



Louisiana Workforce and Social Services  
Reform Task Force (LA WASS)  
Final Report

Pursuant to Executive Order JML 24-44

# Executive Summary

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## Executive Summary

Louisiana is a state of remarkable resources and opportunities, boasting some of the largest ports in the nation, abundant natural resources, a hardworking population, and a rich culture. Yet, despite these strengths, a significant disconnect exists between these assets and the needs of business, industry, and the workforce. Nearly 20% of the state's population lives in poverty and relies on social assistance. While unemployment is low and job openings abound, Louisiana faces one of the lowest workforce participation rates in the country. This paradox highlights systemic inefficiencies in workforce development and social services programs, which this report seeks to address.

The Louisiana Workforce and Social Services Reform Task Force (LA WASS), established by Executive Order JML-24-44 in March 2024, was tasked with developing solutions to integrate and modernize the state's fragmented systems. Currently, these programs are managed by multiple agencies, leading to inconsistent services, duplication, and inefficiencies. Employers struggle to navigate the complex maze of workforce programs, while job seekers face barriers such as limited access to training, child care, and transportation.

This report is a series of recommendations from the Task Force to the Governor and to the Louisiana Legislature. It will be the responsibility of the Governor and the Louisiana Legislature to decide when, where, and how to implement some, none, or all of these recommendations.

## Key Recommendations

- 1. Create a Centralized Workforce Agency:** Replace the fragmented structure with a unified agency that consolidates workforce and social services programs, ensuring consistent, streamlined service delivery statewide.
- 2. Enhance Accessibility Through a One-Door System:** Establish a single point of entry for all workforce and social service programs, integrating intake, eligibility, and case management processes.
- 3. Bridge the Gap Between Employers and Resources:** Introduce a shared Customer Relations Management (CRM) system and regional single points of contact to simplify employer engagement with workforce and economic development initiatives.
- 4. Modernize Technology and Data Sharing:** Consolidate case management and data systems to improve coordination, reduce redundancies, and provide a holistic view of individual and program outcomes.
- 5. Co-Locate Services:** Strategically position workforce and social service facilities together to improve access for residents and reduce administrative costs.
- 6. Revitalize Case Management:** Redefine case manager roles, training, and compensation to focus on customer outcomes, ensuring high-quality support for job seekers.

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# Louisiana Workforce and Social Services Reform Task Force Members

- The Commissioner of Administration, Taylor Barras, or his designee, Randy Davis
- The Secretary of the Louisiana Workforce Commission, Susana Schowen, and one additions staff member, Executive Counsel James Garvey
- The Secretary of the Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services, David Matlock, and one staff member, Deputy Secretary Aly Rau
- The Secretary of the Louisiana Department of Economic Development, Susan Bonnett Bourgeois, or her designee, Tedra Cheatham
- The President of the Louisiana Community and Technical College System, Monty Sullivan, or his designee, Chandler LeBoeuf
- The State Superintendent of the Louisiana Department of Education, Cade Brumley, or his designee, Mellynn Baker
- The Secretary of the Louisiana Department of Health, Michael Harrington, or his designee, Drew Maranto
- The Secretary of the Louisiana Department of Veterans Affairs, Charlton Meginley, or his designee, Brandee Patrick
- The Secretary of the Louisiana Department of Corrections, Gary Westcott, or his designee, Andrea Buttross
- The Speaker of the Louisiana House of Representatives, Phillip DeVillier, or his designee, Rep. Barbara Freiberg
- The President of the Louisiana State Senate, Cameron Henry, or his designee, Sen. Stewart Cathey, Jr.
- The Louisiana Legislative Auditor, Michael Waguespack, or his designee, Chris Magee
- Representative of Local Workforce Development Boards, appointed by the Secretary of Louisiana Workforce Commission, Tina Roper
- Representative of Louisiana non-profits serving individuals in poverty, appointed by the Secretary of Department of Children and Family Services, Michael Williamson
- Representative of Louisiana employers, appointed by the Governor, Matt Dickerson

# Acronyms Used in this Report


- **BESE - Board of Elementary and Secondary Education**  
The governing body overseeing public elementary and secondary education in Louisiana.
- **CCAP - Child Care Assistance Program**  
A program that provides subsidies to low-income working families for child care costs.
- **CCDBG - Child Care and Development Block Grant**  
A federal program used by Louisiana to support the CCAP program.
- **CRM - Customer Relationship Management**  
A system recommended for statewide use to streamline employer engagement and improve workforce service delivery.
- **CSE E&T - Child Support Enforcement Employment and Training Program**  
A program providing employment and training support to non-custodial parents to help them meet child support obligations.
- **DCFS - Department of Children and Family Services**  
The state agency responsible for administering SNAP, TANF, and related social services.
- **DDS - Disability Determination Services**  
The state agency that administers Social Security Disability claims in Louisiana.
- **FITAP - Family Independence Temporary Assistance Program**  
A component of TANF providing temporary cash assistance to families with children in Louisiana.
- **JML - Jeff Landry**  
The Governor of Louisiana, referenced in Executive Order JML-24-44, which created LA WASS.
- **LA WASS - Louisiana Workforce and Social Services Reform Task Force**  
A task force established by Governor Jeff Landry in 2024 to modernize and streamline Louisiana's workforce and social services programs.
- **LCTCS - Louisiana Community and Technical College System**  
The system of community colleges in Louisiana that also administers adult education and literacy programs.
- **LDOE - Louisiana Department of Education**  
The state agency that oversees public education in Louisiana, including the administration of CCAP.
- **LED - Louisiana Economic Development**  
The state agency responsible for economic growth initiatives, including workforce programs like LED FastStart.
- **LLA - Louisiana Legislative Auditor**  
An arm of the Louisiana legislature that conducts audits and performance evaluations of state agencies, including those administering workforce and social services programs.
- **LOLA - LCTCS Online Learning System**  
A virtual platform used by LCTCS for adult education and training services.
- **LRS - Louisiana Rehabilitation Services**  
A division of the Louisiana Workforce Commission that provides vocational rehabilitation and related services to individuals with disabilities.
- **LWC - Louisiana Workforce Commission**  
The state agency responsible for administering WIOA programs, unemployment insurance, and vocational rehabilitation services.

