

Employment and Training Administration Advisory System U.S. Department of Labor Washington, D.C. 20210	CLASSIFICATION ONE-STOP/LMI
	CORRESPONDENCE SYMBOL OWS/USES/ALMIS
	DATE DRAFT

TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT GUIDANCE LETTER NO.

TO: ALL STATE WORKFORCE LIAISON
ALL STATE WORKFORCE AGENCIES
ALL STATE WORKER ADJUSTMENT LIAISONS
ALL ONE-STOP CENTER SYSTEM LEADS

FROM: EMILY STOVER DeROCCO
Assistant Secretary

SUBJECT: Planning Guidance for Program Year (PY) 2002
Workforce Information Core Products and Services:
Workforce Information Formula Allocations to States

1. Purpose. To transmit guidance for the development and management of PY 2002 Workforce Information grant plans.
2. References. Section 7, Parts (a)(3)(D) and (d) and Section 15 of the Wagner-Peyser Act; Section 309 of the Workforce Investment Act; Section IV(C)(3) of the WIA/Wagner-Peyser Planning Guidance (FRN/Vol 64, No. 37/Thursday, February 25, 1999); 29 CFR Parts 93, 94, 96, 97 and 98; and OMB Circular A-87.

Consistent with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501-3520), OMB has reviewed and approved the Information Collection Request for this planning guidance (OMB Control Number 1205-0417). This approval expires (*to be determined*). Under 5 CFR 1320.f(b), an Agency cannot conduct, sponsor, or require a response to a collection of information unless the collection displays a valid OMB Control Number.

RESCISSIONS None	EXPIRATION DATE
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3. Allocations. Funding is provided in the One-Stop Career Center/America's Labor Market Information System (ALMIS) appropriation for Fiscal Year (FY) 2002. For PY 2002, \$38 million, minus a 2.6 percent postage reserve (\$988,000), is allocated by formula to the fifty States, the District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.

Funds are being provided to States to produce the core information products and services defined in this guidance and for the development of other workforce information products and services which might be required to support the State's strategic workforce investments.

States received an increase in funding for workforce information core products and services beginning in PY 2001 and are allocated nearly identical amounts for PY 2002. Funding should be sufficient to fully support production of the required core products and services and to carry out customer satisfaction assessment activities required in PY 2002.

See Attachment I for the table of allocations and allocation formula.

4. Period of Performance. The maximum expenditure period for these funds is three years, pursuant to the Wagner-Peyser Annual Funding Agreement. The grant plan will cover, at a minimum, the 12 month period of July 1, 2002 to June 30, 2003 but may, if negotiated between the State and Regional Office, cover a longer period of time up to the maximum expenditure period ending June 30, 2005.

5. Annual Plan Format and Content. The annual plan narrative shall be organized into three sections: (a) a description of the statewide employment statistics system; (b) a description of the products and services to be provided with these funds; and (c) a description of the strategy to be employed by the State for assessing customer satisfaction with State produced workforce information.

(a) Statewide Employment Statistics System.

It is ETA's intent that ALMIS formula-funded grants to States for (Core) products be an integral part of the statewide employment statistics system and support the State's overall plan for workforce investment. Section 111(d)(8) of WIA requires that the State Workforce Investment Board assist the governor in developing the statewide employment statistics system. Section 309 (e) of WIA requires that the State agency designated by the

Governor as being responsible for the management of the statewide employment statistics system consult with State and local boards, the business community and individuals about the relevance of the information to be provided through the system. In order to better understand how the activities funded by these grant funds support the State's overall workforce investments, the plan narrative must provide a concise description of the statewide employment statistics system including descriptions of:

- The state agency's consultation process with State and local workforce investment boards, the business community, individuals and workforce development professionals to determine customers' workforce information needs;
- how the statewide employment statistics system supports the State's WIA/Wagner-Peyser Five Year Strategic Plan for State and local workforce development;
- the broad strategic approach for workforce information delivery to the system's three principal customer groups - the business community, individuals and the State's workforce development system;
- how workforce information and services are delivered to the business community and job seekers through the State's One-Stop service delivery system.

In addition, States are requested, but not required, to provide information on funding sources other than these grant funds which are budgeted for workforce information, and the activities being carried out with those funds that are part of the State's employment statistics system.

(b) Products and Services. In order to receive funding, States must submit a grant plan for providing, at minimum, the core products and services described in Attachment III. These are the most recent priorities defined by the Workforce Information Council, the Federal-State governance body established pursuant to Section 309 (b)(1) of WIA to achieve cooperative management of the nationwide workforce information system.

