

**Temporary Assistance and Food Stamps Employment Plan
January 1, 2012– December 31, 2013**

Section 1 Assurances/Signature

As a condition of the receipt of federal and State funds the Monroe Department of Social Services submits this Temporary Assistance and Food Stamp Employment Plan (Plan) to the New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance. The Plan outlines the administration of employment services for Temporary Assistance (TA) and Food Stamps (FS) applicants and recipients for the period January 1, 2012 through December 31, 2013. As Commissioner of Monroe County Department of Social Services, I hereby affirm that employment services programs will be administered in accordance with all applicable federal and State policies, laws, regulations and provisions of this Plan.

Kelly A. Reed, Social Services Commissioner

Date : 12/13/2011

Section 2 Administration

Section 2.1 Administrative Structure

This agency's organizational chart is attached. It identifies the units and staff within the agency that are involved in the operation of the district's employment program.

Following is a description of the office(s) in and/or outside of the Department of Social Services that are involved in the operation of the district's employment program. The responsibilities of each office are described below.

1. MCDHS – The Financial Assistance Director oversees Temporary Assistance, Food Stamps, Medicaid, Employment Services, Domestic Violence, HEAP and Day Care. The Employment Coordinator has responsibility for: Front door job search activities, the operations of the DHS Employment Unit, TASA youth case-management services, the employment related activities of the financial assistance teams, and all contracts which are part of Monroe County's WTW overall program.
2. The work of the Employment Unit is organized in a Task-Based Case-management model. Within this framework there are four distinct groups. These four groups are comprised of:
 - The Front Door – Case-management and Supportive Services
 - Customer Service – Phones- Mail
 - Lists – Tracking
 - Interviewing

3. **Front Door- C. M. and S. S.** Perform all functions related to front door job search and diversion activities for applicants of TANF, SN, SNF, and FS assistance as well as all supportive services and specialized case-management. The front door activities include the provision of: orientation, job search, job club, on-site employers and job interviews. In addition to job search, job placement, and job retention services the front door diversion staff refer to free Income Tax Services along with financial literacy guidance to help divert applicants from the need for full public assistance.

Customer Service Phones- Mail operates as a call center for employment phone calls. They are responsible for: conciliation response calls, rescheduling appointment calls, case specific or general questions from clients, providers, and the community. Staff in this area documents all conversations in WTCMS and complete actions resulting from the phone calls.

Lists -Tracking Work with COGNOS 8 and WTCMS lists to monitor client participation and compliance. The staff in this area: make assessment appointments at assessment providers for new clients or in-house for SN non MOE and returning TANF eligible clients, review attendance reports, generate conciliations, request sanctions, perform code changes, and responses to temporary assistance staff.

Interviewing staff deliver: orientations, employability assessments, reassessments, determine employability, create employability development plans, and assign to work activities, refer to case-management or TASA youth services, and request supportive services.

All staff in each of the groups are responsible for documenting their actions and client actions in WTCMS and updating IEDR.

4. The MCDHS Temporary Assistance examiners maintain active TA and FS caseloads. The staff is currently divided into four separate workgroups: Intake, Employable/Disabled, Rehabilitation, and Child Only. TA undercare units are currently managed under a traditional caseload based system. Monroe County plans to realign assigned TA staff in early 2012 so that TA undercare is managed by task groups for interviewing, customer service, case processing and lists/reviews. At that time we will also transfer all self-sufficiency tasks and activities from the undercare work teams to a specialized self-sufficiency group. The SS group will be responsible for all current employment activities as well as disability assessment, restoration to self sufficiency, substance abuse and support services. The Intake workers are responsible for referral to applicant job search activities and referral to the List-Tracking group for assessment appointments. They are also responsible to initiate supportive services such as transportation and day care for new recipients of public assistance. There is a Temporary Assistance team that handles all cases where the adult in the household has been determined to be disabled. The team has dedicated staff to review medicals, develop plans with the clients to help return them to employability when appropriate. In cases where the individuals are permanently and completely disabled, MCDHS staff assists them in the SSI process. The district utilizes the Access LIVES and the Rochester Rehabilitation JRT, WEP, and Job Placement contract to work with the work limited individuals and when appropriate develop SN Plans of Self Sufficiency.

5. The Employment Unit examiners are responsible for the supportive service payments, the conciliation and sanction process for TA recipients. The Income Eligible Day Care team issues Transitional childcare for Cases that close due to excess income.
6. The Rehabilitation teams are responsible for the monitoring of progress and participation for all adults enrolled in drug and alcohol treatment programs which includes maintaining the Addiction Recovery Employability System (ARES) online attendance system.
7. MCDHS currently contracts with 3 assessment providers, Baden St Settlement and Career Systems Development Corp, and Rochester Works to deliver approximately 55 % of orientations, in depth assessments, Employability Development Plans and referrals to work activities for applicants and recipients of TANF or SN assistance. The assessment centers enter the completed assessments and EPs directly into WTWCMS.
8. MCDHS Employment Unit staff is responsible for the additional 45% of orientations in depth assessments, Employability Development Plans and referrals to work activities for applicants and recipients of TANF or SN assistance.
9. The total number of employees of the local Department of Human Services Financial Assistance Division is 535.
10. MCDHS contracts with a number of community agencies to provide job placement and retention services. The agencies currently delivering that service are:
 - a. Career Start LLC- Job placement and Retention through subsidized and unsubsidized employment for TANF and SN recipients. Career Start also assists with job placement for applicants as diversion.
 - b. Career Systems Development Corp - Job Placement and Retention for FS and SN recipients and applicants
 - c. Rochester Works provides Subsidized Job Placement and Retention for TANF and SN recipients.
 - d. Rochester Rehabilitation Options – Job Readiness, Job placement, and Retention for TANF eligible clients
11. MCDHS currently contracts with various providers in the community to deliver programs that include: developing WEP positions, supervising those WEP participants, preparing participants for paid employment, reporting attendance and performance and in certain programs providing GED and Job skill or vocational education training on site. The District is in the process of consolidating all WEP management contracts into one contract to manage 1200 WEP openings throughout the community. The transition to one centralized contract will take effect in 2012 and should be fully operational by April 2012.
12. The current list of contracted WEP provider agencies are:
 - a. Rochester City School District Office of Adult Career & Educational Services Careers Program- Careers is a program that provides at least 150 participants with a full schedule that has a minimum of 22 hours weekly in a core work activity(mainly WEP)

and 10 to 15 hours of either education (GED, ABE, or ESOL) or job skills or vocational education. The program uses City School District staff to provide case management for participants with attendance or other problems. The WEP program operates as a non-profit micro-enterprise. The work experience includes working in carpentry, tailoring, printing, retail sales or jewelry making workshops and creating actual products that are sold by participants at a store on site which is run by WEP participants. Goods are also sold at craft fairs and at the Rochester Public Market. All funds from the sale of goods go back into supporting the program. The program includes several hours weekly of classroom work in areas such as financial literacy, resume writing, job search, etc.

- b. Food link Inc- RLT - The program has developed 100 work experience slots at community non-profit providers. RLT monitors and tracks attendance and enters actual attendance directly into WTCMS.
- c. South West Neighborhood Association (SWAN) The program has developed 150 work experience slots at community non-profit providers. SWAN monitors and tracks attendance and reports actual attendance weekly to the DHS attendance team. SWAN has a computer lab for job skill training on-site.
- d. Rochester Rehabilitation, Inc. Options Program- The options program has developed over 200 work experience slots at community non-profit agencies including their own agency. The program begins with a week of JRT followed by work experience plus job skills or GED. Rochester Rehab has a PLATO computer lab on site for job skill training .Rochester Rehab reports attendance weekly to the DHS attendance team.
- e. Baden St Settlement – Baden St developed and manages approximately 200 work experience slots within their own agency and at other non-profit agencies. Baden St enters actual attendance directly into WTCMS.
- f. Monroe Community College (MCC) - MCC is contracted to develop and manage 200 work experience slots on campus for TANF and SN recipients who are enrolled in school at MCC. Most MCC students meet their required participation through a combined schedule of work experience and/or college work study plus vocational education or job skills hours. MCC reports actual attendance to the DHS attendance team.
- g. Grace Urban Ministries is contracted to manage 100 work experience positions in the Northwest quadrant of the City of Rochester. G.U.M. has a wide variety of work experience offerings including: food service, clerical, maintenance, clothing distribution, community outreach, daycare, etc. G.U.M. is located near the public library which is operating a GED program that WEP participants can enroll in.
- h. Catholic Family Center is contracted to manage up to 100 work experience slots within their agency and community sites. In addition to participants with few barriers CFC can work with recovering substance abusers, non-English speakers, and ex-offenders. CFC operates: rehabilitation programs, EAP programs, an ex-offender reentry program, and an ESOL program that are complimentary to the WEP program.
- i. Veterans Outreach Center is contracted to provide WEP management services for 50 to 100 employable veterans in Monroe County. In addition to WEP VOC offers a variety of wrap-around services such as computer training, Job Readiness workshops, case-management, and job placement.
- j. MCDHS utilizes a wide variety of public and non-profit agencies through worksite agreements to maintain work experience placements. MCDHS clients participate in

WEP at sites such as, the Hall of Justice, Monroe Community Hospital, the County Office building, the Public Library System, daycare centers, etc.

