

Guide to Completion for the 2024-2025 Temporary Assistance (TA) and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Employment Plan

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Overview

In accordance with § 333 of the New York State Social Services Law and Department Regulation 18 NYCRR 385.10, every two years each social services district (district) must develop a Temporary Assistance (TA) and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Employment Plan (Plan). The Plan must be developed in cooperation with local education institutions, childcare providers, childcare resource and referral agencies, labor unions, libraries, public and private employers, employment and training agencies, Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA) partners, and Workforce Development Boards, as well as any other applicable agencies or institutions. Draft Plans are required to be made available for public comment for a 30-day period. The 30-day public comment period should begin at the time the draft Plan is submitted to the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) for initial review.

These instructions should be used as a guide for completing each section of the district's Plan. The instructions are divided into sections that correspond to each section of the Plan. For further information or clarification concerning the contents of this document, please contact your OTDA Employment Services Advisor (ESA).

For the 2024-2025 Plan submission, districts will access their Plan template through the web-based Biennial Employment Plan System ([BEPS](#)) application. BEPS allows district users to enter information into a template and submit the Plans directly to OTDA for review all within the application. OTDA staff will then review and approve each district's Plan within the application. District staff will be able to upload required documentation into a district-specific document repository and all team members (Employment Coordinator, the OTDA ESA, and other designated staff, as needed) will have access. Additionally, staff will be able to create and print a copy of the Plan directly from BEPS while they are drafting it and after it has been completed. The BEPS User Manual (Attachment C) provides additional guidance for system use. After all Plans are approved, OTDA Plan managers will upload all approved Plans into the BEPS document repository. The Biennial Employment Plan SharePoint site will continue to store prior year approved Plans and related documentation, per OTDA retention policies. OTDA still maintains the Biennial Employment Plan SharePoint site. Anyone who requires access to review a prior year Plan should reach out to their ESA.

District Access to BEPS

District staff must be assigned permissions to access BEPS. District LAN Administrators may add or remove district users to BEPS at any time. Directions for adding district users can be found in the BEPS District System Administrator User Manual (Attachment D). District access is broken out into four user roles:

- District Viewer – can view but cannot make any changes to the Plan;
- District User – can view and make changes to the Plan, but cannot submit;
- District Submitter – can view, make changes, and submit the Plan; and
- District System Administrator – would give district staff access to the system as one of the three previously mentioned roles.

Each district is required to have at least one District Submitter and one District System Administrator.

Plan Submission Process

Districts must create and submit their draft Plan to OTDA via BEPS and release it for a 30-day public comment period no later than October 27, 2023. Districts will be able to upload required attachments into the district specific document repository in BEPS. In line with document accessibility guidelines, please provide all Plan attachments as a Word or Excel file in lieu of a scanned document whenever possible.

After reviewing the Plans, ESAs will send an email to Employment Coordinators indicating any changes which must be made prior to final Plan approval. Districts must incorporate any changes, required by OTDA as well as any changes necessitated by public comment, and submit a final copy of the Plan for approval by the due date included in the comment letter. Using BEPS, the Commissioner, or their designee, must certify their district's final Plan by clicking the "Certify" and "Submit" buttons, which will add the Commissioner's electronic signature for OTDA approval. Please ensure all applicable attachments have been uploaded in BEPS before submitting.

Instructions for Plan Sections

District users should note that while the Plan sections within BEPS have not been rearranged this year, there have been some additions made to the 2024-2025 Plan. All sections will not correspond directly with the 2022-2023 Plan. District users may copy and paste responses from prior versions of the biennial TA and SNAP Employment Plans directly into corresponding questions in BEPS. Users should ensure that when doing so, non-alphanumeric characters are not turned into erroneous symbols during the copying/pasting process. District users should also ensure that the response copied from prior versions is pasted in the appropriate section and adequately addresses the information requested. District users should take special care to remain within the character limits set for each section of the Plan within BEPS. The following instructions may be used to assist in Plan completion. **District users should also be aware that they must save each section of the Plan in BEPS before navigating to the next section.**

Section 1 Administration

This section includes a description of internal district employment administration and contracts with external agencies.

1.1 Administrative Structure

In part a. of this section, the district must upload an organizational chart as an attachment into the BEPS Document Repository. The organizational chart should identify the units and staff within the agency that are involved in the operation of the district's employment programs. There is a text box in this part for the district to add any additional information.

In part b. of this section, in the space available, please provide a description of the office(s) in and/or outside the Department of Social Services that are involved in the district's employment programs. This must also include the responsibilities of each office.

1.2 TA and SNAP Employment & Training (SNAP E&T) Provider Agencies

In part a. of this section, complete Table 1 with information regarding agencies/providers with which the district contracts to provide employment services for the TA and SNAP population. In selecting providers, districts are encouraged to take into account such factors as past performance in providing similar services, demonstrated results, fiscal accountability, cost effectiveness and ability to meet other performance standards.

Providers listed in table 1 may include, but are not limited to, private education and training providers, community-based organizations, WIOA agencies, State agencies, school districts, Board of Cooperative Educational Services, post-secondary educational institutions, Educational Opportunity Centers, and others. When it is feasible, districts should develop performance-based contracts or agreements with such entities. Standards must include an evaluation procedure to ensure that services offered by a provider are sufficient to substantially enhance a participant's opportunity to secure unsubsidized employment. Contracts entered into by districts must be available for review by OTDA upon request. Please be sure to enter all contracts funded by the Flexible Fund for Family Services (FFFS), by SNAP E&T (formally known as FSET), with local funding, or with grants. The district may not contract for a service or activity which is otherwise available at no cost.

The activities and services provided by these agencies may include, but are not limited to: employability determinations; development of assessment 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. Districts should be aware that SNAP E&T funds cannot be used to supplant state, county, or local funds for educational programs normally available to residents. Moreover, the educational provider must not charge (and the district cannot claim) more than what the general public or the SNAP recipient would pay if not participating in E&T.