In accordance with Section 309 of WIA, the grant plan must be consistent with the State's WIA/Wagner-Peyser Five-Year Strategic Plan. All core products and services and any additional products, services or activities to be delivered

with these grant funds must be planned in consultation with the State and local Workforce Investment Boards, with activities and planned customer outcomes defined in context of the State's WIA/Wagner-Peyser Five-Year Strategic Plan.

The plan narrative must provide a description of each activity to be funded by the grant and include the following information for each of the planned activities, products or services:

- A detailed description of the activity, product or service, including the principal customers of the product, e.g., employers, job seekers, workforce development professionals or others, and the methodology to be used, where appropriate;
- the focus of each activity, e.g., data or economic analysis, correcting data gaps, system development, One-Stop service delivery or other;
- a description of the process for and result of the consultation process with the State Board concerning the activity, product or service;
- how the activity supports the State's WIA/Wagner-Peyser Five Year Strategic Plan;
- the measurable customer outcome(s) projected for each activity, product or service;
- planned milestones for completion of the activity;
- total estimated cost of each activity, including identification of planned equipment purchases of \$5,000 or more per unit cost.

The measurement of customer outcomes combined with assessment of customer satisfaction with workforce information products and services, provide the basis for formulating continuous improvement strategies for the system. States should define measurable customer outcomes that provide indicators of the utility or value of each product or service for meeting the information needs of principal customers.

Because of the nature of providing information services, it may not be possible to identify specific customer outcomes such as "entered employment." Indicators such as customer usage may be used for this purpose.

Examples of possible indicators are: usage statistics for Web-based systems or modules of such systems; demand statistics for a product or service, such as number of publication or listserv subscriptions or number of requests for consultations by stakeholders; or number of individuals served by an activity, such as number of individuals trained by course offering or counseled using an O*NET based occupational analysis product.

(c) Customer Satisfaction Assessment. Section 15 of the Wagner-Peyser Act (WIA Section 309) requires state agencies to consult with customers about the labor market relevance of the information disseminated through the statewide employment statistics system, in order to continuously improve the system. To carry out this requirement and to ensure accountability for the expenditure of these funds, beginning with PY 2002, a condition for receiving this grant will be an assessment by the State of customer satisfaction with state produced workforce information.

Based on guidance from the Workforce Information Council, ETA is not prescribing an approach or methodology for assessing customer satisfaction, and is defining customer satisfaction information broadly to allow states to define and use a variety of methods for gaining information about what customers value. These might include focus groups, surveys, consultation or other methods the State considers appropriate, employed solely or in combination.

For PY 2002, each state has the flexibility to devise a strategy employing single or multiple approaches for assessing customer satisfaction with state workforce information services. States may choose the range of services to assess, from the entire Section 309 statewide employment statistics system to selected components of the system such as these formula funded products and services.

The grant plan must include a description of the customer satisfaction assessment strategy to be employed by the State. The plan must describe the workforce information to be assessed and the method(s) to be used to collect and interpret customer satisfaction information. At a minimum, satisfaction must be assessed in some manner for each of the system's three principal customers - the business community, job seekers, and the workforce system (state and local boards, state and local workforce agencies, service and training providers, etc.)

Since PY 2002 is the first year requiring customer satisfaction assessment and many states are inexperienced in this area, the strategy described in the plan may subsequently be modified, if necessary, through a formal modification to the plan narrative statement of work. It is ETA's intent to provide technical assistance to assist States in developing strategies.

Grantees are to submit an electronic copy of the approved plan narrative in PDF format to the ETA National Office at es-in@doleta.gov. The document will be posted on a secure ETA supported Web site accessible to the workforce development system. The purpose of making the plans Web-accessible is to allow the sharing of workforce information delivery strategies and innovative practices among states.

6. Plan Modifications. The Grantee and Regional Office may jointly modify planned activities and associated expenditures, within the State allocation, during the plan period of performance. The Regional Office has unilateral authority to recommend funding adjustments to the Grant Officer when overall grant expenditures are substantially below quarterly budgeted forecasts in the approved SF-424A.

In the event that the Secretary of Labor may be required to carry out other responsibilities not anticipated in the plan, grantees may be requested to submit a plan modification to carry out the additional responsibilities.

7. Grant Conditions. Funds provided by this grant may not be used to supplant funds obligated from other funding sources for workforce information activities.

Any planned data collection activities must conform to the technical standards and methodologies established by the Bureau of Labor Statistics or provide, in the plan, a sound business rationale for the use of an alternative methodology.

Any information technology systems or applications developed with these funds must adhere to industry-standard, open architecture principles with documentation and software code made available for use by other State or local entities.

