

# **Temporary Assistance (TA) and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Employment Plan**

January 1, 2020 – December 31, 2021

## **Schenectady County**

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## **Section 1- Assurances**

As a condition of the receipt of federal and State funds the Schenectady 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, 2020 through December 31, 2021. As Commissioner of Schenectady County Department of Social Services, I hereby affirm that employment services programs will be administered in accordance with all applicable federal and State policies, laws, regulations and provisions of this Plan.

/s/ PB 12/12/2019

Paul Brady, Social Services Commissioner

12/12/19, Date

Amendments to this Plan:

Date Approved OTDA	Section(s) Amended

(To be completed by OTDA)

## Section 2 Administration

### Section 2.1 Administrative Structure

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

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

The Schenectady County Department of Social Services contracts with the Schenectady County Job Training Agency (SJTA) to maintain a TA/SNAP Employment Program that meets the employment service needs of all TA/SNAP applicants and recipients who are residents of the county. Schenectady Job Training Agency (SJTA) is now a separate county department that provides those services and oversees the employment support needs of the local community. The Director of Workforce Development is responsible for the supervision of all the employment programs in Schenectady County. The Welfare to Work program has a program director that answers directly to the Director of Workforce Development.

### Section 2.2 TA and SNAP Employment & Training (SNAP E&T) Provider Agencies

**Table 1 - Contracts Associated with TA and SNAP Employment Programs and Services**

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 assessments and employment plans; conciliation and grievance activities; provision of work activities such as job readiness training; education and job skills training; monitoring and support for compliance with treatment plans for exempt individuals with the potential for restoration to self-sufficiency; job development; job placement and retention services; and other employment related activities.

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

<b>Provider</b>	<b>Total Contract Cost (per year)</b>	<b>Funding Source(s) (Check all that apply)</b>	<b>Categories of Clients Served (Check all that apply)</b>	<b>Programs, Services or Activities Provided</b>
Schenectdy County Job Training Agency (SJTA)	\$656,000	<input type="checkbox"/> FFFS <input type="checkbox"/> SNAP E&T <input type="checkbox"/> Local <input type="checkbox"/> Other	<input type="checkbox"/> FA <input type="checkbox"/> SNA Family <input type="checkbox"/> SNA Individual <input type="checkbox"/> SNAP <input type="checkbox"/> TANF 200%	Employment, Assessment, Employability Plans, Job Search, JRT, WEP Placement, Conciliation
	\$0	<input type="checkbox"/> FFFS <input type="checkbox"/> SNAP E&T <input type="checkbox"/> Local <input type="checkbox"/> Other	<input type="checkbox"/> FA <input type="checkbox"/> SNA Family <input type="checkbox"/> SNA Individual <input type="checkbox"/> SNAP <input type="checkbox"/> TANF 200%	

<b>Provider</b>	<b>Total Contract Cost (per year)</b>	<b>Funding Source(s) (Check all that apply)</b>	<b>Categories of Clients Served (Check all that apply)</b>	<b>Programs, Services or Activities Provided</b>
	\$0	<input type="checkbox"/> FFFS <input type="checkbox"/> SNAP E&T <input type="checkbox"/> Local <input type="checkbox"/> Other	<input type="checkbox"/> FA <input type="checkbox"/> SNA Family <input type="checkbox"/> SNA Individual <input type="checkbox"/> SNAP <input type="checkbox"/> TANF 200%	
	\$0	<input type="checkbox"/> FFFS <input type="checkbox"/> SNAP E&T <input type="checkbox"/> Local <input type="checkbox"/> Other	<input type="checkbox"/> FA <input type="checkbox"/> SNA Family <input type="checkbox"/> SNA Individual <input type="checkbox"/> SNAP <input type="checkbox"/> TANF 200%	
	\$0	<input type="checkbox"/> FFFS <input type="checkbox"/> SNAP E&T <input type="checkbox"/> Local <input type="checkbox"/> Other	<input type="checkbox"/> FA <input type="checkbox"/> SNA Family <input type="checkbox"/> SNA Individual <input type="checkbox"/> SNAP <input type="checkbox"/> TANF 200%	
	\$0	<input type="checkbox"/> FFFS <input type="checkbox"/> SNAP E&T <input type="checkbox"/> Local <input type="checkbox"/> Other	<input type="checkbox"/> FA <input type="checkbox"/> SNA Family <input type="checkbox"/> SNA Individual <input type="checkbox"/> SNAP <input type="checkbox"/> TANF 200%	
	\$0	<input type="checkbox"/> FFFS <input type="checkbox"/> SNAP E&T <input type="checkbox"/> Local <input type="checkbox"/> Other	<input type="checkbox"/> FA <input type="checkbox"/> SNA Family <input type="checkbox"/> SNA Individual <input type="checkbox"/> SNAP <input type="checkbox"/> TANF 200%	
	\$0	<input type="checkbox"/> FFFS <input type="checkbox"/> SNAP E&T <input type="checkbox"/> Local <input type="checkbox"/> Other	<input type="checkbox"/> FA <input type="checkbox"/> SNA Family <input type="checkbox"/> SNA Individual <input type="checkbox"/> SNAP <input type="checkbox"/> TANF 200%	
	\$0	<input type="checkbox"/> FFFS <input type="checkbox"/> SNAP E&T <input type="checkbox"/> Local <input type="checkbox"/> Other	<input type="checkbox"/> FA <input type="checkbox"/> SNA Family <input type="checkbox"/> SNA Individual <input type="checkbox"/> SNAP <input type="checkbox"/> TANF 200%	
	\$0	<input type="checkbox"/> FFFS <input type="checkbox"/> SNAP E&T <input type="checkbox"/> Local <input type="checkbox"/> Other	<input type="checkbox"/> FA <input type="checkbox"/> SNA Family <input type="checkbox"/> SNA Individual <input type="checkbox"/> SNAP <input type="checkbox"/> TANF 200%	
	\$0	<input type="checkbox"/> FFFS <input type="checkbox"/> SNAP E&T <input type="checkbox"/> Local <input type="checkbox"/> Other	<input type="checkbox"/> FA <input type="checkbox"/> SNA Family <input type="checkbox"/> SNA Individual <input type="checkbox"/> SNAP <input type="checkbox"/> TANF 200%	
	\$0	<input type="checkbox"/> FFFS <input type="checkbox"/> SNAP E&T <input type="checkbox"/> Local <input type="checkbox"/> Other	<input type="checkbox"/> FA <input type="checkbox"/> SNA Family <input type="checkbox"/> SNA Individual <input type="checkbox"/> SNAP <input type="checkbox"/> TANF 200%	
	\$0	<input type="checkbox"/> FFFS <input type="checkbox"/> SNAP E&T <input type="checkbox"/> Local <input type="checkbox"/> Other	<input type="checkbox"/> FA <input type="checkbox"/> SNA Family <input type="checkbox"/> SNA Individual <input type="checkbox"/> SNAP <input type="checkbox"/> TANF 200%	