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. Districts must maintain proper monitoring and oversight to ensure that contractors perform in accordance with the terms, conditions, and specifications of their contracts.

To enter information into Table 1, users will have to select the "Add Contractor" button for a new screen to pop up for entry of the provider's information, as well as other data. The following directions describe the steps users must follow to complete this table:

1. The user will add the provider's name in the box provided.
2. In the box below, the total annual contract cost must be entered as numbers only. Do not add commas, periods, or dollar signs. This section also states that the contracts must include a cost allocation methodology that satisfies Generally Accepted Accounting Principles and the requirements of pertinent U.S. Office of Management and Budget Circulars, unless services are reimbursed on a performance basis.

3. The user will then select the appropriate funding source used by the agency/provider to support the contract. Funding sources may include FFFS, SNAP E&T, local or other. If selecting “other”, please provide the funding source in the space provided. Choose all that apply for each contract. Districts are advised that for locally developed contracts, the district must maintain oversight to ensure that contractors perform in accordance with the terms, conditions, and specifications of their contracts. This includes procedures for regular monitoring and receipt of review of progress reports related to outcomes and deliverables.
4. The user will then select the categories of participants, referred by the district, that are served by the provider. Categories may include Family Assistance (FA), Safety Net Assistance for Families (SNA Family), Safety Net Assistance households without children (SNA Individual), SNAP, and TANF 200% population.
5. The user should then enter the programs, services, or activities in the box provided. This box may contain the name of the program but must contain a description of the program, services, or activities that are provided.
6. Once all the information has been added for this provider, please click the “Save” button and repeat steps 1-5 for any additional provider.

In part b. of this section, Table 2 includes agencies/providers to which the district refers participants for employment services that do not require a payment from the district. These organizations may be directly funded by OTDA or some other source such as State and federal education funds. Please list these organizations, the funding source(s) if known, the categories of individuals served who were referred by the district, and the programs, services or activities provided by the organization for those referred by the district.

To enter information into Table 2, users will have to click the “Add Service Provider” button for a new screen to pop up for entry of the provider’s information, as well as other data. The following directions describe the steps users must follow to complete this table:

1. The user will then add the provider’s name in the box provided.
2. The user will then select the appropriate funding source used by the agency/provider to support the contract. If the funding source is not one of the provided check boxes, the user may also select “Other” and provide the funding source in the space provided.
3. The user will then select the categories of participants served who were referred by the district. Categories may include FA, SNA Family, SNA Individual, SNAP, and TANF 200% population.
4. The user should then enter the programs, services, or activities in the box provided. This box may contain the name of the program but must contain a description of the program, services, or activities that are provided.
5. Once all the information has been added for this provider, please click the “Save” button and repeat steps 1-4 for any additional provider.

In part c. of this section, describe the process used to monitor district held contracts/agreements with providers that use TANF and SNAP E&T funds for employment services. Districts who use this funding to contract with providers for services must ensure that the activities funded are not otherwise available from that provider on a non-reimbursable basis. If the contract is not performance-based, districts must include a statement in their contracts that 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, and A-21 for educational institutions, or A-87 for state and local governments will be used. Districts must have monitoring procedures in place to maintain appropriate oversight to

ensure that contractors perform in accordance with the terms, conditions, and specifications of their contracts.

1.3 OTDA Jobs Staff Agreement

Districts who currently have an OTDA Jobs Program Specialist who provides support for various employment related services must complete this section. Districts without a Jobs Program Specialist do not need to complete this section. The district should designate in part a. of this section which services will be offered and the target group(s) that will be served by selecting the appropriate options.

For districts with an OTDA Jobs Program Specialist, additional narrative may be included in part b. of this section to describe specific services or duties Jobs staff will be expected to fulfill which are not included in the template.

1.4 Access to Services at New York State Career Centers

In part a. of this section, districts are asked to identify how they provide access to their programs and services at the New York State Career Centers. Please check all applicable boxes that describe how access is provided.

In New York State, WIOA agencies are required to coordinate access to TANF services with the comprehensive Career Centers in partnership with districts. In part b. of this section, please provide a brief description of how the district is coordinating with the local Career Center partners to enhance service delivery, maximize resources, improve access to available programs and services, etc. for TA and SNAP recipients.

Section 2 Orientation, Assessment and Employment Plan

2.1 Orientation (Reference 18 NYCRR 385.5)

Districts must offer to all TA applicants and recipients an orientation regarding employment expectations and other requirements. This orientation should include information regarding time limits and requirements to engage in work, school attendance for teen parents and finding childcare, if necessary. A complete explanation of the rights and responsibilities of applicants and recipients and the benefits and obligations of participation in employment activities will help districts meet participation rate requirements and help recipients understand program expectations and support efforts to achieve economic independence.

The complete list of what must be included in orientation is contained in 18 NYCRR 385.5. In part a. of this section, please check the appropriate box that describes the district's orientation procedures. If the district's orientation covers additional elements, please provide a brief description in the space allowed.

In part b. of this section, please describe how the district completes the orientation, including who conducts the orientation (e.g., TA staff, Employment staff, or both), at what point during the application process is it completed, in what type of setting (e.g., group or individual), and if the process for providing orientation to exempt individuals is different from the orientation process for non-exempt individuals. In addition, please indicate whether the process for orientation is

different at recertification and, if so, how. Please indicate how the orientation is held, either virtually over the phone, by mail, or in-person. In-person and virtual orientations can be in a group setting, individually, or a combination of both.

2.2 Temporary Assistance (TA) Employment Assessment

Assessments are required for most TA participants. Assessments must include a review of educational level, including literacy and English language proficiency, basic skills proficiency, childcare and supportive service needs, as well as a review of family circumstances.