13. Monroe County uses a revenue intercept with NY State for a contract with NYSID to collect and enter actual attendance from the majority of work activity providers for TANF eligible participants in the district. This service includes calling weekly to obtain data, entering the data and maintaining the paper records.
14. MCDHS currently contracts with Industrial Medicine Associates through the state level contract to provide independent health examinations, mental health evaluations, and cognitive testing.
15. Monroe County utilizes ACCESS VR and ACCESS LIVESII services for work limited individuals.

Section 2.2 TA and FSET Provider Agencies

Table 1 lists the local contracts or agreements with agencies to provide employment services to TA and FS clients. These activities and services may include, but are not necessarily limited to, employability determinations, development of assessments and employment plans, conciliation and grievance activities, provision of work activities such as job readiness training, education and job skills training, monitoring and support for compliance with treatment plans for exempt individuals with the potential for restoration to self-sufficiency, job development, job placement and retention services, and other employment related activities.

Each contract listed in Table 1 contains an assurance that the activities are not otherwise available from that provider on a non-reimbursable basis and, if not a performance-based contract, a statement regarding use of a cost allocation methodology that satisfies Generally Accepted Accounting Principles, as well as the requirements of U.S. Office of Management and Budget Circulars A-122 for nonprofit organizations, A-21 for educational institutions, or A-87 for State and local governments.

Table 2 includes agencies/providers that offer services to participants and to which the district expects to refer participants but which have no direct financial agreement with the district (e.g., WIA programs, SED funded services, OTDA Wage Subsidy providers).

TABLE 1 - Contracts Associated with TA and FS Employment Programs and Services

| Provider | Total Contract Cost (per yr.) | Funding Source(s) | Categories of Clients Served | Programs, Services or Activities Provided |
|----------|-------------------------------|-------------------|------------------------------|---|
|----------|-------------------------------|-------------------|------------------------------|---|

| | | | | |
|--|-----------|--------------------------|-------------------------|--|
| Career Systems Job Search | \$200,000 | FSET | FS, SNA | The program includes Job readiness, Job search, placement, retention. Payment is performance based on meeting placement and retention milestones |
| Career Systems Work Now | \$608,600 | TANF program, SN program | TANF, SNF | In depth Assessment assignment to work activity, EDP WTWCMS entries |
| Career Start LLC | \$825,000 | TANF program, SN program | TANF , SNF, SNA | Job Development, Job placement, Subsidized Employment contracts, and post placement services |
| Baden St Settlement | \$730,505 | TANF program, SN Program | TANF, SNF, SNA | In depth Assessment assignment to work activity, EDP WTWCMS entries Manage 200 WEP slots within Baden ST and elsewhere in the community, Supervise and monitor and report attendance in WTWCMS |
| Foodlink/Rochester Landscape Technicians | \$156,619 | TANF program, SN program | TANF SNF, SNA | Work Experience and GED for over 100 participants , JRT, Post placement retention services, operates a mobile WEP landscaping crew in the County Parks |
| Grace Urban Ministries | \$40,000 | TANF program, SN program | TANF , SNF, SNA | Work Experience job readiness training for up to 100 participants, |
| Catholic Family Center | \$70,000 | TANF program, SN program | TANF, SNF, SNA | Work Experience for at least 100 participants, JRT, case-management, and EAP services specializing in refugees ex-offenders, and substance abusers |
| Rochester Rehabilitation Options | \$203,864 | TANF program | TANF &SNF | Community WEP program for up to 200 participants along with, job readiness, job placement, and job retention |
| Rochester City School District CAREERS | \$699,000 | TANF, and SN program | TANF , SNF, SNA FSET | The Careers program combines vocational education, GED, ESOL, or ABE, classes with a schedule that includes the participants required hours of community or on site work experiences for up to 150 adult participants and JRT. |
| Southwest Neighborhood Association | \$62,986 | TANF and SN program | TANF, SNF, & SNA | A WEP management program that maintains at least 150 openings for work experience positions within the Southwest city of Rochester at community locations. |
| Monroe Community College | \$91982 | TANF and SN program | TANF, SNF, and SNA | Work experience for up to 200 individuals enrolled at MCC in courses of study. The program includes case management and JRT |
| Veterans Outreach Center | \$45,000 | SN program | SNA | JRT and Job Skill training for 50 veterans in receipt of public assistance |
| Rochester Works, Inc | \$325,000 | TANF program, SN program | TANF, SNF, and SNA | In depth Assessment assignment to work activity, EDP WTWCMS entries |

TABLE 2 – Other Service Providers

| Provider | Funding Source(s) (if known) | Categories of Clients Served | Programs, Services or Activities Provided |
|--|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| ABC Youth Works | | FA & SNF, SNA & 200% Youth | GED, Life Skills, JRT |
| OASES Rochester City School District | NY State Ed | SNF & SNA FAA | ABE, GED, Vocational Education Provides alternative HS, GED, ESOL and case-management for 16 to 20 year olds Alternative HS and case-management services for pregnant and parenting teen mothers |
| BOCES #2 | NY State Ed | SNF, FA, SNA FS, & 200 % | ESOL, ABE, GED, HS diploma, Vocational education |
| BOCES #1 | NY State Ed | SNF, SNA FA, FS, 200 % | ESOL, ABE, GED, HS diploma, Vocational education |
| Greece Community Education | State Ed | FA & SNF, SNA Families youth | GED, HS diploma |
| ACCESS | NY State ED | SNF, FA, FS SNA, 200% | Vocational Rehab, Assessment, Testing, Work Tryouts, Job Coaching |
| NYSID | WTWCMS data entry | TANF SNF | Data entry and collection of actual attendance in WTWCMS |
| Rochester Works, Inc | WIA and Stimulus | TANF, SNF, SNA, FS, | Assessment, Job Skill Training, JRT, Voc Training, Distance Learning |
| Career Academy Career Pathways | OTDA | TANF ,SNF, SNA Youth | Computer training, Job Readiness training, and job placement |
| Hillside Work Scholarship Career pathways | OTDA | TANF ,SNF, SNA Youth | Youth employment and JRT |
| Rochester City School District Career Pathways | OTDA | TANF ,SNF, SNA Youth | Youth Employment, Training and JRT |
| Volunteers of America | United Way | TANF ,SNF, SNA Youth | The Working Wardrobe delivers workshops on dressing and grooming for employment along with one on one consultations, interview attire and clothing to begin work. |

Section 2.3 OTDA Jobs Staff Agreement

OTDA Jobs Program Services – Target Groups

(“X” signifies those that apply in this district)

| Services | | Target Groups | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|----------------------|--------------|
| Assessment/Employment Plan | _____ | Applicants | <u> x </u> |
| Supervised Job Search | _____ | TANF (inc. SNF) | _____ |
| Job Readiness Training | _____ | SNA non-MOE Singles | _____ |
| Job Club | <u> X </u> | Food Stamps | _____ |
| Job Placement Services | _____ | 200% of Poverty | _____ |
| Grant Diversion | <u> X </u> | | |
| Job Development (employer outreach) | _____ | | |
| WOTC pre-certifications | _____ | | |

Other Services Requested

Described below are additional services/duties which will be requested of Jobs staff (e.g., WTWCMS data entry, case conferencing, job fairs)

OTDA Jobs Program Staffing and Location

Please list staff location address and indicate # of staff at that location.

1. 1 staff person at 691 St Paul St (JOBS staff will be moving to 111 Westfall Rd February 2012 to work with the Self Sufficiency group).

2.

3.

District Staff Contact for OTDA Jobs Program (Name & Phone Number)

Ida Siegel 585 753-5721

Section 3 Engagement and Work Preparation

Section 3.1 Federal “Engaged in Work” Requirement (Reference 18 NYCRR 385.2 (f))

For purposes of satisfying the federal requirement which states that parents or caretakers must be engaged in work as soon the district determines they are ready, but no later than within 24 months of receiving federally funded assistance, the district’s definition of “Engaged in Work” is:

Compliance with assessment, employment planning, and all activities included in the individual’s Employment/Self-Sufficiency plan including any need to attend treatment/rehabilitation programs, or any of the work activities listed in Section 3.4. Also included is pursuit of other forms of income such as SSI and SSD.

