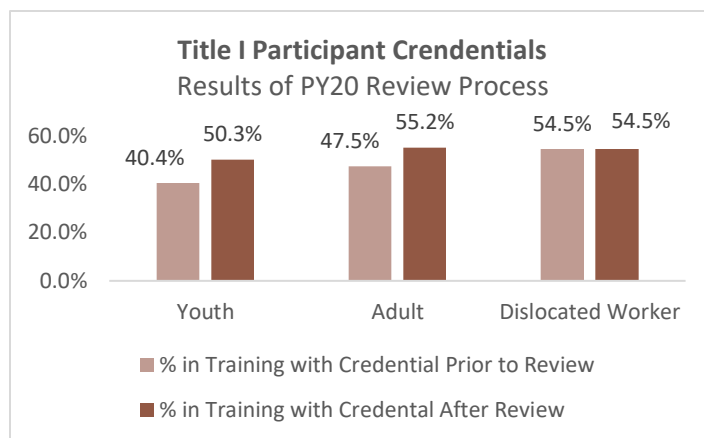


Figure M

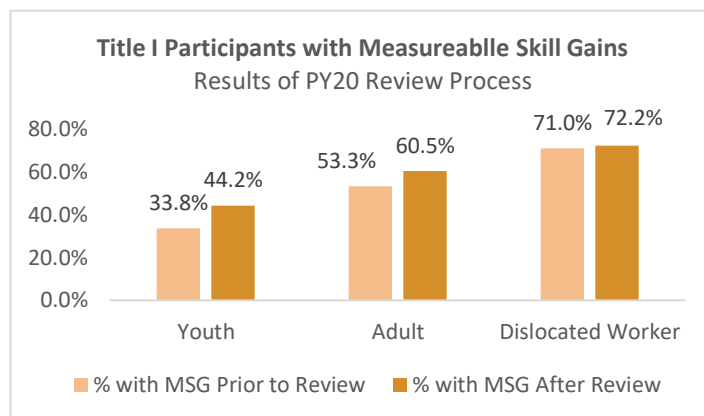


Figure N

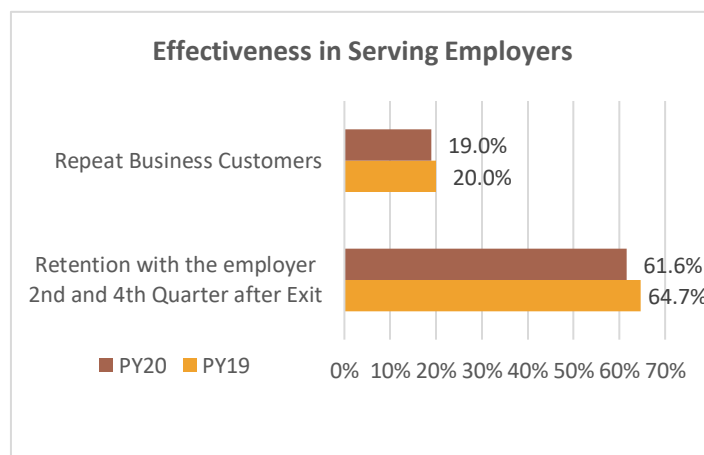


Figure O

ONE-STOP CAREER CENTER CERTIFICATION

The Huron, Madison, Mitchell, and Sioux Falls Job Service Offices were certified by the Workforce Development Council as One Stop Centers in South Dakota. Each office is reviewed every three years and certified every fourth. This certification includes program review, data validation, Equal Opportunity, Americans with Disabilities Act, and a review to ensure compliance with DLR WIOA [Policy 3.3-1](#).

DLR REVIEW CREW

In the previous program year, South Dakota found huge success in utilizing the “Review Crew,” a team of job service office staff completing reviews over several days, to complete the Oversight and Monitoring of One-Stop Career Centers. Using the same model this year, staff reviewed 161 program files and 463 data validation files across five programs, TAA, Title I Adult, Title I Dislocated Worker, Title I Youth, Title III Wagner-Peyser. Thirty-two staff members from One-Stop Career Centers across the state were able to work with Labor Program Specialists to develop their knowledge on a variety of programs while completing file reviews.

Staff involved in the process also benefitted from greater WIOA knowledge, including documentation requirements, effective case notes, and case management best practices. This process also allowed Labor Program Specialists to provide more timely feedback to each office. The One-Stop Certification, Americans with Disabilities Act, and Equal Opportunity reviews were completed outside of the Review Crew.

DATA VALIDATION

The DLR Review Crew reviewed 895 files for data validation purposes as outlined in the DLR Oversight and Monitoring Policy (See [Appendix B](#)). Descriptive statistics by program are provided in Table 7.

DLR is in the process of reviewing the descriptive statistics by data element to provide better awareness of particular items of interest to program staff and local offices for training purposes.

Program	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4
Adult				
Total Files	80	75	68	69
Pass Rate	98.75%	100%	100%	92.8%
Dislocated Worker				
Total Files	31	30	29	31
Pass Rate	100%	100%	100%	87.1%
NDWG				
Total Files	-	-	1	1
Pass Rate	-	-	100%	100%
TAA				
Total Files	7	9	1	2
Pass Rate	100%	100%	100%	50%
Wagner-Peyser				
Total Files	100	100	100	100
Pass Rate	99%	100%	99%	97%
Youth				
Total Files	17	16	14	14
Pass Rate	100%	93.75%	85.7%	78.5%

Table 7: Quarterly data validation pass rates by program

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY OFFICER

The Equal Opportunity (EO) Officer provides One-Stop Career Centers with guidance, technical assistance, and oversight to ensure equal services are provided to all participants.