**Table 2 – Other Service Providers**

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.

<b>Provider</b>	<b>Funding Source(s) (if known)</b>	<b>Categories of Clients Served (Check all that apply)</b>	<b>Programs, Services or Activities Provided</b>
Schenectady Community Action Program Inc. (SCAP)	Federal & State	<input type="checkbox"/> FA <input type="checkbox"/> SNA Family <input type="checkbox"/> SNA Individual <input type="checkbox"/> SNAP <input type="checkbox"/> TANF 200%	Job Readiness, Job Search, Occupational Training, Health Profession Opportunity Grants (HPOG), Displaced Homemaker Program (DHP), Mohawk Valley Employer Resource Network (MV ERN)
Schenectady County Career Center (One Stop)	Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> FA <input type="checkbox"/> SNA Family <input type="checkbox"/> SNA Individual <input type="checkbox"/> SNAP <input type="checkbox"/> TANF 200%	Job Search, Job Readiness, Resume Assistance, Interviewing Techniques, Beginning Computer Classes, Hiring Events
Schenectady County Community College	Federal and State	<input type="checkbox"/> FA <input type="checkbox"/> SNA Family <input type="checkbox"/> SNA Individual <input type="checkbox"/> SNAP <input type="checkbox"/> TANF 200%	Education/ Tuition Assistance, Childcare Assistance, Transportation Assistance
		<input type="checkbox"/> FA <input type="checkbox"/> SNA Family <input type="checkbox"/> SNA Individual <input type="checkbox"/> SNAP <input type="checkbox"/> TANF 200%	
		<input type="checkbox"/> FA <input type="checkbox"/> SNA Family <input type="checkbox"/> SNA Individual <input type="checkbox"/> SNAP <input type="checkbox"/> TANF 200%	
		<input type="checkbox"/> FA <input type="checkbox"/> SNA Family <input type="checkbox"/> SNA Individual <input type="checkbox"/> SNAP <input type="checkbox"/> TANF 200%	
		<input type="checkbox"/> FA <input type="checkbox"/> SNA Family <input type="checkbox"/> SNA Individual <input type="checkbox"/> SNAP <input type="checkbox"/> TANF 200%	
		<input type="checkbox"/> FA <input type="checkbox"/> SNA Family <input type="checkbox"/> SNA Individual <input type="checkbox"/> SNAP <input type="checkbox"/> TANF 200%	
		<input type="checkbox"/> FA <input type="checkbox"/> SNA Family <input type="checkbox"/> SNA Individual <input type="checkbox"/> SNAP <input type="checkbox"/> TANF 200%	

### Section 2.3 OTDA Jobs Staff Agreement

#### OTDA Jobs Program Services – Target Groups

("X" signifies those that apply in this district)

<b>Services</b>		<b>Target Groups</b>	
Assessment/Employment Plan	=	Applicants	=
Supervised Job Search	=	FA & SNA with children	=
Job Readiness Training	=	SNA without Children	=
Job Club	=	SNAP	=
Job Placement Services	=	TANF 200%	=
Grant Diversion	=		
Job Development (employer outreach)	=		
WOTC pre-certifications	=		

#### Other Services Requested

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

At this time there is not a Jobs staff person assigned to our office.

### Section 2.4 Access to Services at New York State Career Centers

In New York State, TANF is a required WIOA partner and must coordinate access to TANF services with the comprehensive Career Centers.

- a. Below is a description of how the district provides access to its programs and services with Career Center partners. Check 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: The Schenectady County Welfare to Work and SNAP Employment and Training programs are co-located with the Career Center; several other partner agencies including Department of Labor, Disabled Veterans Outreach Program, Disability Resource Coordinator, ACCES-VR, and CDTA are housed within the Career Center as well.
  
- b. Please provide a description of how the district coordinates with Career Center partners with providing 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.
 

All WtW and SNAP E&T clients are provided with information about and referrals to the Career Center; staff from the Career Center work in conjunction with the WtW and SNAP E&T counselors to tailor services and workshops to the clients' needs. Being co-located



lends an advantage in that clients become familiar with the Career Center through reporting to their Welfare to Work and SNAP Employment and Training appointments.