1. For the purposes of targeting substance abuse applicants/recipients, the district will utilize the Addiction Recovery Employability System (ARES) to monitor individual treatment compliance and progress towards self -sufficiency. Individuals deemed able to work with no other disabling condition will be required to participate in a variety of other work activities in conjunction with treatment.
2. The Rapid Engagement Demonstration (RED) Team is collaboration between DHS Temporary Assistance and Monroe County Office of Mental Health and assists adults with histories of substance abuse to works with DHS to obtain access to services and achieve recovery. Recipients of RED services must have a history of drug dependence and or serious mental health; have 3 or more applications for public assistance, or 3 or more Emergency Housing placements in the past 12 months. Clients must also be eligible for public assistance and be residents of Monroe County. The team meets with clients in the community where they live with a goal of engaging effectively with them. One of the goals of the RED team is for their clients to establish stable housing in the community. When it is determined that an individual is going to be permanently disabled the RED team works to support the SSI application process.
3. MCDHS assesses exempt individuals to determine whether they may benefit from some form of treatment or therapy to improve their ability to work. This may include participation in reasonable medical care, and/or rehabilitation programs such as physical therapy and mental health counseling. Once the disability review has been completed a Restoration to Self Sufficiency Plan (RSSP) is developed with the participation of the affected individual. This RSSP treatment plan is reviewed and signed by the client and then monitored for compliance. RSSP plans are currently tracked in an access database to ensure updated medical information is provided at the appropriate interval. When clients have complied with the RSSP and are still determined to be exempt a referral is made to the DART unit to begin the SSI process.
4. The Disability Assessment Review Team (DART) reviews medicals and related documentation for disability review, assists disabled applicants/recipients with online application for SSI/SSD and refers to the contracted advocacy unit to

follow up the application and appeal process. When necessary MCDHS provides legal assistance with SSI appeals. Individuals whose medical evaluations indicate that his/her employability status may improve with treatment or physical therapy will meet with MCDHS staff to develop a Restoration to Self Sufficiency Treatment Plan. Clients are required to adhere to the treatment plan which will be monitored

In addition, Monroe County has implemented SOAR training for case managers working for community based organizations and health care organizations that assist individuals with the SSI/SSA application process. SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access and Recovery (SOAR) are a SAMHSA funded initiative that helps to increase access to SSI/SSDI benefits for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. The SOAR Stepping Stones to Recovery training curriculum includes intensive training for case managers and entitlement specialists to assist applicants and gather evidence proactively. The goal is to present comprehensive documentation of the disability so that the application is approved without need for a hearing or appeal.

- 5. Employable adults who are ready to go work will be referred to one of our placement contracts to help them to plan and attain self-sufficiency. The district will utilize employment subsidies such as TEAP, Transitional Jobs, Healthcare Jobs, Green Jobs, Monroe County funded OJT, and tax credits to assist with job placement and incentivize employers.

Section 3.2 Orientation (Reference 18 NYCRR 385.5)

Check one of the following:

The district provides orientation in accordance with Dept. Reg. 385.5 and no additional information is provided at orientation.

In addition to the requirements outlined in Section 385.5 of the regulations, the district's orientation provides the following.

Monroe County provides literature and information in the orientation about Responsible Fatherhood Programs and services, free banking, bonding for convicted felons, nutrition programs, maintaining a healthy home (lead abatement, and asthma-prevention environment), community resources for cars, clothing, food, and computers.

Described below is the manner in which the district completes the required orientation for all applicants and recipients of Temporary Assistance (e.g., done in a group setting or individually or a combination of both), including the orientation procedure for exempt individuals and non-exempt individuals, if different.

Orientation is delivered initially at intake by the Employment Unit examiner and Sr. Examiner staff in a group setting for employable applicants. Orientation is handled individually by the Intake examiners for applicants who are exempt from job search requirements at that time. At recertification orientation is done individually. It is included as a part of job search orientation at intake and is piece of the recertification checklist the under-care teams utilize. The contracted assessment centers also provide clients with a comprehensive orientation as do all of our JRT and JS contracted providers. Orientation is given both verbally and in written form.

Section 3.3 Assessment and Employment Planning

Temporary Assistance Assessment (Reference 18 NYCRR 385.6 and 385.7)

a. Check one of the following:

[X] The district conducts assessments in accordance with 18 NYCRR 385.6(a) and 385.7(a) with no additional requirements.

[] In addition to the requirements outlined in 18 NYCRR 385.6(a) and 385.7(a), the district's assessment also includes the following elements: The MCDHS assessments do not include additional elements

b. A copy of the assessment tool used by the district is attached. Additional assessment tool(s) used by the district is (are):

Effective January 2012 the district will begin using a screening tool for TASA services for pregnant or parenting youth. MCDHS also utilizes Work Keys testing during the assessment period for clients who are interested in vocational education and or clients who are ready to be employed. Work Keys testing is administered by Rochester Works to identify an individual's competencies in various skill areas such as: following instructions, locating information, applied math, reading for content, etc. Participants can receive a bronze, silver, or gold certificate that has been marketed locally to employers as an employment readiness credential.

Test results can also serve as a predictor of success in vocational training or as a need for remediation.

c. Describe the local district procedure for the completion of an employment assessment: MCDHS applicants and recipients are assessed either by an assessment specialist at one of three contracted assessment centers or by an examiner in the MCDHS Employment Unit.

The assessment centers all follow the same basic processes for TANF eligible and Safety Net applicants or recipients.

1. Clients participate in a group orientation and receive an overview of the assessment process and are handed all forms including, the Employability Development Plan Part A. Questionnaire, Employability Development Plan

Supplement, Child Care Rights and Responsibilities, and Request for Supportive Services.

2. Clients then have an opportunity to fill out the EDP Part A, EDP Part A Supplement, and Request for Supportive Services.
3. Assessment specialist meets individually with each client to review the form, discuss any barriers and go over supportive services.
4. TANF eligible applicants fill out The Self-Directed Search after which they are administered the TABE test. TANF eligible recipients do not take the TABE test if they have taken it for us in the past and nothing has significantly changed to improve their scores. SN Non MOE applicants and recipients do not take the TABE test unless we need to determine eligibility for vocational education enrollment.
5. After the testing and self directed search clients are scheduled for a one on one appointment to: go over all information gathered, to discuss all program offerings, to request supportive services, and to discuss any barriers. The Assessment specialist enters the evaluation in WTWCMS and completes the optional sections on Veteran status, Criminal Background, Job History, and Health Status.
6. Clients who are determined to be medically exempt or work limited develop a restoration to self sufficiency plan and a time frame is established to re-determine employability. A 4005 form Notice of Employability is issued to apprise the clients of their employability status and advise them of their rights.
7. The assessment specialist along with input from the client develops an individualized Employment Plan including the assignment to work activities and authorization for supportive services.

Employability assessments conducted by MCDHS examiners are all done in a one on one setting. Examiners provide clients with an orientation and overview of their rights and responsibilities, supportive services, childcare, program offerings etc. MCDHS examiners use the EDP Part A, the EDP supplement, Childcare Rights and responsibilities, and Request for Supportive Services. MCDHS examiners do not administer any testing.

The MCDHS Examiner enters the evaluation in WTWCMS and completes the optional sections on Veteran status, Criminal Background, Job History, and Health Status.

Clients who are determined to be medically exempt or work limited develop a restoration to self sufficiency plan and a time frame is established to re-determine employability. A 4005 form Notice of Employability is issued to apprise the clients of their employability status and advise them of their rights. The Examiner along with input from the client develops an individualized Employment Plan including the assignment to work activities and authorization for supportive services.

- d. The qualifications of the employees administering the assessment tool(s) are at minimum: (Refer to requirements listed in 18 NYCRR 385.6(c) and 385.7(c))

The minimum requirements necessary to perform assessments are the same qualifications as those of the MCDHS examiner position.

- e. The district administrative unit or contractor responsible for conducting assessments is:

1. Career Systems Development
2. Baden St Settlement

- 3. Rochester Works
- 4. MCDHS Employment Unit

f. Applicants in households with dependent children are required to participate:
 Yes No

Applicants in households without dependent children are required to participate:
 Yes No

Temporary Assistance Employment Plans (Reference 18 NYCRR 385.6(b) and 385.7(b))

a. A copy of the district's employment plan is attached and:
 The district completes employment plans in accordance with 18 NYCRR 385.6(b) and 385.7(b) and no additional information is contained in the plan.

In addition to the requirements outlined in 18 NYCRR 385.6(b) and 385.7(b), the employment plan includes:

b. The district administrative unit or contractor that develops employment plans is (list only if different from those performing assessments):

c. The qualifications of the employees developing employment plans are (list only if different from the requirements for those performing assessments):

Section 3.4 Participation Rates and Work Activities (Reference 18 NYCRR 385.8 and 385.9)

a. Described below is how the district plans to meet federal and State Temporary Assistance participation rate requirements. Included is the weekly hours standard participation requirement for individuals in the different case and household types, along with the typical time period it takes for nonexempt individual to be engaged in activities for both newly opened cases and individuals who status changed from exempt to nonexempt. Information regarding engaging exempt individuals is entered in Section 3.6

- 1. Non –exempt individuals who apply for assistance in Monroe County are immediately referred to supervised job search and job club activities during the application period. Applicants go through the complete employability assessment within 5 days of providing all required documentation to determine eligibility. The required number of contacts for SN single applicant is 15 per week and 8 can be on line applications. The required number for Applicants of TANF or SNMOE

is 10 and 5 may be on line applications. The numbers are flexible depending upon individual circumstances, work experience and type of employment sought.

