

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

January 1, 2020 – December 31, 2021

Tompkins County

Contents

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Section 1- Assurances | 3 |
| Section 2 Administration | 5 |
| Section 2.1 Administrative Structure | 5 |
| Section 2.2 TA and SNAP Employment & Training (SNAP E&T) Provider Agencies | 6 |
| Table 1 - Contracts Associated with TA and SNAP Employment Programs and Services..... | 6 |
| Table 2 – Other Service Providers..... | 9 |
| Section 2.3 OTDA Jobs Staff Agreement..... | 10 |
| OTDA Jobs Program Services – Target Groups..... | 10 |
| Other Services Requested..... | 10 |
| Section 2.4 Access to Services at New York State Career Centers | 10 |
| Section 3 Engagement and Work Preparation | 11 |
| Section 3.1 Federal “Engaged in Work” Requirement (Reference 18 NYCRR 385.2 (f)) | 11 |
| Section 3.2 Orientation (Reference 18 NYCRR 385.5)..... | 11 |
| Section 3.3 Assessment and Employment Planning..... | 11 |
| TA Assessment..... | 11 |
| TA Employment Plan | 13 |
| Section 3.4 Participation Rates and Work Activities (Reference 18 NYCRR 385.8 and 385.9)..... | 14 |
| Section 3.5 Job Development | 21 |
| Section 3.6 Training Approval and Activity Enrollment Policies (Reference 18 NYCRR 385.9) | 21 |
| Section 3.7 Work Verification | 25 |
| The Quality Assurance (QA) plan include the following elements: | 25 |
| The District’s Quality Assurance Process is as follows:..... | 26 |
| Use of Outside Providers/Vendors..... | 26 |
| Section 3.8 Strategies/Procedures for Accommodating Individuals with Limited English Proficiency | 27 |
| Section 3.9 Strategies/Procedures for Increasing Program Attendance | 27 |
| Section 3.10 Strategies/Procedures for Engaging Sanctioned TA Participants..... | 27 |
| Section 3.11 Strategies for reducing the need for TA | 28 |
| Section 4 Support Services | 28 |
| Section 4.1 TA and Non-TA SNAP Applicants and Recipients in Work Activities Approved by the District | 28 |
| Section 4.2 Transitional Support Services | 29 |
| Section 4.3 Extended Support Services..... | 30 |
| Section 5 Conciliation, Sanction and Dispute Resolution Procedures | 30 |
| Section 5.1 Conciliation..... | 30 |
| Section 5.2 Sanctions..... | 31 |
| Section 5.3 Dispute Resolution | 32 |
| Section 6 Disability Determinations, Documentation and Requirements of Exempt Individuals | 32 |
| Section 6.1 Disability Determination Process and Tools..... | 32 |
| Section 6.2 Mental Health Screening and Assessment | 33 |
| Section 6.3 Requirements for Exempt TA Participants (Reference 18 NYCRR 385.2 (e))..... | 34 |

Section 1- Assurances

As a condition of the receipt of federal and State funds the Tompkins 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 Tompkins 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/ KMK 01/29/2020

Kit Kephart, Social Services Commissioner

January 29, 2020

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.

Challenge Industries – Provides a comprehensive “Employment Services and Placement Program”. (Formerly called STEPS.)

Program components include:

Employment Assessment

Job seeking skills training

Job development assistance

Job placement assistance

Developing appropriate work habits and attitudes

Follow up supports after placement

Job retention skills training

SNAP Employment and Training Program (FSET) Venture IV Partner

Women's Opportunity Center –

Displaced Homemaker Program: Safety Net Women

Retail and Office Administrative Training Program

Employability and Computer skills training

Community Work Experience Program and support for entry level positions

SNAP Employment and Training Program (FSET) Venture IV Partner

The Board of Cooperative Educational Services (TST BOCES) - educational resources:

ELI (English Language Instruction)

HSE(High School Equivalency) diploma

Preparation classes as well as career planning and connection with employment opportunities

SNAP Employment and Training Program (FSET) Venture IV Partner

Tompkins Workforce Development Center – required services to a universal population (job seekers)

Outreach / Intake

Orientation

Initial assessment

Job Search & Placement

Career Counseling

Labor market information

Referrals to other programs

Resource Room usage including “how to” workshops

Job Referrals

Tompkins County Department of Social Services (TCOSS) has approximately 170 employees. TCOSS Employment Unit is staffed and the functions of the Unit are as follows:

Division Coordinator – Responsible for the overall supervision of the Employment Unit and Fair Hearing Liaison. Directly supervises: Two Senior Social Welfare Examiners as follows:

One Senior Social Welfare Examiner – Responsible for the direct supervision of one SWE Employment Unit staff and of two SWE Eligibility Examiners: one who is responsible for the exempt substance abuse caseload and one who is responsible for the non-exempt employable caseload. This Senior SWE is also a Fair Hearing Liaison for TCDSS.