## Section 3 Engagement and Work Preparation

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

For purposes of satisfying the federal requirement which states that parents or caretakers must be engaged in work as soon as the district determines they are ready, but no later than within 24 months of receiving federally funded assistance, 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 3.4. Also included is pursuit of other forms of income such as SSI and SSDI.

Include any additional information regarding the district’s local “engaged in work” requirements:

N/A

### Section 3.2 Orientation (Reference 18 NYCRR 385.5)

Check one of the following:

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

N/A

Described below is the manner in which 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), including the orientation procedure for exempt individuals and non-exempt individuals, if different:

Orientation is provided by the TA Examiners individually, at case opening, recertification, and at client entry to work eligible employment status or at time deemed exempt.

### Section 3.3 Assessment and Employment Planning

#### TA Assessment

(Reference 18 NYCRR 385.6 and 385.7)

Check one of the following:

- a. The district conducts assessments as required by 18 NYCRR 385.6(a) and 385.7(a):
  - The district enters assessments directly into WTCMS
  - The district uses the LDSS 4980 (New York State Assessment) and later enters information into WTCMS.
  - The district conducts assessments using a local equivalent tool, and later enters information into WTCMS. Attached is the local equivalent.

The local equivalent does not contain additional elements other than what is required.

The local equivalent does contain additional elements beyond what is required, listed below:

- b. Describe the district procedure for the completion of an employment assessment:

The client reports to SJTA and completes a personal fact sheet with basic employment information. The client is given a specific appointment time to report for an individual assessment appointment with an Employment & Training Counselor at SJTA. At that one-on-one assessment appointment the client's information is entered into WTWCMS in the Assessment Summary and the Employability Plan is completed. The client is engaged in core and non-core activities following the individualized assessment appointment. No employment self-assessment is done by the clients. SJTA shall conduct an assessment of employability for applicants and recipients in households without dependent children within a year of application. SJTA shall conduct an assessment of employability for applicants and recipients with dependent children within 90 days of the date such recipient is determined to be eligible for public assistance. If an individual is determined to be exempt from employment activities, the TA Examiner would refer the client to SJTA for an assessment at time of recert or would have the responsibility of completing the assessment.

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

The Schenectady County Job Training Agency has responsibility for conducting assessments.

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

Employability Assessments are completed by Employment and Training Counselors and Social Welfare Examiners.

Employment and Training Counselors are employees of SJTA who are college graduates with four-year degrees from accredited colleges/universities with experience in Human Service/Employment and Training Programs.

Social Welfare Examiners are employees of the Department who have graduated from a regionally accredited college or university with an Associate's degree or high school diploma or equivalency and two years of experience in examining, investigating, or evaluating claims of assistance, or a combination of the above. Social Welfare Examiners must demonstrate knowledge of State and Federal laws governing eligibility for social service benefit programs.

- e. Applicants in households **with** dependent children are required to participate in completion of an assessment:

Yes       No

- f. Applicants in households **without** dependent children are required to participate in completion of an assessment:  
 Yes       No
  
- g. **Exempt** adults in households **without** dependent children are required to participate in the completion of an assessment:  
 Yes       No
  
- h. How often and under what circumstances is the assessment updated?  
  
An assessment plan is updated annually or as deemed necessary by the Employment Counselor. An employment counselor will update the assessment anytime there is a significant change in the need for supportive services such as child care or transportation or if there is new medical information that is presented that would change the limitations in work activity or our engagement with the customer in a work activity.

### Temporary Assistance Employment Plan

(Reference 18 NYCRR 385.6 and 385.7)

- a. Check one of the following:
  - The district develops individual employment plans as required by 18 NYCRR 385.6(a) and 385.7(a):
  - The district enters employment plans directly into WTCMS.
  - The district uses the LDSS 4978 (New York State Employment Plan) and later enters information into WTCMS.
  - The district develops individual employment plans using a local equivalent tool and later enters information into WTCMS. Attached is the local equivalent.
    - The local equivalent **does not** contain additional elements other than what is required.
    - The local equivalent **does** contain additional elements beyond what is required, listed 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. Describe the district procedure for the completion of an individual's employment plan.  
  
An individual employment plan is completed by an Employment and Training Counselor at the same time the Initial Assessment is completed. This document is created by the

counselor in partnership with the customer to elicit buy-in and compliance. The employment plans is subject to change and is amended as necessary.

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

The employment plan will be updated as necessary to be reflective of the customers growth in their skills and abilities, their indication of a new barrier or the removal of a barrier and their need or eliminated need of supportive services. The employment plan must be up to date in order to inform the work of the employment counselor on how best to help the customer meet their short and long term goals.

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

- a. Describe below how the district plans to meet federal and State TA participation rate requirements. Included is the weekly hours standard participation requirement for individuals in the different case and household types, along with the typical time period it takes for nonexempt individuals to be engaged in activities for both newly opened cases and individuals who status changed from exempt to nonexempt. Information regarding engaging exempt individuals is entered in Section 6:

All nonexempt individuals that receive Temporary Assistance will be engaged in a combination of core and non-core work activities, not to exceed 40 hours of total combined hours of activity per week, within two weeks of case opening or change in employment status. This two week period allows for establishment of reliable childcare and resolution of any transportation concerns. Assigned work hours may vary depending on circumstances.