2. TANF and SN family assessments in some cases are a 2 day process including all testing and completion of the Employability Development Plan.
The assignment to activity is made on the second day of the assessment and clients are given a start date within 7 days.
3. TANF and SN family recipients are assigned to a minimum of 30 hours of work activity regardless of the age of the children in the household and sometimes are assigned to 40 hours of activity depending upon the individual circumstances.
4. Assessments for SN recipients with no dependents are completed in one day and the individual is assigned to a work activity within 7 days depending upon the availability of work experience openings.
5. Individuals in households without children are typically assigned to a total of 35 hours of activity. Most single individuals participate in a combination of work experience plus job skills training. The number of hours of work depends on the size of their public assistance grant plus food stamp allotment and the non-core activity depends on their skill level.
6. Monroe County has stationed staff from our day care referral agency on site to facilitate obtaining day care in time to participate in activities and or to accept employment.
7. Monroe County promotes up front diversion to Intake staff, community advocates and applicants. This includes training community advocates, vendors, staff and clients on opportunities to divert applicants through supportive services, rent, heat and utility payments, and landlord negotiations among others.
8. Monroe County and Rochester Works Inc have partnered to expand our training and career center located at our 691 St Paul St office. The Training and Career Center offers services to applicants and recipients through its state of the art computer center. Rochester Works administers work keys testing and certificates as well as individualized job skills training plans designed to compliment clients' core work activities and job search.
9. The District has increased work experience offerings over the past several years by contracting with non-profit agencies to manage large community WEP programs. The current work experience management contracts are Baden St Settlement, SWAN Community Center, Rochester Landscape Technicians, Rochester Rehabilitation Options, Rochester City School District Careers, Catholic Family Center, and Grace Urban Ministries. Each WEP management program oversees at least 100 WEP slots and combines WEP with other activities on site. RCSD Careers, Rochester Landscape Tech, CFC, and Grace Urban Ministries all have JRT and educational programs on site or close by. Rochester Rehab, Baden St, and SWAN have computer labs on site. The District is in the process of consolidating all WEP management contracts into one contract to manage 1200 WEP openings throughout the community. The contract

requirements include the implementation of a robust computer software program that has attendance and job matching capabilities that is adaptable to use for WEP management as well as assist with job placement.

10. In addition the county is continuing our efforts in job placement and retention by continuing to contract with providers who have shown results in this area. Career Start, Rochester Works, and Career Systems have had significant success working with the public assistance population. Subsidized employment has proven to be an excellent way to increase job entries and retention.
11. Contracted provider agencies all have differing strengths and specialties which permit staff options for referral of individuals with barriers to employment such as, mental illness, chemical dependency, lack of English or other basic skills. This allows the county to provide more employment opportunities for some work limited individuals
12. MCDHS obtained funding for Transitional Jobs, Healthcare Jobs, and Green Jobs subsidized employment. This funding has allowed us to create jobs in the community for TA clients in demand occupations. The training component for the transitional jobs is a challenge for local employers.

- b. Described below is a description of how the district uses work participation management reports available through Cognos or other reports and activities to monitor district progress toward meeting work participation requirements and ensuring full engagement by adults in work or work preparation activities.

Monroe County DHS Employment Unit primarily utilizes current Employment Reports in COGNOS 8 to identify clients who: are not participating, are under-enrolled, need reassignment to a new activity, or need a code change.

For those purposes the following reports are reviewed at least monthly by supervisors and the work on those cases is distributed to the task group that generates appointments, code changes, and conciliations.

Activity Status of Adults

Adults in Work Experience

Job Search/Readiness > 6 weeks

Adults in Vocational Education 9 Months or More

Adults in Sanction Status/Process

Exempted Caretaker of Child < 1 Exceeding 12 Month Limit

Adults with No Activity Status > 3 Months

MCDHS Employment Unit utilizes the **Adults with Earned Income**

Reports to ensure that ABEL budgeting and WTWCMS schedules accurate

The following reports are cross-referenced:

Adults with Current Employment Schedule

Adults with Budgeted Earned Income and Current Employment Schedule and

Adults with Budgeted Income and No Current Employment Schedule

Adults with No Budgeted Income and Current Employment Schedule

MCDHS also utilizes the COGNOS 8 **monthly detail reports for SN Non MOE, TANF, and SN MOE** to identify and analyze which individuals are engaged but not counting in order to engage them fully if possible and increase participation.

The Employment Unit utilizes the following COGNOS 8 reports found in the WTWCMS folder in order to correct and update schedules and cases in WTWCMS, **PA Clients with Schedules Associated with FS Case Numbers Report** and **Clients with Manual Folders**.

The WTWCMS folder report **Job Skills** is useful for identifying candidates to refer for specific job openings.

MCDHS Employment Unit looks at the WTWCMS listing reports **No Sanctions Imposed**, and **Client No Shows** to impose and keep track of non-compliance actions.

The report **Omission of Hours** is used to ensure that attendance and non-attendance is being entered timely.

The **ARES system** generates reports that are used to track drug and alcohol rehabilitation completions to then refer to additional employment activities and change employment coding.

Reports are pulled from the **RSSP database** to initiate disability reviews and engage formerly exempt individuals in employment activities or refer to SSI if appropriate

- c. Describe the extent to which the district requires Non-Temporary Assistance Food Stamp applicants and recipients to participate in FSET work activities. If the district is not mandating FSET work activity assignments, please describe how NTA Food Stamp work registrants are informed of the services available, upon request, for assistance with job search activities. Please note: At a minimum, districts are required to make available job search as an FSET activity to food stamp applicants and recipients.

Non-exempt Food Stamp work registrants are referred to Career Systems Employability Job Readiness Training and Job Search Program to complete job search requirements. The program includes 5 days of job readiness and up to 15 weeks of supervised job search activities. Participants are provided with transportation in the form of a monthly bus pass.

- d. The allowable work activities that are available in the social services district are listed and defined as follows. An “X” in the appropriate column indicates the activity is available for individuals receiving Family Assistance (FA), Safety Net Assistance for households with children (SNF), Safety Net Assistance for households without children (SNA), and/or Food Stamp (FS) benefits.

If a column is blank it indicates that the activity is not available for that household/case type.

