POLICY STATEMENT

31

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEMS

Equip all jobseekers with the skills to find and maintain employment that will make them self-sufficient and will meet the needs of the business community.

TARGET POPULATION

The failure to find jobs undermines the efforts of Americans to support themselves and their families and generates high costs (both direct and indirect) for jurisdictions. Recent trends make clear that the struggle to find employment is widespread and that people at the low-wage and less-educated end of the employment spectrum face an increasingly uphill battle to find jobs that pay adequately. As the growth of the economy has slowed, job growth is concentrated in positions requiring skills that are hard to find among the unemployed. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the overall unemployment rate in 2004 hovered at or about 5.5 percent; but for people over 25 who have less than a high school diploma (a description matching the majority of returning prisoners), the rate was more than 8.5 percent.[10,11] The overall unemployment rates for African-Americans and Latinos were even higher (10.25 and 7.05 percent, respectively).[12,13]

Earlier policy statements have articulated ways to link people who are in prison or jail to employment services while they are behind bars, immediately after their release, and during their period of community supervision. (See Policy Statement 21, Creation of Employment Opportunities for more on the employment of individuals released from prison and jails.) People re-entering the community after being in prison or jail are more likely to succeed when they find work and earn a wage on which they can live. Research has shown that well-run employment programs that serve people who are incarcerated (or recently released) can dramatically cut recidivism rates. An evaluation of Project RIO, for instance, a Texas program

10 US Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Labor Force Statistics from the Current Population Survey*, ID# LNS14000000, available at www.bls.gov/data/home.htm (accessed on November 19, 2004).

11 US Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Unemployment Rate—Less than a High School Diploma, 25 yrs. & Over*, ID# LNS14027659, available at www.bls.gov/data/home.htm (accessed on November 19, 2004). The median age of returning prisoners is 34, and the median education level is 11th grade. Thomas P. Bonczar and Lauren E. Glaze, *Probation and Parole in the United States, 1998*, US Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics (Washington, DC: 1999), NCJ 178234.

12 US Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Unemployment Rate—Black or African-American*, ID#LNS14000006, available at www.bls.gov/data/home.htm (accessed on November 19, 2004).

13 US Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Unemployment Rate—Hispanic or Latino*, ID# LNS14000009, available at www.bls.gov/data/home.htm (accessed on November 19, 2004).

designed to help released prisoners find and maintain employment, revealed that 23 percent of program participants were reincarcerated, compared to 38 percent of the comparison group.[14] The three-year return-to-prison rate for participants in the employment program at St. Leonard's Ministries in Chicago is 20 percent, compared to a 54 percent return rate for all state prisoners.

Despite the value of such programs, their availability is extremely limited, and fewer than half of released prisoners had a job lined up upon their return to the community.[15] Further, a recent analysis of data collected from parole and probation violators returned to prison in Illinois in 2001-02 found that 43 percent were unemployed at the time of their violation.[16]

This policy statement focuses on the nation's workforce development system as a whole, not just those aspects that relate to re-entering individuals, and the strategies being implemented to support people entering or returning to the labor market. The success of these efforts carries the broadest of implications: individual communities and the national economy can thrive when the workforce system responds quickly and effectively to ever-changing economic conditions to develop job opportunities and to prepare and match people to these opportunities.

KEY ISSUES

Many people seeking employment have settled for jobs for which they are overqualified and underpaid. The underemployment rate, which was calculated in June 2004 at 9.6 percent, adds three categories of people not captured by unemployment rates: (1) those who have accepted part-time jobs after failing to find full-time work; (2) those "discouraged job seekers" who were not looking for work specifically because they believed no jobs were available for them; and (3) those "marginally attached" to the job system because they wanted a job and had actively looked for one sometime in the most recent 12 months, but not in the most recent four weeks.[17] In 1997, when the unemployment rate was significantly lower than it is currently, more than four million workers were forced to work part-time because full-time jobs were not available to them.[18]

For those with poor education backgrounds and other barriers to employment, the types of jobs available are often very low-paying. The shift from a goods-producing economy (with jobs like mining and manufacturing) to a service-producing economy has resulted in a growth in low-paying jobs. In fact, the largest amount of job growth has been in the two lowest-paying service sectors, the retail trade and the services industries.[19] People who have left welfare rolls (whose education and job experience is often akin to that of returning prisoners) are concentrated in the

14 See also R. Menon et al., *An Evaluation of Project RIO Outcomes: An Evaluative Report* (College Station: Texas A&M University, Public Policy Resources Laboratory, 1992).