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

	<b>Households with Dependent Children Average Monthly</b>	<b>Households without Dependent Children Average Monthly</b>
Individuals	200	50

- c. Describe below 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:

The TA Director and SJTA senior staff consistently review numerous Cognos reports regarding participation on a monthly basis. Information is shared with line staff to ensure that all employable clients are engaged to their full potential and that every client is coded properly and engaged in employable activities as required. The TA unit monitors cases claiming exemption and updates their assessments accordingly.

- d. Describe the extent to which the district requires Non-Temporary Assistance Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (NTA SNAP) recipients to participate in SNAP E&T work activities. If the district is offering Supervised Job Search as an E&T activity component, the district must describe how the job search activity will be supervised and tracked, including the frequency of monitoring the participant’s job

search efforts. (Please note: Case management services must be provided to all participants enrolled in an E&T activity):  
 Schenectady County does not mandate Non-Temporary Assistance SNAP applicants and recipients to participate in SNAP E&T work activities but does offer individuals assistance with job search activities at each contact. SJTA will make a qualifying ABAWD activity available if requested. Qualifying activities will include employment, participation in an educational or training program or job search and job readiness activities through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

If the district is not mandating SNAP E&T work activity assignments, please describe 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 make available job search as a SNAP E&T activity to NTA SNAP applicants and recipients):

All customers are encouraged to use the services of the Career Center for job search, hiring events, workshops and all employment related needs.

- e. 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:

- 1. The district assigns TA **applicants** to Job Search.       Yes    No

If yes, the process for engaging TA **applicants** is:

The Examiner determines customers employability and creates a referral in the WTCMS system for customer to attend an Applicant Job Readiness Training. The customer is provided a job search form to document job search activity to be brought to the first day of the training session.

Applicant Job Search	Minimum Number of Contacts	Minimum Number of Hours	Additional Information
TANF and SNA MOE	25 contacts per week		10 hours per week of classroom training
SNA Individuals	25 contacts per week		10 hours per week of classroom training

- 2. The district assigns TA **recipients** to Job Search.       Yes    No

If yes, the process for engaging TA **recipients** is:

Recipients assigned to Job Search as a Work Activity are required to submit documentation of a minimum of 30 hours per week if job search is the only activity.

- The required number of contacts and hours are adjusted for individuals participating in additional work activities and no more than a total of 40 hours per week of participation in activities is required. Individuals are required to submit a job search to document job search efforts which is monitored and tracked bi-weekly to their assigned Employment and Training Counselor.
- f. Describe the district’s process and policy, including the guidelines workers follow, when determining whether participation in self-employment is approved as part of an individual’s required work activities. If the district always approves self-employment as part of an individual’s required work activities, please note this policy below. Participation in self-employment may be approved as part of an individual’s work activities if the individual submits documentation of this self-employment including hours employed, wages earned, and dates of employment. This employment may not be approved if it does not meet minimum wage or the customer cannot show progress toward self-sufficiency. The number of hours of work for a self-employed individual will be determined by dividing the net income (after subtracting certain allowable expenses) by the federal minimum wage. The individual may have to participate in additional activities to maintain hourly participation requirements.
- g. The allowable work activities that are available in the social services district are listed and defined in the table on the next two pages. An “X” in the appropriate check box indicates the activity is available for individuals receiving Family Assistance (FA), Safety Net Assistance for households with children (SNA Fam), Safety Net Assistance for households without children (SNA IND), and/or Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits. A blank check box indicates the activity is not available for that case type.

<b>Activity and Definition</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> FA</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> SNA Fam</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> SNA Ind</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> SNAP</li> </ul>	<p><b>Unsubsidized Employment</b> - 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.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> FA</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> SNA Fam</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> SNA Ind</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> SNAP</li> </ul>	<p><b>Subsidized Private Sector Employment</b> - 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.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> FA</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> SNA Fam</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> SNA Ind</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> SNAP</li> </ul>	<p><b>Subsidized Public Sector Employment</b> - 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.</p>

<b>Activity and Definition</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— FA</li> <li>— SNA Fam</li> <li>— SNA Ind</li> <li>— SNAP</li> </ul>	<p><b>Work Experience</b> - 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.</p> <p>In addition to those components noted above, work experience will include unpaid internships that are part of any non-graduate student’s education curriculum. (Note: Paid internships are to be reported as employment.)</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— FA</li> <li>— SNA Fam</li> <li>— SNA Ind</li> <li>— SNAP</li> </ul>	<p><b>On-the-Job Training (OJT)</b> - Training in a public or private sector employment setting during which the participant receives work-essential paid training while he or she is engaged in productive work that provides the knowledge and skills essential to attain full and adequate performance of the job.</p> <p>OJT will be unsubsidized (for which the employer does not receive a subsidy) or subsidized using TANF funds or other funds to offset the cost of the training provided to the participant. A subsidized OJT will be subsidized for up to the full cost of providing such training and wages/benefits provided to the program participant. Positions will be subsidized for the length of time determined appropriate by the State or social services district. OJT is distinct from subsidized employment since the individual must participate in workplace training to attain full and adequate job performance and the subsidy provided is intended to offset the cost of such training.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— FA</li> <li>— SNA Fam</li> <li>— SNA Ind</li> <li>— SNAP</li> </ul>	<p><b>Community Service</b> - A structured program in which participants perform work for the direct benefit of the community under the auspices of public or nonprofit organizations. Community service placements must be projects that serve a useful community purpose in fields such as health, social services, environmental protection, education, urban and rural redevelopment, welfare, public recreation, public facilities, public safety, and childcare. Community service programs are designed to improve the employability of participants not otherwise able to obtain unsubsidized employment. Participation in community service may include training that is directly required for the participant to complete the community service assignment. For example, an individual who is expected to provide clerical support to a food pantry may be provided training to develop or refine filing and data entry skills.</p> <p>Community service assignments will primarily be voluntary in nature including participation in VISTA, AmeriCorps, and unpaid volunteer activities at a school, Head Start programs, religious or faith-based institutions, community organizations or a nonprofit or public agency but will also include such mandated participation when court ordered. Participation in activities to support these organizations is deemed to provide a service to the community. In those instances, where the participation could meet the federal definition of work experience or community service and the district or program provider would like to have another recipient provide childcare for the community service individual, such hours of work may be reported as participation in community service.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— FA</li> <li>— SNA Fam</li> <li>— SNA Ind</li> <li>— SNAP</li> </ul>	<p><b>Job Search</b> - 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.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— SNAP</li> </ul>	<p><b>SNAP E&amp;T Supervised Job Search</b>- 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.</p>