Training was developed and provided to the job service office staff covering data and information collection of medical and disability information. The training covered the federal requirements outlined in 29 CFR 38.41 and highlighted the importance of protecting sensitive information collected from the participant and stressed the importance of redacting sensitive information in case notes. The training presentation was added to the internal resource site for future reference of job service office staff.

In addition to creating the training, the EO Officer is also working to enhance the process for uploading sensitive information into SDWORKS. The vendor, GeoSol, Inc., recently published a new application in a test environment allowing administrators to create permission levels by staff, office, and region. DLR staff are currently testing the application in the test environment to see how it works and provide feedback for improvements.

Updates to the 2017 Language Assistance Plan (LAP) started at the end of PY20 with expected completion by the end of the first quarter of PY21. The updated plan will include revised data used to identify languages spoken by participants served by DLR job service offices [i](#), used to identify vital information for translation and which languages to focus on as well as translation needs for Babel notices. The LAP will also update the resources DLR uses to provide accommodations to Limited English Proficient individuals.

As part of the One-Stop Certification process, the EO Officer conducts monitoring reviews of One-Stop Career Centers to ensure compliance with the DLR Non-Discrimination Plan and 29 CFR 38 and that the One-Stop Centers are conducting WIOA programs in a nondiscriminatory way. Offices in Sioux Falls, Mitchell, Madison, and Huron were reviewed this program year. The reviews identified an opportunity to improve the complaint log process to ensure all employment-related complaints are logged, and then referred to the appropriate specialist or resolved by each job service office. Using Microsoft Forms and Power Automate, a new and more efficient process was implemented.

FEDERAL WAIVERS FOR TITLE I YOUTH

The DLR Title I Youth Program has benefited from two approved waivers. These waivers have been essential to creating a robust youth program. Connecting with students while they are in school increases participation by both in-school and out-of-school youth.

WIOA SECTION 129(A)(4)(A) AND 20 CFR 681.410 – OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH EXPENDITURE WAIVER

This waiver allows DLR to expend up to 50% of youth funding on In-School Youth. With this waiver in place, DLR has improved partnerships with DOE and school districts throughout the state increasing workforce services provided to youth. Exposure to various employment opportunities and awareness of business needs, allows students to make informed decisions about their education and career pathway.

Increase Career Exploration services to youth regardless of their educational status.

Career Exploration services include Job Shadows, Provision of Labor Market Information, and Leadership Development Services. With the approval of this waiver in PY18, you can see an 89% increase in the number of Career Exploration services provided to youth participants compared to PY17 (see Figure P). A notable decrease happened in PY19 and again in PY20. This decrease is likely due to the reassignment of job service staff to the RA Division from March through November of 2020.

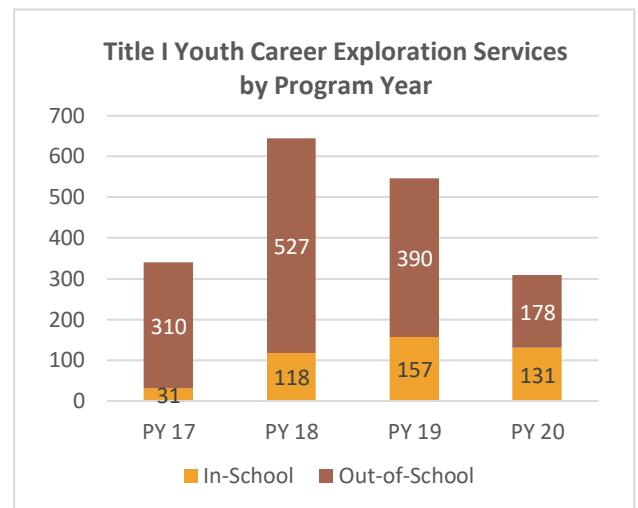


Figure P

Providing these services correlates to our overall increase in enrollment numbers, as shown by the trend in career exploration services. Figure P shows an increase in In-School Youth Career services, through PY20. Out-of-School Youth and total career exploration services decreased from PY18 through PY 20. Despite Covid-19 considerations, the appetite for these services remains strong.

Increase Work-Based Learning services to youth despite their education status. This includes work experiences, internships, pre-apprenticeships, on-the-job training, and job shadows.

South Dakota's low employment numbers have businesses increasingly interested in building relationships with students. This waiver allows DLR to offer services to all youth participants equally, resulting in a sizable increase in the number of Work-Based