15 Steven Steurer, Linda Smith, and Alice Tracy, *Three-State Recidivism Study* (Lanham, MD: Correctional Educational Association, 2001).

16 Nancy G. LaVigne, Cynthia A. Mamalian, Christy Visher, and Jeremy Travis, *A Portrait of Prisoner Reentry in Illinois* (Washington D.C.: The Urban Institute, 2003).

17 Lawrence Mishel, Jared Bernstein, and Sylvia Allegretto, *The State of Working America 2004/2005 – Advance Edition* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2005).

18 Janet L. Norwood, Testimony before the US House of Representatives Ways and Means Committee, Subcommittee on Human Resources, Hearing on Unemployment Insurance Reform, April 24, 1997.

19 Janice Fine, "A New Progressive Agenda: Innovative Ideas for Work and Immigration Policy," *2004 CLASP Audio Conference Series: The Squeeze: Helping Low-Income Families in an Era of Dwindling Resources* (Washington, DC: Center for Law and Social Policy, 2004).

three sectors that offer the lowest average hourly pay of all non-farm industries; retail, the industry in which this population is over-represented, offers the lowest pay of all.[20] These jobs tend to pay minimum wage, which at its current level is insufficient to keep a full-time worker with one child above the poverty line.[21]

Working even a low-paying job may disqualify individuals from receiving government subsidies or participating in income-based benefit programs, and may cause them to endure hardships without any safety net. 29.9 percent of individuals who left federal welfare rolls in 1997, and who were working full-time, full-year, faced at least one critical hardship (such as skipping meals or necessary medical care, being evicted, or having utilities shut off), while 76.8 percent had faced at least one serious hardship (such as not being able to make housing payments, worrying about food, or having telephone service disconnected).[22] Those who left welfare rolls and were working part-time experienced hardships at even higher rates. (See sidebar, "Welfare-to-Work" for more on the relationship between welfare reform and workforce issues.) In addition, low-paid workers may struggle to meet costs associated with work, such as transportation and child care.

SYSTEM ORGANIZATION AND FUNDING

The national workforce system comprises a vast array of organizations and agencies, often working independently of each other, at the local, state, and federal level, to provide income supports to current and potential workers; to develop jobs and employment opportunities; and to provide job training and placement services.

Temporary Assistance to Need Families (TANF), which replaced the nation's welfare system and its cash benefits in 1996, is a federal program that provides some support to low-income workers, especially those entering or re-entering the job market. In accordance with its design to move people from "welfare to work," the 1996 welfare law requires that at least half of those receiving TANF benefits participate in work or work-related activities and sets a five-year lifetime limit for welfare benefits in most cases. (See sidebar, "Welfare-to-Work" for more on the relationship between welfare reform and workforce issues.)

The Workforce Investment Act (WIA) is the latest in a series of federal programs to better train and match workers with jobs. (See sidebar, "A Brief History of Federal Employment and Training Legislation," for an outline of major workforce legislation leading up to WIA.)

The guiding philosophy of WIA is that employment, training, and jobs programs funded through the US Department of Labor should be driven as much by the demand side of the workforce equation (businesses) as they are by the supply side (jobseekers). (See sidebar, "Key Principles of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998.") Regardless of training or skills, individuals should be able to obtain job training and placement services from career centers run by states and localities.

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20 Ibid.

21 Janice Fine, "A New Progressive Agenda: Innovative Ideas for Work and Immigration Policy," *2004 CLASP Audio Conference Series: The Squeeze: Helping Low-Income Families in an Era of Dwindling Resources* (Washington, DC: Center for Law and Social Policy, 2004).

22 Elise Richer, Steve Savner, and Mark Greenberg, *Frequently Asked Questions about Working Welfare Leavers* (Washington, DC: Center for Law and Social Policy, 2001), citing Heather Boushey and Bethney Gundersen, *When Work Just Isn't Enough: Measuring Hardships Faced by Families After Moving from Welfare to Work* (Washington, DC: Economic Policy Institute, 2001).

