Temporary Assistance (TA) and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Employment Plan
January 1, 2022 - December 31, 2023

Oswego County
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1. Administration

1.1 Administrative Structure

a. This agency's organizational chart is attached. It identifies the units and staff within the agency that are involved in the operation of the district's employment program. (Attachments must be uploaded to the system through the “Documents” screen prior to submitting the plan. Use the textbox below to provide any additional information.)

Attachment A provides an organizational chart for the Oswego County Department of Social Services highlighting the units responsible for the district's employment programs. Included are the Employment and Training, Temporary Assistance and Child Support units.

Administrative oversight is provided through a DSS Managers group comprised of:
- Commissioner of Social Services
- Deputy Commissioner of Social Services
- Director of Assistance Programs
- Coordinator of Child Support Enforcement
- Director of Community Services
- Director of Employment and Training
- Director of Fiscal Management
- Director of Social Services

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

While Employment and Training takes the lead in delivering employment services, teams comprised of staff from each unit deliver services to clients. Employment functions include but are not limited to assessment; employment plan development; assignment to work activities; monitoring of participation in work activities; job development, job placement and job retention activities; job readiness training; education and job skills training; developing and monitoring treatment plans for exempt individuals with potential for restoration to self-sufficiency; coordination and provision of supportive services; conciliation/dispute resolution; and disability determinations as they relate to employment activities. While the employment unit takes the lead in administering these services, information is shared and services are coordinated with the other units as needed.
1.2 TA and SNAP Employment & Training (SNAP E&T) Provider Agencies

a. Table 1 lists the local contracts or agreements with agencies to provide employment services to TA and SNAP clients. These activities and services 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.

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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Provider</th>
<th>Total Contract Cost/Year</th>
<th>Funding Source(s)</th>
<th>Categories of Clients Served</th>
<th>Programs, Services or Activities Provided</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Farnham Family Services</td>
<td>$155,770</td>
<td>FFFS</td>
<td>FA, SNA Family, SNA Individual, SNAP, TANF 200%</td>
<td>Completes on-site Drug and Alcohol screenings and assessments, employability determinations, tracks attendance, progress and compliance of drug and alcohol treatment requirements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oswego County Opportunities</td>
<td>$145,126</td>
<td>FFFS</td>
<td>FA, SNA Family, SNA Individual, SNAP, TANF 200%</td>
<td>Case Management Services to assist individuals subject to the work requirements to identify and overcome barriers to participation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

b. Table 2 includes agencies/providers that offer services to participants and to which the district expects to refer participants, but which have no direct financial agreement with the district.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Provider</th>
<th>Funding Source(s)</th>
<th>Categories of Clients Served</th>
<th>Programs, Services or Activities Provided</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Child Care and Development</td>
<td>Other:</td>
<td>FA, SNA Family, SNA Individual, SNAP, TANF 200%</td>
<td>Services to assist families with child care needs. Services to assist individuals to become registered child care providers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Council of Oswego County</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oswego Public Library</td>
<td>Other:</td>
<td>FA, SNA Family, SNA Individual, SNAP, TANF 200%</td>
<td>Services to assist individuals to develop computer skills and prepare for employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provider</td>
<td>Funding Source(s)</td>
<td>Categories of Clients Served</td>
<td>Programs, Services or Activities Provided</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------</td>
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<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oswego County Workforce NY (OCWNY)</td>
<td>Other: WIOA, FFFS. NYESS</td>
<td>FA, SNA Family, SNA Individual, SNAP, TANF 200%</td>
<td>Services to assist individuals to prepare for, obtain and retain employment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oswego County Opportunities</td>
<td>Other:</td>
<td>FA, SNA Family, SNA Individual, SNAP, TANF 200%</td>
<td>Services to begin early childhood education (Head Start) and address nutrition needs (WIC).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A4TD</td>
<td>Other:</td>
<td>FA, SNA Family, SNA Individual, SNAP, TANF 200%</td>
<td>Services to assist individuals ages 55 and over with job readiness training and internship.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HHUNY</td>
<td>Other:</td>
<td>FA, SNA Family, SNA Individual, SNAP, TANF 200%</td>
<td>Services to assist individuals with home health care management services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Banks in Oswego County</td>
<td>Other:</td>
<td>FA, SNA Family, SNA Individual, SNAP, TANF 200%</td>
<td>Services to assist individuals with food/nutrition needs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HUD Housing Offices in Oswego County</td>
<td>Other:</td>
<td>FA, SNA Family, SNA Individual, SNAP, TANF 200%</td>
<td>Services to assist individuals with housing needs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Salvation Army</td>
<td>Other:</td>
<td>FA, SNA Family, SNA Individual, SNAP, TANF 200%</td>
<td>Pathway of Hope Program. Services to assist individuals with case management, goal setting and connections to resources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farnham Family Services</td>
<td>Other:</td>
<td>FA, SNA Family, SNA Individual, SNAP, TANF 200%</td>
<td>Services to assist individuals in recovery from substance abuse issues with peer advocacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACCES-VR</td>
<td>Others: NYSED</td>
<td>FA, SNA Family, SNA Individual, SNAP, TANF 200%</td>
<td>Services to assist individuals with disabilities to obtain training and prepare for, obtain, and retain employment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARISE</td>
<td>Other:</td>
<td>FA, SNA Family, SNA Individual, SNAP, TANF 200%</td>
<td>Services to assist individuals with disabilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CiTi</td>
<td>Others: NYSED</td>
<td>FA, SNA Family, SNA Individual, SNAP, TANF 200%</td>
<td>Services to assist individuals to remediate basic skills, address English language barriers, prepare for High School Equivalency exam, and to obtain work readiness skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provider</td>
<td>Funding Source(s)</td>
<td>Categories of Clients Served</td>
<td>Programs, Services or Activities Provided</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cornell Cooperative Extension</td>
<td>Other:</td>
<td>FA</td>
<td>Services to assist families with financial literacy, budgeting, and food/nutrition needs (ie. APPLES workshops and budgeting food money, nutrition, meal preparation).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>SNA Family</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>SNA Individual</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>SNAP</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>TANF 200%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUNY Oswego VITA</td>
<td>Other:</td>
<td>FA</td>
<td>Services to assist families with income tax preparation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>SNA Family</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>SNA Individual</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>SNAP</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>TANF 200%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compass Federal Credit Union</td>
<td>Other:</td>
<td>FA</td>
<td>Services to assist individuals with budgeting, understanding credit, banking and keeping safe in an electronic world (Money Smart workshops).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>SNA Family</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>SNA Individual</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>SNAP</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>TANF 200%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

c. Monitoring and Oversight of TANF and SNAP E&T Funded Contracts/Agreements

Described below is the process used to monitor district held contracts/agreements with providers that use TANF and SNAP E&T funds for employment services:

Oswego County Opportunities (OCO) Case Management Assistant (CMA) Services program is monitored through monthly submission of case notes by CMA and report showing compilation of contact between CMAs and clients, attempts to contact clients, services provided, and outcomes. Participants in the CMA program are referred by OCDSS Employment Specialists who determine eligibility prior to referral, and determine direction of employment plan. OCO also submits an annual Single Audit to OCDSS for review.

Farnham Family Services provides drug & alcohol screenings during the assistance application process through referrals from OCDSS staff. They also obtain timesheets for clients participating in D&A treatment, in accordance with their Employment Plans, developed by OCDSS Employment Specialists. Farnham CASACs are in regular contact with OCDSS staff about the status of clients and their compliance throughout treatment. Farnham and OCDSS management meet regularly to discuss and monitor operations within the contract.

Attendance, participation & outcomes of both programs are reviewed at monthly OCDSS Employment and Training Meetings to discuss any issues that arise or modifications that need to be implemented. Lead OCO CMA attends these meetings as well.
1.3 OTDA Jobs Staff Agreement

a. OTDA Jobs Program Services - Target Groups. Check all services and target groups that apply:

Services:
- Assessment/Employment Plan
- Supervised Job Search
- Job Readiness Training
- Job Club
- Job Placement Services
- Grant Diversion
- Job Development (employer outreach)
- WOTC pre-certifications

Target Groups:
- Applicants
- FA & SNA with children
- SNA without children
- SNAP
- TANF 200%

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

Not applicable- No OTDA Jobs staff.

1.4 Access to Services at New York State Career Centers

a. Described below is how the district provides access to its programs and services with Career Center partners (select all that apply):

- The district has employee(s) physically present at a Career Center
- The district has contract staff physically present at a Career Center
- The district makes available direct access to its program staff via phone or technology at a Career Center
- The district makes available copies of the LDSS-2921 (Common Application) at a Career Center
- Other:

b. Described below is how the district coordinates with Career Center partners to provide services to the district’s clients, including referral and information sharing mechanisms, or other collaboration such as participation on the local WIOA Business Services Team, etc.