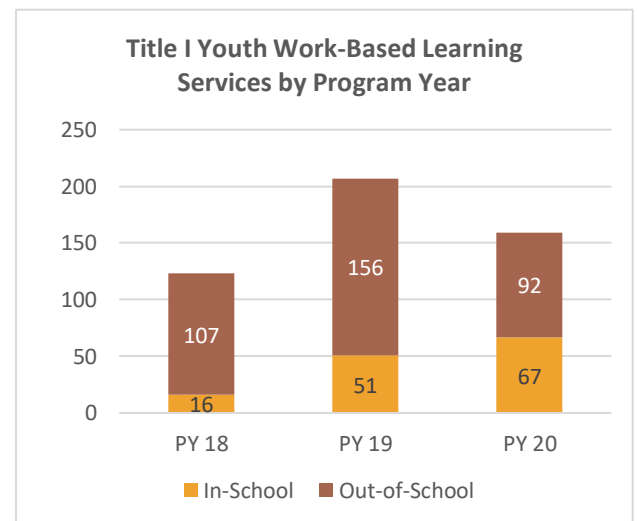


Figure Q

Learning Services provided in South Dakota communities. These opportunities include work experiences, internships, pre-apprenticeships, on-the-job training, and job shadows. DLR offered 16 work-based learning services to In-School Youth in PY18. In PY19, this increased by 218% to 51 work-based learning opportunities provided to In-School Youth. Despite pandemic-related decreases in enrollment numbers in PY20, 67 participants received a work-based learning service this program year. Moreover, there was a 68% increase in the number of work-based learning services provided to all youth participants from PY18 to PY19, with 159 youth receiving these services in PY20. Since the implementation of this waiver, DLR has met the requirement established in WIOA §129(c)(4) that 20% of funds must be used to provide In-School Youth and Out-of-School Youth participants work-based learning services.

Enhance partnerships with schools and businesses to increase youth apprenticeship opportunities.

Apprentices in South Dakota are primarily between the ages of 16 and 24. Figure R illustrates new apprentices by age. The Pathway Partnership program (see [Registered Apprenticeship](#) section) engaged 40 youth apprentices throughout the state. The Pathway Partnership initiative will continue to increase the number of youth entering apprenticeships in the coming years.

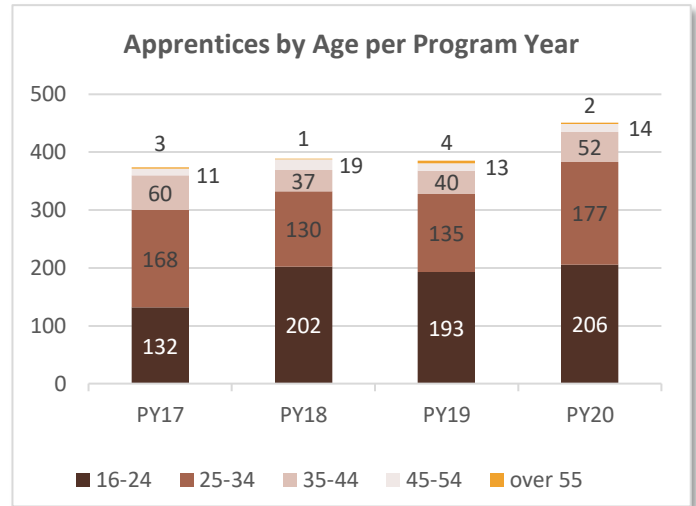


Figure R

20 CFR 681.550 – INDIVIDUAL TRAINING ACCOUNT USAGE FOR IN-SCHOOL YOUTH WAIVER

This waiver allows DLR to operate our in-school youth program in alignment with our out-of-school youth program. This eases implementation for a small state like South Dakota, where the same staff work multiple workforce programs, improves partnerships, and increases participation.

Increase enrollment in South Dakota’s WIOA Title I Youth program

This waiver was first approved in PY18. As you can see in Figure S, DLR job service offices responded quickly to the opportunities provided by the waiver and raised enrollments by 43% in the first program year of waiver approval. From PY18 to PY19, our youth program participation increased by another 44%. COVID-19 contributed to a decrease in PY20, but initial PY21 numbers provide optimism we will once again reach PY19 enrollment levels (see [Figure S](#)).

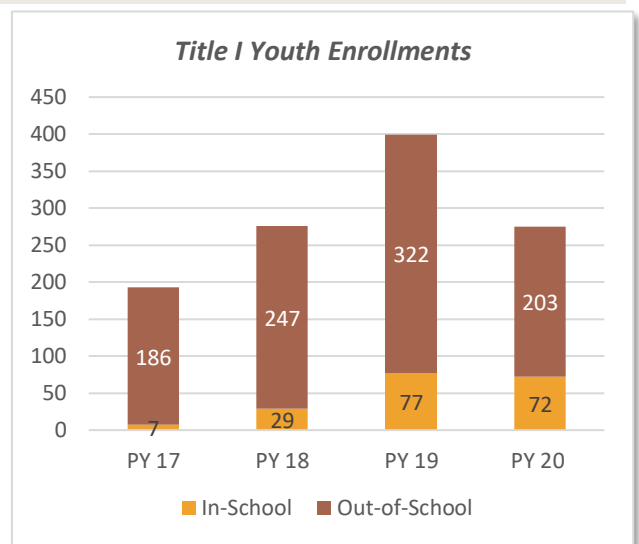


Figure S

Increase post-secondary options to disadvantaged In-School Youth

Since the implementation of this waiver, DLR had a 1400% increase in Occupational Skills Trainings offered to in-school youth from PY17 to PY19 (see [Figure T](#)). Providing 15 disadvantaged in-school youth in our state with post-secondary opportunities can make a significant impact in one year. Many of these students are identified through the Career Launch SD program (See [Youth Engagement](#) section), creating opportunities for exposure to post-secondary opportunities and providers, such as campus tours. Through holistic case management, post-secondary transition and preparation, financial literacy, and tutoring through educational achievement, DLR expects to see continued utilization of Title I Youth funding to assist students in reaching their training and career goals.