One Senior Social Welfare Examiner – Responsible for two SWE Employment Unit and one Support Staff. This Senior SWE is responsible for supervising the Job Search program for TCDSS which monitors employable individuals for the SNAP Job Search. This Senior SWE is also the Employment Unit Liaison with Tompkins Workforce NY.

The individual responsibilities of the Employment Unit Staff listed above is as follows:

Three Social Welfare Examiners - Responsible for participation compliance including activity assignment, monitoring, WTCMS entry and conciliation, sanction and dispute resolution along with their direct supervisors of the Family Assistance and the Safety Net Assistance population(s) both non- exempt and exempt. These SWEs are also responsible for assessments and employment plans for these populations.

One Social Welfare Examiner – Responsible for the Temporary Assistance and Safety Net Assistance cases of the exempt substance abuse caseload. This SWE processes courtesy intake applications and recerts for out of county rehabilitation clients and clients in the Door to Door (Alternatives to Incarceration) Program.

One Social Welfare Examiner – Responsible for a caseload that consists of all Temporary Assistance cases that are employed and/or at 50 months time limit; Safety Net Family Assistance cases (at 60 months time limit) exempt or non-exempt; and Safety Net Assistance cases that are non-exempt.

One Support Staff – Responsible for general support for the entire unit. Also responsible for WTCMS maintainance, imaging, and closed filing.

The following individuals work closely with the Employment Unit but are not part of the unit:

One Substance Abuse Evaluator (CASAC) – Responsible for Pre-Treatment Assessments (Back-to-Work Aessments) and referrals to substance abuse treatment and follow-up; and review and approval of LOCADTR changes.

Medicaid – Administartive Assistant - Responsible for disability determinations and assisting applicants that need to apply for Social Security Disability (SSDI) or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) through the Social Security Administration.

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.

| Provider | Total Contract Cost (per year) | Funding Source(s) (Check all that apply) | Categories of Clients Served (Check all that apply) | Programs, Services or Activities Provided |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|--|--|
| Challenge Industries | \$50,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> FFFS <input type="checkbox"/> SNAP E&T <input type="checkbox"/> Local <input type="checkbox"/> Other TANF | <input type="checkbox"/> FA <input type="checkbox"/> SNA Family <input type="checkbox"/> SNA Individual <input type="checkbox"/> SNAP <input type="checkbox"/> TANF 200% | Employment Placement Program |
| Tompkins County Probation | \$42,618 | <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% | Community Work Expeience Program (CWEP) |
| | \$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% | |

| Provider | Total Contract Cost (per year) | Funding Source(s) (Check all that apply) | Categories of Clients Served (Check all that apply) | Programs, Services or Activities Provided |
|-----------------|---------------------------------------|--|--|--|
| | \$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.

| Provider | Funding Source(s) (if known) | Categories of Clients Served (Check all that apply) | Programs, Services or Activities Provided |
|--|-------------------------------------|---|--|
| Challenge Industries/ TST BOCES / Women's Opportunity Center | OTDA | <input type="checkbox"/> FA <input type="checkbox"/> SNA Family <input type="checkbox"/> SNA Individual <input type="checkbox"/> SNAP <input type="checkbox"/> TANF 200% | SNAP Employment and Training Venture IV Program |
| TST BOCES | | <input type="checkbox"/> FA <input type="checkbox"/> SNA Family <input type="checkbox"/> SNA Individual <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SNAP <input type="checkbox"/> TANF 200% | ESI (English Language Instruction) / HSE (High School Equivalency) |
| Women's Opportunity Center | | <input type="checkbox"/> FA <input type="checkbox"/> SNA Family <input type="checkbox"/> SNA Individual <input type="checkbox"/> SNAP <input type="checkbox"/> TANF 200% | ((Displaced Homemaker Program - L.E.A.D.S - Leadership Employment and Development Skills Program)) |
| Women's Opportunity Center | | <input type="checkbox"/> FA <input type="checkbox"/> SNA Family <input type="checkbox"/> SNA Individual <input type="checkbox"/> SNAP <input type="checkbox"/> TANF 200% | ((Retail Store Training. Computer Skills Training)) |
| Workforce New York | | <input type="checkbox"/> FA <input type="checkbox"/> SNA Family <input type="checkbox"/> SNA Individual <input type="checkbox"/> SNAP <input type="checkbox"/> TANF 200% | ((Comprehensive Career Center, Job Zone)) |
| | | <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)

| Services | = | Target Groups | = |
|-------------------------------------|---|------------------------|---|
| 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)

There are no JOBS Staff assigned to Tompkins County DSS.

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 district has dedicated one of our Senior Social Welfare Employment Examiners to act as a liaison with our WIOA partner. The Employment Division Coordinator will act as a secondary designee.

- 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.
 Based on the Tompkins County Service Delivery Memorandum of Understanding: our liaison (as indicated above) and/or Division Coordinator will be meeting regularly with WIOA staff and coordinating a referral and information sharing system to best serve the needs of the district's clients.