| FA | SNF | SNA | FS | Activity | Definition |
|----|-----|-----|----|--------------------------------------|---|
| X | X | X | X | Unsubsidized Employment | Full time or part time employment in the public or private sector that is not subsidized by TANF or any other public program (excluding employer tax credits). Unsubsidized employment includes self employment and/or paid internships. |
| X | X | X | | Subsidized Private Sector Employment | Employment in the private sector for which the employer receives a subsidy from TANF or other public funds (excluding tax credits) to offset some or all of the wages and costs of employing and training a recipient in accordance with New York State Social Services Law 336-e. Subsidized private sector employment will include positions subsidized through grant diversion/TEAP, supported employment programs, and paid college work study programs at private institutions. Individuals participating in subsidized private sector employment are paid wages and receive the same benefits as unsubsidized employees who perform similar work. An employment situation will be subsidized for up to the full amount of wages/benefits provided to the program participant and will be subsidized for the length of time as determined appropriate by the State or social services district. |
| X | X | X | | Subsidized Public Sector Employment | Employment in the public sector for which the employer receives a subsidy from TANF or other public funds (excluding tax credits) to offset some or all of the wages and costs of employing and training a recipient. Subsidized public sector employment will include positions subsidized through grant diversion/TEAP, supported employment programs, and paid college work study programs at public institutions. Individuals participating in subsidized public sector employment, and work study unless otherwise permitted under a federal work study program, are paid wages and receive the same benefits as unsubsidized employees who perform similar work. An employment situation will be subsidized for up to the full amount of wages/benefits provided to the program participant and will be subsidized for the length of time as determined appropriate by the State or social services district. |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---------------------------|--|
| X | X | X | X | Work Experience | <p>Unpaid work performed at a public or not-for-profit organization to enable participants who cannot find unsubsidized employment to improve his or her employability. Work experience provides participants with an opportunity to acquire the general skills, training, knowledge and work habits necessary to obtain and retain employment. Participation in work experience includes training required for the participant to complete the work experience assignment. For example, an individual who is expected to provide clerical support in a government agency may be provided training to develop or refine filing and data entry skills as needed to perform the tasks required as part of the work activity assignment.</p> <p>In addition to those components noted above, work experience will include unpaid internships that are part of any non-graduate student's education curriculum. (Note: Paid internships are to be reported as employment.)</p> |
| X | X | X | | On-the-Job Training (OJT) | <p>Training in a public or private sector employment setting during which the participant receives work-essential paid training while he or she is engaged in productive work that provides the knowledge and skills essential to attain full and Adequate performance of the job.</p> <p>OJT will be unsubsidized (for which the employer does not receive a subsidy) or subsidized using TANF funds or other funds to offset the cost of the training provided to the participant. A subsidized OJT will be subsidized for up to the full cost of providing such training and wages/benefits provided to the program participant. Positions will be subsidized for the length of time determined appropriate by the State or social services district. OJT is distinct from subsidized employment due to the fact that the individual must participate in workplace training to attain full and adequate job performance and the subsidy provided is intended to offset the cost of such training.</p> |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|-------------------|--|
| X | X | X | | Community Service | <p>A structured program in which participants perform work for the direct benefit of the community under the auspices of public or nonprofit organizations. Community service placements must be projects that serve a useful community purpose in fields such as health, social services, environmental protection, education, urban and rural redevelopment, welfare, public recreation, public facilities, public safety, and childcare. Community Service programs are designed to improve the employability of participants not otherwise able to obtain unsubsidized employment. Participation in community service may include training that is directly required for the participant to complete the community service assignment. For example, an individual who is expected to provide clerical support to a food pantry may be provided training to develop or refine filing and data entry skills.</p> <p>Community service assignments will primarily be voluntary in nature including participation in VISTA, AmeriCorps, and unpaid volunteer activities at a school, Head Start programs, religious or faith-based institutions, community organizations or a nonprofit or public agency, but will also include such mandated participation when court ordered. Participation in activities to support these organizations is deemed to provide a service to the community. In those instances where the participation could meet the federal definition of work experience or community service and the district or program provider would like to have another recipient provide childcare for the community service individual, such hours of work may be reported as participation in community service.</p> |
| X | X | X | X | Job Search | <p>The act of seeking or obtaining employment or preparing to seek or obtain employment and will include looking for suitable job openings in a group or individual setting, making contact with potential employers, learning appropriate workplace expectations and behaviors in preparation for submitting job applications and interviewing, preparing to or applying for and/or interviewing for jobs and related activities.</p> |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|--|---|
| X | X | X | X | <p>Job Readiness Training Activities</p> | <p>Participation in programs that include seeking and preparing for work. JRT includes two types of activities: (1) traditional activities of resume preparation, training in interviewing skills, and instruction in workplace expectations, training in effective job seeking, including life skills training; and (2) activities that improve an individual's employability, such as substance abuse treatment, mental health treatment, or rehabilitation activities in which a qualified medical or mental health professional has certified that such treatment is necessary.</p> <p>Traditional JRT activities will include: resume preparation, training in interview skills, instruction in workplace expectations, training in effective job seeking, life skills essential to workplace success, time management, goal setting, budgeting, basic math and literacy skills, household management, interpersonal skills, decision making skills, anger management, parenting skills when it has been determined that such training could help reduce unplanned work leave or apprehension toward entering employment.</p> <p>For TANF and SNA MOE families, JRT also includes substance abuse and other treatment and rehabilitative services that are required for individuals who are unable to work or individuals whose employability and employment retention requires such services. Such services, which should be reported on WTWCMS as such, will be deemed within WRTS participation rate logic to be JRT for recipients of TANF and SNA MOE but will be deemed to be Community Service for recipients of SNA non-MOE, include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical health treatment and rehabilitation services including attending necessary physical therapy, and doctor appointments. Such treatment will include medical, behavioral and other treatment necessary for individuals suffering from substance abuse (current and former users) with such required treatment ranging from detoxification services to after care/abstinence maintenance. • Mental health services including therapy, counseling, and other services to address mental or emotional disorders that can interfere with an individual's daily life functions, ability to work, looking for work or the ability to retain employment. |
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| | | | | |
|---|---|---|----------------------|---|
| X | X | X | Vocational Education | Vocational education is defined as an organized educational program that directly relates to the preparation of individuals for current or emerging occupations that require training other than a baccalaureate or advanced degree. Vocational education does not generally include basic or remedial education or ESL but may include work focused general education and language instruction that is a regular or integral part of a vocational education program. Social services districts are responsible for ensuring that any such remedial education or ESL is a regular part of the program for participants with similar skill sets as the TANF/SNA MOE client, is determined necessary by the program provider, and is limited in hours to less than one half of program participation. Vocational education programs include the completion of activities that provide individuals the knowledge and skills to perform a specific trade, occupation or vocation. Vocational education must be provided by an education or training organization. |
| X | X | X | Job Skills Training | Training or education in job skills to improve a participant's employability, to ensure clients have the basic skills competencies required by employers to support job entry and/or to advance or adapt to the changing demands of the workplace. Where identified as needed such training may include the development of basic workplace skills including professional workplace behaviors and decision making skills. Job skills training may include customized or technical training designed to provide participants with additional workplace skills, post secondary education courses leading to a bachelor's or other advanced degree or other training included under the definition of vocational education training. Job skills training may include literacy instruction, English language instruction or other basic education for an individual who has already obtained a high school diploma or equivalency when determined from a client's assessment that such instruction is needed to improve the participant's employability. |

| | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Education Training | Education directly related to employment for a recipient who has not received a high school diploma or equivalency must be related to a specific occupation, job or job offer or otherwise determined based on a client assessment as necessary to improve the participant's employability to support job entry, retention or advancement. Education directly related to employment may include courses designed to provide the knowledge and skills for general or specific occupations or work settings to ensure clients have the basic skills competencies required by employers and may also include adult basic education, English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction and education leading to a GED or HS equivalency diploma as determined as necessary to improve the participant's job opportunities in potential occupations. Where identified as needed such training may include the development of basic workplace skills including professional workplace behaviors and decision making skills. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Secondary School | Regular attendance in accordance with the requirements of the secondary school or a course of study at a secondary school or other State accredited institution leading to a general equivalence diploma (GED), in the case of a recipient who has not completed secondary school or received a certificate of general equivalence. Secondary school participation may include general adult basic education or ESL if it is linked to attending secondary school or leading to a GED as determined necessary by the educational institution. Secondary School or GED programs that routinely include ESL, career training, alternative school, tutoring, dropout prevention, teen pregnancy or parenting programs as a requirement of program participation as determined by the educational institution will also be permitted. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Provision of Childcare for Individual Participating in Community Service | Providing unpaid childcare to enable another Temporary Assistance (TANF/SNA MOE funded) recipient to participate in a community service program. |
| | | | Other | Any work activity that does not meet the criteria of any of the above countable activities constitutes participation that is not countable toward federal and state participation rates. |

Local District Job Search Procedures:

The district assigns Temporary Assistance applicants to Job Search. Yes No

If yes, please describe the local district procedure for TA Applicant Job Search, including the required number of job search contacts and hours per week assigned. Also include a description of how often applicants are generally required to report job search outcomes and if activities other than job search are routinely expected of TA applicants during the application period.

1. The Employment Unit front door diversion group along with 1 district JOBS staff operate the upfront diversion activities for applicants of TANF, SN, and SNMOE, assistance.
2. The applicant job begins with the intake examiner referring all non –exempt TA applicants to Job Search Orientation.
3. The applicants are issued a monthly unlimited ride bus pass to participate and informed regarding their responsibility to arrange for childcare if necessary and are given all childcare forms at that time. The childcare resource and referral agency has staff on site at DHS to assist applicants in securing 2 legal daycare openings when needed.
4. At Job Search orientation applicants are: informed of their rights and responsibilities regarding job search, are given brief job readiness overview, are provided with current employment postings, given a tour of our on-site one stop center, given information on community resources, and frequently meet with employers on site.
5. Once the applicants have been oriented they are given their job search assignments which consist of: 10 contacts per week for families and 15 contacts per week for singles. MCDHS currently accepts online job search contacts and faxed applications for one third of the job search and the rest must be in person. The percentage of online versus in person applications can be flexible on a case by case basis depending upon the job market at the time, the nature of the jobs, and the applicants' qualifications.
6. Applicants who are ready to go to work and who have skills that an employer is looking for can be referred to Rochester Works or Career Start LLC for direct job placement.
7. The applicants are given return appointments for a job club that they must attend weekly and provide verification of their job search activity.

The district assigns TA recipients to Job Search. Yes No

If yes, please describe the local district procedures for TA Job Search, including the required number of job search contacts and hours per week assigned. Also include a description of how often recipients are generally required to report job search outcomes and who in the agency is responsible for monitoring the job search.

1. TA recipients are assigned to various providers to assist them with job search. This is in addition to the core work activity that clients are assigned to and the number of hours and contacts varies by program. Contracted job search providers meet weekly with job search

participants to discuss progress with the clients, assist with referrals and guidance and to review reasonableness and completeness of the job search attestation log.

2. TA recipients are assigned to self attested job search during times that their regular assigned work experience or training program is closed for days that are not counted as holidays. The minimum required number of hours per week is 30 and the number of contacts may vary depending upon the time the clients attest that they have actually spent on each individual job search contact on their log.

Section 3.5 Job Development

Yes No the district conducts or receives job development activities to expand job opportunities for TA and FS clients, either directly or by contract or agreement.

If yes, the district participates in job development activities in the following manner:

District staff contact employers to solicit jobs for Temporary Assistance participants. Below is the description of how this is done, including number of staff, frequency of contacts, etc:

District contracts or has an agreement with another agency to contact employers and solicit jobs for Temporary Assistance participants. Below is the description of how this is done, including number of staff, frequency of contacts.

1. MCDHS contracts with a number of providers who have job developers on staff.
2. Rochester Works is a contracted job development and placement provider co-located with DHS on site at the 691 St Paul St. Rochester Works operates a one stop career center at the MCDHS office with staff that provides a combination of services including job development and placement.
3. Career Start LLC is a contracted provider that markets subsidized employment and tax incentives to area employers to place DHS clients in full time employment. Career Start draws from a pool of clients who are participating in Work Experience and from referrals as part of the employability development plan.