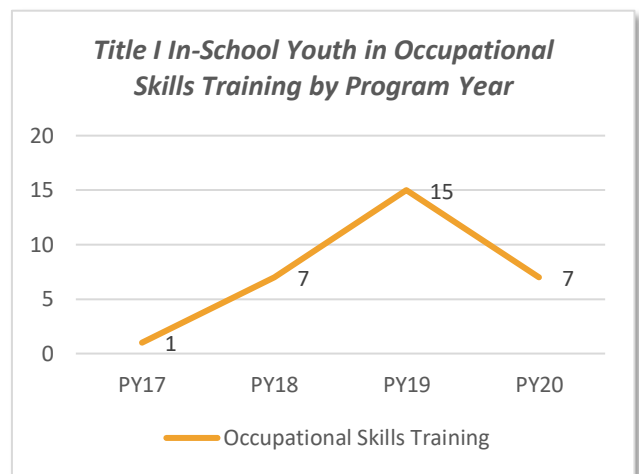
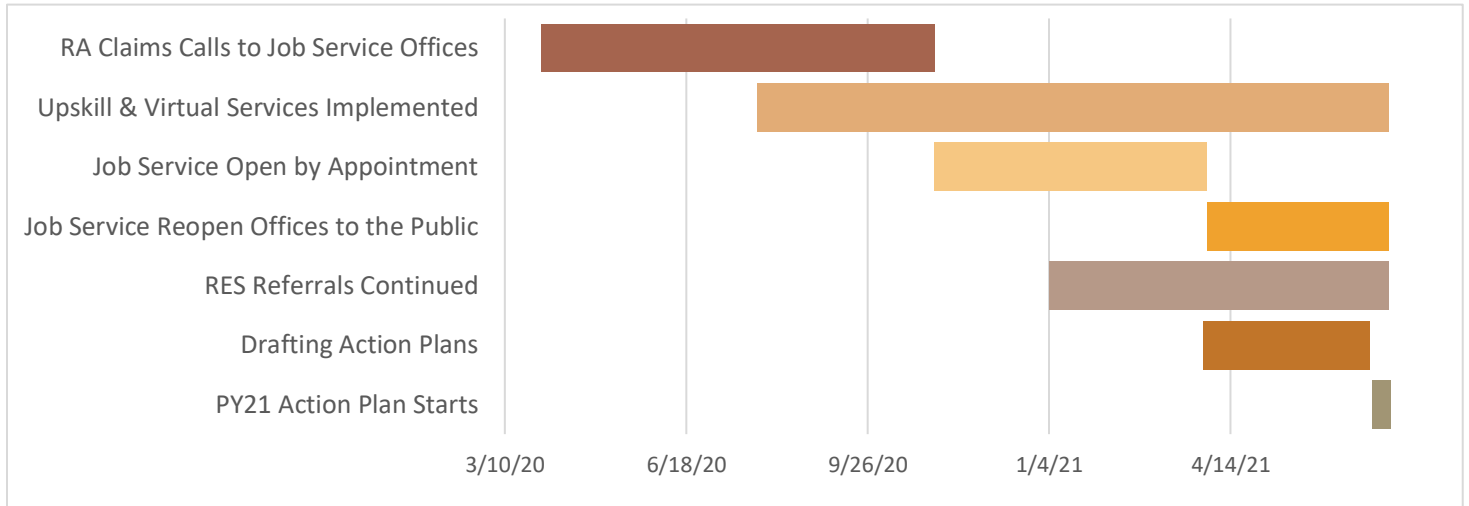


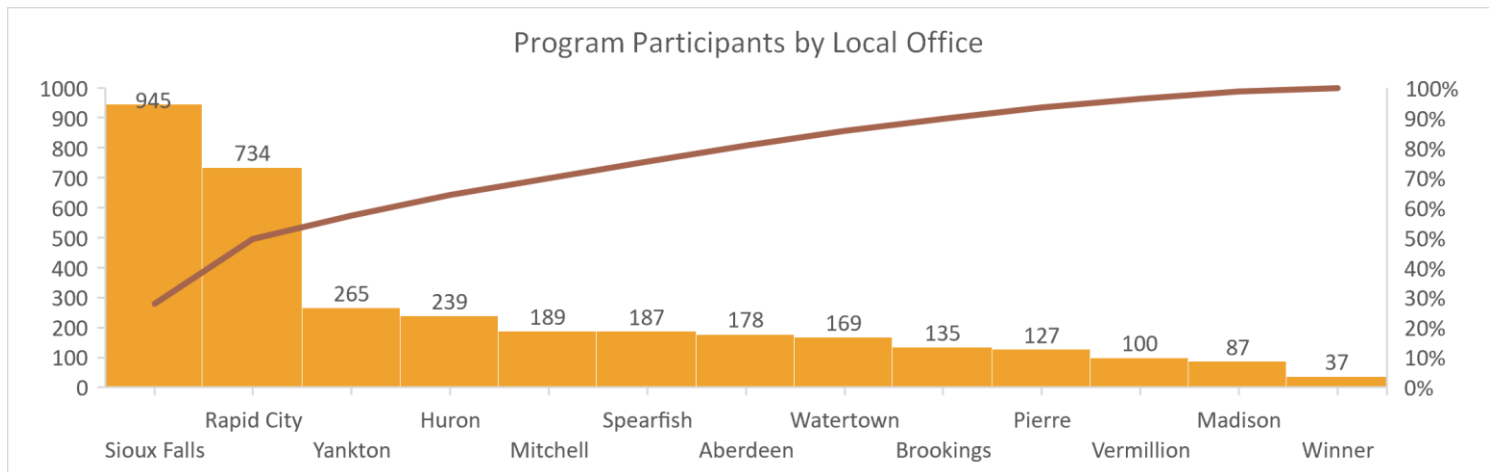
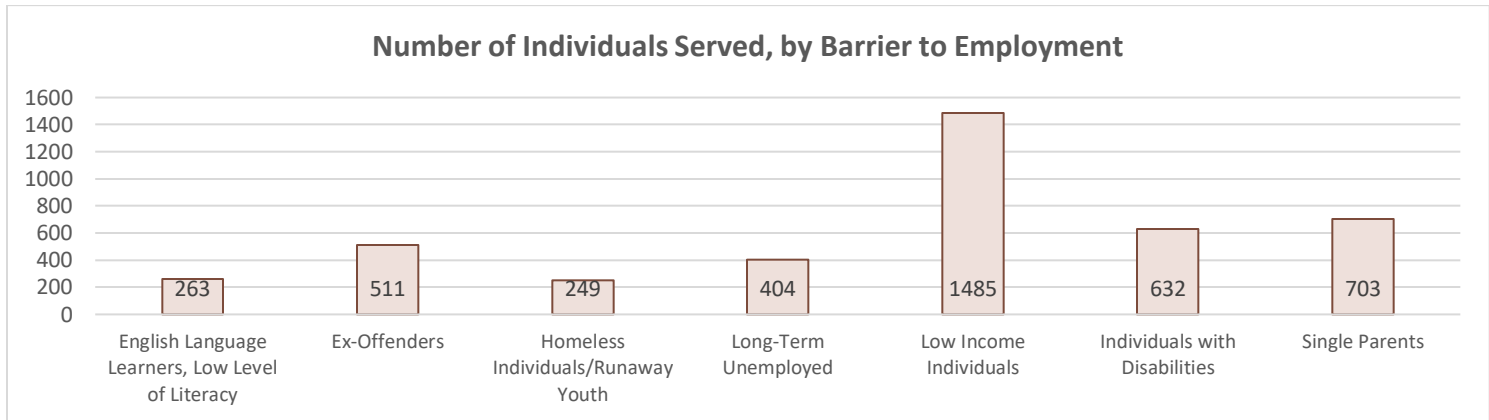
Figure T