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:

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:

- An explanation of the application/recertification process
- Domestic Violence Screening
- Alcohol/Substance Abuse Screening
- An explanation of Transitional Supports
- An explanation of the earned income budgeting incentives
- Review of Transitional Services
- An explanation of Child Care in lieu of temporary assistance
- An explanation of Job Search requirements.

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:

Tompkins County DSS Pre-Intake Unit Social Welfare Examiners or the Intake Unit Social Welfare Examiners provide orientation for exempt and non-exempt applicants and recipients on an individual basis during interviews. Program requirements such as employment and drug/alcohol screening and assessment are explained. All other available services: e.g. childcare, transportation, and domestic violence, etc. are also addressed. This orientation occurs during pre-intake interviews, intake appointments, and recertification appointments.

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:

For households with dependent children: All adults in households with dependent children and 16 and 17-year-olds not in school upon case opening and receiving public assistance will receive assessments within 90 days of eligibility. Assessments will be done on all individuals in these households. These individuals are referred to Challenge Industries for their employment assessment and when necessary are referred to the Employment Unit Staff.

For households without dependent children: To the extent that resources are available, all adults upon case opening or receiving public assistance and residing in households without dependent children who are not exempt from assignment to work activities will receive assessments within a year following their application. These individuals are referred to the SNAP E&T Venture IV Program for assessment or when necessary are referred to the Employment Unit Staff.

For households with and without dependent children, the district understands that individual self-assessment alone does not meet the requirements for conducting assessments.

PLEASE NOTE! The district does not conduct employment assessments on applicants. Assessments are conducted upon recipients only (upon case opening and receiving public assistance).

- c. The district administrative unit or contractor responsible for conducting assessments is:
- The Employment Unit within TCDSS and our agency provider, Challenge Industries, as per their contract, are responsible 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)]

Department Staff who administer assessments are designated trained Employment staff with demonstrated effectiveness in assessment and employability development and multiple years of experience. (Senior Social Welfare Examiners and Social Welfare Examiners) They have attended the Employment Services Training Institute for TA and

SNAP (ESTI) (or its predecessor, Welfare to Work Core Training Program.) The Staff at our contracted provider, Challenge Industries, have several years of experience in employability and assessment interviewing. They have participated in numerous trainings offered by the New York State Supportive Employment Training Initiative (SETI) through the Center for Rehabilitation Synergy at the University of Buffalo, The State University of New York.

- e. Applicants in households **with** dependent children are required to participate in completion of an assessment: (Recipients only)
 Yes No
- f. Applicants in households **without** dependent children are required to participate in completion of an assessment: (Recipients only)
 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?

Assessments are completed upon case opening and receiving public assistance and updated at recertification and whenever there is reason to believe that an individual has a physical or mental impairment that would limit their ability to participate in work activities; or whenever changes in individual's circumstances or activity assignments warrant reassessment. At a minimum, assessments must be updated annually.

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 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.
 - 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.

When Challenge Industries completes the manual New York State Assessment-LDSS 4980 and the manual New York State Employment Plan-LDSS 4978 (or a precise electronic equivalent) for our recipients; the assessments and employment plan are submitted by fax, mail or email to Tompkins County DSS Employment Unit for our review and approval. (TCDSS employment staff then enter them into WTWCMS.) Upon our review, if there are any changes to the employment plan; the recipient and Challenge will be notified of the change(s).

When TCDSS employment staff complete the manual New York State Assessment-LDSS 4980 and the manual New York State Employment Plan-LDSS 4978 for our recipients, they are reviewed and entered into WTWCMS. Upon review, if there are any changes to the employment plan, the recipient will be notified of the changes.

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

Employment plans are completed upon case opening and receiving public assistance and updated at recertification and whenever there is reason to believe that an individual has a physical or mental impairment that would limit their ability to participate in work activities; or whenever changes in individual's circumstances or activity assignments warrant reassessment. At a minimum, employment plans must be updated annually.

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:

TCDSS will assess and verify that participants in the work activities reported for work eligible individuals meets the State approved definitions for the activity.

All non-exempt recipients are assigned to work activities (usually within 15 days) designed to both further their progress towards self-sufficiency and meet participation rate requirements. Example: A newly opened recipient's assessment reveals a particular vocational desire for the construction trades – he/she may be placed in a Work Experience site administered by the Probation Department. This site focuses on repair and/or construction of community properties.

Exempt recipient's employability status is closely monitored by employment staff for changes that may allow assignment to appropriate countable activities e.g. a recipient who has not been able to perform any physical activities, now (through medical

verification) has limited capabilities. He/she (within 30 days) is re-assessed and an appropriate activity is assigned.

Temporary Assistance cases are referred (within 15 days of case opening) directly for assessment to determine suitability for activity enrollment. Cases with individuals whose employability status changes from Exempt to Non-exempt have their Employment Plans updated to reflect their ability to participate at the assigned level.

Single Parent Families with a child under the age of 6 years are assigned to participate a minimum of 20 hours per week.