8. Publications and Other Information Products. Grantees are requested to submit hard copies of publications produced with these grant funds to the appropriate Regional Office and to submit PDF copies of publications considered to be of special interest to the system and which might be replicated by other states, to a Web site supported by ETA. Examples of

publications of special interest might be workforce information targeted to the needs of specific customer groups, sub-state economic snapshots or industry-specific research and analysis.

Additionally, grantees are required to submit copies or descriptions of marketing material and documentation of other innovative products or services to the ETA supported Web site. Examples might be State brochures describing the availability and functionality of electronic, self-service tools, or documentation of applications developed for database access, or workforce information services publicly available through the One-Stop system or targeted to specific customer groups.

Submission of hard copy publications to the ETA National Office is not required.

9. Annual Performance Reports. Grantees are required to submit an annual performance report that tracks performance for each planned activity, per 29 CFR 97.40(b)(2) and as specified in Attachment IV, Section A.

The annual performance report must also include a summary of findings of the grantee's assessment of customer satisfaction with state workforce information products and services and a summary of activities to be undertaken to add customer value where needs for improvement are indicated. A description of the methods used to collect and interpret customer satisfaction information must be included. The report may also include recommendations for consideration by the Workforce Information Council and ETA for improvements or changes to the suite of core products and services.

Grantees are to electronically submit the annual performance report to the appropriate Regional Office with a copy in PDF format to the ETA National Office at: es-in@doleta.gov. Per 29 CFR 97.40 (b)(1), annual reports are due 90 days following the end of the Program Year.

The ETA National Office will post the annual performance reports on a secure ETA supported Web site, accessible to the workforce development system, for the purpose of informing the system of overall performance of the workforce information system and of customer satisfaction with the products and services delivered.

10. Financial Management and Reporting. States are to forecast actual cash needs by program year quarter on SF-424A, Section D, for all quarters covered by the plan.

State Workforce Agencies will report quarterly expenditures by direct data entry of Standard Form 269 into the Web-based Enterprise Information Management System (EIMS). Quarterly financial reports are due within 30 days following the end of each quarter, per 29 CFR 97.41(b)(4). A financial reconciliation will be conducted by the Regional Office at the end of the program year.

Questions regarding financial management and reporting for PY 2002 or for any existing prior year fund balances should be addressed to the appropriate Regional Office.

11. Action Required. Grant plans are due within 45 days of the date of this guidance. Regional Offices may extend the due date, if necessary. State Workforce Agency Administrators are requested to:

- a. Immediately transmit this planning guidance to the appropriate State Workforce Agency office.
- b. Submit two signed copies of the PY 2002 grant application package to the appropriate Regional Administrator and e-mail one electronic copy, in PDF format, of the approved annual plan narrative to the ETA national office at: es-in@doleta.gov.
- c. The grant application package must include:
 1. A Transmittal Letter
 2. Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)
 3. Budget Plan(SF-424A, Section D only)
 4. Annual Plan Narrative

12. Inquiries. Questions on plan requirements may be directed to the appropriate Regional Office or to Olaf Bjorklund at 202-693-2870. Grant and financial management questions may be directed to the appropriate Regional Office or to Gwendolyn Baron-Simms at 202-693-3309 or to Jim Stockton, Grant Officer, at 202)693-3335.

13. Attachments.

- I. Allocations for PY 2002
- II. Grant Procedures
- III. Statement of Work Guidelines
- IV. Annual Performance Report Instructions

Attachment II

Grant Procedures

A. Grant Agreement. The Wagner-Peyser Annual Funding Agreement encompasses the Wagner-Peyser Base Grant and the One-Stop/LMI grant for PY 2002/ FY 2003. The Annual Funding Agreement includes Assurances and Certifications which apply to all grants covered by the Agreement. Therefore, Assurances and Certifications need not be submitted with the One-Stop/LMI grant application.

B. Grant Application. Grant Applications are to be developed in accordance with Attachments I, II and III. The Grant Application must include a signed transmittal letter, a signed Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424), Budget (SF- 424A, Section D only) and Plan Narrative. States are requested to submit two signed copies of the complete grant package to the appropriate Regional Office and one PDF copy of the final negotiated plan narrative to the ETA National Office at: es-in@doleta.gov.

C. Plan Approval. Regional Administrators are responsible for final approval of the plan and will issue an approval letter, with a copy of the approved grant package, to the State and a copy of the approval letter and approved grant package to the Grant Officer. A Notice of Obligation will be issued by the Grant Officer subsequent to the receipt of the Regional Office's approval package.