OCDSS, through its Employment and Training Division, has staff who provide mandatory employment programs located at the Oswego County Workforce NY (OCWNY) Career Center, which has enabled staff to develop a working relationship with staff from other agencies located at OCWNY. This includes an informal referral process with NYSDOL, the NYS Veterans Program, ACCES-VR, and A4TD. In addition, information is shared on job postings/job leads, on-site employer recruitments/open interview sessions, upcoming education and vocational training opportunities, and on-site vocational/college recruitments.
OCDSS also has an established process for referring individuals with a criminal history to a NYSDOl staff member that works with this population and provides information, resources and job referrals.

2. Orientation, Assessment and Employment Plan

2.1 Orientation (Reference 18 NYCRR 385.5)

a. Check one of the following:

☐ The district provides orientation in accordance with 18 NYCRR 385.5 and no additional information is provided at orientation.
☒ In addition to the requirements outlined in 18 NYCRR 385.5 of the regulations, the district’s orientation provides the following:

OCDSS has an up-front Applicant Orientation for all individuals applying for Temporary Assistance. The Applicant Orientation includes the following information:
- Information regarding the temporary nature of public assistance with emphasis on time limits
- Alternatives to Temporary Assistance
- Information on child care in lieu of TA
- Information on one-time payments
- Available tax credits
- Drug and alcohol requirements
- Medical review process for those claiming unable to work/work limited
- Domestic Violence and abuse information and services
- Student Loan repayment obligation
- Employment requirements
- Work requirements for applicants and recipients
- Career center services
- Child care, transportation and other employment related supportive services
- Other community resources available
- Transitional benefits
- Training opportunities

b. Described below is how the district completes the required orientation for all applicants and recipients of TA (e.g. in a group setting, individually, or a combination of both). Please include the orientation procedure for exempt individuals and non-exempt individuals, if different:

The orientation is conducted by staff from the Employment and Training unit at the Oswego County Department of Social Services. Orientations are currently being conducted individually with applicants at the time of the Employment Assessment, rather than in a group setting due to COVID-19. However, group orientations may be provided when the district determines it is appropriate. Orientation is also provided in writing to applicants at that time. At recertification, the orientation information is provided to individuals in writing (orientation brochure and handout attached).
2.2 Temporary Assistance (TA) Employment Assessment

a. The district conducts assessments as required by 18 NYCRR 385.6(a) and 385.7(a). Check one of the following:
   - ☐ The district enters assessments directly into WTWCMS
   - ☑ The district uses the LDSS 4980 (New York State Assessment) and later enters information into WTWCMS.
   - ☐ The district conducts assessments using a local equivalent tool, and later enters information into WTWCMS. Please attach the local equivalent tool. If the local equivalent contains additional elements beyond what is required, list them below:

b. Described below is the district procedure for the completion of an employment assessment:

   Households with dependent children as well as individuals who are 16 and 17 years of age, who are not in school, receive assessments within 90 days of eligibility; households without dependent children are completed within one year of application date. Due to COVID-19, on the day that the applicant attends the face to face interview with the Temporary Assistance Unit, the applicant is allowed the option to complete the Employment Assessment Face to Face on that day or to be scheduled for a phone Employment Assessment for a future date. If the applicant chooses to complete the Employment Assessment by phone, they are provided a scheduling letter that day, scheduling them for an Employment Assessment within 10 days. Employment Assessments are conducted by staff in both the Mexico and Fulton offices. Adult applicants (those age 25 or older and all applicants claiming an exemption) generally are scheduled to complete the Employment Assessment with staff in the Mexico location, while youth applicants (up through age 24 that are not claiming an exemption) generally complete the Employment Assessment with staff at the Fulton office where additional resources are available to assist youth to meet their employment needs. Employment staff complete the NYS Assessment Form (LDSS-4980), and the NYS Employment Plan (LDSS-4978). Group meetings may be scheduled in the future, to also include completing the orientation, basic skills testing and meeting with an Employment Specialist to complete the NYS Assessment Form and Employment Plan on that date.

   Employment staff review the NYS Assessment form with each individual, and use this information to determine work readiness. Non-exempt individuals determined work ready are assigned to job search and job readiness workshops as appropriate. Individuals who are non-exempt, but not work ready are assigned to workshops and/or referred to other services to address their needs. At the point the individual is determined work ready, s/he is assigned to job search and/or appropriate workshop activities. Further work activity requirements, that may be assigned at a later date, are also discussed with the individual, such as educational training, voc ed, job skills training and work experience. Other available resources are also discussed with the individuals as appropriate. Those completing the Employment Assessment with Fulton Staff are also made aware of the resources available through the One Stop youth programs to assist them to meet their employment goals. Employment staff conduct an assessment of the educational skills of the individual through the TABE exam, or other equivalent, when deemed necessary for further services.

c. Which district administrative unit or contractor is responsible for conducting assessments?

   The Employment and Training unit is responsible for conducting employment assessments.
d. Described below are the minimum qualifications of the employees conducting the assessment (refer to requirements listed in 18 NYCRR 385.6(c) and 385.7(c)):

Employment Specialists conduct initial Employment Assessments. Employment Specialists have a Bachelor’s degree and receive training in conducting assessment and employment plan development.

Employment Specialists and Employment Specialist Assistants complete Employment Assessment updates. Employment Specialist Assistants have 2 years of study at a NYS registered college/university/business school or 2 years of clerical experience supporting social service, employment, healthcare or other closely related program, or an equivalent combination.

e. Are applicants in households with dependent children required to participate in completion of an employment assessment?
   ☒ Yes  ☐ No

f. Are applicants in households without dependent children required to participate in completion of an employment assessment?
   ☒ Yes  ☐ No

g. Are exempt adults in households without dependent children required to participate in completion of an employment assessment?
   ☒ Yes  ☐ No

h. How often and under what circumstances is the employment assessment updated?

   An assessment is completed at application and at a minimum of every 12 months. The assessment is also updated upon contact with the individual if there are any noted changes in the assessment criteria.

   OCDSS utilizes the alert on WTW to determine assessments coming due and assessments that are past due. The Assessment Status Report is also run quarterly and provided to each Employment Specialist to assist with the monitoring of assessment dates.

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

a. The district develops individual employment plans as required by 18 NYCRR 385.6(a) and 385.7(a). Check one of the following:
   ☐ The district enters employment plans directly into WTWCMS.
   ☒ The district uses the LDSS-4978 (New York State Employment Plan) and later enters information into WTWCMS.
   ☐ The district develops individual employment plans using a local equivalent tool and later enters information into WTWCMS. Attached is the local equivalent tool. If the local equivalent contains additional elements beyond what is required, list them below:
b. Check one of the following:
   ☑ The same administrative unit or contractor that conducts employment assessments also
develops employment plans.
   ☐ A different district administrative unit or contractor develops employment plans, and their
   qualifications include:

c. Described below is the district procedure for the completion of an individual's employment plan:

   An Employment Plan is completed with the individual on the day of the Employment
   Assessment, following the review of the LDSS-4980 with the individual.

   If it is a reassessment and completed by an Employment Specialist Assistant, the assigned
   Employment Specialist will complete and/or update the Employment Plan as appropriate.
   Employment staff use the NYS Employment Plan (LDSS-4978) to establish a plan of service
to move the individual to self-sufficiency. The plan is developed with each individual and
outlines/defines the activities the individual will be assigned to participate in to reach his/her
employment goal. The employment plan also addresses any barriers faced by the individual
and the supportive services necessary for the individual to participate in employment
activities. The Employment Plan is developed with each individual based on the required
activities and the individual’s employment goal, interests, needs and preferences. If
preferences cannot be accommodated, it is noted in the plan. The individual’s Employment
Plan is provided to the applicant.

d. How often and under what circumstances is the employment plan updated?

   An individual's employment plan is updated when there are changes to any of the elements
   in the plan. This can include changes to employment goals, supportive services provided
   and outcomes, including work activity assignments. The individual signs the updated
   Employment Plan when present and is provided a copy of the plan. If the individual is not
   present, the changes are discussed verbally with the individual and noted on the plan and in
   the case record, and a copy of the updated plan is sent to the individual.

3. Engagement

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

a. Federal requirements state that parents or caretakers must be engaged in work as soon as
the district determines they are ready, but no later than within 24 months of receiving
federally funded assistance. The district’s definition of “Engaged in Work” is:

   Compliance with assessment, employment planning, 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 4.1. Also
   included is pursuit of other forms of income such as SSI and SSDI.
b. Described below is additional information regarding the district’s “Engaged in Work” requirements:

Oswego County will use the State definition above to define “Engaged in Work”.