Single Parent Families with child older than 6 years are assigned to participate a minimum of 30 hours per week.

Two Parent Families in which one parent is disabled are assigned to participate a minimum of 30 hours per week.

Two parent Families in which neither parent is disabled are assigned to participate a minimum of 35 hours per week for each parent.

Nonexempt Individual SN non-MOE's are required to participate a minimum of 35 hours per week.

Exempt individual's employability is closely monitored by staff to ensure up-to-date information is available to evaluate the current status and make appropriate assignments to programs designed to achieve self-sufficiency. These may include application for SSI and or referral to ACCESS VR for rehabilitative training.

All participation is monitored and documented on WTWCMS by the Employment Unit Worker (SWE). Monitoring of participation is accomplished weekly through direct contact with activity providers.

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

| | Households with Dependent Children Average Monthly | Households without Dependent Children Average Monthly |
|-------------|---|--|
| Individuals | 250 | 150 |

- 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:

- Earned Income/Employment Report:** This report is reviewed by a supervisor on a weekly basis to ensure that budgeted income hours match hours entered on WTWCMS and investigates any discrepancies between the two systems.

- Possibly Miscalculated Non-Legal Union Families With Children in Common Report;** is reviewed by a supervisor on a weekly basis to ensure proper coding of cases with multiple adults.

- Participation and Engagement Status Report: (Nonparticipating individuals) This report is reviewed by the employment worker weekly to identify those individuals who need to be engaged in work activities.

- Preliminary Federal Countable Not Countable Report & Preliminary SNA Non-MOE Countable Not Countable Report: These reports are reviewed at least twice a month by the employment workers to review individuals participation in work activities. This is run in the beginning of the month to look to see who needs more hours of work activity and at the end of the month to track who still needs actual hours to prioritize the employment workers time.

- TANF and SN MOE Worker Participation/Engagement Summary Report & SN Non-MOE Worker Participation/Engagement Summary Report: These reports are reviewed by the supervisors and employment workers around the 20th of each month following the report month to review which individuals were countable or not.

- 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):

The district does not mandate SNAP E&T work activity assignments. NTA SNAP work registrants are informed of the services available and for assistance with Job Search activities by flyers and handouts. Tompkins County DSS Pre-Intake Unit Social Welfare Examiners and the Intake Unit Social Welfare Examiners notify NTA SNAP applicants of its availability as part of their orientation. A SNAP E&T Venture IV Program operating collaboratively with Challenge Industries, TST BOCES and Women’s Opportunity Center (WOC) to help recipients of SNAP (no TANF recipients) is available.

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):
As stated above.

- 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:

All non-exempt TA applicants are notified by their intake worker of the requirement to meet with the Job Search Specialist and to participate in Job Search prior to their case opening. Upon reporting to the Job Search Specialist, the applicant is assigned a Job Search Log to record a minimum number of contacts and hours per week. At least half of the contacts per week must be in person, not done online or by

telephone or fax. Completed Job Search Logs must be submitted to the designated job search staff for review on a weekly basis. Random samples of applicant's job contacts will be called to verify if a recent application is on file and/or if contact was made.

| Applicant Job Search | Minimum Number of Contacts | Minimum Number of Hours | Additional Information |
|----------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|
| TANF and SNA MOE | 5 | 10 | |
| SNA Individuals | 10 | 20 | |

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

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

- 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. If in the agency's opinion this self-employment would allow them to make progress toward their self-sufficiency; it would be approved as part of an individual's required work activities. The budgetting and monitoring of self-employment income requires that all changes in the income must be reported immediately and possibly reviewed on a more frequent basis e.g. quarterly. Due to a variety of factors impacting different types of self-employment; the Agency reserves the right to determine if and when the self-employment may no longer be approved as an individual's required work activity.
- 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.

| Activity and Definition | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> FA <input type="checkbox"/> SNA Fam <input type="checkbox"/> SNA Ind <input type="checkbox"/> SNAP | 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. |

| Activity and Definition | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — FA — SNA Fam — SNA Ind — SNAP | <p>Subsidized Private Sector Employment - Employment in the private sector for which the employer receives a subsidy from TANF or other public funds (excluding tax credits) to offset some or all of the wages and costs of employing and training a recipient in accordance with New York State Social Services Law 336-f. Subsidized private sector employment will include positions subsidized through grant diversion/Transitional Employment Advancement Program (TEAP), supported employment programs, and paid college work study programs at private institutions. Individuals participating in subsidized private sector employment are paid wages and receive the same benefits as unsubsidized employees who perform similar work. An employment situation will be subsidized for up to the full amount of wages/benefits provided to the program participant and will be subsidized for the length of time as determined appropriate by the State or social services district.</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — FA — SNA Fam — SNA Ind — SNAP | <p>Subsidized Public Sector Employment - Employment in the public sector for which the employer receives a subsidy from TANF or other public funds (excluding tax credits) to offset some or all of the wages and costs of employing and training a recipient in accordance with New York State Social Services Law 336-e. Subsidized public sector employment will include positions subsidized through grant diversion/TEAP, supported employment programs, and paid college work study programs at public institutions. Individuals participating in subsidized public sector employment, and work study unless otherwise permitted under a federal work study program, are paid wages and receive the same benefits as unsubsidized employees who perform similar work. An employment situation will be subsidized for up to the full amount of wages/benefits provided to the program participant and will be subsidized for the length of time as determined appropriate by the State or social services district.</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — FA — SNA Fam — SNA Ind — SNAP | <p>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.</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"> — FA — SNA Fam — SNA Ind — SNAP | <p>On-the-Job Training (OJT) - Training in a public or private sector employment setting during which the participant receives work-essential paid training while he or she is engaged in productive work that provides the knowledge and skills essential to attain full and adequate performance of the job.</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> |