In part a. of this section, select the appropriate option to indicate how the district conducts assessments. The three available options are: the district enters assessment information directly into WTCMS, uses the LDSS 4980 (New York State Assessment) and later enters information into WTCMS, or uses a local equivalent assessment tool. If a local equivalent is used, please upload a copy of the district's employment assessment in the Documents tab in BEPS. Please indicate whether the assessment tool contains additional elements and list those elements in the space provided. Please also indicate if the district's assessment includes specific screening tools to identify participants with potential disabilities.

Districts are encouraged to reevaluate and reassess a participant's work status and activity assignment at least annually. It is important to periodically evaluate whether or not any changes to the individual's assignment or support services are warranted based on any changed circumstances and the extent to which the individual is making progress in the current activity assignment(s).

In part b. of this section, describe the local process used to complete an employment assessment. Include here when the initial assessment is completed and if it is conducted in-person, over the phone, or a combination of both. Please describe the district policy that ensures that all adults in households with dependent children and 16 or 17-year-olds not in school receive assessments within 90 days of eligibility. District policy should also ensure that all non-exempt adults applying for or receiving TA and residing in households without dependent children receive assessments within a year following their application. Districts are reminded that individual self-assessment alone does not meet the requirements for conducting assessments as outlined in 18 NYCRR 385.6(c) and 385.7(c). Districts must ensure that local assessment procedures are in place that will gather relevant information about an individual's strengths and barriers as part of a comprehensive strategy to help the individual obtain meaningful employment or otherwise assist the family to become economically secure.

In part c. of this section enter the administrative unit or contractor responsible for conducting assessments.

In part d. of this section, describe the minimum qualifications of the employees completing assessments. Specifically, please indicate what type of training the individuals receive for these tasks or if there is an experience requirement for the position. If the individual is a district employee, please include their title.

In parts e., f. and g. of this section, indicate if assessments are completed with applicants, for both households with children and households without children and for exempt adults in households without dependent children.

In part h. of this section, indicate how often and under what circumstances an individual's assessment is updated and what the district's process for making updates is.

2.3 Temporary Assistance (TA) Employment Planning (Reference 18 NYCRR 385.6 and 385.7)

In part a. of this section, select the appropriate option to indicate if the district enters employment plan information directly into WTWCMS, uses the [LDSS-4978 New York State Employment Plan](#), or uses a local equivalent employment plan. If a local equivalent is used, indicate whether the employment plan tool contains additional elements beyond what is required and list those elements.

Upload a copy of the district's local equivalent employment plan form as an attachment into the Documents tab in [BEPS](#).

In part b. of this section, indicate if the same administrative unit or a contractor conducts employment assessments also develops employment plans or if a different one does.

In part c. of this section, describe the local process for completion of an individual's employment plan in the space provided.

In part d. of this section, describe how often and under what circumstances the individual's employment plan is updated and what the district's process for making updates is in the space provided.

Section 3 Engagement

3.1 Federal "Engaged in Work" Requirement (Reference 18 NYCRR 385.2 (f))

Part a. of this section contains the definition of what it means to be "engaged in work" to comply with the federal requirement that all TANF-funded parents and caretakers will be engaged in work prior to receiving 24 months of assistance. Engaged in work can be described as compliance with assessment, employment planning, 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 SSDI. Districts may include additional information to reflect local requirements in the space provided.

In part b. of this section, include any additional information regarding the district's "Engaged in Work" requirements in the space provided.

3.2 Strategies/Procedures for Accommodating Individuals with Limited English Proficiency

In this section, describe how the district accommodates the needs of non-English speaking participants in accessing employment services. Please be specific regarding how the district provides equal access to employment services for the participant who has language barriers

and how the district helps the individual understand (e.g., bilingual staff, access to interpreters, etc.) his/her rights and responsibilities.

3.3 Strategies/Procedures for Increasing Program Attendance

In this section, describe the district's policies and procedures in place to reduce the amount of time participants fail to participate in work activities, including time missed with good cause. Federal work participation rate requirements significantly limit the number of excused absences from attending a program activity that may be reported toward the work participation rate. Additionally, it is important that program participants adopt strategies to balance work and other needs to reduce time missed from work, so they are better prepared to enter and retain employment. The district's practices may include strategies to motivate recipient participation, counseling recipients on the importance of having back up childcare arrangements and strategies to reduce the extent to which personal needs conflict with work schedules. Additionally, districts should take steps to reduce the extent to which agency requirements conflict with work activity schedules and employ strategies such as immediate outreach to ensure attendance is quickly resumed.

3.4 Strategies/Procedures for Engaging Sanctioned TA Participants

In this section, please check the appropriate box that best describes the district's strategies and procedures used to engage sanctioned participants. Please include at what point during the sanction period this takes place.

3.5 Strategies for Reducing the Need for TA

In this section, describe the strategies the district uses to divert applicants from needing/applying for continued TA. Applicant assessment should not be included as a strategy since it is an eligibility requirement and does not provide an alternate source of income or meet an immediate need. Districts may indicate that supportive services are provided as a strategy but, since they are listed in part d. of section 7.1, they should not be listed here. Instead, districts should list the specific criteria for providing those services here (e.g., verified employment, promise of employment).

Section 4 Work Activities

4.1 Allowable Work Activities

In this section, describe the work activities in which participants are enrolled. The work activity definitions established by OTDA incorporate the requirements defined and established in the Final TANF rule at 45 CFR 261.2 and New York State's approved Work Verification Plan. Districts may choose to provide additional detail regarding local activity offerings, so long as the activity description for all countable work activities remains consistent with the requirements outlined in [08-ADM-07](#) and [21-ADM-05](#).

Districts may provide activities from the list contained in the Plan template. This is not an all-inclusive list. The district must indicate for which categories of participants, which activities are available by selecting the appropriate boxes in the table.