APPENDIX A: PY20 JOB SERVICE INFOGRAPHIC

PY20 TIMELINE OF JOB SERVICE OFFICE ACTIVITY



DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF WHO DLR SERVED



SERVICES PROVIDED

1,874

Individuals Served with **Basic Career Services**

1,456

Individuals Served with **Individualized Career Services**

284

Individuals Served with **Training Services**

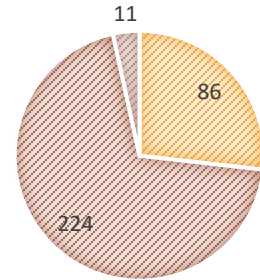
Basic Career Services – Staff-assisted services that provide general information and assistance. Examples include resume assistance, job search workshop, referrals to economic assistance, and Labor Market Information (Title III Wagner-Peyser).

Individualized Career Services – More intensive services that help progress towards employment goals. Examples include Employment Plans, Work Experience opportunities, and assessments to identify skills, aptitude, and barriers (Title I).

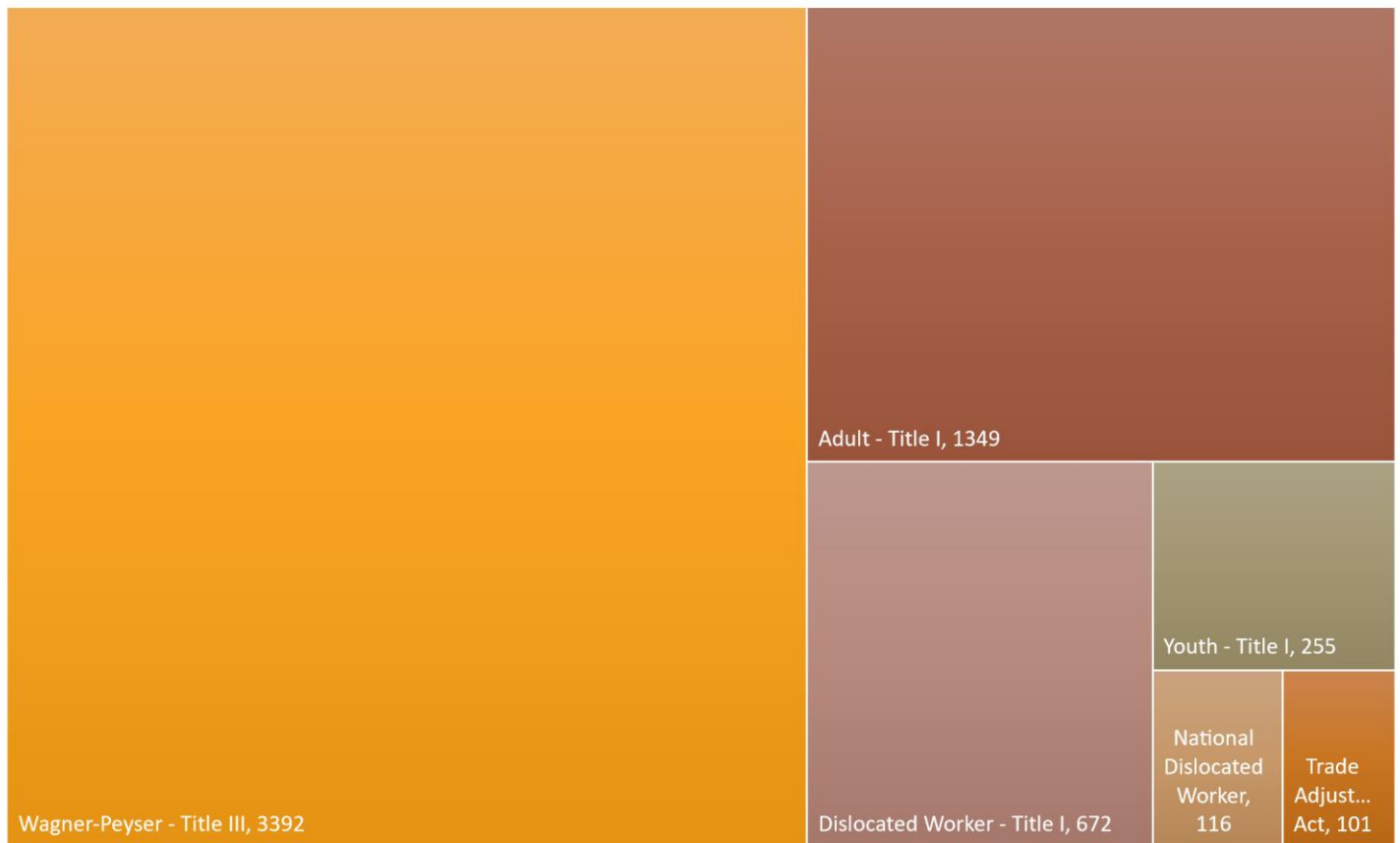
Training Services – Provide an opportunity for the individual to gain knowledge and skills. Examples include post-secondary education, On-the-Job Training, and Registered Apprenticeships (Title I)