| Activity and Definition | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — FA — SNA Fam — SNA Ind — SNAP | <p>Community Service - A structured program in which participants perform work for the direct benefit of the community under the auspices of public or nonprofit organizations. Community service placements must be projects that serve a useful community purpose in fields such as health, social services, environmental protection, education, urban and rural redevelopment, welfare, public recreation, public facilities, public safety, and childcare. Community service programs are designed to improve the employability of participants not otherwise able to obtain unsubsidized employment. Participation in community service may include training that is directly required for the participant to complete the community service assignment. For example, an individual who is expected to provide clerical support to a food pantry may be provided training to develop or refine filing and data entry skills.</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"> — FA — SNA Fam — SNA Ind — SNAP | <p>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.</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — SNAP | <p>SNAP E&T Supervised Job Search- The act of seeking or obtaining employment through a job search that is directly supervised and may include: case management services, career exploration, interview preparation, job application assistance, learning appropriate workplace expectations and behaviors in preparation for submitting job applications and interviewing, job leads, and direct job referrals.</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — FA — SNA Fam — SNA Ind — SNAP | <p>Job Readiness Training (JRT) Activities - Participation in programs that include seeking and preparing for work. JRT includes two types of activities: (1) traditional activities of resume preparation, training in interviewing skills, and instruction in workplace expectations, training in effective job seeking, including life skills training; and (2) activities that improve an individual's employability, such as substance abuse treatment, mental health treatment, or rehabilitation activities in which a qualified medical or mental health professional has certified that such treatment is necessary.</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 WTWCMS 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"> • Physical health treatment and rehabilitation services including attending necessary physical therapy, and doctor appointments. Such treatment will include medical, behavioral and other treatment necessary for individuals suffering from substance abuse (current and former users) with such required treatment ranging from detoxification services to after care/abstinence maintenance. • Mental health services including therapy, counseling, and other services to address mental or emotional disorders that can interfere with an individual's daily life functions, ability to work, looking for work or the ability to retain employment. |

| Activity and Definition | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — FA — SNA Fam — SNA Ind — SNAP | <p>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.</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — FA — SNA Fam — SNA Ind — SNAP | <p>Job Skills Training - Training or education in job skills to improve a participant’s employability, to ensure clients have the basic skills competencies required by employers to support job entry and/or to advance or adapt to the changing demands of the workplace. Where identified as needed, such training may include the development of basic workplace skills including professional workplace behaviors and decision-making skills. Job skills training may include customized or technical training designed to provide participants with additional workplace skills, post-secondary education courses leading to a bachelor’s or other advanced degree, or other training included under the definition of vocational education training. Job skills training may include literacy instruction, English language instruction, or other basic education for an individual who has already obtained a high school diploma or equivalency when determined from a client’s assessment that such instruction is needed to improve the participant’s employability.</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — FA — SNA Fam — SNA Ind — SNAP | <p>Education Training - Education directly related to employment for a recipient who has not received a high school diploma or equivalency must be related to a specific occupation, job or job offer or otherwise determined based on a client assessment as necessary to improve the participant’s employability to support job entry, retention or advancement. Education directly related to employment may include courses designed to provide the knowledge and skills for general or specific occupations or work settings to ensure clients have the basic skills competencies required by employers and may also include adult basic education, ESL instruction and education leading to a 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"> — FA — SNA Fam — SNA Ind — SNAP | <p>Secondary School - Regular attendance in accordance with the requirements of the secondary school or a course of study at a secondary school or other State accredited institution leading to a high school equivalence (HSE) diploma, in the case of a recipient who has not completed secondary school or received a certificate of general equivalence. Secondary school participation may include general adult basic education or ESL if it is linked to attending secondary school or leading to a HSE diploma as determined necessary by the educational institution. Secondary School or HSE programs that routinely include ESL, career training, alternative school, tutoring, dropout prevention, teen pregnancy or parenting programs as a requirement of program participation as determined by the educational institution will also be permitted.</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — FA — SNA Fam — SNA Ind — SNAP | <p>Provision of Childcare for Individual Participating in Community Service - Providing unpaid childcare to enable another TA (TANF/SNA MOE funded) recipient to participate in a community service program.</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — FA — SNA Fam — SNA Ind — SNAP | <p>Other - Any work activity that does not meet the criteria of any of the above countable activities constitutes participation that is not countable toward federal and State participation rates.</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.