Considerations and requirements for some of the work activities are as follows:

- Districts are encouraged to enroll TA recipients in job skills training or vocational education programs to provide participants with marketable job skills.
- Districts are required to consider enrollment in an educational activity for all participants who do not have a high school diploma or equivalent.
- In accordance with 18 NYCRR 385.9(d)(3), work experience and community service must meet the requirements prohibiting displacement and other applicable provisions. The number of hours of participation in work experience cannot exceed the TA and SNAP grants divided by the federal or State minimum wage, whichever is higher.
- In accordance with 18 NYCRR 385.9(b), a non-graduate degree student who is participating in work study, internships, externships, or other work placement that is part of that student's curriculum cannot be unreasonably denied the opportunity to participate in that placement as a work activity assignment. The regulation states that participation in such a program is to be considered unsubsidized employment, subsidized private or public sector employment or on-the-job training. Subsidized employment may be more appropriate for federal work study programs, while participation in internships or externships would probably be more appropriately considered on-the-job training.
- At a minimum, districts are required to offer job search assistance as a SNAP E&T activity for Non-Temporary Assistance (NTA) SNAP applicants and recipients.

Employment Activities and Definitions:

Note that these definitions will appear in the district plan; however, to save space on the BEPS screen, only the titles of the activities appear in the system.

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.

Work Experience – Unpaid work performed at a public or not-for-profit organization to enable a participant who has not obtained unsubsidized employment to improve his or her employability. Work experience provides participants with an opportunity to acquire training, knowledge, work habits, and work references 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.

Job Search – 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 and applying for, and/or interviewing for jobs and related activities.

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 up to a four-year degree. Vocational education does not generally include basic or remedial education or English as a Second Language (ESL) but may include work focused on 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.

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 high school equivalence (HSE) diploma, 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 HSE diploma as determined necessary by the educational institution. Secondary School or HSE 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.

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 bachelors 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

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, ESL instruction and education leading to a HSE 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.

Job Readiness Training (JRT) Activities – 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.

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-f. Subsidized private sector employment will include positions subsidized through grant diversion/Transitional Employment Advancement Program (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.

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 in accordance with New York State Social Services Law 336(e). 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.

Community Service – 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.

Provision of Childcare for Individual Participating in Community Service – Providing unpaid childcare to enable another TA (TANF/SNA MOE funded) recipient to participate in a community service program.

SNAP E&T Supervised Job Search – The act of seeking or obtaining employment through a job search that is directly supervised and may include: case management services, career exploration, interview preparation, job application assistance, learning appropriate workplace expectations and behaviors in preparation for submitting job applications and interviewing, job leads, and direct job referrals. This work activity is only available to individuals who are receiving SNAP only.

On-the-Job-Training (OJT) – 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.

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.

4.2 Job Development

In this section, describe the job development services available in the district to expand job opportunities for TA and SNAP participants. Job development activities include active efforts by the district to identify potential job openings for which participants are qualified to apply through outreach to area employers, employer associations and other methods. Please select “Yes” or “No” to indicate whether or not job development activities are conducted. If “Yes”, please indicate who is involved in job development and describe number of staff, frequency of contact with employers, and any other pertinent information. Districts are encouraged to coordinate job development activities with local workforce agencies.

4.3 Training Approval and Activity Enrollment Policies (Reference 18 NYCRR 385.9)

Districts should ensure that education and job training services are available to individuals whose assessment indicates a need for Adult Basic Education, HSE, or English Language Instruction. Districts should strive to provide opportunities for job skills training for individuals who would benefit from these services.

Federal and State participation rate requirements limit the types of educational activities that count towards meeting work participation rates. Districts are reminded that all hours in a vocational education placement count toward federal TANF/MOE work participation rates for up to 12 months in a lifetime for any individual. Job skills training counts toward the federal TANF/MOE work participation requirement, so long as it is combined with at least 20 hours weekly in a “core” work activity such as employment or work experience. (Work experience may be less than 20 hours weekly if “deemed” to meet the 20-hour standard due to the hourly participation being equivalent to the number of hours resulting from dividing the household’s TA grant plus SNAP allotment by the higher of the federal or State minimum wage).

In parts a. and b. of this section, describe how the district identifies and provides appropriate education or job skills services for individuals whose assessment indicates that such services would be an appropriate work activity assignment. This should include what arrangements the district has in place with education and training providers, including contracted services, to provide such services. This information is requested to ensure that each district’s planning process includes an active effort to ensure such services are available for individuals whose assessment indicates that education or training is appropriate. Please ensure to include providers the district partners with for the provision of Adult Basic Education (ABE), High School Equivalency (HSE), and English language instruction list in Tables 1 and 2 under Section 1.2 of the 2024-2025 TA and SNAP Employment Plan.

In parts c. and d. of this section, describe the district’s process for making educational activities available to participants and the guidelines workers follow for determining when individuals without a high school diploma or equivalent are enrolled in educational activities. This includes individuals who are 18 and older and individuals who are 16 or 17 who are not attending secondary school or its equivalent. In accordance with 18 NYCRR 385.6 (a), basic literacy level is defined as a literacy level equivalent to the ninth grade. The regulations also require districts to offer individuals who have not attained a high school diploma, or equivalent, the opportunity

to participate in educational activities, including adult basic education and activities intended to prepare them to attain a high school diploma or its equivalent. As with all activity assignments, districts may consider factors when determining whether or not assignment in an educational activity is appropriate. Include in part d. any instances when the district may deny participation in educational activities. Please refer to [09-ADM-16](#) for additional guidance on educational activities.

In part e. of this section, 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. Districts are reminded that vocational education counts fully toward federal work participation requirements for an individual for up to 12 months in the individual's lifetime. Job skills training counts without a time limit so long as it is combined with 20 hours of "core" work activity. Vocational education activities beyond the 12-month limit may be reported as job skills training if it is combined with 20 hours of "core" work activity. Please refer to [08-ADM-07](#) for additional guidance on job skills training and vocational education activities.