3.2 Strategies/Procedures for Accommodating Individuals with Limited English Proficiency

a. Described below is how the district accommodates non-English speaking participants’ access to employment activities and services:

OCDSS has the following arrangements in place to address the needs of non English speaking participants in accessing services:
- The district's Assistance Programs unit employs Spanish speaking staff (our main alternative language)
- Access to Interpretalk; a language interpretation service can be accessed to address the needs of non English speaking participants.
- An Informal agreement is in place with Oswego County CiTi to provide ESOL classes for non/limited English speaking participants.
- An adaptive technology computer is available to communicate with hearing/speech impaired individuals.

3.3 Strategies/Procedures for Increasing Program Attendance

a. Described below are the district policies and/or procedures used to reduce the number of times participants fail to participate in work activities. This includes absences with good cause:

OCDSS policies in place to reduce the amount of time participants fail to participate in work activities include the following:

- OCDSS has all Temporary Assistance applicants attend an Employment Assessment. At the Employment Assessment participants are educated on the benefits of full participation in work activities and barriers to participation are addressed.
- The employment plan is developed with each participant taking into consideration employment goals, education and employment needs, interests, skills, and any barriers to employment (with a plan to overcome) prior to assignment to work activities.
- Meetings are held with participants to review progress, concerns, and to remind the participant of the importance of full attendance and how this can be used to help them in securing employment, as well as the ramifications for non-compliance.
- OCDSS may refer participants to Oswego County Opportunities to be assigned to a Case Management Assistant (CMA) when eligible and appropriate. CMA's are able to work 1:1 with the participant to overcome any barriers encountered in maintaining work activity attendance.
3.4 Strategies/Procedures for Engaging Sanctioned TA Participants

a. Select all that apply:

☑ Described below are the strategies the district uses to attempt to engage sanctioned participants as soon as they are sanctioned:

OCDSS utilized the ‘Adults in Sanction Status’ report to assist with monitoring individuals in sanction status. OCDSS works with sanctioned participants by requiring that they attend case eligibility review meetings as part of the determination of continuing eligibility for Temporary Assistance. These meetings provide the participant with an opportunity to discuss with an Employment Specialist the reason(s) for non-compliance and what is needed to engage the individual to end their sanction. This may include discussion of issues such as barriers to employment and ways to overcome these barriers; the negative impact sanctions have a family and the Temporary Assistance case; child care needs; health concerns; financial obstacles; and short and long-term goals to self-sufficiency.

The Employment Specialist may also request documentation to show how the participant is meeting current responsibilities (i.e. rent, utilities) with the reduction in their Temporary Assistance grant. Exploration of resources (i.e. child support, employment) to assist the participant to meet their responsibilities are also reviewed. Failure of the individual to participate in these meetings may result in a case closing.

☑ Described below are the strategies the district uses to attempt to engage sanctioned participants when the durational period of the sanction is completed:

As outlined above, Oswego County’s strategy to engage sanctioned participants involves immediate engagement of sanctioned participants through case eligibility review meetings. These meetings may continue for the duration of the sanction.

☑ Described below are the strategies the district uses to attempt to engage sanctioned participants during different times in the sanction period:

As outlined above, Oswego County’s strategy to engage sanctioned participants involves immediate engagement of sanctioned participants through case eligibility review meetings. These meetings may continue for the duration of the sanction.

3.5 Strategies for Reducing the Need for TA

a. Described below are the district’s strategies for reducing the need for TA:

To reduce the need for TA, OCDSS completes Employment Assessments with participants within 10 days of application. Barriers are addressed at that time, job readiness and job search is started. OCDSS also focuses on preparing clients for job retention. Work readiness is a focus of job search prep to ensure clients retain their jobs through good attendance, reliability, skill building & fulfillment of basic needs. Incentive cards and supportive services are issued to qualified participants to assist with obtaining and maintaining employment. Transitional benefits and information on other beneficial programs are also provided to participants, such as WIC, Head Start, LIDC, HUD, Child Support,
National Grid budget plans, HEAP, free cell phone programs, and free income tax preparation. Upon Temporary Assistance case closing due to earned income, participants eligible for TANF 200% services are provided a monthly questionnaire, for up to 12 months, in which they are provided the opportunity to address any concerns they may be experiencing that may affect their ability to retain employment. Any noted concerns/barriers are addressed with the clients. If the questionnaire is returned and the participant meets program guidelines, the participant will be issued an Incentive Card. Consistent employment and retention eliminates the need for Temporary Assistance.

4. Work Activities

4.1 Allowable Work Activities

a. Please select all the activities available to individuals receiving Family Assistance (FA), Safety Net Assistance for households with dependent children (SNA Fam), Safety Net Assistance for households without dependent children (SNA Ind), and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits. In the chart below, the case type is listed next to each activity available to it in the district.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case Type</th>
<th>Activity and Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FA, SNA Fam, SNA Ind, SNAP</td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FA, SNA Fam, SNA Ind, SNAP</td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FA, SNA Fam, SNA Ind, SNAP</td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FA, SNA Fam, SNA Ind, SNAP</td>
<td>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 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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case Type</td>
<td>Activity and Definition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FA SNA FAM SNA Ind SNAP</td>
<td><strong>Secondary School</strong> – 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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FA SNA FAM SNA Ind SNAP</td>
<td><strong>Job Skills Training</strong> – Training or education in job skills to improve a participant’s employability, to ensure clients have the basic skills competencies required by employers to support job entry and/or to advance or adapt to the changing demands of the workplace. Where identified as needed, such training may include the development of basic workplace skills including professional workplace behaviors and decision-making skills. Job skills training may include customized or technical training designed to provide participants with additional workplace skills, post-secondary education courses leading to a bachelor’s or other advanced degree, or other training included under the definition of vocational education training. Job skills training may include literacy instruction, English language instruction, or other basic education for an individual who has already obtained a high school diploma or equivalency when determined from a client’s assessment that such instruction is needed to improve the participant’s employability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FA SNA FAM SNA Ind SNAP</td>
<td><strong>Education Training</strong> – 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 high school equivalency diploma as determined as necessary to improve the participant’s job opportunities in potential occupations. Where identified as needed such training may include the development of basic workplace skills including professional workplace behaviors and decision-making skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FA SNA FAM SNA Ind SNAP</td>
<td><strong>Job Readiness Training (JRT) Activities</strong> – 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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FA SNA FAM SNA Ind SNAP</td>
<td><strong>Subsidized Private Sector Employment</strong> – 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.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Case Type and Activity and Definition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case Type</th>
<th>Activity and Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☒ FA ☒ SNA FAM ☒ SNA Ind ☒ SNAP</td>
<td><strong>Subsidized Public Sector Employment</strong> – 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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☒ FA ☒ SNA FAM ☒ SNA Ind ☐ SNAP</td>
<td><strong>Community Service</strong> – 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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☒ FA ☒ SNA FAM ☒ SNA Ind ☒ SNAP</td>
<td><strong>Provision of Childcare for Individual Participating in Community Service</strong> – Providing unpaid childcare to enable another TA (TANF/SNA MOE funded) recipient to participate in a community service program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☒ FA ☒ SNA FAM ☒ SNA Ind ☐ SNAP</td>
<td><strong>SNAP E&amp;T Supervised Job Search</strong> – 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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☒ FA ☒ SNA FAM ☒ SNA Ind ☒ SNAP</td>
<td><strong>On-the-Job-Training (OJT)</strong> – 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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☒ FA ☒ SNA FAM ☒ SNA Ind ☐ SNAP</td>
<td><strong>Other</strong> – 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.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 4.2 Job Development

**a.** Does the district conduct or access job development services to expand job opportunities for TA and SNAP participants?

- ☒ Yes
- ☐ No

If Yes, select how the district participates in job development activities.

District staff contacts employers to solicit jobs for TA and SNAP Participants. Describe below how this is done, including number of staff, frequency of contacts, etc.

OCDSS operates a Subsidized Employment program funded through Flexible Fund for Family Services (FFFS). Employment and Training staff are responsible for administering this program. Staff solicit job openings for Temporary Assistance applicants and recipients.
based on the individuals’ interests/needs. Employers are provided an opportunity to interview each candidate for available job openings. Positions in the public, private or non-profit sectors may be considered. Once the employer selects a trainee, a training period is established taking into consideration the background and skills of the individual being trained. The employer is reimbursed the trainee’s wages during the designated training period to offset the employer’s cost of training. Full-time, permanent positions are targeted for the Subsidized Employment program. However, part-time positions can be considered as appropriate. Employment and Training staff contact employers on an on-going basis. Once an individual is placed with an employer, the Employment Specialist maintains contact with the trainee and the employer as needed, or a minimum of once each month, throughout the training period.