RECEIVED VIRTUAL SERVICES

- Job Search Workshop
- Virtual Enrollment into WIOA
- Virtual Enrollment and Workshop



Participants by Program



- Wagner-Peyser - Title III
- Adult - Title I
- Dislocated Worker - Title I
- National Dislocated Worker
- Youth - Title I
- Trade Adjustment Act

PY20 SERVICES FOR DISLOCATED WORKERS

UpSkill is a partnership with the Board of Technical Education that offers opportunities for South Dakotans to earn certificates from the state's technical colleges at little or no cost.

Some RA Claimants are referred to **Re-Employment Services (RES)** and are required to complete additional job contacts and activities to continue to receive benefits. These referrals restarted on January 2, 2021.

112 UpSkill
Participants

Services include tuition, books, fees, support services, tutoring, and intensive virtual case management.

778 Claimants
referred to RES

Services include labor market information, job search assistance, support services, and training opportunities

11 Rapid Response
Events

608 Employees
Affected by RR Events

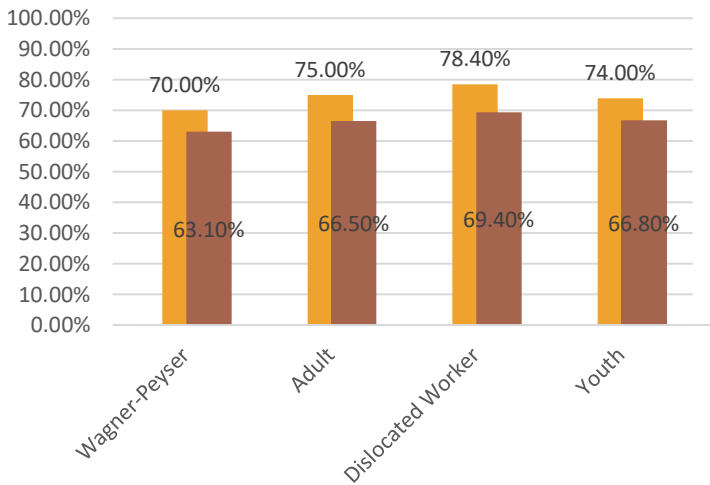
OUTCOMES

After working with DLR Job Service

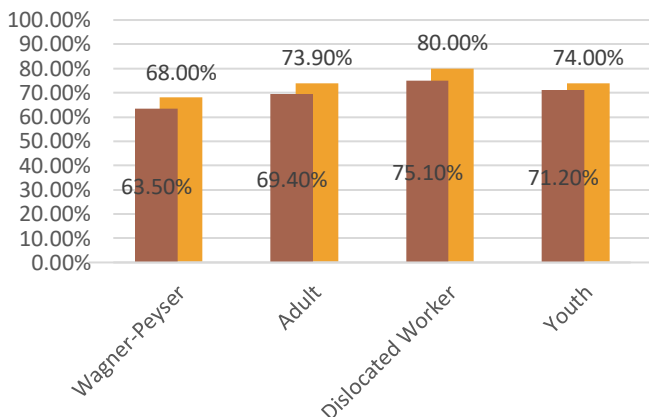
■ = Negotiated

■ = Actual

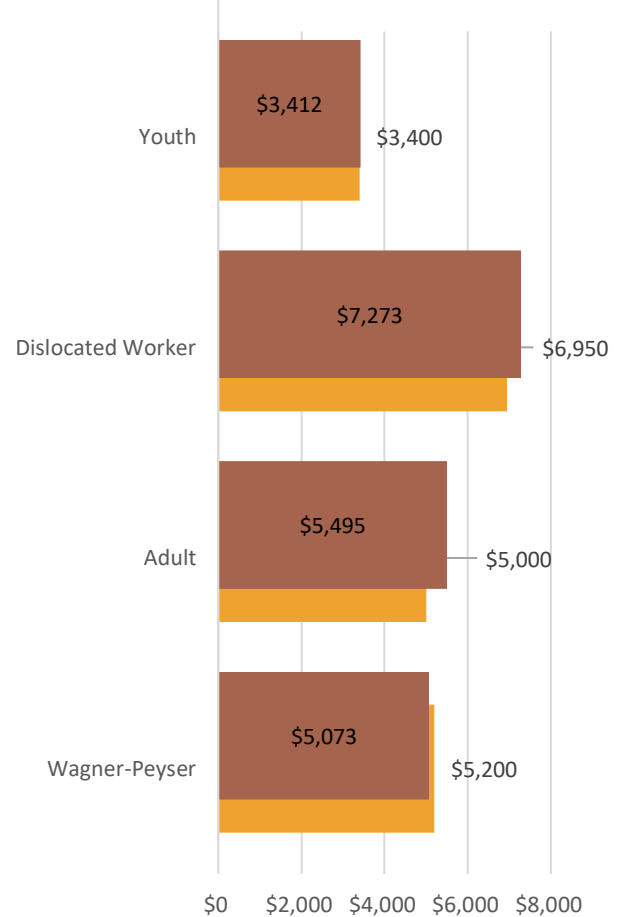