WELFARE-TO-WORK

One of the major goals of the 1996 welfare reform law was to move poor families with children into the labor force.[23] Since the welfare law was enacted, far fewer poor families have been receiving cash assistance and more poor families are working.[24] However, employment does not guarantee that families will escape poverty: more than one-fourth of all working families with children—and forty percent of minority working families—are poor or near-poor.[25] In addition, nearly all families that transition from welfare to work struggle to deal with child care, transportation, and medical insurance gaps; and they often have trouble accessing benefits that could help them supplement their limited earnings.[26]

Families facing persistent and extreme poverty often have multiple and interrelated barriers to employment, and when they do work, they earn much less money than other working families. Both single mothers in these families and non-resident fathers of these children face issues including limited education, language barriers, poor job skills, physical and learning disabilities, chronic health problems, depression and other mental health problems, domestic violence, substance abuse problems, and a history of incarceration.[27,28]

A BRIEF HISTORY OF FEDERAL EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING LEGISLATION

Manpower Development and Training Act (1962) — Required government to identify labor shortages, as well as to train unemployed and underemployed individuals.

Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (1973) — Moved federal employment and training programs to states and localities.

Job Training Partnership Act (1983) — Targeted training to disadvantaged, dislocated workers.

Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (1996) — Established some support provisions for low-income workers, especially those entering or re-entering the job market.

Workforce Investment Act (1998) — Established One-Stop Career Centers and introduced greater flexibility in training.

KEY PRINCIPLES OF THE WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACT OF 1998

- Training and employment programs must be designed and managed at the local level where the needs of businesses and individuals are best understood.
- Customers must be able to conveniently access the employment, education, training, and information services they need at a single location in their neighborhoods.
- Customers should have choices in deciding the training program that best fits their needs and the organizations that will provide that service. They should have control over their own career development.
- Customers have a right to information about how well training providers succeed in preparing people for jobs. Training providers will provide information on their success rates.
- Businesses will provide information, and leadership, and will play an active role in ensuring that the system prepares people for current and future jobs.

Source: www.doleta.gov/usworkforce/wia/Runningtext2.htm.

23 The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act, P.L. 104-193, codified in part as 42 USC § 601 *et seq.*; Child Trends Data Bank, *Children in Working Poor Families* (Washington, DC: Child Trends), available at www.childtrendsdatabank.org.

24 Tom Waldron, Brandon Roberts, and Andrew Reamer, *Working Hard, Falling Short: America's Working Families and the Pursuit of Economic Security*, Working Poor Families Project (Baltimore, MD: Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2004), 8-10; Richard Wertheimer, *Working Poor Families with Children: Leaving Welfare Doesn't Necessarily Mean Leaving Poverty* (Washington, DC: Child Trends, 2001).

25 A "near-poor" family of three is one that earned less than $29,648 in 2003 far less than the median family income of $53,911. Of those 9.2 million poor or near-poor working families, 2.5 million are officially in poverty (earning less than $14,824 for a family of three.) Tom Waldron, Brandon Roberts and Andrew Reamer, *Working Hard, Falling Short: America's Working Families and the Pursuit of Economic Security*, Working Poor Families Project (Baltimore, MD: Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2004), 8-10.

26 Amy Brown, *Beyond Work First: How to Help Hard-to-Employ Individuals Get Jobs and Succeed in the Workforce* (New York, NY: Manpower Demonstration Research Corp.), 10-12, 52-53.

27 Child Trends Data Bank, *Children in Poverty* (Washington, DC: Child Trends, 2004); Amy Brown, *Beyond Work First: How to Help Hard-to-Employ Individuals Get Jobs and Succeed in the Workforce* (New York, NY: Manpower Demonstration Research Corp.), 10-12, 52-53.

28 Elise Richer, Abbey Frank, Mark Greenberg, Steve Savner, and Vicki Turetsky, *Boom Times a Bust: Declining Employment Among Young, Less-Educated Men* (Washington, DC: Center for Law and Social Policy, 2003).

The WIA statute recognizes that finding opportunities in the workforce for hard-to-place employees, including the disabled, immigrants, and the elderly, can be particularly challenging. It specifically includes among individuals who should be targeted to receive workforce services adults and juveniles involved with the criminal justice system.[29] The statute also authorizes funds to be used for educating individuals in correctional facilities.[30]

The U.S. Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration is one of many federal entities working to generate new jobs, retain existing jobs, and stimulate industrial and commercial growth in the United States. In addition, each state has its own economic development authority, and local communities may have from one to several such authorities. Understanding where jobs may be lost or created is complicated, and WIBs work closely with these and other agencies to foster employment opportunities and prepare the workforce to meet emerging needs and opportunities.