Employment and Training staff also coordinate with other workforce programs and serve as business service representatives on the OCWNY Business Services Team; this helps to ensure all job leads are shared between the respective workforce programs so all appropriate candidates can be considered.

OCDSS staff participate in job fairs coordinated by OCWNY and other organizations. TA and SNAP participants are provided information to attend the job fairs.

District contracts or has an agreement with another agency to contact employers and solicit jobs for TA and/or SNAP participants. Describe below how this is done, including number of staff, frequency of contacts, etc.

OCDSS has an informal agreement with the OCWNY Career Center to share information on job development activities. The Job Development staff at OCWNY use electronic means (i.e. e-mail, NYS Job Bank, Social Media) to share information on job leads and employer recruitments. As OCWNY staff develop/learn of job openings and/or employer recruitments, information is shared with local district employment staff to make them aware of the job openings, job requirements, and the process for referring individuals. Employer recruitments are held on-site at the OCWNY Career Center and at the Career Center located at the Department of Social Services. Staff provide outreach to individuals inviting them to attend the recruitments.

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

a. Described below is how the district identifies appropriate education program providers for services of Adult Basic Education, High School Equivalency (HSE) diploma preparation, and English Language Instruction that are available to clients whose assessment indicates such services would be an appropriate work activity assignment:

Through affiliation with the Oswego County Workforce Development Board, OCDSS works with partner agencies to identify appropriate education programs available in Oswego County. OCDSS has access to ABE, HSE, and ESOL programs through CITI (formerly Oswego County BOCES); these agencies serve as providers for these programs.

OCDSS will conduct an assessment of the educational skills of Temporary Assistance recipients. The district may mandate recipients who lack a high school diploma or a HSE, those identified as basic skills deficient, and through the TABE exam or other equivalent
those in need of ESOL classes, to participate in educational programs.

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

OCDSS coordinates with the OCWNYCareer Center and uses Local Workforce Development Boards approved Demand Occupation List to identify the jobs in demand in the local/regional labor market which training will be approved for. Training providers used must be an approved provider on the New York State Eligible Training Provider List (NYS ETPL). Training providers can apply for approval on the NYS ETPL at any time. An individual requesting training in an occupation not currently on the Demand Occupation List may make a case for approval of the training if they can show there are three or more verifiable job openings using a bona fide job search engine, or by providing a commitment to hire letter from a local employer.

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

OCDSS conducts an assessment of the educational skills of Temporary Assistance recipients. All non-exempt recipients who lack a high school diploma or HSE, those who are basis skills deficient, and/or those in need of ESOL classes are made aware of the educational services available to meet their needs. Individuals may be mandated to participate in these programs as part of their Employment Plan.

d. Described below are the district’s process and policy, including the guidelines workers follow, when determining whether participation in educational activities is approved for individuals who have not attained a high school diploma who are interested in participating in an educational activity. Include in this section instances when the district would deny participation in educational activities:

OCDSS’s policy is to approve non-exempt individuals for educational programs in addition to their required participation in other mandated work activities.

e. Described below is the district’s process and policy for determining whether a participant is approved/assigned to participate in job skills or vocational education activities:

Non-exempt Temporary Assistance applicants/recipients interested in participating in job skills or vocational education activities meet with an Employment Specialist to determine if the work activity is the most effective method of achieving self-sufficiency. Factors to be considered in approving this work activity may include: cost of training, ability to meet federally mandated participation rates, past history of work activities/training activity assignments and success/non success in completing these activities, the need for training, current skill levels, an individual's ability to find gainful employment with their current skill level, the individual's aptitude for a particular occupation, and local demand of businesses/employers.

Before an individual is approved for training, the individual must complete a training approval process, which may include market research, to show they understand the job opportunities available, working conditions, work shifts, job expectations and expected earnings for their chosen field of training. They should also demonstrate a history of follow
through on employment/work requirements. Those accepted for training must commit to finding and accepting employment as a result of the training. This commitment is established by reviewing their history in regards to successful completion of past required work activities, the quality of their market research, and their response to questions asked during the interview process. Oswego County DSS retains the final say regarding approval/disapproval of job skills or vocational educational activities. Vocational Education may count up to 12 months and may be counted as Job Skills beyond the 12 month timeframe.

Individuals are required to continue to participate in work activities throughout the approval process.

Individuals claiming a work exemption must receive clearance from their provider (e.g. D/A, Medical, Mental Health) in order to be considered for job skills or vocational training activities.

f. Described below are the standards by which education and training providers are evaluated:

OCDSS uses a variety of methods to evaluate training providers. These include but are not limited to:
A Work Experience Program (WEP) Worksite Agreement process is used to evaluate public and community work experience sites.

An OJT proposal/contract process to evaluate OJT and other subsidized employment programs.
Utilizing the New York State Eligible Training Providers Listing (NYS ETPL) and the Oswego County Demand Occupation List for Job Skills Training and Vocational Training approvals.

g. Described below is the district's procedure for advising participants of approved training:

OCDSS assesses each individual based on their needs, appropriateness for and ability to benefit from training, and local labor market conditions. Any training program considered must be in an occupation in demand in the local labor market. Participants seeking training are generally required to perform market research exploring the local job market and training providers who offer what the applicant is looking for. Oswego County does not direct participants to specific training providers. Rather, the New York State Eligible Training Providers Listing (NYS ETPL) is used as a guide and the training applicant selects the training provider that best meets their needs. Individuals are allowed to make a case for training if they can show there are three verifiable job openings in the local labor market for a training in an occupation that is not on the demand occupation list, or with an employer commitment to hire letter.

h. Described below is the district's procedure for notifying participants they are approved for training or enrollment in a work activity:

Individuals are notified of approval for training or enrollment in a work activity through meetings with an Employment Advisor/Employment Specialist. Individuals are notified verbally and/or in writing of all assignments and appointments.
i. Described below is how the district will monitor the high school attendance for 16-18 year-olds in order for them to retain their TA exempt status:

OCDSS adopts each Oswego County school district's enrollment policy in support of their effort to get teen students to attend and graduate from high school in accordance with New York State Education Law. The district will require verification of school enrollment at application and recertification. A form is also mailed to the school districts quarterly to check status and follow up by an Employment Specialist as appropriate.

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

At the Temporary Assistance face to face interview, applicants complete the Screening For Participation In Or Exemption From Work Activities Form (attached), prior to assignment to any work activity. If the applicant states I am able to work (may or may not be employed at this time), but have verifiable mental or medical health limitations which may impair my ability to perform work related functions, the applicant is required to submit medical verification of those limitations. The submitted documentation is used to identify limitations and any accommodations needed prior to the assignment to a work activity. If an accommodation is needed for a recipient to participate in a work activity such as work experience, the Employment Specialist provides the work site with written notification of an individual's needed accommodation(s) and works with the worksite to identify and address the needed accommodations. The Employment Specialist continues to monitor the client's progress throughout the work assignments.

Applicants and recipients who declare limitations outside the interview process are removed from any assigned work activities and are required to submit verification of their limitations and accommodations. Based on the submitted documentation, any limitations and accommodations are considered prior to re-assignment to a work activity.

Applicants stating they are able to work without limitations, and those who decline to answer, are considered non-exempt from work activities. An Employment Specialist determines work readiness and assigns each individual to appropriate work activities. Once the applicant becomes a recipient, the Employment Specialist continues to work with each individual and assigns them to additional work activities as appropriate.

4.4 Post-Secondary Education Approval and Enrollment Policies

a. Described below is the highest level of post-secondary level education that the district will approve as a work activity, up to a four-year college program:

The highest level allowed is a two year degree program, or the last two years of a bachelors degree program if the individual has already completed two years of college prior to applying for approval for job skills or vocational skills training and meets all other requirements under section 4.3 (e) of this plan.
b. Described below is how the district will ensure that enrollments in post-secondary education beyond the 12-month lifetime limit are combined with a weekly average of at least 20 hours in paid employment activities which may include work study, work experience or community service:

Temporary Assistance applicants/recipient who request approval for training beyond the 12 month lifetime limitation will not be approved unless the training is in conjunction with one of the following core work activities for a minimum of 20 hours per week: paid employment, work experience, and/or work study.