Each district is responsible for the approval of work activities that take place in the district, including training and education. In parts f., g. and h. of this section, describe the district's standards for approving training providers, how the district determines that the training is for positions that are "in demand" in the area or, if the training is more general, that it provides the base needed by some individuals in order to progress toward or within competitive employment. An evaluation procedure must be incorporated into the approval determination standards of each social services district. Each social services official must maintain a list of programs which have been approved by the district. Additionally, describe the procedure for advising applicants/recipients of approved activities and providers the procedures for notifying applicants/recipients whether enrollment in a work activity is approved, and the requirements participants must meet to maintain their enrollment in those activities.

In part i. of this section, describe the district's procedure for monitoring high school attendance for those age 16-18 years old in order to determine the individual's TA exempt status. If normal periodic monitoring is due during a summer month, when students are not normally in school, the district must verify the enrollment when school reconvenes.

In part j. of this section, describe how the district ensures that an individual's health limitations are accommodated when making an assignment to a work activity. Districts are reminded that in accordance with 18 NYCRR 385.2(d), a participant's limitations must be provided, in writing, to the provider agency. Please note, privacy laws prohibit disclosure of a medical condition but restrictions or limitations resulting from the medical condition must be shared with the supervisor at the participant's work assignment.

4.4 Post-Secondary Education Approval and Enrollment Policies

In part a. of this section, describe the highest level of post-secondary education the district will approve as a work activity, up to a four-year college program. Please ensure to include the current providers the districts partners with for the provision of post-secondary education programs in Table 1 or Table 2 under Section 1.2 of this plan.

In part b. of this section, indicate which conditions listed would cause the district to withhold approving placement in a work activity such as a work-study, internship, externship or other work placement associated with a non-graduate educational program. In accordance with 18

NYCRR 385.9(b), unless a valid reason exists, districts must approve a work activity as part of an education program, regardless of whether or not the district has approved the education program. Districts may withhold approving placement if one or more of the conditions listed in this section apply. Districts may check at least one of the conditions on the list but may check as many as apply and may include additional conditions in the space provided. If the district would never deny such an activity, they may leave this part blank.

Section 5 Work Requirements

5.1 Meeting TA Work Requirements

In part a. of this section, describe how the district plans to meet federal and State TA work participation requirements. This description should include the weekly hours standard of participation requirements for individuals in different case and household types. For example, this would include the district's weekly participation standard for a household with no children under the age of six, the weekly participation standard of single caretaker of a child under the age of six, or any other case or household type. Additionally, include the typical time period between case opening and engagement in activities for nonexempt individuals and the typical time period for engagement in a traditional work activity after an individual's status has changed from exempt to nonexempt. Include how this and other factors regarding participation rate and engagement are monitored.

In part b. of this section, enter the estimated monthly average number of individuals the district expects to serve. This should be entered for households with dependent children and households without dependent children.

In part c. of this section, describe 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.

In part d. of this section, answer using the check box provided if the district assigns TA applicants to job search. If the answer is "Yes", in the chart provided, please indicate the minimum number of employer contacts, or hourly participation, or both that is generally required of applicants in households with dependent children and without dependent children. Districts should also provide a description of job search requirements for recipients in households with dependent children and without children in the space provided.

In part e. of this section, answer using the check box provided if the district assigns TA recipients to job search. If the answer is "Yes", in the chart provided, please indicate the minimum number of employer contacts, or hourly participation, or both that is generally required of applicants in households with dependent children and without dependent children. Districts should also provide a description of job search requirements for recipients in households with dependent children and without children in the space provided under "Additional Information".

Participation in job search includes time directly supervised by the program provider, as verified through attendance records or other statements from the program provider. As required by the United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), individuals participating in self-directed job search will be required to maintain and submit a log detailing the amount of time spent participating in independent job search activities. This job search log will be reviewed by

the staff person responsible for providing supervision of the activity to determine if a reasonable number of contacts were made during the time reported given the amount of time required to identify, apply, and interview for a job, along with time spent preparing and sending follow-up materials to an employer. Districts are strongly encouraged to support each individual's search for work through actions such as helping participants identify job openings that are consistent with his or her work abilities and interests.

In part f. of this section, describe the policies and procedures, including the guidelines workers follow, that the district uses to determine whether participation in self-employment is approved as part of an individual's required work activities.

5.2 Informing SNAP Applicants and Recipients of Work Requirements

At application, recertification, any time a previously-exempt household member becomes non-exempt, or when a new non-exempt person joins the household, the district must inform a SNAP household of the work rules when at least one member is non-exempt and subject to work requirements. The work rules include General SNAP Work Rules, Mandatory SNAP E&T, and ABAWD Requirements. This information must be provided both verbally and in writing.

In part a. of this section, please indicate how written information is provided to households.

In part b. of this section, describe how district eligibility staff provide SNAP households the verbal explanation of the SNAP work rules.

In part c. of this section, please indicate how the district documents that SNAP households were provided with the written information about SNAP work rules.

In part d. of this section, please indicate how the district documents that SNAP households were provided with the verbal information about SNAP work rules.

5.3 Meeting SNAP Work Requirements

In part a. of this section, describe the extent to which the district requires NTA SNAP recipients to participate in SNAP E&T work activities. If assigning NTA SNAP recipients to participate in SNAP E&T work activities, the district must include case management services as part of their E&T program. Case management may include comprehensive intake assessments, individual service plans, progress monitoring, or coordination with service providers. Additionally, the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018 (Farm Bill) replaces job search programs with supervised job search. If the district is offering supervised job search as an E&T activity component, the district must describe in part b. of this section how the job search activity will be supervised and tracked, including the frequency of monitoring the participant's job search efforts.

If the district is not mandating SNAP E&T work activity assignments, please describe in part c. how NTA SNAP work registrants are informed of the services available, upon request, for assistance with job search activities.

5.4 Advising Household of Employment and Training Services

At recertification, non-exempt SNAP recipients who reside in a household that contains at least one adult member, with no elderly or disabled individuals, and had no earned income at their last certification or required reporting period, must be advised of the availability of employment and training services in the district or region.

In part a. of this section, please select who the district provides information to regarding employment and training services.