In general, federal funding for workforce development initiatives flows from the Employment and Training Administration (ETA), the Department of Labor office charged with administering federal government job training and worker dislocation programs, federal grants to states for public employment service programs, and unemployment insurance benefits. ETA distributes hundreds of millions of dollars in grants and contracts each year.[31]

While the Labor Department provides oversight, evaluation, and leadership towards the implementation of WIA through special projects and initiatives, each state has established both state and local Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs) to manage the nation's workforce system on a day-to-day basis. The WIBs are given broad responsibilities over the spending of their allocated funds, the design of workforce services and outreach, the selection of approved providers within the system, and the creation of a local workforce system that includes stakeholders in economic development, education, and labor, as well as community leaders, elected officials, and others. WIBs are chaired by local business leaders and must be comprised of a majority of business representatives. Fiscal accountability for the boards rests with the chief local elected officials in the various jurisdictions.

WIA is designed to create a workforce system with universal, locally based access points: governors designate local "workforce investment areas," each of which must establish at least one physical full-service "One-Stop" Career Center, which may be supplemented by other centers, electronic access points, or networks at affiliated sites. One-Stop Career Centers provide three tiers of services for adults, dislocated workers, and youth: core, intensive, and training services. Core services include labor market information, initial assessment of an individual's skill levels, and job search and placement assistance. Eligible unemployed individuals who have completed at least one core service program may receive intensive services, which essentially consist of one-on-one job counseling. Employed individuals who need additional services to obtain or keep employment that will lead to self-sufficiency are also eligible for intensive services. Finally, training services are available

29 Workforce Investment Act of 1998, 29 USC §§ 2854, 2864.

30 Ibid.

31 US Department of Labor, Employment and Training Agency, "Grants & Contracts," available at www.doleta.gov/grants/ (accessed on November 30, 2004).

to those who have met the requirements for intensive services but have been unable to obtain or keep employment.

In the summer of 2004, about 1,900 One-Stops were operating across the country. As indicated above, local WIBs enjoy a great deal of flexibility in designing the One-Stop service system for their area and coordinating with wide variety of providers, programs, and employers. Many, for instance, have begun to integrate their systems with the federal TANF program by helping jobseekers meet the requirements for work and work-related activities set forth in the statute. Others have formed partnerships with state and local economic development authorities to share information about employment trends and to implement job creation strategies, or with community-based providers, including local faith-based organizations, to increase outreach to both workers and employers.

As is the case with any national initiative, implementation of WIA varies greatly among investment areas across the country. Some jurisdictions have transformed their public workforce systems and operate in concert with WIA principles, while others have evolved more slowly and may not yet have adopted the locally based, customer-focused priorities of WIA. While Congress is in the process of reauthorizing the WIA statute, which may lead to significant changes, the effective and efficient growth of the workforce development system in its current structure depends greatly on the ability of advanced WIBs to solidify and extend their progress, and on other the ability of other WIBs to strengthen their performance.

In addition to these WIA-related workforce development providers, a vast constellation of public and private organizations, programs and policies provide job training to potential and current workers, training the former to enter the workforce, and helping the latter to upgrade their skills to meet the demands of an increasingly technological society. The United States boasts a robust network of postsecondary educational institutions, including public and private two- and four-year colleges and universities, proprietary trade schools, and community-based providers. In addition, private and public sector employers each spend an estimated 2.5 percent of payroll on training their employees.[32]

The following set of recommendations outlines top priorities for moving the national workforce system forward. Policymakers and workforce practitioners can meet the employment needs of businesses and jobseekers by serving as nexuses of collaboration; by understanding the market and using that knowledge to inform the workforce development system; by addressing the full spectrum of needs of individuals seeking employment or career services; and by monitoring and evaluating the performance of workforce development programs to ensure that effective practices are identified and proliferated.

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32 Brenda Sugrue and Kyung-Hyun Kim, *2004 State of the Industry Report* (Alexandria, VA: American Society for Training & Development, 2004).

recommendations

A | Increase system collaboration through local Workforce Investment Boards and One-Stop Career Centers.