OTDA Jobs Program staff are charged with job development as indicated in Section 2.3. Additional information, if any, is described below:

Section 3.6 Training Approval & Activity Enrollment Policy (Reference 18 NYCRR 385.9)

- a. Describe how the district identifies appropriate education program providers for program services of Adult Basic Education, GED preparation, and English Language Instruction, that are available to clients whose assessment indicates such services would be an appropriate work activity assignment:

MCDHS completes a biennial process for local area educational providers to apply to be approved for referrals. Providers submit information regarding their accreditation, staffing, and numbers served, outcome measures as well as attendance tracking and student performance policies. Programs that demonstrate reasonable performance measures and comply with attendance tracking will be considered. Programs must agree to gather and report attendance weekly to MCDHS on any of our clients in program.

- b. Describe how the district identifies appropriate education program providers of Vocational Education and Job Skills Training programs that are available to clients whose assessment indicates such services would be an appropriate work activity assignment:

MCDHS completes a biennial process for local area Vocational education providers to apply to be approved for referrals. Providers submit information regarding their accreditation, staffing, numbers served, outcome measures including percentage of enrollees who complete program and percentage of graduates who obtain employment. They must also submit attendance tracking and student performance policies. Programs that demonstrate reasonable performance measures and comply with attendance tracking will be considered. Programs must agree to gather and report attendance weekly to MCDHS on any of our clients in program.

- c. Describe the process and guideline workers follow to ensure that individuals who have not attained a basic literacy level and/or have not attained a high school diploma are offered the opportunity to participate in an educational activity:

Clients who have not attained a HS credential or are in need of ESOL or literacy education are offered the opportunity to engage in educational activities during the employment assessment.

- d. Describe the district's process and policy, including the guideline workers follow, when determining whether participation in educational activities is approved for individuals who have not attained a high school diploma who are interested in participating in an educational activity; also include in this section instances when the agency would deny participation in education activities:

Clients who read and perform math below an 8th grade level are encouraged to participate in educational activities. Clients performing above those levels are encouraged to participate in GED or if they are not interested in GED are informed of vocational education offerings, and/or job readiness and placement opportunities.

- e. Describe what steps the district will take to increase or maintain high levels of engagement by participants in vocational education and job skills training programs. Such steps may include increased use of such contracted services through local training providers, including WIA funded services and State Education Department funded training programs. Districts should consider additional blending of activities such as work experience or employment with job skills training in fields that would improve participants' ability to obtain employment or increase wages or hours of employment.

MCDHS has a close partnership with our local WIA agency, Rochester Works which is co-located at our 691 St Paul office. Rochester Works administers Work Keys and Key Train to assess client's abilities in specific work areas and provide remedial computer based training to prepare clients to enter vocational education and job skill programs. MCDHS has contractual relationships with Monroe Community College, Rochester Landscape technicians, and Rochester City School District to be able to combine internships, work experience, GED, job skill and vocational education right at the training location. MCDHS refers to local providers for case management to youth ages 17 to 21 on their own cases and attending educational, job skill, and vocational education to help ensure successful outcomes.

- f. Education and training providers are evaluated by the following standards:

1. Education providers must be licensed by the state of NY.
2. Attendance is documented and reported weekly and accurately.
3. Participants in GED, ESOL, and ABE achieve appropriate educational attainment milestones in a timeframe that is reasonable given the individuals' abilities.
4. Vocational training offered continues to be for demand occupations in the local labor market.
5. The Voc Ed provider can demonstrate the successful completion for a minimum of 75 % of enrollees and a placement rate of 80% for completers.

- g. The district procedure for advising participants of approved training providers is:

Training and education providers frequently address DHS clients at Job Search Orientation, Job Club, and all of our case-management groups to market their programs. Marketing materials for all training providers are posted and available as handouts throughout the waiting rooms, interviewing areas, and job search rooms. Applicants and recipients are made aware of the possibility of training or education through the orientation and assessment process. Copies of approved program listings will be available in the orientation area and are available for study at the client's request. Marketing materials and copies of the approved training lists are distributed to contracted assessment centers and community agencies that serve TANF and Safety Net recipients.

- h. Describe the district's process and policy for determining whether or not a participant is approved/assigned to participate in job skills or vocational education activities:

Recipients must achieve the minimum entrance requirements established by the training program as documented by their testing instrument.

A recipient who has completed an approved vocational training program in the past 2 years without obtaining employment will not be approved for further training unless administratively approved. A recipient seeking administrative approval should submit a written request to their Employment Unit worker documenting why the program they recently completed did not result in employment and a reason why they feel additional training will have a more positive result. This will be forwarded for review to the Employment Coordinator.

A recipient who enrolls in an unapproved vocational training program and refuses to withdraw will be denied training related expenses, but may be deferred from other required employment-related activities for the duration of the current session. Concurrent work activities may be assigned.

- i. The district procedure for notifying participants of approval for training or enrollment in a work activity is:

Recipients and applicants will be notified verbally and in writing of their program assignment and the minimum standards for participation in that program. This notification will generally take place after the development of the Employability Plan.

Recipients and applicants will receive a Notice of Decision informing them of any supportive services that are approved to receive.

All work activity enrollment, approval, required number of hours in program, and duration of approval will be detailed in the Employability Development Plan

- j. In accordance with 18 NYCRR 385.9 (b), regardless of whether the college program is approved for the participant as an employment work activity, the district will approve as a work activity a work-study, internship, externship or other work placement that is part of a non-graduate student's curriculum unless one or more of the following conditions applies as check below:

[X] It has been determined that the student voluntarily quit a job or reduced earnings to qualify for initial or increased Public Assistance.

[X] A job or on-the-job training position that is comparable to the work-study, internship,

externship or other work placement cannot reasonably be expected to exist in the private, public, or not-for-profit sector.

- [X] The student is not maintaining a cumulative C average (or the equivalent). The district may disregard this provision if the student documents an undue hardship.
- [X] The institution or student fails to monitor and report information regarding the student's attendance and performance as required.
- [X] The student fails to progress toward the completion of a course of study without good cause, as determined by the district.
- [X] The student has previously enrolled in work-study, internship, or other work placement and failed to complete the work placement without good cause as determined by the district.
- [] Additional reasons as stated below:

- k. In order to verify continued exempt status, the local district will monitor the high school attendance of 16-18 year old students in the following manner:

MCDHS requests school attendance at Intake, recertification and review for each school age child. The district has an MOU with The Rochester City School District (the largest number of MCDHS youth attend RCSD) to provide monthly attendance for high school students through a computer match. We will continue to request verification for students in suburban school districts manually. All teenage heads of household on their own case are referred for case management services to agencies such as the Center for Youth Services, Hillside, Threshold, etc.

- l. The district's procedure for ensuring that an individual's health related limitations are accommodated when assigning the individual to a work activity is:

The individual's medical and or psychological evaluation is reviewed and considered when choosing a work activity and establishing the individual's Employment Plan. When the assignment is made to a work site the referral form documents the person's restrictions and is used to inform the site supervisor. The client's diagnosis is only shared when the client authorizes the release of that information in writing.

Section 3.7 Work Verification

Consistent with New York State's approved Work Verification Plan (WVP), and in accordance with the requirements established by the United States Department of Health and Human Services, districts must develop a quality assurance plan to ensure that the data reported, from which their work participation rates are derived, are accurate. The plan must include the district's procedure for monitoring reported scheduled and actual attendance in paid employment and unpaid work activities and the controls in place to ensure that reported exemption statuses resulting in federal exclusions from the work participation rate calculation are accurately made, work eligible individuals are correctly identified, hours of attendance reported are accurate and documented, data entry is accurate and that the district and its providers adhere to the approved work activity definitions and the determination of countable excused absences and holiday

reporting within federal limits. Each district must maintain documentation to verify what is being reported to NYS OTDA.

Each district must describe how it will conduct periodic self audits to determine that system entries are consistent with documentation in case files. The district must also explain how it will choose the sample size, select sample cases and establish the review period (no less frequently than semi-annually). The plan must indicate the district will maintain documentation on all pertinent findings produced through its self audit process and that case records for all reviewed cases will be available for State and other auditors in their review of the local work verification system for the standard 6 year period associated with such reviews.

After each self audit is completed, the district must submit a summary of findings for State review including specific information on each of the errors identified. In addition, when monitoring reveals substantial problems, the district must describe the corrective action it will take.

The Quality Assurance plan must explain how staff will:

- Ensure that documentation of wages and actual hours of employment is verified and accurately projected/reported and present in the case file, is actual and is projected correctly;
- Ensure that the documentation for actual hours, supervision/attendance, excused absences, and holidays in other activities is present in the case file;
- Assess whether participation in the work activities reported for work eligible individuals meets the approved federal definition for the activity;
- Assess that the data entered into either WTWCM, NYCWAY or other automated system used for reporting work activities is accurate, including actual hours, excused absences and holidays; and is based on documentation in the case record; and
- Ensure that documentation necessary to determine an individual to be exempt due to being the caretaker of a disabled household member (Employability Code 38), and/or parent or caretaker relative of a child in the household under 12 months of age, (Employability code 31), is present in the case file and that individuals meet the exempt status based on the required documentation.