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

- It has been determined that the student voluntarily quit their job or reduced earnings to qualify for initial or increased TA.
- A job or on-the-job training position that is comparable to the work-study, internship, externship or other work placement cannot reasonably be expected to exist in the private, public or not-for-profit sector.
- The student is not maintaining a cumulative C average (or the equivalent). The district may disregard this provision if the student documents an undue hardship.
- The institution or student fails to monitor and report information regarding the student’s attendance and performance as required.
- The student fails to progress toward the completion of a course of study without good cause, as determined by the district.
- The student has previously enrolled in work-study, internship, or other work placement and failed to complete the work placement without good cause as determined by the district.
- Additional reasons as stated below:

The work study is for less than 20 hours per week and the student refuses to participate in another core activity as assigned by OCDSS.

The student is on an employment sanction for failure to participate in an assigned work activity.
5. Work Requirements

5.1 Meeting TA Work Requirements

a. Described below is how the district plans to meet federal and State TA participation rate requirements. Include in this description the weekly hours standard participation requirements for individuals in the different case and household types, along with the typical time period it takes for nonexempt individuals to be engaged in activities for both newly opened cases and individuals whose status changed from exempt to nonexempt. (Information regarding engaging exempt individuals is entered in Section 9).

OCDSS strives for a weekly participation requirement of up to 40 hours per week for each non-exempt individual. While this is the established standard, each case is reviewed and individuals are ultimately assigned based on the circumstances of their case. Work hours assigned may vary due to work exemptions, work limitations and/or other case circumstances.

Applicants participate in an Employment Assessment generally within 10 days of their face to face temporary assistance interview. The assignment to work activities begins at the Employment Assessment. Non-exempt individuals determined work ready are assigned to job search and job readiness trainings. Failure to participate may result in a negative action on their case.

At the Employment Assessment, work experience and other appropriate work activities are reviewed. At the point the Temporary Assistance case opens, the individual is assigned to Work Experience and/or other appropriate work activities based on the circumstances of each case.

Upon notification of an individual's status change from exempt to non-exempt status, the individual is scheduled for a case eligibility review meeting. Meetings are generally scheduled within one week of the notice of change in status. Employment staff meet with the individual to complete a NYS Employment Plan, address barriers and supportive services, and assign the individual to job search. The individual is provided the job search contact record which is used for individuals to record their job search contacts and is given a job search follow-up appointment for a future date. The individual is also assigned to other appropriate work activities based on his/her needs, program requirements and employment goals. Activities may include, but are not limited to, educational training, voc ed, job readiness training, job skills training, and work experience. Oswego County uses WTWCMS and Cognos reports to monitor participation rates.

b. Estimate the number of individuals expected to receive employment services for:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Household Type</th>
<th>Number Served</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Households with Dependent Children Average Monthly</td>
<td>523</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Households without Dependent Children Average Monthly</td>
<td>546</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
c. Described below is 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:

OCDSS uses the current and monthly Cognos reports to monitor the district's progress toward meeting work participation requirements. Staff are provided with both the preliminary countable and non countable report and the participation and engagement report specific to their caseload each month. The COGNOS Earned Income reports and Adults in Sanction status report are also shared with staff monthly. These reports are used to ensure information in the system is accurate and complete, and to identify cases needing to be engaged or assigned to additional work activities. Supervisory and management staff also use reports to review progress (for individual staff and in aggregate) and identify areas needing further attention.

d. Does the district assign TA applicants to Job Search? If yes, describe the district procedure for Job Search, including the required number of job search contacts and hours per week assigned. Use the “Additional Information” column in the chart below to describe how often individuals are generally required to report job search outcomes and if activities other than job search are routinely expected:

The district assigns TA applicants to Job Search.
☒ Yes
☐ No

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Applicant Job Search</th>
<th>Min. Contacts</th>
<th>Min. Hours</th>
<th>Additional Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TANF and SNA MOE</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Job Search contacts are recorded on a job search log. Non-exempt applicants are assigned to job search at the time of the employment assessment. Applicants are scheduled to attend their first Job Search appointment within 2 weeks of the Employment Assessment and scheduled to attend appointments at a minimum of every 30 days. Case management by Employment Specialists is available on a daily basis to ensure continued assistance with job search and supportive services. Applicants are also assigned to district offered job readiness trainings as appropriate such as Interviewing Skills, Resume Writing/Typing, Intro to Computers, Internet Job Search, Career Exploration, and Keys to Success. Individuals declaring work limitations are assigned following the receipt of medical documentation and determined work limited.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Applicant Job Search

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Applicant</th>
<th>Job Search</th>
<th>Min. Contacts</th>
<th>Min. Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SNA</td>
<td>Individuals</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Additional Information**

Job Search contacts are recorded on a job search log. Non-exempt applicants are assigned to job search at the time of the employment assessment. Applicants are scheduled to attend their first Job Search appointment within 2 weeks of the Employment Assessment and scheduled to attend appointments at a minimum of every 30 days. Case management by Employment Specialists is available on a daily basis to ensure continued assistance with job search and supportive services. Applicants are also assigned to district offered job readiness trainings as appropriate such as Interviewing Skills, Resume Writing/Typing, Intro to Computers, Internet Job Search, Career Exploration, and Keys to Success. Individuals declaring work limitations are assigned following the receipt of medical documentation and determined work limited.

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e. Does the district assign TA recipients to Job Search? If yes, describe the district procedure for Job Search, including the required number of job search contacts and hours per week assigned. Also include a description of how often individuals are generally required to report job search outcomes and if activities other than job search are routinely expected:

The district assigns TA recipients to Job Search.

☑ Yes

☐ No

### Recipient Job Search

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recipient</th>
<th>Job Search</th>
<th>Min. Contacts</th>
<th>Min. Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TANF and SNA MOE</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Additional Information**

Contacts are recorded on a job search log. Job Search appointments are scheduled at a minimum of every 30 days. Case management by Employment Specialists is available on a daily basis to ensure continued assistance with job search and supportive services. Recipients are also assigned to further activities such as work experience, vocational education, educational activities, job skills trainings and job readiness trainings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recipient</th>
<th>Job Search</th>
<th>Min. Contacts</th>
<th>Min. Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SNA</td>
<td>Individuals</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Additional Information**

Contacts are recorded on a job search log. Job Search appointments are scheduled at a minimum of every 30 days. Case management by Employment Specialists is available on a daily basis to ensure continued assistance with job search and supportive services. Recipients are also assigned to further activities such as work experience, vocational education, educational activities, job skills trainings and job readiness trainings.
f. Described below is the district's process and policy used for determining whether participation in self-employment is approved as part of an individual's required work activities, including the guidelines workers follow. If the district always approves self-employment as part of an individual’s required work activities, please note this policy below.

OCDSS approves self-employment as part of an individual's required work activities when the number of hours of paid employment can be verified. Agency Self-Employment and/or Independent Contractor agency forms are provided to the individual to obtain verification of start date, earnings and number of hours of employment.

### 5.2 Meeting SNAP Work Requirements

a. Described below is the extent to which the district requires NTA SNAP recipients to participate in SNAP E&T work activities. (Please note: Case management services must be provided to all participants enrolled in SNAP E&T activity):

While job search assistance is offered, OCDSS does not mandate NTA SNAP applicants and recipients to participate in SNAP E&T work activities. However, NTA SNAP applicants and recipients are provided written information regarding services the services available to assist with employment needs.

b. If the district is offering Supervised Job Search as an E&T activity component, describe below how the job search activity will be supervised and tracked, including the frequency of monitoring the participant's job search efforts.

Not Applicable

c. If the district is not mandating SNAP E&T work activity assignments, please describe below how NTA SNAP work registrants are informed of the services available, upon request, for assistance with job search activities. (Please note: At a minimum, districts are required to offer job search assistance to NTA SNAP applicants and recipients):

Assistance Program staff inform NTA SNAP work registrants of the services available at the time of application and recertification. The NTA-SNAP applicants are sent the information in writing. The letter sent is scanned and saved in the case record.

### 6. Quality Assurance/Work Verification

#### 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 United States Department of Health and Human Services, districts must develop a quality assurance plan to ensure that the data reported, from which their work participation rates are derived, are accurate. The plan must include the district's procedure for monitoring reported scheduled and actual attendance in paid employment and unpaid work activities and the controls in place to ensure that reported exemption statuses resulting in federal exclusions from the work participation rate calculation are accurately made, work eligible individuals are correctly identified, hours of attendance reported are accurate and documented, data entry is accurate and that the district and its
providers adhere to the approved work activity definitions and the determination of countable excused absences and holiday reporting within federal limits. Each district must maintain the documentation to verify what is being reported to NYS OTDA.