In part b. of this section, please select how the district advises SNAP recipients of available employment and training services.

5.5 Provider Determinations

In part a. of this section, please describe which procedures the district has in place for the provider determination process, which is when a provider/contractor determines an individual is not a good fit for a particular activity or program to which they are referred or assigned. Include in the description the district process for screening individuals prior to referral to a provider, the procedures providers follow to communicate information related to provider determinations with the district, the procedures workers follow to communicate information related to provider determinations with the client, and the procedures for documenting provider determinations.

In part b. of this section, please describe the district's process for informing providers of their authority and responsibility to determine if an individual is not a good fit for a particular activity or program.

Section 6 Quality Assurance/Work Verifications

In this section of the Plan, districts must provide their procedure for monitoring attendance in work activities. Districts must describe the controls put in place to ensure that exemptions, which may result in the federal exclusions from the work participation rate calculation are accurately made. This should include how the district ensures 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 and holiday reporting. Districts must validate attendance reporting by monitoring visits to providers and viewing attendance rosters for training. Districts must describe the frequency of attendance monitoring visits, which may vary based on the number of participants served by the provider.

6.1 Quality Assurance Process - Random Case Sampling

Consistent with New York State's approved Work Verification Plan (WVP), and in accordance with the requirements established by the HHS, 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 the documentation to verify what is being reported to 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 how 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.

The district will sample cases from each month within the (6 month) semi-annual period. The October to March review will be due by May 20th. The April to September review will be due by November 20th. The results of these audits will enable the district to identify policies, processes or cases that may need corrective action.

After each self-audit is completed, the district must submit a summary of findings to OTDA A&QI at AQI.WV.SelfAudits@otda.ny.gov 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 (QA) plan must include the following elements:

- 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 WTWCMS, NYCWAY or other automated systems 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 parent caretaker of a disabled household member (Employability Code 38 or 48), 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.

In part a. of this section, districts must enter the number of random sample cases of participation in paid work activities the district will review semi-annually.

In part b. of this section, districts must enter the number of random sample cases of participation in unpaid work activities the district will review semi-annually.

In part c. of this section, districts must enter the number of random sample cases in which a case member is reported as a TA employability code 38 – “Parent needed in the home full time to care for an incapacitated/disabled household member” or TA employability code 48 – “Needed in the home to care for an incapacitated child full time – time limit exemption”.

In part d. of this section, districts must enter the number of random sample cases in which a case member is reported as an employability code 31 – “Parent or caretaker relative of a child under 12 months of age”.

The minimum number of cases a district must sample is based on district size using the percentage of the Rest of State (ROS) Total Denominator to calculate. Districts are listed below in one of the following categories (NYC, and ROS Large, Medium or Small).

The number of cases that each district will sample will be at a minimum:

NYC:

- Paid Work Activities – 75 Cases
- Unpaid Work Activities – 50 Cases
- Caretaker of a disabled household member (employability code 38) – 25 Cases
- Caretaker of a child under the age of 12 months (employability code 31) – 25 cases

Large Districts: (Erie, Monroe, Nassau, Onondaga, Suffolk, Westchester)

- Paid Work Activities – 24 Cases
- Unpaid Work Activities – 24 Cases
- Caretaker of a disabled household member (employability code 38) – 12 Cases
- Caretaker of a child under the age of 12 months (employability code 31) – 12 cases

Medium Districts: (Albany, Broome, Chautauqua, Jefferson, Niagara, Oneida, Orange, Oswego, Schenectady)

- Paid Work Activities – 12 Cases
- Unpaid Work Activities – 12 Cases
- Caretaker of a disabled household member (employability code 38) – 6 Cases
- Caretaker of a child under the age of 12 months (employability code 31) – 6 cases

Small Districts: (Allegany, Cattaraugus, Cayuga, Chemung, Chenango, Clinton, Columbia, Cortland, Delaware, Dutchess, Essex, Franklin, Fulton, Genesee, Greene, Hamilton, Herkimer, Lewis, Livingston, Madison, Montgomery, Ontario, Orleans, Otsego, Putnam, Rensselaer, Rockland, St. Lawrence, Saratoga, Schoharie, Schuyler, Seneca, Steuben, Sullivan, Tioga, Tompkins, Ulster, Warren, Washington, Wayne, Wyoming, Yates)

- Paid Work Activities – 6 Cases
- Unpaid Work Activities – 6 Cases
- Caretaker of a disabled household member (employability code 38) – 3 Cases
- Caretaker of a child under the age of 12 months (employability code 31) – 3 cases

6.2 Use of Outside Providers/Vendors

In part a. of this section, districts must answer if they utilize outside providers/vendors to collect documentation and enter data directly into WTCMS.

In part b. of this section, if the district answers “Yes” to the question in part a, they must answer if the provider/vendor collects documentation, completes data entry and manages WTCMS by following the same process used by the district worker.

In part c. of this section, if the district answers “No” to the question in part b, they must describe the process used in the space provided.

Section 7 Supportive Services

Support services may include, but are not necessarily limited to, childcare assistance, transportation assistance, nonrecurring payments to meet employment related needs such as car repairs or clothing, and placement and retention services including job coaches and other methods of case management.

It is important to remember that families who have received 60 months of TANF-funded assistance and who are now receiving Safety Net Assistance remain eligible to receive TANF funded non-assistance support services. The exception is supportive services, such as transportation assistance provided to families that are not employed. Supportive services for these families must be provided, if necessary, to participate in work activities approved by the district, but must be funded with Safety Net Assistance or local funds.

7.1 TA and Non-TA SNAP Applicants and Recipients in Work Activities Approved by the District

When resources are available and when the district determines necessary, each district must provide transportation, work related expenses, case management, and medical assistance. Childcare shall be guaranteed, if appropriate, to individuals who need such care to participate in orientation, assessment, employment planning, and work activities approved by the district.