Challenge Industries through the STEPS Program and the SNAP Employment and Training Venture IV Program provide job development services on a daily basis for both TA and SNAP clients as part of their contract and/or agreement with Tompkins County DSS. There is the equivalent of 1.5 FTE devoted to job development. Clients are referred to Challenge to participate in these programs by Tompkins County DSS employment staff.

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 Employment Coordinator is charged with outreaching throughout the community to identify educational programs that are available for our clients. When a new program is identified, the Employment Coordinator meets with the provider and gathers the information about the program and their target population. He/She disseminates the information to the employment workers so that they may discuss all options with their clients at assessment and reassessment. Applicants/recipients will be referred to these services based on information obtained during an assessment and the development of an employment 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:

The Employment Coordinator is charged with outreaching throughout the community to identify vocational educational programs and Job Skills training programs that are available for our clients. When a new program is identified, the Employment Coordinator

meets with the provider and gathers the information about the program and their target population. He/She disseminates the information to the employment case managers so that they may discuss all options with their clients at assessment and reassessment. Applicants/recipients will be referred to these services based on information obtained during an assessment and the development of an employment plan.

- 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:

TST BOCES provides opportunities and resources for nonexempt TA recipients to enroll in ELI (English Language Instruction) or HSE (High School Equivalency) diploma preparation classes as well as develop longer term employment goals. Those without an HSE/high school diploma or those that score below a 9th grade level are required to attend TST BOCES for either HSE classes, ELI classes or for basic skill building.

- 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:

District employment staff will approve, in a manner consistent with the district's training Policy, educational programs which are determined to be appropriate for HSE/ABE(Adult Based Education) / ELI English Language Instruction) or high school participation. In addition, in recognition of participation rate requirements, recipients may also be assigned to core work activities such as work experience for an appropriate number of hours based upon category of assistance and family circumstances. Applicant/Recipients that don't have an HSE, diploma or TABE below a 9th grade level are strongly encouraged to participate in remediation as part of their Employment Plan.

TST BOCES receives referrals for potential HSE participants from Challenge Industries following completion of the Employability Assessment.

ESI students will take a computerized assessment called the BEST PLUS to determine placement in the appropriate ESI level class. The BEST PLUS utilizes a combination of oral skills as well as picture identification to determine the student's ability to properly pronounce and construct oral responses. As students progress they are assessed utilizing the BEST LIT which assesses the ability of the student to correctly construct appropriate written responses.

HSE students are assessed using the TABE (Test of Adult Basic Education) to determine students' skills and develop a plan of instruction. When the instructor recommends (along with the TABE post test results indicating readiness) for the student to sit for the TASC assessment, a TRA (TASC Readiness Assessment) is conducted to help determine if the student is ready to pass the TASC assessment. If the student can pass the TRA then the student should be successful on the TASC assessment. If the student is not successful on the TRA the instructor continues to work with the student on any deficiencies that need to be addressed prior to sitting for the TASC.

Participation in Educational activities may be denied if the Vocational Program exceeds twelve months from start to completion, or if the individual has failed to make satisfactory progress in their current program or past approved program.

- 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:
Employment workers identify the Vocational Education and Job Skills trainings that would assist the client with meeting both their long and short term goals and refer the identified clients to the trainings as they occur. A variety of career assessments tools are utilized to determine appropriateness of training for the individual.
- 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 highest level of post-secondary level education that we will approve as a work activity is an associates degree.
- 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:
If a client does not have a paid employment activity of at least 20 hours weekly; we will assign them to work experience or community service to fulfill the requirement.
- h. Education and training providers are evaluated by the following standards:
Activities must be "countable" for participation purposes.
 - Projected outcomes must assist participants in overcoming barriers to employment, job retention, and self-sufficiency.
 - The number of entries to employment must meet requirements as per provider's contract with DSS.
 - The retention rate of persons obtaining employment must meet outcome measure outlined in provider's contract with DSS.
 - The cost per participant must not exceed costs as outline in provider's contract with DSS.
 - Provider must offer employer support available as outlined in provider contract with DSS.
 - Provider must demonstrate a strong collaboration/cooperation exists with other service providers.
 - Providers must be willing to provide the local district with necessary information, i.e. attendance and progress reports.
- i. The district procedure for advising participants of approved training providers is:
A list of the Tompkins County Department of Social Services' approved training providers is available as part of the orientation process and a review of those providers and the programs they offer are addressed during the assessment process prior to program enrollment. Client previous work history and personal interests are taken into consideration as the employment plan is developed. Applicants/recipients with limited English comprehension, verbal and/or written, will be assisted by TCDSS staff in order to assure full understanding of all parties' responsibilities.