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

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.

a. Below is the number of random sample cases of participation in paid work activities the district will review semi-annually. Refer to the Instruction Guide for the minimum number of cases per district and guidance regarding review requirements.
   12 cases

b. Below is the number of random sample cases of participation in unpaid work activities the district will review semi-annually. Refer to the Instruction Guide for the minimum number of cases per district and guidance regarding review requirements.
   12 cases
c. Below is the number of random sample cases in which a case member is reported as an 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”. Refer to the Instruction Guide for the minimum number of cases per district and guidance regarding review requirements.
6 cases

d. Below is 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”.
Refer to the Instruction Guide for the minimum number of cases per district and guidance regarding review requirements.
6 cases

The district will review district worker or approved provider/vendor collected documentation and data entry of the above listed elements. The district will assess and verify that participation in the reported work activities listed above meet the State approved definition for the activity.

6.2 Use of Outside Providers/Vendors

a. Does the district utilize outside providers/vendors to collect documentation and enter data directly into WTWCMS?
☐ Yes
☒ No

b. If Yes, does the district’s provider/vendor documentation collection, data entry and management of WTWCMS follow the same process that would be used by the district worker?
☐ Yes
☐ No

c. If No, describe below the process used:

7. Supportive Services

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

a. The district must provide childcare in accordance with the childcare section of the district’s Child and Family County Services Plan. The district will also provide the following expenses, which the district deems necessary for the individual to participate in orientation, assessment, employment planning, approved work activities and activities to restore self-sufficiency:

Supportive Services may include, but are not limited to, transportation assistance such as automotive insurance, automotive repairs, and fees associated with driver’s license, driver’s permit, and automotive registrations; certification/licensing fees; child care; clothing/uniform costs; educational related activities; gasoline allowance; job related safety equipment;
Requests for supportive services are reviewed on a case-by-case basis, with respect to need, availability of funds, and the availability of services from other resources and/or community programs to meet that need. Each request is reviewed to see if cost effective and reasonable. Maximum allowable costs are established for each service (see below).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Supportive Service</th>
<th>Dollar Limit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Automobile Insurance</td>
<td>Actual cost for a six month policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(NYS legal minimum unless collision is</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>required)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Automobile Repairs</td>
<td>$3000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fees for Driver’s License/Permit</td>
<td>Actual cost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fees for Automobile Title/Registration</td>
<td>Actual cost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Books, Fees, Supplies</td>
<td>Actual verified cost if required for an approved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>training program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Childcare</td>
<td>Applicable District Market Rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clothing</td>
<td>$200.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Driver’s Education/Defensive Driving</td>
<td>$820.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Fees</td>
<td>Actual verified cost if required for an approved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>training program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>License and Other Work Related Fees</td>
<td>$250.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tires</td>
<td>$800.00 ($200 per tire)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tools and Equipment</td>
<td>$500.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>IRS medical/moving rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gas Card</td>
<td>$50.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incentive Card(s)</td>
<td>$100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuition</td>
<td>Actual cost less federal and state financial aide,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>up to a maximum of $6,000.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Supportive services may be provided to enable an eligible individual to participate in an employment activity or to accept or retain employment. Supportive Services are issued in accordance with agency policy up to the dollar caps listed. Exceptions to both the supportive services available and the caps can be made by the commissioner or his/her designee. Oswego County Department of Social Services retains the final say regarding approval of supportive services requests. The established OCDSS TANF 200% Transportation Guidelines are attached.

b. Indicated below are the services the district will use to assist those participants who need transportation to and from an approved work activity site, including any applicable mileage reimbursement rate, and the method used by the district to arrive at that reimbursement rate. OTDA policy establishes a mileage reimbursement rate of no less than the IRS established rate for medical/moving purposes. In all instances, should the actual cost of transportation needed to participate in an assigned work activity exceed the reimbursement rate determined by the district, the district will reimburse for the actual costs based on reasonable documentation submitted by the work activity participant. (Select all that apply)
   - Bus pass/token
   - Gas card/voucher
   - Mileage reimbursement at IRS Business rate (effective 1/1/21 is 56 cents/mi)
   - Mileage reimbursement at IRS Medical/Moving rate (effective 1/1/21 is 16 cents/mi)
   - Other mileage rate (please explain methodology used to establish reimbursement rate):
OCDSS will use the following approaches to assist participants assigned to work activities that require transportation assistance:

- OCDSS will issue mileage reimbursement to participants at the IRS medical/moving rate for the distance traveled to and from an employment activity, including the costs for taking a child(ren) to a childcare provider. If the IRS medical/moving rate changes, the district will adjust the mileage reimbursement rate to match said rate.
- Bus tokens and passes will be purchased and will be issued to participants upon request and need.
- Bus schedules will be made available and the district will assist participants to identify the appropriate bus service and route.
- The district will attempt to schedule participants lacking transportation in work activities as close to their residence as possible.
- The district will encourage car-pooling as a means of transportation when appropriate.
- The district will seek out worksites throughout the county in an effort to ensure there are sites within relatively close proximity to participants’ homes. A participant may suggest a worksite location to the district and the district will contact the proposed site to solicit participation in the program.
- The district will continue to explore other available resources in the county to address transportation needs and will refer to other programs as appropriate.

c. OTDA policy establishes a distance not to exceed two miles as the maximum distance that the district can require a participant to walk to a work activity assignment or to access public transportation. Describe below the distance an individual may be required to walk, each way, to a work activity or to access public transportation:

Due to the rural nature of the county and adverse winter weather conditions, Oswego County establishes a distance not to exceed one (1) mile as the maximum distance the district will require a participant to walk to a work activity assignment or access public transportation. Oswego County will not allocate transportation supportive services for participants that reside within a one (1) mile radius of the work activity site. Exceptions to this policy can be made by the district on a case-by-case basis due to extenuating circumstances, such as transporting children to/from day care, a participant’s verified disabling condition, etc.

d. Described below are the services the district will provide to assist individuals at risk of needing TA to improve their opportunities for employment or to maintain their employment:

OCDSS may provide supportive services to individuals at risk of needing TA, provided the service is needed to obtain and/or maintain employment. Supportive services may include but are not limited to: automotive insurance, automotive repairs, fees associated with: driver’s license, driver’s permit, automotive registrations, tires, and clothing/uniform costs. Requests for any supportive services are reviewed on a case-by-case basis, with respect to need, availability of funds, and availability of services through other resources or community programs. Requests are approved if they meet the criteria and fall within the maximum allowable costs. Exceptions can be made by the commissioner or his/her designee. Requests for supportive services not listed above are reviewed on a case-by-case situation using this criteria.

OCDSS may provide upfront mileage costs for a participant to accept employment with a verified job offer. The maximum allowable cost will be determined by multiplying the IRS rate
for medical/moving by the number miles to get to/from the employer, for each day scheduled to work until which time the participant receives their first pay check, up to a maximum of $75.00.

OCDSS has the following arrangements in place to address the needs of non English speaking participants in accessing supportive services:
- The district employs Spanish speaking staff (our main alternative language)
- Access to Interpretalk; a language interpretation service
- Informal agreement with Oswego County CiTi for ESOL classes for the limited English speaking participants.

An adaptive technology computer is available for individuals with a disability.

7.2 Post-Employment/Transitional Supportive Services

a. Described below are the supports and strategies the district will provide to support job retention:

OCDSS may provide individuals eligible for TANF 200% services the supportive services outlined in Section 7.1 to maintain employment. Requests for supportive services are reviewed on a case-by-case basis, with respect to need, availability of funds, and availability of services through other resources and/or community programs. Requests may be approved if they meet this criteria and fall within the maximum allowable costs. Exceptions can be made by the commissioner or his/her designee. Requests for supportive services not listed above are reviewed on a case-by-case situation using this criteria. The district retains the final say regarding approval of supportive services requests.

OCDSS may provide incentive cards for TANF 200% eligible individuals that are active on a Temporary Assistance case that obtain employment a minimum of 20 hours per week, obtain their TASC or a Vocational Education license/certificate. The incentive cards are also offered at established benchmarks if the participant remains active on Temporary Assistance.

OCDSS maintains regular contact with the TANF 200% eligible participants that close Temporary Assistance due to excess earned income or client request due to earned income, for up to one year after case closing. Questionnaires are mailed to the participants to complete and return to identify any barriers or obstacles they may be experiencing, that may prevent them from maintaining employment (i.e. child care, transportation). Any issues noted are addressed by staff. The district may provide incentive cards for a maximum of $50.00 per month to the participants that return the completed questionnaire and maintain employment of a minimum of 20 hours per week. This is reviewed on a case-by-case basis, with respect to need and availability of funds.
b. Described below are the support services (for up to 90 days after case closing) the district will provide to individuals whose TA cases have closed due to employment:

OCDSS may make the supportive services outlined in Section 7.1 available to an individual whose case has closed due to employment, provided the supportive service is necessary for the individual to retain employment, pending the availability of funds. Exceptions to the supportive services to be provided and/or maximum limits as established in Section 7.1 can be made by the commissioner or his/her designee. The district will maintain regular contact with TANF participants that closed TA due to excess earned income for up to one year after the case has closed due to new or increased earned income.