The Workforce Investment Act calls for a complete system overhaul, and in many communities, this transformation of the system is a work in progress, which will continue to evolve over the coming years. WIA identifies Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs) and One-Stops as instruments to address these employment sector goals:

- Meeting the employment needs of local business
- Improving outreach and service to under-represented, under-employed, and marginalized populations
- Building on educational programming from kindergarten to post-secondary
- Fostering economic development
- Creating a comprehensive vision for workforce development in communities
- Branding the workforce system to improve awareness and value among all customers and stakeholders
- Leading the public to understand the need for a new type of workforce to meet the economic realities of this century.

No individual organizations can accomplish these objectives alone. Coordination among economic development authorities, the private sector, community-based organizations, and the educational and labor communities is critical to the effectiveness of the local workforce system. WIB members can be pivotal in developing a collaborative system which draws from and builds on local strengths, and One-Stop Career Centers provide a centralized point where the needs and strengths of local service providers, businesses, and prospective employees can meet. To the extent that this system can marshal its federal resources and partnerships to find the common ground among these populations, it can fill critical labor gaps and enhance the likelihood that unemployed individuals will make a meaningful contribution to their communities and the economy.

B | Let the market drive the workforce development system.

A successful workforce development system must match employees to business needs. The public workforce system is the definitive source of

labor market information, and this information should be the foundation of strategic plans and activities at the local level. A demand-driven system can enable trainers and job placement specialists to maximize the efficient allocation of resources and make quick changes in their strategies to meet labor market demands. The workforce system should strive to meet these goals whether the labor pool includes high school graduates, community college students, post-graduate unemployed persons, or prisoners in training programs.

This requires workforce development professionals to quickly shift gears to prepare and retrain jobseekers for emerging industries and occupations. One-Stop Career Center personnel are charged with convening training academies, community colleges, four-year colleges, universities, and other vocational training providers to tailor workforce solutions for business. Training and placement services should target positions which are in demand in industries offering jobs with family-sustaining wages and career advancement opportunities. Customized training services, such as on-the-job, industry-specific, and school-to-career tracking, need to be available to businesses of all sizes.

For their part, business leaders must ensure that the entire spectrum of training and education providers—from nonprofit groups to faith-based organizations and community colleges to universities—is aware of the current and future needs of the local labor market. When businesses determine the skills they need in their workplaces, they can collaborate with WIBs and One-Stops to ensure that such skills are incorporated into training offered through the public workforce system. Business leaders can optimize outcomes by establishing industry standards for training, choosing the best trainers, and holding the system accountable for meeting performance standards.

One-Stop Career Centers are challenged to continually improve and expand their range of services to extend beyond examination of the workforce development aspects of local companies in order to recognize and assist them in addressing a wider range of issues that may prevent businesses from growing and remaining viable. In some cases, these efforts can result in new or retooled employment opportunities.

Policymakers should have an active role in facilitating market-driven systems. State and local officials can persuade local businesses to participate in planning and evaluation processes. Incentives such as tax benefits for public and private providers could encourage coordination of services and linkages with educational and vocational training schools.

Program flexibility and coordination between public and private providers can establish a framework to allow One-Stop systems and other job placement programs to tailor their services for local businesses and jobseekers, while meeting economic development needs in a rapidly changing environment. Under the auspices of Project RIO in Texas, for

instance, corrections officials coordinate with the state education agency and the state workforce commission to ensure that institutional training and curricula reflect the most current needs of the labor market. As a result, people leaving incarceration are prepared to immediately assume positions in the local workforce.

c | Ensure that workforce development providers address the full spectrum of needs of individuals seeking employment or career services.

Any prospective employee, regardless of background or work history, should be able to seek and receive the services he or she needs through the public workforce development system. This does not mean that the public system must be the provider of all services. Rather, the public system should be able to match the needs of jobseekers with available services and resources in any given community or region. The ability of a workforce development system to provide this robust level of universal service depends on identifying general supports needed by jobseekers and coordinating with service systems other than those directly concerned with employment to provide those supports.