<b>Activity and Definition</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— FA</li> <li>— SNA Fam</li> <li>— SNA Ind</li> <li>— SNAP</li> </ul>	<p><b>Job Readiness Training (JRT) Activities</b> - Participation in programs that include seeking and preparing for work. JRT includes two types of activities: (1) traditional activities of resume preparation, training in interviewing skills, and instruction in workplace expectations, training in effective job seeking, including life skills training; and (2) activities that improve an individual's employability, such as substance abuse treatment, mental health treatment, or rehabilitation activities in which a qualified medical or mental health professional has certified that such treatment is necessary.</p> <p>Traditional JRT activities will include: resume preparation, training in interview skills, instruction in workplace expectations, training in effective job seeking, life skills essential to workplace success, time management, goal setting, budgeting, basic math and literacy skills, household management, interpersonal skills, decision making skills, anger management, parenting skills when it has been determined that such training could help reduce unplanned work leave or apprehension toward entering employment.</p> <p>For TANF and SNA MOE funded families, JRT also includes substance abuse and other treatment and rehabilitative services that are required for individuals who are unable to work or individuals whose employability and employment retention requires such services. Such services, which should be reported on WTCMS as such, will be deemed within WRTS participation rate logic to be JRT for recipients of TANF and SNA MOE funding but will be deemed to be Community Service for recipients of SNA non-MOE, include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical health treatment and rehabilitation services including attending necessary physical therapy, and doctor appointments. Such treatment will include medical, behavioral and other treatment necessary for individuals suffering from substance abuse (current and former users) with such required treatment ranging from detoxification services to after care/abstinence maintenance.</li> <li>• Mental health services including therapy, counseling, and other services to address mental or emotional disorders that can interfere with an individual's daily life functions, ability to work, looking for work or the ability to retain employment.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— FA</li> <li>— SNA Fam</li> <li>— SNA Ind</li> <li>— SNAP</li> </ul>	<p><b>Vocational Education</b> - 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.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— FA</li> <li>— SNA Fam</li> <li>— SNA Ind</li> <li>— SNAP</li> </ul>	<p><b>Job Skills Training</b> - 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.</p>

<b>Activity and Definition</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— FA</li> <li>— SNA Fam</li> <li>— SNA Ind</li> <li>— SNAP</li> </ul>	<p><b>Education Training</b> - 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.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— FA</li> <li>— SNA Fam</li> <li>— SNA Ind</li> <li>— SNAP</li> </ul>	<p><b>Secondary School</b> - 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.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— FA</li> <li>— SNA Fam</li> <li>— SNA Ind</li> <li>— SNAP</li> </ul>	<p><b>Provision of Childcare for Individual Participating in Community Service</b> - Providing unpaid childcare to enable another TA (TANF/SNA MOE funded) recipient to participate in a community service program.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— FA</li> <li>— SNA Fam</li> <li>— SNA Ind</li> <li>— SNAP</li> </ul>	<p><b>Other</b> - 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.</p>

### Section 3.5 Job Development

The district conducts or accesses job development services to expand job opportunities for TA and SNAP participants.       Yes       No

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

District staff contacts employers to solicit jobs for TA and SNAP participants.

Below is the description of how this is done, including number of staff, frequency of contacts, etc.:

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

Schenectady County Job Training Agency works with the Business Services Team of the Department of Labor to provide job development activities. These activities include recruitment assistance for hiring needs of local businesses, on-site hiring events and monthly mini-job fairs. TA and/or SNAP recipients are sometimes mandated and always encouraged to attend all scheduled hiring events. Additionally, Counselors conduct one on one outreach to employers through the Employer Resource Network of the City Mission to identify openings recipients can apply for and support a customers retention in a position should they get hired.

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

### Section 3.6 Training Approval and Activity Enrollment Policies (Reference 18 NYCRR 385.9)

- a. Describe 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:

The district has a long standing relationship with the Washington Irving Educational Center (WIEC) in providing the services listed above. They have a proven track record working with our population to provide these services around core activities as needed. They consistently exceed the state benchmark numbers on the National Reporting System. The programs at WIEC are provided to our participants at no cost to the county or the participant. Several other area programs are utilized as needed to fit the structure and needs of an individual's employability plan.

- b. Describe 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:

There are several locations available that provide vocational education and High School Equivalency Diploma programs. They include, but are not limited to: Schenectady

Community Action Program, Schenectady County Community College, EOC, Capital Region BOCES, Mildred Elley, and Bryant & Stratton. Each vocational activity is approved on an individualized basis based on if the vocational activity can lead to employment. The schools listed above have always supported our efforts in helping the individual be successful and provide us with timely updates, successful outcomes and job placements.