Please describe the process the district will use to review district worker collected documentation and data entry of the above listed elements (include a description of how a case sample for review will be selected, sample size and frequency of reviews):

Monroe County DHS will assess and verify that work eligible individuals are correctly identified, hours of attendance reported by providers is accurate and documented, data entry is accurate and that district and providers adhere to approved district and State policy in terms of work activity definitions and determination of excused absence reporting.

MCDHS will perform a random sample of 10 cases per quarter for paid work activities. The temporary assistance case files will be reviewed. Hours of employment will be verified through

receipt of pay stubs, employer verification forms, and direct phone contact with the employer documented in case notes. The review will ensure the hours of employment on the ABEL budget are consistent with the hours reported on WTWCMS and documentation is in the file to support hours reported on WTWCMS and that the scheduled hours on WTWCMS is consistent with the documentation.

Monroe County DHS will perform a random sample of 25 cases per quarter for participation in unpaid work activities. The employment Unit master files will be reviewed. Actual hours of attendance will be documented by attendance sheets showing actual hours of attendance, any excused absences during the month, any unexcused absences during the month, and holiday time. The review will ensure the actual hours of attendance reported on the monthly attendance sheets has been correctly reported on WTWCMS, excused absences and holiday time are documented in the case file and correctly reported on WTWCMS in accordance with federal limitations, and that documentation of actual hours of attendance is accurate and matches the hours of participation reported on WTWCMS by district or provider staff.

MCDHS will perform a random sample of 10 cases per quarter in which a case member is reported as an employability code 38-needed in the home fulltime to care for a disabled household member. The temporary assistance case file will be reviewed to ensure there is presence of medical documentation to support the exemption and that the documentation has a timeframe for the exemption and that the individual is the appropriate caretaker.

MCDHS will perform a random sample of 10 cases per quarter in which a case member is reported as an employability code 31-caretaker of a child under the age of 12 months. The temporary assistance case file will be reviewed to ensure there is a birth certificate present to verify the child under the age of one.

MCDHS will perform a random sample of 10 cases per quarter in which a case member is reported to be incapacitated to determine if s/he remains incapacitated or is now a work eligible person. The temporary assistance case file will be reviewed to ensure there is presence of medical documentation to support the exemption and that the documentation has a timeframe for the exemption

A summary/management report using the OTDA recommended format will be prepared following each review period and will be forwarded to Kathleen Nagy at OTDA for review.

Please describe the process the district will use to review district worker collected documentation and data entry of the above listed elements (include a description of how a case sample for review will be selected, sample size and frequency of reviews):

1. The case reviews will be conducted by the MCDHS Employment Unit Supervisors
2. MCDHS Information systems select the random sample of cases for the review.
3. MCDHS will review a quarterly sample of 65 cases, ten from each of the required employability coded areas.
4. Upon completion of the case reviews the results will be compiled and summarized for the district to evaluate areas for improvement, corrective action, and will be submitted to the state as required.

Section 3.8 Requirements for Exempt Temporary Assistance Participants
(Reference 18 NYCRR 385.2 (e))

An exempt individual who has the potential to be restored to self-sufficiency through rehabilitation may be required to accept medical care to assist the individual in recovering from a mental or physical impairment, accept referral to and enrollment in a program of vocational rehabilitation, training, and/or other essential rehabilitation, and provide requested evidence that he/she is participating in the assigned program.

- a. Following is the district's procedure for determining if a disabled individual has the potential to be restored to self-sufficiency. This determination is different from the determination of the individual's disability exemption as covered in Section 6 of this plan. Included here is who (e.g., physician, employment worker, Temporary Assistance worker, local review team, etc.) makes or assists in this determination that an individual can restore or improve employability through treatment or other rehabilitative activities. Also included is the source and type of information used to make the determination (e.g., information from individual's physician, district contracted provider, specialist evaluation obtained as result of district referral, etc.):
 1. MCDHS contracts with Industrial Medicine Associates via the NY State contract to provide medical evaluations, psychological evaluations, and IQ testing for individuals to determine if they have the potential to be restored to self-sufficiency. The individual also has the right to provide documentation from their own practitioner as specified in 18 NYCRR 385.2 within the allowable time frames.
 2. Currently the determination of exemption, and/or restoration to self sufficiency is made by the Disability Assessment Review Team, the TA Supervisors and Sr. Examiners, or the Employment Unit staff with consultation from medical or mental health professionals who have involvement with the individual.
 3. MCDHS has dedicated staff on the D.A.R.T. team whose function is to review medicals, communicate with clients, the TA workers, Employment workers, medical professionals involved in the case. They make the disability determinations and develop plans to restore individuals to employability when appropriate or to refer to SSI application facilitators.
 4. When additional functional or a psycho-social evaluations are indicated a referral will be made to ACCESS, Rochester Rehabilitation, or LDA to obtain those services.
- b. Following is the district's procedure for developing a treatment plan and for referring the participant to appropriate treatment, etc. Please be specific:
 1. In the case of substance abuse treatment MCDHS contracts with an outside agency to provide 4 CASAC s on site at MCDHS to evaluate the need for treatment and the level of care needed. A referral is then made to a treatment provider and the plan is entered into the ARES system which serves as the instrument for tracking compliance and progress.

2. For individuals who are participating in substance abuse treatment and are employable an assessment and Employability plan is completed and when possible the clients are assigned to a work activity in addition to their treatment program.
 3. As the individual progresses the plan is revised and the work activity requirements increase.
 4. MCDHS currently has 1 TA team specializing in cases with substance abuse problems and Employment has one examiner working with high risk low success clients in the RED team
 5. MCDHS staff dedicated to the disability review process review medical evaluations to determine whether to work with clients to restore them to employability or to assist them in obtaining SSI. Whenever necessary the staff will seek input from: the TA workers, Employment workers, medical professionals or any case managers involved in the cases to gain a better understanding of the clients' situations. Disability Review examiner staff will develop plans together with the clients. Plans may include such activities as: participation in any treatment programs recommended in their medical evaluations, physical or mental health therapy, and Vocational rehabilitation activities, working with case-managers, and/or participating in regular group meetings.
 6. TANF recipients may be referred to the LIVES program or VOC to work with the client, provide support, help with goal setting, and encourage progress.
- c. Following is the district's procedure for tracking the participant's compliance with the treatment plan, including who in the district is responsible for monitoring compliance. Include elements such as monthly confirmation of attendance at rehabilitation or other factors to judge participation and progress, along with how often the treatment plan is updated.
1. Substance abuse treatment is tracked regularly in the ARES system which is updated monthly by treatment providers.
 2. Treatment such as physical therapy or mental health is tracked regularly by examiners on the Disabled Unit through use of the Restoration to Self Support Plans.
 3. Clients with active cases on the case-management teams, RED, or Transitional Housing are monitored by their case-managers.

Section 3.9 Strategies/Procedures for Increasing Program Attendance

Describe district policies and/or procedures in place to reduce the amount of time participants fail to participate in work activities, including absences that are with good cause:

MCDHS plans to increase attendance and participation by:

Reviewing the performance of contracted providers to determine which ones have the best performance and will replicate where possible and remediate the weaker performers.

Section 3.10 Strategies/Procedures for Engaging Sanctioned Temporary Assistance Participants

District has no specific strategies to engage sanctioned participants.

District attempts to engage sanctioned participants as soon as they are sanctioned using the following strategies:

MCDHS employment workers send newly sanctioned individuals a letter inviting them to come in and meet with them to work on resolving the sanction. They refer them directly to job developers because in many instances a client won't participate in a program but will go to work if someone connects them directly to employment.

District attempts to engage sanctioned participants when the durational period of the sanction is completed using the following strategies:

MCDHS sends the client out the 4231 form Option to End Your Sanction offering clients an opportunity to contact the Employment Unit to receive instructions on their next steps to comply and end the sanction.

District attempts to engage sanctioned participants during different times in the sanction period using the following strategies:

Section 3.11 Diversion Strategies:

District has no specific diversion strategies.

District's diversion strategies are described below:

MCDHS offers job search orientation, job club, and on site career services to help all applicants of public assistance and food stamps to find employment prior to completing during the application process. Additional services offered at job search orientation, and job club are:

- Background checks
- Assistance with legal issues through the Judicial Process Commission,
- Bonding for convicted felons through DOL,
- Financial literacy information
- EITC Outreach
- VITA referrals
- Assistance with child support

Direct job matching through our career center and employment contracts
Access to computers and internet daily in our onsite Career Center
Basic computer training daily in our onsite Career Center
Immediate referrals and access to Interview attire through MOU with the
Volunteers of America Working Wardrobe
Referrals to WIC
Employers interviewing on site
Resumes typed and copied
MCDHS offers one time only assistance payments for: rent, energy,
transportation, car insurance or repairs, tools, etc. to avoid ongoing assistance.