Employment 6-months after Exit



Employment 12-months after Exit



Median Earnings

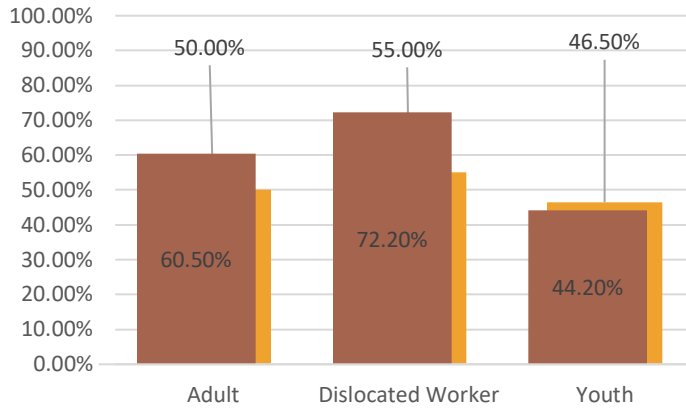


After working with DLR Job Service

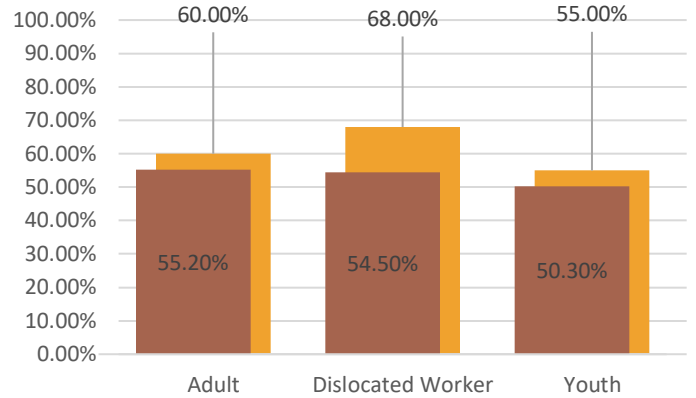
■ = Negotiated

■ = Actual

Measurable Skills Gains

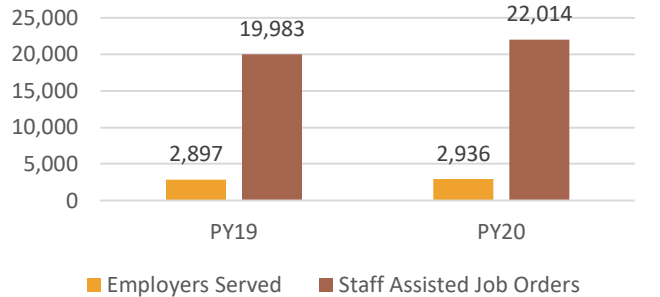


Credential Rate

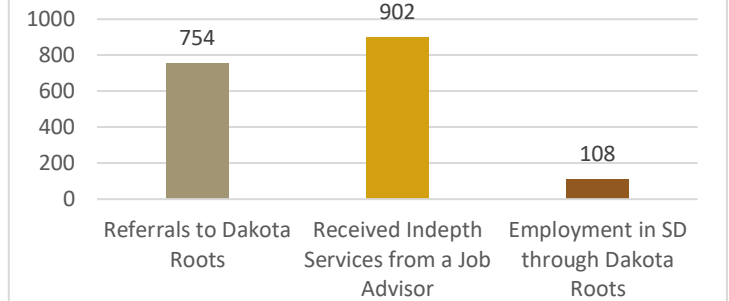


WORKER RECRUITMENT EFFORTS

Job Order Services



Out-of-State Recruitment



OVERSIGHT AND MONITORING

The DLR One-Stop Operator and One-Stop Career Center, or job service office, managers are responsible for ensuring compliance with federal laws, regulation, and guidance as well as state policies and procedures. The Workforce Training, Employment Services, and Administrative Services Divisions are responsible for oversight and monitoring of the One-Stop Career Centers to ensure compliance with federal laws, regulation, and guidance, and state policies and procedures. Monitors ensure:

- DLR programs achieve intended results.
- Resources are utilized efficiently and effectively for authorized purposes and are protected from waste, fraud, and abuse.
- Accurate and timely information is reported to serve as the basis for improved decision-making and required reporting.