7.3 Extended Support Services

a. Described below are the support services the district will provide for individuals who are eligible under the TANF Services 200% of poverty eligibility guidelines. These services can be provided as long as funding is available (FFFS, etc.):

OCDSS may provide individuals eligible for TANF 200% services the following supportive services to obtain and/or maintain employment: automotive insurance, automotive repairs, fees associated with: driver's license, driver's permit, automotive registrations, tires, incentive/gas cards, tools and equipment, and clothing/uniform costs. Requests for supportive services are reviewed on a case-by-case basis, with respect to need, availability of funds, and availability of services through other resources and/or community programs. Requests may be approved if they meet this criteria and are within the maximum allowable costs per section 7.1. Exceptions can be made by the commissioner or his/her designee. Requests for supportive services not listed above are reviewed on a case-by-case situation using this criteria. OCDSS retains the final say regarding approval of supportive service requests.

8. Conciliation, Sanction and Dispute Resolution Procedures

8.1 Conciliation

a. The district's conciliation process for TA applicants and recipients must be conducted in accordance with 18 NYCRR 385.11(a). Indicate below how conciliations are conducted. (Select all that apply and describe the procedure below).

☑ In person
☒ By phone
☒ By mail

OCDSS applicants/recipients who fail to comply with employment program requirements receive a written conciliation notification providing an opportunity for conciliation. The conciliation notification advises the client to contact the agency within 10 days to explain his/her reason(s) for failing to comply with the work activity and to establish good cause. If the individual fails to contact OCDSS within the allowed timeframe, all information available to the district will be considered in determining if the client's non-compliance was both willful and without good cause.
b. Who makes the TA good cause/willfulness determination? (Select all that apply)

- The client’s employment worker
- A supervisor in the district
- A separate entity (describe below):

The Employment Specialist renders a decision regarding willfulness and good cause. Those determined not to be willful or who have good cause are rescheduled. Good cause may include reasons such as employment, a court appearance, or illness. Those determined willful and without good cause are referred to Temporary Assistance to take action and issue a timely written notice. Employment and Training Staff can agree to a positive resolution on a case-by-case basis.

c. The district’s conciliation process for SNAP applicants and recipients must be conducted in accordance with 18 NYCRR 385.11(d). Indicate below how conciliations are conducted. (Select all that apply and describe the procedure below)

- In person
- By phone
- By mail

OCDSS applicants/recipients who fail to comply with SNAP work activities receive a written conciliation notification providing an opportunity for a conciliation. The conciliation notification advises the client to contact the agency within 10 days to provide a good cause reason for failing to comply with the work activity. Good cause may include reasons such as employment, a court appearance, or illness. The notification also explains how to avoid a SNAP sanction by demonstrating compliance with an assigned work activity. If the individual fails to contact OCDSS within the allowable timeframe or does not complete the assigned work activity as an option to avoid the sanction, all information available to the district will be considered in determining if the client's non-compliance was both willful and without good cause. If the individual demonstrates compliance by complying with the assigned work activity, the individual is not referred for sanction.

d. Who makes the SNAP E&T good cause/willfulness determination? (Select all that apply)

- The client’s employment worker
- A supervisor in the district
- A separate entity (describe below):

The Employment Specialist renders a decision regarding willfulness and good cause. Good cause may include reasons such as employment, a court appearance, or illness. Those determined not to be willful or who have good cause are rescheduled for the work activity. Those determined willful and without good cause, and have not demonstrated compliance with the assigned SNAP work requirement, are referred to Temporary Assistance/SNAP to take action and issue a timely written notice.
e. Described below is the district’s procedure for engaging SNAP recipients in a work activity to demonstrate compliance to avoid a SNAP E&T related sanction:

To demonstrate compliance, SNAP recipients must comply with the requirement to look for work. Recipients need to complete 5 verifiable job applications and properly complete the Job Search Contract Record and return the Record with the completed contacts within the conciliation timeframe (10 days). If recipient contacts Employment Specialist within the conciliation timeframe, an extension may be granted on a case-by-case basis.

See attached form (Option to Avoid a SNAP Sanction).

8.2 Sanction

a. Described below is the district’s procedure for determining compliance for those TA recipients who wish to end their employment sanction (18 NYCRR 385.12, 385.13), including the time period established for demonstrating compliance to the satisfaction of the district:

At the completion of a durational sanction, individuals who wish to end their employment sanction need to agree to comply with work activities and demonstrate compliance by participating in the work activity that the sanction occurred (or an appropriate work activity as determined by OCDSS) for five(5) or more consecutive business days. If the participant does not participate for five(5) or more consecutive business days, the participant is determined to not be in compliance with work requirements and the sanction continues.

If the individual has agreed to comply and has demonstrated compliance, a referral is completed to request the Temporary Assistance unit lift the sanction effective the date the individual agreed to comply, but no earlier than the expiration of the sanction period.

If an individual has documented an exemption from TA work requirements, a referral is completed to Temporary Assistance requesting the sanction be lifted effective the date the exemption is verified, but not earlier than the expiration of the sanction period.

b. Describe below the district’s procedure for determining compliance for those SNAP recipients who wish to end their employment sanction (18 NYCRR 385.12, 18 NYCRR 385.13), including the time period established for demonstrating compliance to the satisfaction of the district:

At the completion of a durational sanction, individuals who wish to end their employment sanction need to agree to comply with work activities and demonstrate compliance by participating in the work activity that the sanction occurred (or an appropriate work activity as determined by OCDSS) for five(5) or more consecutive business days. If the participant does not participate for five(5) or more consecutive business days, the participant is determined to not be in compliance with work requirements. An individual may be eligible for SNAP benefits before the end of the durational period if the individual documents that he/she is exempt from SNAP work requirements and is otherwise eligible for SNAP benefits.
8.3 Dispute Resolution

a. The district’s procedure for individuals who wish to dispute their work activity assignments, including individuals who dispute the district’s response to their request for health-related accommodations must be conducted in accordance with 18 NYCRR 385.11(c). Indicate below who mediates the grievance.

- An independent entity which has an agreement with the district
- Supervisory staff who are trained in mediation and who have no direct responsibility for the individual’s case
- Designated supervisory staff who have no direct responsibility for the individual’s case and who are not trained in mediation

9. Disability Determinations, Documentation and Requirements of Exempt Individuals

9.1 Disability Determination Process and Tools

a. The district’s process for determining an individual’s disabilities and/or work limitations must be in accordance with 18 NYCRR 385.2(d). Indicate below what the district’s process is for determining an individual’s disabilities and/or work limitations. (Select all that apply, and describe the process)

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

If an individual declares a disability or work limitation, the individual is given a Medical Examination for Employability Assessment, Disability Screening and Alcoholism/Drug Addiction Determination form to bring to their practitioner to complete. The individual is required to return the completed form within 10 days. If the individual states they are unable to work or have a work limitation due to mental health issues and attend Oswego County Behavioral Health Services (OHBS), the individual signs the releases of information (ROIs) and the ROIs and form are sent to OHBS on behalf of the individual, with a request that the practitioner complete and return the form within 10 days. If OHBS does not return the completed form, the individual is then given a Medical Examination for Employability Assessment, Disability Screening and Alcoholism/Drug Addiction Determination form to bring to the practitioner to complete.

OCDSS may allow a written statement from the practitioner if the statement contains the necessary elements to determine disability. If an individual states they are unable to obtain medical documentation and requests assistance, OCDSS will assist the individual with obtaining the documentation.

OCDSS staff, which can include Employment Specialist, Temporary Assistance Staff and Supervisory Staff are responsible to review medical documentation, monitor the recommended treatment plan, determine the employment status, and review progress no
fewer than three months, unless otherwise indicated on the completed Medical Examination for Employability Assessment, Disability Screening and Alcoholism/Drug Addiction Determination form and no greater than 12 months.

A recipient claiming a medical exemption is required to provide a medical update within 10 days, by submitting a completed medical form. If the individual states they are unable to work or have a work limitation due to mental health issues and attend Oswego County Behavioral Health Services (OHBS), the agency obtains updated ROIs as needed and the ROIs and form are sent to OHBS on behalf of the individual, with a request that the practitioner complete and return the form within 10 days. If OHBS does not return the completed form, the individual is then given a Medical Examination for Employability Assessment, Disability Screening and Alcoholism/Drug Addiction Determination form to bring to the practitioner to complete. If the form is not received in the agency within that timeframe, and the individual does not state they are unable to obtain the documentation and request that the agency assist with obtaining the documentation, the case is referred for closing.