- j. The district procedure for notifying participants of approval for training or enrollment in a work activity is:
Participants will be notified of approval for training or enrollment in a work activity via a written employment plan. The employment plan will detail the obligations for the agency and the participant alike, and will specify the steps to be taken and services to be provided as a series of actions to be followed leading to the full time unsubsidized employment of the participant.
- 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 teen must be considered a student in good standing by the school. The examiner will obtain written verification from the school district of the student's standing at application and at each 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:
The employment program or examiner referring a recipient to a work activity will inform the worksite and/or training provider in writing at the time of the activity assignment of any health related limitations and special accommodations that must be made, providing

these have been made known by the recipient and confirmed by the client's healthcare provider and supported by appropriate documentation.

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 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 WTCMS, 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 (6) 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 WTCMS and documentation is in the file to support hours reported on WTCMS and that the scheduled hours on WTCMS is consistent with the documentation.

The district will perform a random sample of (6) 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 (3) 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 (3) 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:

Non-English speaking participants are offered interpreters from contracted agencies. Individual attention is given as an alternative to group orientations, recertification, etc. Tompkins County also uses Language Line Solutions routinely while working with these clients.

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:

- Community Rideshare Coalition: provides clients with access to online service that connect individuals with potential rideshare opportunities in the community.
- Applicants/recipients are scheduled up to 35 hours of activity per week to allow flexibility in hours missed to limit the amount of excused and unexcused absences. District staff will discuss with individuals the importance of having backup child care and transportation arrangements.

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:

When the durational sanction period ends; the client is contacted by the employment worker to encourage compliance. The "Option to End Your Sanction" letter generated through WTCMS is sent by the Employment worker to the individual at the end of the sanction period. The client is encouraged to contact the Employment worker by phone to discuss their situation. The benefits of complying with work rules are discussed and sanctioned clients whose durational period has been completed are offered the opportunity to engage in work related activities.

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

The district staff; Employment and Eligibility workers attempt to engage sanctioned participants at every client contact (phone call, recertification, etc.) The benefits of complying with work rules are discussed and sanctioned clients are offered the opportunity to engage in work related activities. When the durational sanction period ends, and/or the individual expresses a willingness to comply; the client is contacted by the employment worker to encourage compliance.

Section 3.11 Strategies for reducing the need for TA

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

- Tompkins County has a diversion strategy that would allow payment for transportation related expenses for any employed eligible household member using a TA diversion payment code type – D9. This allows for expedited service that reduces the prospect of job loss and the subsequent potential need for TA.
- TCDSS utilizes a "Front End Unit" (TA Intake and Special Services) which works with clients to access emergency services and helps clients identify other community services and supports they can access rather than apply for TA.

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:
 - Clothing (up to \$150) necessary to obtain or retain employment and/or uniforms/special clothing required for approved training programs when no other options are available.
 - Fees (up to \$150) for licenses necessary for employment.
 - Tools and equipment (up to \$100) necessary for employment when no other options are available.
 - Reasonable costs of necessary repairs to a recipient's automobile (up to the equivalent of the "trade-in" "good" Kelley Blue Book value or a maximum of \$4500) and payment of automobile insurance premiums (up to \$1000 for 6 months coverage) to enable a recipient to obtain or retain employment.
 - Any other supportive needs deemed appropriate by the agency.
 - The district reserves the right to set a maximum amount for any of the employment related support services listed.
 - The district reserves the right to reimburse the least expensive form of transportation available to the participant.

- 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): Due to higher fuel prices locally and the limited funds of our client population and the older model less fuel efficient vehicles that our clients drive; we have set the mileage reimbursement rate slightly above the IRS Medical/Moving rate; it will be .25 cents/mi.

- 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:

Due to inclement weather conditions in this area, the maximum distance an individual would be required to walk to participate in a work activity assignment is one mile. Exceptions would be made. Individuals are encouraged to seek housing in areas where public transportation is readily available. The TCDSS Special Services Unit has access to a list of available housing.

- 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:
- Tompkins County has a diversion strategy that would allow payment for transportation related expenses for an employed eligible household member using a TA diversion payment code type – D9. This allows for expedited service that reduces the prospect of job loss and the subsequent potential need for TA.
 - TCDSS utilizes a "Front End Unit" (TA Intake and Special Services) which works with clients to access emergency services and helps clients identify other community services and supports they can access rather than apply for TA.

Section 4.2 Transitional Support Services

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

- Assistance with transportation needs i.e. auto repairs, auto insurance payments, license fees, clothing and tools,etc. To be determined on a case by case basis. The maximum amounts are the same as stated in Section 4.1 (a).

- Transitional Medicaid (if eligible)

- Transitional Childcare (if eligible)

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:

same as above

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:

none

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

The participant is notified in writing of the non-compliance and a request is made for the client to respond within the required timeframe. Upon contact, the reason for the non-compliance is discussed with the individual. The employment worker reviews all information pertinent to the non-compliance and determines if there was good cause. If there is good cause the conciliation process terminates. If it is determined that the non-compliance was willful and without good cause, the employment sanction is imposed and the individual is notified of his/her right to a fair hearing. If the individual does not respond to conciliation, the individual will be referred for sanction.