In part a. of this section, the district must describe the services they will provide or for which they will provide reimbursement to individuals to participate in approved employment related activities or to assist participants to improve their opportunities for sustained employment or advancement. This includes both in-person and virtual activities. Include maximum amounts for items, if applicable.

In part b. of this section, select all that apply and describe the transportation services the district provides. Districts must continue to make diligent efforts to assist individuals in obtaining transportation to get to and from a work activity site. Where lack of transportation is a direct barrier to participation in a work activity, the district must make a reasonable effort to assign the individual to an appropriate work activity at a site as close as possible to the individual’s home. If there is a specific mileage reimbursement rate, please indicate that here along with information regarding the method used to establish the reimbursement rate.

The standard mileage reimbursement rates established by the Internal Revenue Service effective January 1, 2023, are as follows:

- Business mileage 65.5 cents per mile
- Medical/moving 22 cents per mile

While gasoline is a significant factor in the mileage reimbursement figure, other items enter in the calculation, such as vehicle depreciation and insurance, as well as other fixed and variable costs. The business standard mileage rate is used to compute the deductible costs of operating an automobile for business use in lieu of tracking actual costs.

Based on the information provided above, OTDA policy establishes a mileage reimbursement rate of no less than the IRS established rate for medical/moving purposes. In all instances, if an individual's actual transportation costs to participate in an approved work activity exceed the reimbursement rate determined by the district, the district must reimburse for the actual costs based on reasonable documentation submitted by the individual.

OTDA policy establishes that the maximum distance a district can require an individual to walk to a work activity assignment or to access public transportation cannot exceed two miles. In part c. of this section, identify the maximum distance an individual may be required to walk, each way, to a work activity or public transportation. Please also include the guidelines workers follow when determining whether it is appropriate to require an individual to walk the maximum distance identified by the district as well as factors taken into consideration when making this determination (e.g., weather conditions, terrain, safety of the route, etc.).

In part d. of this section, describe the supportive services which the district will provide to assist individuals at risk of needing TA to improve their opportunities for employment or to maintain their employment.

7.2 Post-Employment/Transitional Supportive Services

In part a. of this section, describe the supports and strategies the district will provide to support job retention.

In part b. of this section, describe the supportive services the district will provide for up to 90 days after an individual's TA case has closed due to employment.

7.3 Extended Support Services

In part a. of this section, describe the supportive services the district will provide for individuals who are eligible under the TANF Services 200% of poverty eligibility guidelines, as long as funding is available and may include funding from FFFS.

Section 8 Conciliation, Sanction and Dispute Resolution Procedures

District Plans must include a description of the conciliation process used to afford a TA recipient the opportunity to explain a refusal or failure to comply with an assignment or to dispute an activity assignment. The Plan must also include a description of the SNAP conciliation process

that is used by the district to determine if good cause exists for a recipient's failure to comply with a SNAP E&T employment requirement and to offer the opportunity to avoid a SNAP sanction consistent with [14-ADM-06](#).

8.1 Conciliation

Temporary Assistance

Conciliation must be conducted for TA applicants and recipients in accordance with 18 NYCRR 385.11(a). TA reengagement/conciliation procedures for NYC (a resident of a city with a million or more individuals) are outlined in 18 NYCRR 385.11(b).

In part a. of this section, check as many of the appropriate boxes that apply to indicate how conciliations are conducted. In the space provided, describe the procedure.

In part b. of this section, check as many of the appropriate boxes that describe which staff person or other entity makes the determination that noncompliance by TA recipients was willful and without good cause. If a separate entity makes the determination, please describe in the space provided.

SNAP

Districts must also offer conciliation to a SNAP recipient when they fail to comply with a SNAP E&T work requirement, consistent with 18 NYCRR 385.11(d). The SNAP conciliation process includes the opportunity to document that the individual was not willful, had good cause, or has become exempt from participation in SNAP work activities. It also provides an individual the opportunity to avoid a SNAP E&T sanction by demonstrating compliance with a district assigned SNAP work activity. The district must consider the facts and circumstances, including information submitted by the individual when determining whether the individual's noncompliance was willful or without good cause. Individuals who demonstrate their noncompliance was not willful, had good cause, document an exemption from SNAP E&T requirements, or demonstrate compliance are not subject to a SNAP E&T sanction.

In part c. of this section, check as many of the appropriate boxes that apply to indicate how SNAP conciliations are conducted.

In part d. of this section, check as many of the appropriate boxes that describe which staff person or other entity makes the determination that noncompliance by SNAP recipients was willful and without good cause. If a separate entity makes the determination, please describe in the space provided.

In part e. of this section, describe the district's procedure for engaging SNAP recipients in a work activity to demonstrate compliance. Please specify which activities and number of hours a SNAP recipient would need to complete to demonstrate compliance to avoid a SNAP E&T related sanction. For example: a SNAP recipient would need to conduct five hours of supervised job search in a ten-day period or make four job contacts in a ten-day period. Please note, in accordance with [14-ADM-06](#), the time period for demonstrating compliance cannot exceed ten days.

8.2 Sanction

Individuals who complete the minimum sanction duration period and demonstrate a willingness to comply with employment requirements, or who can document an exemption from work

requirements consistent with 18 NYCRR 385.2 for TA and 385.3 for SNAP may be added back to their household's case or may reapply for benefits if they are eligible.

In part a. of this section, describe the district's procedures for determining compliance for those TA recipients who wish to end their employment sanction. Individuals who are subject to a durational sanction must serve the full durational period and demonstrate a willingness to comply (or documents that they have become exempt from TA employment requirements consistent with 18 NYCRR 385.2) to the satisfaction of the district to restore eligibility for TA benefits. In all instances, the time period established for demonstrating compliance to the satisfaction of the district cannot exceed ten business days. For example, an individual who does not reside in a household with dependent children subject to a three-month durational sanction reapplies for TA after the three-month sanction period has ended. The district requires all nonexempt applicants to conduct applicant job search during the 45-day waiting period. If the individual complies with the assigned applicant job search, the case opens. The client is not required to demonstrate compliance according to the process outlined in the district's demonstrated compliance procedures described in Section 8.2 of its approved Plan.