Section 4 Support Services (Reference 18 NYCRR 385.4)

Section 4.1 For Temporary Assistance and Non-Temporary Assistance Food Stamp Applicants and Recipients in Work Activities

- a. The social services district will provide childcare in accordance with the childcare section of the district's Child and Family County Services Plan. The district will also provide to participants the following allowances which the district deems necessary for the individual to participate in orientation, assessment, employment planning, work activities and activities to restore self sufficiency:
 1. a monthly unlimited ride all zone bus pass or if necessary the district will provide cash in lieu of a bus pass for individuals who own a vehicle and bus travel is impractical. The district issues cash allowance for transportation in the same amount as the cost of a monthly buss pass, fifty six dollars.
 2. Monroe County has a Memorandum of understanding with The Volunteers of America Working Wardrobe (VOA) to provide clothing The agreement states The VOA will furnish clients with up to 3 appropriate outfits for job interview attire or for clients to begin or maintain employment. Under the MOU Volunteers of America will also conduct one on one consultations and monthly dressing for success, grooming and appearance workshops.
 3. MCDHS will provide participants with a Clothing Allowance in the amount of \$150 when needed to secure or maintain employment or when essential for other assigned employment activities.
 4. The district will assist participants in need of supplies and or books with a maximum allowance of \$500 when necessary to secure or maintain employment or for other assigned employment activities such as training.
 5. MCDHS will assist participants in need of licensing or testing fees that are job specific and are necessary to secure or retain employment. The district will authorize a maximum allowance of \$300 for this purpose.
 6. MCDHS will provide participants with a maximum allowance of \$500 for the purchase of tools necessary to obtain, maintain, or resume employment

- b. The district will use the following approach to assist those participants who need transportation to and from a work activity site, including any applicable mileage reimbursement rate. OTDA policy establishes a mileage reimbursement rate of no less than the IRS established rate for medical/moving purposes unless the district can document an acceptable methodology for applying a lower rate. (The IRS medical/moving rate effective 7/1/11 is 23.5 cents per mile. Please refer to attachment A for further guidance.)

MCDHS provides clients who reside within walking distance of public transportation a monthly unlimited ride bus pass in order to participate in work activities. Individuals who own a vehicle and who could potentially take advantage of public transportation but would prefer to use their vehicle are provided with a gas allowance in lieu of a bus pass in the equivalent dollar amount of a \$56 monthly bus pass. Individuals who own a vehicle and are unable to utilize public transportation can be provided with a mileage allowance at the .55 per mile rate. Mileage is calculated to and from the assigned employment activity.

- c. The district will use the following approach for those individuals who reside in an area where public transportation is not available. OTDA policy establishes a distance not to exceed 2 miles as the maximum distance that the district can require a participant to walk to a work activity assignment. Please identify the maximum distance the participant would be expected to walk, if applicable:

There are no Monroe County Temporary Assistance recipients with documented transportation hardships that prevent active participation. Persons claiming these hardships will be counseled and offered available transportation and relocation services. It is the district's expectation that these individuals will make themselves available for employment programs.

The maximum distance a healthy employable individual would be required to walk is 1.5 miles which is the distance that several area school districts require students to live beyond before they are eligible to be bused. Individuals with disabilities will be accommodated.

- d. The district will provide the following services to assist individuals at risk of needing public assistance to improve their opportunities for employment or to maintain their employment:

MCDHS offers a single point of entry intake process for all programs. At intake MCDHS is able to provide the following supportive services for diversion of individuals and families at risk of needing public assistance:

1. Transportation (bus pass, gas allowance)
2. Vehicle repair
3. Clothing
4. Tools
5. Licensing fees
6. Applicant Job search program
7. One time rent payment
8. Heat and Utility payments

- 9. Assistance with certificates of relief
- 10. Background checks

- e. Following is a description of how the district accommodates the needs of non-English speaking participants in accessing employment activities and services (or see below):

The district contracts for interpreter services when an individual does not provide their own interpreter

- The district does not generally find the need to provide services to individuals who do not speak English (never or rarely have occasion to serve such individuals).

Section 4.2 Transitional Support Services

The district will provide the following supports and strategies to support job retention:

MCDHS has built paid performance incentives for retention into all job placement and job development contracts to encourage placement contractors to provide case management and additional retention services including financial literacy, VITA services, etc. MCDHS works closely with Child support enforcement to help our families get the support in place to help transition from welfare to self sufficiency. MCDHS utilizes TEAP, and Transitional jobs to encourage employers to work harder with participants to achieve better outcomes.

The district will provide the following support services, for up to 90 days after case closing, to individuals whose Temporary Assistance cases have closed due to employment:

The District will continue to provide transportation in the form of a monthly unlimited ride bus pass for 1 month following a case closing for TANF or SNMOE adults who transition off public assistance.

Section 4.3 Extended Support Services

As long as funding is available (through FFFS, etc.), the district will provide the following supportive services for individuals who are eligible under the TANF Services 200% of poverty eligibility guidelines.

The district will provide transitional childcare for up to 12 months for eligible households. The district will provide transitional Food Stamps and Medicaid to eligible households

Section 5 Temporary Assistance Conciliation and Dispute Resolution Procedures; Food Stamp “Good Cause” Determination Procedures (Reference 18 NYCRR 385.11 and 385.12)

Section 5.1 Conciliation

The district’s conciliation process is in accordance with 18 NYCRR 385.11(a). Conciliations are conducted (check all that apply, and describe the procedure.):

- in person
- by phone
- by mail, etc

Clients respond to the conciliation in one of the 3 methods above and the response is reviewed initially by an examiner and conference with a senior examiner or supervisor.

The good cause/willfulness determination is made by:

- client’s employment worker
- a supervisor
- separate entity

Clients respond to the conciliation in one of the 3 methods above and good cause/ willfulness is reviewed initially by an examiner and conferenced with a senior examiner or supervisor.

Section 5.2 Sanction

The district’s procedure for determining compliance for those individuals who wish to end their employment sanction (18 NYCRR 385.11(b), 385.12) is:

Individuals are determined to be in compliance on the day that they participate in a work activity. Individuals that are sanctioned for failure to participate in an assessment must complete the assessment process. Individuals who become employed full time are considered to be in compliance. Benefits are restored retroactive to the date the individual demonstrated a willingness to comply.

If an individual is determined after the fact to have been disabled at the time of the infraction the sanction will be removed and benefits restored retroactive to the date of sanction.

Section 5.3 Dispute Resolution

The district’s procedure for individuals who wish to dispute their work activity assignments, including individuals who dispute the district’s response to their request for health-related accommodations is conducted in accordance with 18 NYCRR 385.11(b).

The grievance is mediated by:

- an agreement with an independent entity

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- supervisory staff who are trained in mediation and who have no direct responsibility for the individual's case
- designated supervisory staff who have no direct responsibility for the individual's case and who are not trained in mediation

Section 5.4 Food Stamps Good Cause Determination

The district's procedure for determining if good cause exists for applicants and recipients who fail to comply with Food Stamp Program employment requirements is in accordance with 18 NYCRR 385.12(c) and is conducted:

- conciliation is offered in the same manner as described in Section 5.1 of this plan;
- by the Employment worker using available information, including that provided by the participant, if any, to determine if there was a good cause reason.
- Other (described below)

MCDHS does not offer conciliation for FS

Section 6 Disability Determinations (Reference 18 NYCRR 385.2(d))

The district's process for determining an individual's disabilities and/or work limitations is in accordance with 18 NYCRR 385.2(d). Check all that apply, and describe the process:

- District participates in the OTDA managed contract for independent medical evaluations
- District contracts directly with a physician to provide independent medical evaluations
- District accepts physician's statement provided by participant
- District accepts physician's statement provided by participant but refers for an independent evaluation when deemed necessary
- Other process

Employment Unit examiner staff, temporary assistance examiner staff, or contracted assessment staff may review medical documentation and make the determinations whether individuals are exempt, nonexempt, or work-limited and complete the 4005 accordingly. In situations where the individuals have previously been coded exempt and are being re-reviewed the medicals and determinations will be handled by the designated disability review examiner staff.

In situations that are very complicated or the individuals are contesting the determination MCDHS may request additional testing or evaluations from IMA or from another source such as LDA in order to make a determination.

The local process for reviewing the medical documentation to determine if the individual is exempt, nonexempt, or work limited is as follows:

- District directs the contracted physician or individual's physician to determine status
- District review team reviews and determines status (described below)
- Specialized disability/medical staff or unit reviews and determines status (described below)
- Other

Employment Unit examiner staff, temporary assistance examiner staff, or contracted assessment staff may review medical documentation and make the determinations whether individuals are exempt, nonexempt, or work-limited and complete the 4005 accordingly. In situations where the individuals have previously been coded exempt and are being re-reviewed the medicals and determinations will be handled by the designated disability review examiner staff.

In situations that are very complicated or the individuals are contesting the determination MCDHS may request additional testing or evaluations from IMA or from another source such as LDA in order to make a determination.