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

During the employment assessment, everyone who meets the above criteria will be afforded the option to engage in Adult Basic Education or High School Equivalency as part of their employment plan.

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

Everyone is offered and encouraged to complete Adult Basic Education or High School Equivalency at the initial employment assessment. SJTA hosts an afternoon High School Equivalency class on site to help those individuals that wish to pursue their High School Equivalency Diploma. Individuals that have a track record of not completing educational activities in the past would be reevaluated to see if this activity is appropriate or any individual that doesn't need Adult Basic Education or High School Equivalency to be employed in their particular field may not be approved for these activities.

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

The recipients' need for education and/or training will be identified during the employment assessment and employability planning process. The recipient's willingness to engage in education/training will be considered. Trainings or degrees already obtained by an individual will be factored into the decision to allow additional educational activities to take place. If an individual already possesses a skill that is marketable, then educational activities may not be supported. The ability to meet participation and still engage in these activities would be considered. Individuals that have a track record of not completing educational activities in the past would be evaluated to see if the activity is appropriate.

- f. Describe 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 recipients need for education and/or training will be identified during the employment assessment and employability planning process. Recipients engaged in a two year Associates program or those that have less than two years remaining on a four year degree program will be permitted to continue as long as their program is being completed in the standard timeframe, their GPA remains in good standing, and their degree will lead them into a career that is considered to be an in-demand occupation.

- g. Describe 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:  
Upon enrollment into post-secondary education, the 12 month lifetime limit is reviewed with recipients. If the individual is not employed 20 hours per week, the individual will be concurrently assigned to a work experience activity beyond the 12 month lifetime limit. An individual may also participate in a community service activity for at least 20 hours per week to meet the requirement after the individual has reached the 12 month lifetime limit.
- h. Education and training providers are evaluated by the following standards:  
The providers will be evaluated on the following performance indicators:
1. Flexible hours of operation
  2. Availability of public transportation or agency transportation
  3. Rate of completion for TANF recipients
  4. Documentation of attendance
  5. Staff to recipient ratios
- i. The district procedure for advising participants of approved training providers is:  
Employment counselors will advise recipients of training programs in the area that could fit their needs. Recipients will be given written instructions for accessing the program by their employment counselor. Additionally, there is a board within SJTA that lists numerous training opportunities in the area.
- j. The district procedure for notifying participants of approval for training or enrollment in a work activity is:  
Written communication is provided to the recipient and the training program/work site documenting the approved start date, time and a contact person at the assigned work activity. This document is generated by the employment counselor and maintained in the recipient's file.
- k. 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:
- It has been determined that the student voluntarily quit a 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:

l. To verify continued exempt status, the district will monitor the high school attendance of 16-18 year old students in the following manner:

The district will verify high school attendance of 16-18 year old individuals at time of application and at the time of recertification.

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

Reasonable accommodation will be made to ensure recipient safety while engaged in work activity. Work activity will be assigned based on client ability to access the activity site safely given his/her documented physical/mental limitations. Written communication is provided to the recipient and the training program/worksites documenting the approved start date, time, contact person at the assigned work activity, and any accommodation needed. This document is generated by the employment counselor and maintained in the recipient's file.

### **Section 3.7 Work Verification**

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

**The District's Quality Assurance Process is as follows:**

The district will perform a random sample of (10) cases semi-annually for **paid work activities** to review district worker collected documentation and data entry. Both the TA and employment case files will be reviewed. Hours of employment will be verified through receipt of pay stubs, employer verification forms or collateral contact with the employer. The review will ensure the hours of employment on the ABEL budget are consistent with the hours reported on WTWCMS and documentation is in the file to support hours reported on WTWCMS and that the scheduled hours on WTWCMS is consistent with the documentation.

The district will perform a random sample of (10) cases semi-annually for participation in **unpaid work activities** to review district worker collected documentation and data entry. The employment case files will be reviewed. Actual hours of attendance will be documented by attendance sheets showing actual hours of attendance, any excused absences during the month, any unexcused absences during the month, and holiday time. The review will ensure

the actual hours of attendance reported on the monthly attendance sheets has been correctly reported on WTCMS, excused absences and holiday time are documented in the case file and correctly reported on WTCMS in accordance with federal limitations, and documentation of actual hours of attendance is accurate and matches the hours of participation reported on WTCMS by district or provider staff.

The district will perform a random sample of (5) cases semi-annually in which a case member is reported as an employability code **38-needed in the home fulltime or employability code 48-time limit exemption** to care for a disabled household member to review district worker collected documentation and data entry. The TA case file will be reviewed to ensure there is presence of medical documentation to support the exemption and that the documentation has a timeframe for the exemption and that the individual is the appropriate caretaker.

The district will perform a random sample of (5) cases semi-annually in which a case member is reported as an employability **code 31-caretaker of a child under the age of 12 months** to review district worker collected documentation and data entry. The TA case file will be reviewed to ensure there is documentation from hospital, birth certificate or social security card present to verify the child under the age of one. TA records will also be reviewed to ensure that the household composition is in fact a one parent case and that the individual has not exceeded the 12-month lifetime limit.

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.

### Use of Outside Providers/Vendors

Does the district utilize outside providers/vendors to collect documentation and enter data directly into WTCMS?

Yes       No

If Yes, does the district's provider/vendor collected documentation, data entry and management of WTCMS follow the same process that would be used by the district worker?