In part b. of this section, describe the district's procedures for determining compliance for those SNAP recipients who wish to end their employment sanction. Individuals who are subject to a durational sanction must serve the full durational period and demonstrate a willingness to comply to the satisfaction of the district to restore eligibility for SNAP benefits. In all instances the time period established for demonstrating compliance to the satisfaction of the district cannot exceed ten business days.

Note: An individual who was previously sanctioned for noncompliance with SNAP employment requirements may resume participation in the SNAP program before the end of the durational sanction period, if they document that they have become exempt from SNAP employment requirements consistent with 18 NYCRR 385.3 and are otherwise eligible.

8.3 Dispute Resolution

In accordance with 18 NYCRR 385.11(c), dispute resolution must be available to recipients who wish to dispute a work activity assignment. This process is also used for participants who dispute the district's response to their request for health-related accommodations.

In part a. of this section, check the appropriate box that describes the district's dispute resolution procedure.

Section 9 Disability Determinations, Documentation and Requirements of Exempt Individuals

9.1 Disability Determination Process and Tools

In order for the district to determine an individual's disability and/or work limitation, the individual must provide documentation of a medical impairment within ten calendar days of the district's request. The district must decide if the individual's medical documentation is sufficient to make a determination. Alternatively, or in conjunction with the request for documentation, the district may refer the individual to a health care practitioner for a determination of their ability to work. If the district refers the individual to its practitioner, the individual may submit their own medical

documentation to the district's practitioner for consideration in the evaluation within prescribed time frames in accordance with OTDA regulation 18 NYCRR 385.2(d).

In part a. of this section, select all the appropriate box(es) that apply and describe the district's process for determining an applicant's or recipient's disability and/or work limitation in the space provided.

In part b. of this section, please describe how the district notifies individuals of their exempt/non-exempt status when an individual indicates they are unable to participate in work activities or when they have participated in the employability review process. Please include information on when the individual is notified that their status has changed from exempt to non-exempt.

In part c. of this section, please indicate how the district notifies an individual of their exemption.

In part d. of this section, select all the appropriate box(es) that apply which describe the process the district uses for obtaining medical documentation. If additional information is required, please include it in the space provided.

9.2 Mental Health Screening and Assessment

In part a. of this section, indicate if the district administers a screening tool for TA participants to help determine whether a referral for mental health evaluation is warranted. If the district does not administer a screening tool for TA participants, section 9.2 is complete.

In part b. of this section, the district should describe their policy for determining who is screened, in the space provided. The policy should be consistent among participants. For example, the district may choose to screen all participants at recertification, all participants who have been sanctioned beyond the duration, or all non-exempt participants with no stable employment or work participation for a certain period of time.

In part c. of this section, select the screening tool(s) that the district uses for mental health screening and assessment. If the district uses a screening tool other than the two listed, please describe in the space provided.

In part d. of this section, districts administering the Modified Mini Screening Tool (MMS) are asked to specify their chosen cutoff score (between 7 and 9) used for referral to a mental health evaluation. Please refer to [15-ADM-04](#) for additional information regarding the MMS.

In part e. of this section, describe the procedure the district uses for referring an individual for a mental health evaluation when warranted by screening results. Please use the space provided to indicate which workers are responsible for arranging for the evaluation and which entity or entities will provide the evaluation, treatment plan, and treatment.

9.3 Requirements for Exempt TA Participants (Reference 18 NYCRR 385.2 (e))

In part a. of this section, describe the district's procedures to determine if an individual, who is unable to work due to mental or physical impairment, has the potential through treatment or other rehabilitative activities to improve the ability to work. Please note that this determination is different from the determination of the individual's disability exemption as covered in Section 9.1

of this plan. Indicate who makes or assists in this determination that an individual can restore or improve employability through treatment or other rehabilitative activities (e.g., medical practitioner, employment worker, TA worker, local review team, etc.). Also indicate the source and type of information used to make the determination (e.g., information from individual's medical practitioner, district contracted provider, specialist evaluation obtained as result of district referral, etc.).

In part b. of this section, describe the district's procedure for developing a treatment plan and referring participants to appropriate treatment. This should include which factors are taken into consideration when developing a participant's treatment plan and referring for appropriate treatment. This section should **not** include the district's procedures for mandatory substance abuse screening and treatment, which are covered by separate OTDA regulations.

In part c. of this section, describe the district's procedure for tracking a participant's compliance with the treatment plan, including who in the district is responsible for monitoring compliance. Include information about the frequency and manner in which attendance verification is obtained or how compliance is otherwise assured and documented. Monthly attendance verification is required for the activity to possibly count toward the district's participation rate.

Section 10 District Certification

10.1 Certification

In this section, the district certifies its commitment to administer an employment program that is in compliance with all applicable federal and State policies, laws, regulations, and provisions outlined in their Plan. This section includes the Commissioner's electronic signature, affirming this assurance. The Commissioner's name and the date will be pre-filled. To submit the Plan the district's Submitter must click the "Submit" button. In order for the "Submit" button to show up, the entire plan must be completed. If there are any sections missing or incomplete, they will be displayed at the top of this screen.

Plan Amendments

Districts who wish to make amendments to their approved Plans may do so at any time. In order to make an amendment, the district must notify their ESA that they will be making a change and must let the ESA know which sections are being modified. Districts must submit any amended attachments with their Plans at this time as well. Districts should also work with their ESA to make these changes. OTDA will fill out the Amendments tab in BEPS, which lists the sections amended. District staff granted the District User or District Submitter roles may access [BEPS](#) to make updates and the District Submitter(s) may resubmit the Plan. If required, districts must put their Plans out for a 30-day public comment period after their Plan has been amended. Please discuss the public comment period with your ESA. Once OTDA has reviewed and approved the revised Plan, the district will receive written notification of its approval.