D. Plan Modifications. The Grantee and Regional Office may jointly modify planned activities and associated expenditures, within the State allocation, during the plan period of performance. The Regional Office has authority to unilaterally recommend funding adjustments to the Grant Officer when overall grant expenditures are substantially below quarterly budgeted forecasts in the approved SF- 424A. In the event the Secretary of Labor is required to carry out other responsibilities not anticipated in the plan, grantees may be requested to modify the plan to carry out the additional responsibilities.

Statement of Work Guidelines

Grantees are required to deliver eight core products and services with PY 2002 funding. Except for those core products which are expected to be standard to allow comparability across states (such as population of the ALMIS Database core tables, production and dissemination of long-term employment projections and short-term employment forecasts), all other core products and services allow states flexibility to address the priority while determining the form and content that best meets the State's needs.

The plan statement of work will be posted on a secure ETA supported Web site to allow review by the workforce development system. For consistency and ease of review, the format of the statement of work must discretely and concisely address each of the planned products and services and include the following information for each:

- A detailed description of the activity, product or service, including the principal customers, e.g., employers, job seekers, workforce boards, workforce development professionals or others, and the methodology to be used, where appropriate;
- the focus of each activity, e.g., data or economic analysis, correcting data gaps, system development, One-Stop service delivery or other;
- a description of the process for and result of the consultation process with the State Board concerning the activity, product or service;
- how the activity supports the State's WIA/Wagner-Peyser Five Year Strategic Plan;
- the measurable customer outcome(s) projected for each activity, product or service;
- planned milestones for completion of the activity;
- total estimated cost of each activity, including identification of planned equipment purchases of \$5,000 or more per unit cost.

Core Products and Services

1) Continue to populate the ALMIS Database with State data.

The ALMIS Database structure is designed to provide States with a resource for storing information in a single format and location to facilitate information delivery to a wide range of customers. The database can serve as the cornerstone for information delivery, research and product development. States are required to populate all tables designated as core tables in accordance with guidelines issued by the ALMIS Database Consortium. Information and technical support are provided at the Consortium's Web site at: <http://almis.dws.state.ut.us>.

The most current database version release is version 2.2. Depending on existing State applications for accessing the database, some States may need to continue maintaining an earlier version for a period of time. States are required to state in the plan which version of the database is currently being used and the projected date for upgrading to version 2.2 if an earlier version is currently used.

The maintenance and updating of occupational licensing data is the responsibility of the ALMIS Database administrator in each State. States are required to populate the following database files: license.dbf, licauth.dbf and lichist.dbf. Licensing data must be updated every two years. States are required to submit licensing data through the National Crosswalk Service Center (NCSC) for inclusion on the America's Career Information Network (ACINet) site. The NCSC also provides support to the ALMIS Database Consortium and State database administrators, including access to ALMIS Database files and information on updates to those files.

The licensed occupations information found in ACINet were recently recoded from an OES to the O*NET SOC coding taxonomy. The NCSC recently distributed the recoded data to state ALMIS Database Administrators. States are free to use any occupational coding taxonomy for the licensing information delivered in State systems. However, the files included in ACINet must be coded to O*NET SOC. The NCSC will assist states in recoding their files if necessary. States may access information and support through the NCSC web site at <http://www.xwalkcenter.org> or by calling 515-242-5034.

Grantees are required to develop or procure and deploy applications that allow customers easy public access to the State ALMIS Database and are encouraged, by the Workforce Information Council and ETA, to ensure such applications allow customers to access and compare information for interstate labor market areas and across multiple States.

States are encouraged to participate in Basic ALMIS Database Training through the LMI Institute, if needed. The curriculum is technical in nature and is targeted to new or inexperienced staff with responsibility for ALMIS Database work. Instruction is conducted with the assistance of the ALMIS Database Consortium.

These grant funds may be used for equipment, programming and applications development and procurement, database development, staff or other costs required to implement and maintain the database.

2) Produce and disseminate long-term, industry and occupational employment projections.

Continue to produce and disseminate State-level, long-term industry and occupational employment projections for calendar years 2000 to 2010, using the methodology, software tools and guidelines developed by the Long-Term Employment Projections Consortium and the MicroMatrix User's Group, in consultation with BLS and ETA. The primary focus for PY 2002 should be the production of sub-State, long-term projections. Inability to produce sub-State projections due to size or other restrictions must be noted in the plan.

States are required to populate the ALMIS Database with the projections data and submit the data for public dissemination following procedures established by the Consortium in consultation with BLS and ETA.

3) Produce and disseminate short-term, industry and occupational employment forecasts.