Many poor people entering the workforce at the lowest levels face a host of financial barriers to employment, including transportation, childcare, appropriate work clothing, and supplies. The re-entering population shares the plight of these employment candidates, and may face additional legal and policy barriers noted in earlier policy statements. (See Policy Statement 14, Identification and Benefits, and Policy Statement 21, Creation of Employment Opportunities.) Overcoming these barriers in any lasting way requires far more than starting a minimum-wage job. It requires ongoing employment at a steady wage and support which will enable an employee to meet these and other, unexpected costs.

Through their efforts to serve all customers, Workforce Investment Boards and their partners should work with returning inmates to overcome individual obstacles to receiving entitlements and services, especially during the critical period of the first few months after release. For example, if a potential employee is actively using cocaine, he or she should be referred to substance abuse treatment before attending job readiness classes. This holistic approach to service delivery necessitates close coordination with a broad array of service providers. High-performing One-Stops have established partnerships with other service providers, including those who work in areas such as substance abuse and mental health treatment, housing, family counseling, childcare, and transportation.

Policymakers and workforce development professionals also should advocate for the repeal of laws that unnecessarily impede willing and able jobseekers from entering the workforce. Though it is appropriate to bar

individuals who pose a real security risk from certain jobs, in general public assistance should be carefully calibrated to reward work, rather than idleness. Individuals who need an extra boost to get on their feet, such as people leaving prison or otherwise entering the workforce without much job or income security, should be able to receive and maintain income supports or supportive services for a sufficient period to establish a viable, law-abiding lifestyle.

D | Locate employment services in neighborhoods where the need for them is highest, and provide continuity of services from one One-Stop or provider to another.

Ideally, all job placement and related supportive services would be integrated in one location. At a minimum, information about the range of services should be readily accessible through a single clearinghouse. One-Stop services should therefore consolidate most federal, state, and local workforce programs and services into centralized physical locations and electronic sites. Businesses and workers should be able to connect in real or virtual communities, to share information about the labor market and particular positions, as well as to gain access to education and training opportunities.

Employment center facilities should be situated in the communities where their services are most in demand. People being released from prison tend to return in high concentrations to neighborhoods where there is already a high degree of unemployment and limited local access to supportive services. Many re-entering individuals lack their own transportation; accordingly, the need to travel a distance to a series of career assessment and training appointments may present an insurmountable obstacle for even the most highly motivated among this population. Placing employment centers in high-need communities also helps staff understand the barriers encountered by jobseekers in their area and develop localized strategies to address them.

People should also be able to continue their course of job development services even if they switch service providers or move to a different town. Such portability is vital to people leaving prisons and jails since they may change residences frequently due to unstable living arrangements or family situations. WIA has authorized the creation of job training vouchers (Individual Training Accounts, or ITAs) to allow customers to “carry” their entitlement to financial support for particular employment services with them to another site if they relocate within the same workforce investment areas. To the extent that individuals travel outside the boundaries of their particular workforce investment area, however, their ITAs may not be portable. This barrier to seamless services should be removed or minimized.

E | Develop measures to monitor and evaluate the performance of workforce development programs.

WIA mandates that performance measures be defined, tracked, and reported. The mandated measures include job placement rates, retention rates, and earnings gains. Community leaders and state officials may track additional measures that provide broader and earlier indicators of workforce system outcomes for businesses and jobseekers, in order to evaluate economic and educational vitality, community opportunity, or other desired outcomes. For example, education or training achievement is highly correlated to future employment and is an early indicator of success, but it is rarely measured. Tracking such benchmarks can be particularly helpful for showing progress with hard-to-place populations, such as individuals returning from prison. (See Policy Statement 3, Incorporating Re-Entry into Organizations' Missions and Work Plans, for more on performance measures that provide incentives for workforce staff to assist released prisoners seeking employment.)

The process of determining local performance measures and performance outcomes should be transparent and readily available to the public. The performance results for each participating program should also be open for review, as businesses, workers, and jobseekers all need to know what services work. Further, taxpayers should be informed of the extent to which the expenditure of public funds yields outcomes beneficial to the community.

Providers and other partners that do not meet performance standards or advance the system's goals and objectives should receive technical assistance to improve their service delivery. If these organizations or individuals do not achieve better results, they should be sanctioned and ultimately dropped from the public workforce system. Funds should be tied to performance measurements which account for the particular challenges of working in different communities. Indeed, WIA permits job candidates to use training vouchers to select industry-recognized training or education programs that have been designated eligible training providers by local WIBs and the state because they have proven results.