OCDSS reserves the right to contract with an independent medical exam provider to conduct physical, mental and IQ evaluations. In addition, should an individual be referred to an independent medical exam, Oswego County may use this information, along with any other documentation to determine the status of an individual's disability and potential to be restored to self-sufficiency.

The mandated Alcohol and Substance Abuse Screenings and Assessments are completed on-site, by a contracted Office of Alcohol and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS) licensed provider. Individuals determined from the screening to need a drug/alcohol assessment, that are not already established into a treatment program, complete the assessment on-site with the contracted OASAS provider staff. If the individual is recommended for Drug and Alcohol treatment by the contracted OASAS provider, an appointment to start treatment is scheduled with an off site treatment provider. The individual is notified in writing of the scheduled appointment date and time, their employability determination as determined by the onsite OASAS provider, and the requirement to comply with any treatment recommendations. The on-site OASAS provider obtains the individual's attendance at a minimum of monthly, and progress reports at a minimum of every 3 months. The on-site OASAS provider provides Case Management in conjunction with Employment Staff to monitor treatment requirements and progress. If the individual is determined able to work around treatment, the treatment may be required as part of the individual's Employment Plan and attendance and progress monitored.

See attached agency form (Medical Examination for Employability Assessment, Disability Screening, and Alcoholism/Drug Addiction Determination form).
b. Indicated below is the process for reviewing the medical documentation to determine if the individual is exempt, nonexempt, or work limited and describe the process by which the determination is made. (Select all that apply)

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

OCDSS reviews information obtained from the individual, individual's medical providers, drug and alcohol providers, on-site OASAS provider and any other information deemed pertinent by OCDSS to determine the status of the individual's disability as well as the individual's potential to be restored to self-sufficiency. Local district staff use this information to determine if the individual is exempt, nonexempt, or work limited. The individual is notified in writing of the district's disability determination via forms LDSS-4005/4005a.

9.2 Mental Health Screening and Assessment

a. In addition to screening for a disability as part of the application or disability determination process, does the district administer a screening tool for TA participants to help determine whether a referral for a mental health evaluation is warranted?

- Yes
- No

b. Describe the district’s policy for determining when a program participant is offered a mental health screen:

c. What screening tools does the district use? (Select all that apply)

- LDSS 5009 - Mental Health Screening Tool
- The computer assisted version of the Modified Mini Screening tool (MMS)
- Other Screening tool (describe below)

d. If using the MMS, indicate below the district’s cutoff score (7, 8 or 9) for referral to a mental health evaluation.

e. Describe below the procedure the district uses if the screening tool warrants a mental health evaluation referral

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

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

Described below is the district’s procedure for determining 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. 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.).

OCDSS staff, which can include Employment Specialist, Temporary Assistance Staff, and Supervisory Staff review information obtained from the participant, participant's medical providers, drug and alcohol treatment providers, and any other information deemed pertinent by OCDSS to determine the status of the individual's disability, as well as individual's potential to be restored to self-sufficiency. Local district staff use this information to determine if the individual is exempt, nonexempt, or work limited. OCDSS uses the OCDSS Medical Examination for Employability Assessment, Disability, Screening, and Alcoholism/Drug Addiction Determination form completed by the individuals provider to determine potential to be restored to self-sufficiency.

Contracted on-site OASAS provider staff complete the Drug and Alcohol Screenings and Assessments on-site and determine employability. If individual is found to be in need of treatment, the on-site OASAS provider staff schedule an appointment for the individual to start/continue treatment. If a non-exempt individual is determined able to work around their treatment, Employment and Training staff may require Drug and Alcohol treatment as part of the individual's employment plan.

b. Described below is the district's procedure for developing a treatment plan and for referring the participant to appropriate treatment, etc.

OCDSS staff (Employment Specialists, TA Staff) review information from the client, medical providers, drug & alcohol (D&A) treatment providers, & other pertinent information to determine the status of a client's disability & potential to attain self-sufficiency. A client's Treatment Plan is determined & referrals to appropriate treatment(s) are made by the Practitioner/Provider. The Medical Examination for Employability Assessment, Disability Screening & Alcoholism/Drug Addiction Determination (OCMed) form, D&A treatment progress reports from local D&A Providers, & notations from on-site OASAS providers indicating treatment recommendations & programs. LDSS 4005 & 4005a are issued to clients as appropriate. OCDSS on-site OASAS providers complete substance abuse screenings & assessments, coordinate with substance abuse treatment providers, obtain treatment plans, inform clients of treatment compliance requirements, & monitor progress. If a client is determined exempt at the D&A screening/assessment due to substance abuse, the client is notified in writing by the onsite OASAS providers. If the client can work around D&A treatment, treatment may be required as part of the employment plan, the client is notified by the on-site OASAS providers, & LDSS 4005a is issued by OCDSS staff. If a client's exemption changes from non-exempt to exempt due their D&A abuse/treatment, the client is notified in writing by OCDSS staff. If on-site OASAS providers determine that the client is required to attend substance abuse treatment, the on-site OASAS providers provide the client with a treatment requirement letter informing the client of their employability determination, appointment date, time & location to start/continue treatment, & the requirement to participate in their treatment plan as determined by their provider. Exempt clients are informed by Employment Specialists that they must comply with their treatment plan as established by their provider. For clients with a mental health or medical impairment,
the OCMed form is used to develop treatment plans for clients as established by the client’s provider. If a provider will not complete the form as they have not had enough visits with the client (per their policy), the provider informs OCDSS of a timeframe in which the form will be completed & the client is expected to inform OCDSS of appointment dates with the provider. Once a treatment plan is established, the form is used by OCDSS staff to monitor progress.

c. Described below is the district’s procedure for tracking the participant’s compliance with their treatment plan, including who in the district is responsible for monitoring compliance. Include elements such as monthly confirmation of attendance at rehabilitation or other factors to judge participation and progress, along with how often the treatment plan is updated.

OCDSS staff (Employment Specialists, TA Staff) review medical documentation, monitor recommended treatment plans, determine employment status, & review progress no fewer than 3 months (unless otherwise indicated on the medical form) & no greater than 12 months. OCDSS Employment & Training staff maintain a database of follow up due dates for medical reports for clients claiming medical exemption/limitation. Prior to the expiration date of the medical documentation on file, the client is sent a document requirement form & OCMed form for their practitioner to complete. The completed form must be returned within 10 days. If the client states they are unable to work or have a work limitation due to mental health issues & attend Lakeview Center for Mental Health & Wellness (Lakeview), OCDSS staff send signed ROIs & the form to Lakeview, requesting the practitioner to complete & return within 10 days. The OCMed form is used to monitor compliance. To monitor compliance with D&A treatment requirements, the on-site OASAS providers obtain client attendance reports/timesheets from the D&A treatment providers at a minimum of monthly, & progress reports at a minimum of every 3 months. The on-site OASAS providers provide Case Management in conjunction with Employment Staff to monitor treatment requirements & progress. If the client is determined able to work around treatment, the treatment may be entered on the client’s Employment Plan & attendance & progress monitored in the same manner. Exempt clients are informed at orientation by an Employment Specialist that they are required to comply with treatment plans, including the medical treatment plan established by their provider. For clients with a mental health or medical impairment, the OCMed form is used by a client’s provider to develop a treatment plan. If a provider will not complete the form as they have not had enough visits with the client (per their policy), the provider informs OCDSS of a timeframe in which the form will be completed & the client is expected to inform OCDSS of all provider appointment dates. Once a treatment plan is established, the form is used to monitor progress & update treatment plans. If the provider indicates on the form that the client did not comply with their treatment plan, it is reviewed by the Employment Specialist for possible sanction. Updates are requested based on the duration timeframe as indicated by the provider on the form.
10. District Certification

10.1 Certification

As a condition of the receipt of federal and State funds the Local District Commissioner of Oswego County Department of Social Services submits this Temporary Assistance (TA) and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Employment Plan (Plan) to the New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance. The Plan outlines the administration of employment services for TA and SNAP applicants and recipients for the period January 1, 2022 through December 31, 2023. Submission of this Plan certifies that the district has read and accepts the terms of this certification and hereby affirms that employment services programs will be administered in accordance with all applicable federal and State policies, laws, regulations and provisions of this Plan.

1/14/2022
Stacy Alvord
Commissioner