Each State is required to annually produce and disseminate state-level, short-term industry and occupational employment forecasts using the methodology, software tools and guidelines developed by the Short-Term Forecasts Consortium and the MicroMatrix User's Group, in consultation with ETA. For PY 2002, States will produce forecasts using any quarter in calendar year 2002 as the base year and forecast to the same quarter in 2004 as the forecasted year.

In addition, States are required to test the production of forecasts data for sub-state areas in accordance with Consortium guidelines. Access to local employment forecasts has been identified as a critical need by the workforce investment system. Inability to produce sub-state forecasts due to size or other restrictions must be noted in the plan.

States will be required to submit the forecasts data for public dissemination in accordance with procedures to be developed by the Consortium in consultation with ETA.

4) Develop occupational analysis products.

Each State will continue to develop customer-focused occupational and career information products, incorporating related information such as occupational supply information, employment projections, forecasts and trends, and skills requirements. All products must be O*NET-based unless there is a compelling reason for using other skills research and information sources. Occupational information products and services must be developed in consultation with Workforce Investment Boards and other stakeholders.

States will determine the technologies and media for development and dissemination of this information. Describe the products to be developed, including the products' intended utility for customers.

5) Provide an employer name and address list that can be accessed by the public.

The majority of States are licensed to use the ALMIS Employer Database. States not licensed are required to provide public access to an alternative, comprehensive employer name and address list to facilitate job search, job development and for other purposes. Licensed States are required to integrate the ALMIS Employer Database with the ALMIS Database in accordance with ALMIS Database Consortium guidelines.

States are required to develop applications allowing easy public access to the employer name and address list and describe, in the plan, the employer name and address list being used or developed, how workforce investment customers will access the information and the functionality of the application for workforce development requirements and operations in the State.

The ALMIS Employer Database also resides on the ACINet site. States have the option of developing system links to or direct use of ACINet for public access to the employer name and address list.

6) Provide information and support to Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs) and produce other State information products and services.

The plan must describe the strategy for collaborating with State and local Workforce Investment Boards to support WIBs' planning and policy development efforts and to provide timely, needed workforce information and services to customers. Describe the process to be used for determining customer's information requirements, the customer groups to be consulted, and the expected information products and services to be provided.

7) Support development and deployment of State-based workforce information delivery systems.

Funds are provided to support the development or the purchase and deployment of electronic technologies to improve access to and dissemination of workforce information. Describe what system development activities will be undertaken to improve customer access to and system functionality of workforce information.

Examples include, but are not limited to, developing (Web-based) applications for self-service access to the ALMIS Database or other information repositories, deploying systems which are compatible with other States' workforce information systems for interstate functionality, or integrating workforce information systems with state workforce development operating systems.

8) Support State workforce information training activities.

Describe the training activities to be undertaken to increase staff and customer understanding of workforce information. The plan must describe the type of training to be provided and its purpose, the intended recipients of the training, the number of training sessions planned or alternative methods of training delivery to be used. Funds may be used to support the costs of course development, training materials, training delivery, facility rental, tuition, training related travel expenses and other associated costs necessary to provide workforce information training. States are encouraged to take advantage of the standard and customized training offered by the LMI Institute.

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Annual Performance Report

States are required to submit an annual performance report which concisely summarizes accomplishments compared to plan and which summarizes the results of the State's assessment of customer satisfaction with the State's workforce information products and services. The report is intended to serve as an accountability, management and analysis tool for States, ETA and the Workforce Information Council.

A. Accomplishments Compared to Plan. For each planned product and service, provide a concise summary of:

- The customer outcomes achieved compared to planned customer outcomes and an analysis that explains the cause of any significant variance from plan. Describe any actions required to bring the activity into conformance with the approved plan.
- The extent to which the activity has conformed to the planned milestones including an explanation for the cause of any significant variance from schedule.
- Actual aggregate expenditures and an explanation for any significant variance from planned aggregate expenditures.

B. Customer Satisfaction Assessment. For each planned product and service, provide a concise summary of:

- The method(s) used for collecting customer satisfaction information and for interpreting the information for assessing satisfaction.
- An assessment of the principal customers' satisfaction with each product and service. At a minimum, satisfaction is to be assessed for the business community, job seekers and for the workforce development system at the State and local levels.
- Activities to be undertaken to add customer value to the product or service, where needs for improvement are identified.

C. Recommendations for Improvements or Changes to the Suite of Core Products. These may be based on one or more of the following:

- Recommendations based on accomplishments compared to plan.
- Recommendations based on customer satisfaction assessment findings.
- Recommendations based on perceived needs for other products and services.

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