Yes       No

If No, please describe the process used below:

### Section 3.8 Strategies/Procedures for Accommodating Individuals with Limited English Proficiency

Following is a description of how the district accommodates the needs of Non-English-speaking participants in accessing employment activities and services:

Schenectady County employs Spanish speaking staff who assist with translation. If a staff member is unavailable to translate, Language Line Solutions is utilized to provide phone-in translation services to the customer. All documents are translated as needed using an online translator and language resources in the community are also utilized.



### **Section 3.9 Strategies/Procedures for Increasing Program Attendance**

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

The district employs procedures to reduce recipient absenteeism from work activity. Staff explain to recipients how a sanction will reduce their TA grant and they stress the requirements for participation in a work activity. Staff provide job readiness training and employment support counseling to recipients with a history of noncompliance.

### **Section 3.10 Strategies/Procedures for Engaging Sanctioned TA Participants**

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

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

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

Sanctioned recipients are provided the opportunity to sign a letter of intent to comply with work rules when their durational sanction ends. Sanctioned individuals are invited to engage in activities at recertification or any time they come into the agency. Recipients attend a compliance group to understand the benefits of working with SJTA. They are enrolled in 10 days of job search or another appropriate activity and provided supportive services at that time.

### **Section 3.11 Strategies for reducing the need for TA**

District's strategies for reducing the need for TA are described below:

One effective strategy has been co-enrolling our population into the One Stop Career Center. This process allows customers to access the training dollars, supportive services, resume assistance, and workshops available at the Center. Additionally, when customers are interested in a career in healthcare, the Health Profession Opportunity Grant (HPOG) is a FREE healthcare training program for residents of Schenectady County who meet household income requirements. HPOG is operated by Schenectady County Community College in partnership with Schenectady Community Action Program (SCAP). SJTA is also a partner with the City Mission for Schenectady Bridges: a Transformational Movement which is a comprehensive, multi-year, collaborative effort designed to help individuals, families, and communities build bridges out of poverty to sustainability.

## **Section 4 Support Services**

(Reference 18 NYCRR 385.4)

### **Section 4.1 TA and Non-TA SNAP Applicants and Recipients in Work Activities Approved by the District**

- a. The social services district will provide childcare in accordance with the childcare section of the district's Child and Family County Services Plan. The district will also provide for participants 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:  
Transportation assistance in the form of CDTA swipe cards will be provided; the county will utilize the most cost effective means of transportation available. Participants may obtain needed uniform, work clothing, tools, or work supplies allowances up to \$75. Applicants and recipients are also co-enrolled in the One Stop Career Center to allow customers to access the support services available through the One Stop Career Center.
- b. The district will use the following approach 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.

Please check all that apply:

- Bus pass/token
- Gas card/voucher
- Mileage reimbursement at IRS Business rate, (effective 1/1/19 is 58 cents/mi)
- Mileage reimbursement at IRS Medical/Moving rate, (effective 1/1/19 is 20 cents/mi)
- Other mileage rate, (please explain methodology used to establish reimbursement rate):

- c. OTDA policy establishes a distance not to exceed 2 miles as the maximum distance that the district can require a participant to walk to a work activity assignment or to access public transportation. The district's policy states that an individual may be required to walk up to the distance described below each way to a work activity or to access public transportation:  
Mileage is calculated using the MapQuest application on Centraport and is provided through reimbursement and transportation is provided from home to childcare location to work activity and return. The County will utilize the most cost effective means of transportation available and will provide CDTA bus swipers or actual cost if that exceeds the IRS Medical/Moving rate.
- d. The district will provide the following services to assist individuals at risk of needing TA to improve their opportunities for employment or to maintain their employment:  
Schenectady County will provide individuals at risk of needing TA with information on community based employment resources such as Job Readiness Training, High School Equivalency Diploma, One Stop Career Center, and current job listings in an effort to assist these individuals in improving their employment options.

## **Section 4.2 Transitional Support Services**

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

Information will be provided to the clients regarding the use of the One Stop Career Center as well as an open-door policy for individuals to contact their employment counselor, even after their temporary assistance case has been closed. Transportation will be supported in the form of bus swipers for up to one month after a temporary assistance case has been closed. Additionally, Schenectady County has a close partnership with the City Mission's Employer Resource Network. If a customer is employed at a participating business, the employment counselor will reach out to the businesses identified success coach to ensure ongoing support is provided to that customer on the job. The transitional benefits that they are eligible for will be provided to them as well and are listed in the next paragraph.

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

Recognizing that even after becoming employed, many families will continue to be low-income households that may need support during the transition - services such as transitional childcare, transitional Medicaid coverage, and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits may be available. Each year a mailing is sent with a letter from the Commissioner to all recipients with reported wages, information on free Income Tax preparation including local Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) sites, and information on Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and Child Tax Credit (CTC). Former recipients are encouraged to check in bi-weekly with their employment counselors via telephone for at least 90 days to ensure that their employment is going well and will continue.

## **Section 4.3 Extended Support Services**

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

Car repairs are not to exceed \$500. Car insurance not to exceed \$500. Cost for work tools, uniforms, and work supplies not to exceed \$200.

## **Section 5 Conciliation, Sanction and Dispute Resolution Procedures**

(Reference 18 NYCRR 385.11 and 385.12)

### **Section 5.1 Conciliation**

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

- in person
- by phone
- by mail

WTWCMS is used for the conciliation process. Conciliation notices are generated through WTWCMS and the client has 10 days to contact the employment counselor to schedule a conciliation appointment.

The Temporary Assistance good cause/willfulness determination is made by:

- client's employment worker
- a supervisor
- separate entity:

A Senior Employment and Training Counselor, another Employment Counselor, or the Director of Employment conducts the conciliation meetings and makes the determination if the action was willful and without good cause - if appropriate, the case is referred back to a DSS examiner for the sanction process.