Selected employment specialists from the One-Stop Career Centers will assist labor program specialists with reviewing active files and data validation. This process will allow employment specialists to better understand the process and requirements to improve accuracy. Labor program specialists will provide training for employment specialists prior to conducting the review. An employment specialist will not validate files from their own One-Stop Center. Labor program specialists will work alongside the employment specialists at all times during the review.

ACTIVE FILE REVIEW

Timeline

File review of active files will be completed every program year by June 30. Files subject to review include participants active in the program during the year of review. Files will be randomly selected to ensure a variety of case managers and offices are represented.

Process

Labor program specialists will develop a review sheet for each program. This review sheet will analyze eligibility, provision of services, quality of case management, documentation, fiscal accountability, and inclusion of data validation elements. An Active File Review Report containing the results of the file review will be provided to the One-Stop Career Centers. These results shall identify the names of the files reviewed, errors, and promising practices identified.

DATA VALIDATION

This preliminary policy establishes data validation guidance for Wagner-Peyser, Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, and Trade Adjustment Assistance programs. Once additional guidance from U.S. DOL is received regarding data validation, revisions may be necessary.

Data validation is a series of internal controls and quality assurance techniques established to verify the accuracy, validity, and reliability of data. The purpose of validation procedures for required performance data are to:

1. Verify the performance data reported is valid, accurate, reliable, and comparable across programs;
2. Identify irregularities in the data and resolve issues that may cause inaccurate reporting;
3. Outline source documentation required for common data elements; and
4. Improve program performance accountability through the results of data validation efforts.

Labor program specialists will review the data validation process, requirements, and plan for completion with the Employment Services and Workforce Training Division Directors annually to ensure staff are prepared for performing data validation of selected files.

Timeline

Data validation will be completed for every program year by September 30 for the previous program year's files. Files that are subject to data validation include participants who exited during the given program year. At least two percent of Wagner-Peyser files and five percent of each of the Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, TAA, and Youth files will be randomly selected for data validation.

Process

The review team will validate the data elements outlined in TEGL 7-18, Attachment I, program eligibility and triggering service data elements outlined in the Participant Individual Record Layout (PIRL) and participant intake/orientation forms. For each validated individual data element, a pass or fail grade will be assessed.

A Data Validation Report containing the results of the data validation shall be provided to the One-Stop Career Centers. These results shall identify the names of the files reviewed, missing and/or erroneous data.

Source Documentation for Common Data Elements

For most data elements, the validation guidelines provide multiple forms of acceptable source documentation. If the State collects multiple sources for the same data element and the sources conflict, the most objective source should be used to determine if the data element is valid and accurate. These source documentation types include:

- **Cross-Match:** a cross-match required validators to find detailed supporting evidence for the data element in a database. An indicator or presence of a Social Security Number (SSN) in an administrative non-WIOA database, i.e., a database not maintained by a WIOA core program such as data from the State's Department of Motor Vehicles, is not sufficient evidence for a cross-match. State validators must also confirm supporting information such as dates of participation and services rendered. DLR will have data sharing agreements in place as appropriate.
- **Self-Attestation:** Self-attestation (also referred to as a participant statement) occurs when a participant states his or her status for a particular data element, such as pregnant or parenting youth, and then signs and dates a form acknowledging this status. The key elements for self-attestation are: (a) the participant identifying his or her status for permitted elements, and (b) signing and dating a form attesting to this self-identification. The form and signature can be on paper and uploaded electronically into SDWORKS or in SDWORKS with an electronic signature.
- **Case notes:** Case notes refer to electronic statements by the case manager that identify, at a minimum, the following: (a) a participant's status for a specific data element, (b) the date on which the information was obtained, and (c) the case manager who obtained the information.
- **Electronic Records:** Electronic records are participant records created, stored or transferred in a form that only a computer can process and maintained in the DLR's management information system. Records can be numeric, graphic, or text. They can also include magnetic storage media such as tapes or disks.

Source documentation for data validation items must be uploaded into SDWORKS. Hard copies are not acceptable as outlined in policy and will not be considered for data validation purposes.

CORRECTIVE ACTION

Results of the annual active file review and data validation review will be incorporated into the [One-Stop Career Center Certification](#) process as identified in Policy 3.3. Findings, areas of concern, and promising practices that remain consistent through the annual reviews will be included in the One-Stop Career Center Certification monitoring report.

WIOA §107, §116, §129, §134
20 CFR §677.150, §679.370, §683.400-440
WIOA Participant Individual Record Layout

ⁱ The DLR Reemployment Assistance (RA) Division administers unemployment benefits, called RA Benefits, in South Dakota

ⁱⁱ DLR Job Service Offices are South Dakota's One-Stop Career Center, or American Job Centers

ⁱⁱⁱ DLR has developed and continues to update a South Dakota WIOA Policy Manual to empower DLR job service offices to delivery consistent services statewide. The manual can be found on the DLR website at https://dlr.sd.gov/workforce_services/wioa/manual.aspx

^{iv} Integrated Resource Teams (IRTs) are seamless customer-focused delivery network. The job service offices ensure universal access to all job seekers. Integrated Service Delivery encourages cohesive intake, case management, and reporting systems. It eliminates the sequence of service, streamlines the administrative process, and allows for braiding resources and WIOA programs. More information is available in the DLR IRT Policy 3.14 at dlr.sd.gov/workforce_services/wioa/wioa_manual/3.14_integratedservicedeliveryjobseekers.pdf

^v SDWORKS is South Dakota DLR's management information system. GeoSol, Inc., is the vendor for this system.