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

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

The good cause/willfulness determination is made by the employment worker. In the event that a question arises or the client contacts the worker to dispute this determination; a supervisor will review it.

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

The client is notified in writing of the non-compliance issue and is given 10 days to respond to the conciliation notice. Included with the conciliation notice are instructions on how the client may demonstrate compliance in lieu of a conciliation hearing. If the client wants to move forward with a conciliation hearing and is found not to have good cause for their non-compliance, they can still avoid a SNAP sanction by demonstrating compliance by making five (5) employer job search contacts within 5 days and submitting the verification of these contacts.

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 client will demonstrate compliance by making five (5) employer job search contacts in five (5) days and submitting the verification of these contacts.

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 Agency mails to the non-compliant a notice informing him/her of the process for ending the existing sanction. This includes the date the sanction will end and the action the client needs to take to re-apply for assistance including a contact person.

When feasible, the district requires that an individual who wishes to end their employment sanction comply with the employment activity which they failed to comply with originally. The district generally requires compliance with the activity for 5 working days to demonstrate their willingness to comply ongoing. In such instances where it is not feasible for the client to comply with the original activity, such as a sanction for a voluntary job quit, the district will assign the client to another work activity (i.e. work experience) and require that the client demonstrate compliance with that activity.

Once the individual has demonstrated compliance consistent with the district's requirements, Temporary Assistance benefits are restored retroactive to the date the individual indicated a willingness to comply (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:

The Agency mails to the non-compliant a notice informing him/her of the process for ending the existing sanction. This includes the date the sanction will end and the action the client needs to take to re-apply for assistance including a contact person.

When feasible, the district requires that an individual who wishes to end their employment sanction comply with the employment activity which they failed to comply with originally. The district generally requires compliance with the activity for 5 working days to demonstrate their willingness to comply ongoing. In such instances where it is not feasible for the client to comply with the original activity, such as a sanction for a voluntary job quit, the district will assign the client to another work activity (i.e. work experience) and require that the client demonstrate compliance with that activity.

Once the individual has demonstrated compliance consistent with the district's requirements, benefits are restored retroactive to the date the individual indicated a willingness to comply (but no earlier than the expiration of the minimum duration period.)

PLEASE NOTE! 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.

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):

Local district TA eligibility workers will inquire whether the applicant/recipient has a physical or mental impairment which would limit his/her ability to participate in work activities. Such inquiry will be made at application, recertification or when there is reason to believe that an applicant/recipient has an impairment.

When an applicant/recipient claims to have a mental or physical impairment, he/she will be given written notification that he/she has ten calendar days, from the date of written notice, to present medical documentation from his/her health care practitioner. The LDSS-4526 is provided to the client and must be fully completed to determine the extent of the limitation(s). Any other medical documentation must include a specific diagnosis; specify work limitations; and specify the length of time the impairment will prevent the applicant/recipient from taking part in work activities. The district will not assign the applicant/recipient to work activities while waiting for medical documentation or while the district is conducting a review of the medical documentation.

The district will assess the information submitted by the applicant's/recipient's health care practitioner and determine if the applicant/recipient is disabled, work-limited or not disabled. Written notice of the results of the determination and the right to a fair hearing to contest the determination will be provided to the client, via the LDSS-4005 and LDSS-4005(a) forms.

In the event the medical documentation submitted by the applicant's/recipient's health care practitioner is insufficient to make a determination, the applicant/recipient may be required to obtain additional documentation from their health care provider.

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

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

Employment Unit staff reviews and determines status with the assistance of the Administrative Assistant in the Medicaid Unit when necessary. TCDSS continues to review the options of utilizing an Independent Medical Examiner (IME) to review certain disability cases.

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.):

- Local district will obtain medical/psychiatric report from individual's primary physician. An Employment Unit worker will review diagnosis and prognosis found in report to determine if individual has potential to be restored to self-sufficiency. Specific recommendations by physician for treatment/rehabilitation will be taken into consideration. If potential is affirmed, the recipient will be notified of his/her responsibility to participate in an appropriate medical care or treatment program. Participation is closely monitored by an Employment worker.
- In addition, the Medicaid Unit Administrative Assistant is responsible for disability determinations for Medicaid and assisting clients needing to apply for SSI (Supplemental Security Income) and SSD (Social Security Disability).

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

- Treatment for disabilities and/or limitations to employment is guided by documentation from professional medical practitioners. If a practitioner identifies a disability and/or limitation, the recipient is required to seek the appropriate treatment or service within a reasonable amount of time given the circumstances of the case.

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:

- Tracking of participant’s compliance is accomplished through the use of quarterly progress reports and efforts to collect monthly attendance documentation to report actual hours on WTCMS and through a regularly scheduled documentation requirement: i.e. current medical statements listing any limitations and prognosis. Participation is closely monitored by the Employment worker under the direct supervision of their immediate supervisor and the Employment Coordinator.