The district's conciliation process for SNAP recipients is in accordance with 18 NYCRR 385.11. Conciliations are conducted (check all that apply and describe the procedure.):

- in person
- by phone
- by mail

WTWCMS is used for the conciliation process. Conciliation notices are generated through WTWCMS and the client has 10 days to contact the employment counselor to schedule a conciliation appointment.

The SNAP E&T good cause/willfulness determination is made by:

- client's employment worker
- a supervisor
- separate entity:

The district's procedure for engaging SNAP recipients in a work activity to demonstrate compliance to avoid a SNAP E&T related sanction is:

The SNAP conciliation period is 10 days, and a total of nine (9) employment applications must be recorded in the job search record and submitted to the district at the time of the conciliation meeting. Customers may use the One Stop Career Center to conduct their job search.

## **Section 5.2 Sanctions**

- a. 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 is:  
The individual is required to sign a statement of compliance. She/he is engaged in a work activity and given an appointment for assessment by an employment counselor. The individual must demonstrate compliance with work rules by engaging in the assigned work activity for 10 days. Temporary Assistance benefits are restored retroactively to the date the individual indicated a willingness to comply (but no earlier than the expiration of the minimum duration period). If the client claims to be work

exempt, the client will be given the opportunity to submit medical documentation to verify the exemption from work requirements and will be added back to the case in the same time frame as a non-exempt individual who has complied, (but no earlier than the expiration of the minimum duration period).

- b. The district's procedure for determining compliance for those SNAP 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 is: Individuals must request to be added back to the case after the minimum duration has ended and comply with work requirements as assigned by the District. Individuals that document an exemption may have the SNAP sanction lifted before the end of the durational sanction period.

### **Section 5.3 Dispute Resolution**

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

The grievance is mediated by:

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

## **Section 6 Disability Determinations, Documentation and Requirements of Exempt Individuals**

(Reference 18 NYCRR 385.2)

### **Section 6.1 Disability Determination Process and Tools**

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

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

If an individual is claiming a medical limitation or stating that they are unable to work at all, they are given an agency medical form to be filled out by their physician. The individual is not engaged in any work activities until employability status can be determined and the individual is notified of the agency's determination. When the agency medical is received by the agency, it is

reviewed by a TA Examiner and a Senior Examiner. If the agency medical is not clear about the limitation(s), a referral to the agency's contracted physician, Industrial Medical Associates, (IMA) may be requested in order to help determine employability status.

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

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

If an individual is claiming a medical limitation or stating that they are unable to work at all, they are given an agency medical form to be filled out by their physician. The individual is not engaged in any work activities until employability status can be determined and the individual is notified of the agency's determination. When the agency medical is received by the agency, it is reviewed by a TA Examiner and a Senior Examiner. If the agency medical is not clear about the limitation(s), a referral to the agency's contracted physician (IMA) may be requested in order to help determine employability status. When all the information is reviewed and a determination is made, the client is sent a 4005/4005a to inform him/her of the agency's decision on his/her employment status.

## **Section 6.2 Mental Health Screening and Assessment**

The district is administering a screening tool for TA participants to help determine whether a referral for a mental health evaluation is warranted, in addition to screening for a disability that occurs as part of the application or disability determination process

- Yes       No (*If No, section 6.2 is complete*)

If yes: Describe the district's policy for determining when a program participant is offered a mental health screen.

If yes: Does the district use the LDSS 5009 - Mental Health Screening Tool and/or the computer assisted version of the Modified Mini Screening tool (MMS)?

- Yes       No

If using the MMS, indicate the district's cutoff score (7, 8 or 9) for referral to a mental health evaluation:

If using a screening tool other than the MMS, indicate the screening tool used:

Describe the district procedure for referring a participant for a mental health evaluation, when warranted by the screening result:

### **Section 6.3 Requirements for Exempt TA Participants (Reference 18 NYCRR 385.2 (e))**

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

- a. Following is the district's procedure for determining if 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 6.1 of this plan. Included here is who (e.g., medical practitioner, employment worker, TA worker, local review team, etc.) makes or assists in this determination that an individual can restore or improve employability through treatment or other rehabilitative activities. Also included is the source and type of information used to make the determination (e.g., information from individual's medical practitioner, district contracted provider, specialist evaluation obtained as result of district referral, etc.):

Schenectady County works with recipients to determine if a disabled individual has the potential to be restored to self-sufficiency by reviewing the medical documentation submitted by the recipient. This decision is made by the Examiner and TA Supervisor. District will refer recipients to IMA for physical and behavioral evaluation to assist in determining the potential for employability.

The Temporary Assistance Unit continually monitors the recipients coded 70, 41, 42, and 43 to update as deemed appropriate.

- b. Following is the district's procedure for developing a treatment plan and for referring the participant to appropriate treatment, etc. Please be specific:

Schenectady County reviews cases and obtains medical documentation in implementing treatment plans in accordance with the medical practitioner's treatment plan recommendation. The plan is discussed with the individual along with their responsibility to attend the treatment program. Referrals to treatment programs come from the TA Examiner and/or SJTA Employment Counselor.

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

A TA Supervisor monitors participant compliance with the treatment plan by reviewing case notes, requesting medical documentation from providers, calling recipients into the Department to review and document their treatment participation at time of recertification or at the completion of a treatment program. We require that all applicants for and recipients of Public Assistance take all necessary action to reduce their need for assistance and participate in any rehabilitative treatment that will restore full or partial employability.