- **LWDB - Local Workforce Development Boards**  
Regional boards responsible for implementing WIOA-funded services and overseeing local workforce development strategies.
- **MOU - Memorandum of Understanding**  
Agreements between state and local agencies to coordinate service delivery and cost-sharing for workforce and social services programs.
- **MSFW - Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker Program**  
A program to support migrant and seasonal agricultural workers through employment and training services.
- **OTS - Office of Technology Services**  
A centralized agency that supports IT systems for state programs, including workforce services in Louisiana.
- **OTS - Office of Technology Services**  
The state entity that manages Louisiana's IT infrastructure, including technology solutions for workforce and social services.
- **RESEA - Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment**  
A federal program aimed at assisting unemployed individuals in returning to the workforce.
- **RLMA - Regional Labor Market Areas**  
Geographic regions in Louisiana used to analyze and report workforce and economic data.
- **SCSEP - Senior Community Service Employment Program**  
A federal program providing training and employment opportunities for older adults, often managed through workforce development agencies.
- **SNAP - Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program**  
A federal assistance program administered by DCFS in Louisiana to provide food-purchasing aid to low-income individuals and families.
- **SNAP E&T - SNAP Employment and Training**  
A program under SNAP to help recipients gain skills and find jobs, managed by DCFS.
- **STEP - Strategies to Empower People**  
A TANF-related program focused on helping recipients achieve self-sufficiency through employment and training.
- **TANF - Temporary Assistance for Needy Families**  
A federal program providing cash assistance and support services to low-income families, overseen by DCFS.
- **UI - Unemployment Insurance**  
A program administered by LWC to provide temporary financial assistance to individuals who have lost their jobs through no fault of their own.
- **VR - Vocational Rehabilitation**  
A service provided by LWC to assist individuals with disabilities in finding and maintaining employment.
- **WIOA - Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act**  
A federal program designed to build a coordinated workforce system at the state level, as well as provide funding for employment, job training, adult education, and vocational rehabilitation services.
- **WP - Wagner Peyser**  
A federal program that provides employment services to job seekers and workers that currently must be provided by state merit staff.

# Introduction

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In 2023, one in five Louisianans were provided public assistance (1.07 million individuals) with a total expenditure of \$3.27 billion across an array of federal and state funded programs, including Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP), Unemployment Insurance (UI), and Medicaid. Louisiana has one of the highest job opening rates (job openings as a percent of employment) alongside one of the highest poverty rates in the nation.<sup>1</sup> However, data shows that over the next five years Louisiana is expected to have 61,918 new job openings alongside \$3.3 billion in new private investment and \$3.9 billion in federal investments in roads and bridges.<sup>2</sup> A key to unlocking the economic growth potential that will be offered by these investments is increasing the labor force participation rate and promoting upward mobility through gainful employment and meaningful careers for all Louisianans. This is a vision that statewide workforce and social services programs should strive for.

Despite having a unified goal, Louisiana’s current workforce and social services programs are administered by numerous state and local agencies. This is a situation which leads to service inconsistency, program fragmentation, siloing of information and data, duplication of services and case management, and inefficient oversight. The system can be a confusing maze for job seekers and employers and is inefficiently designed for a seamless connection between the demand for, and supply of labor.

This report details the current operations and structure of Louisiana’s workforce and social services programs, the current service delivery structure and infrastructure, and the current funding structure. Alongside a critical documentation of current operations, this report offers recommended changes and identifies opportunities for reforms to program administration, service delivery, and financial integration. The following roadmap offers a context and basis for bold reforms to Louisiana’s workforce and social services program foundation and it offers a vision for services that lead to better outcomes and customer service for Louisiana residents.

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1 U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, “Louisiana Job Openings and Labor Turnover – February 2024,” [https://www.bls.gov/regions/southwest/news-release/2024/jobopeningslaborturnover\\_louisiana\\_20240423.htm](https://www.bls.gov/regions/southwest/news-release/2024/jobopeningslaborturnover_louisiana_20240423.htm); U.S. Census Bureau, “Poverty in the United States: 2023,” <https://www.census.gov/library/publications/2024/demo/p60-283.html>

2 Lightcast, Job Trends; Louisiana Economic Development, “A New Chapter for Louisiana,” <https://www.opportunitylouisiana.gov/metadatabasecenter>; Bureau of Labor Statistics, “Louisiana Job Openings and Labor Turnover – November 2024,” [https://www.bls.gov/regions/southwest/news-release/jobopeningslaborturnover\\_louisiana.htm](https://www.bls.gov/regions/southwest/news-release/jobopeningslaborturnover_louisiana.htm)

# A Vision for a Modernized Louisiana Workforce Development System

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Louisiana is positioned to integrate the administration of workforce and social services programs, creating a streamlined system that empowers citizens to move from dependency to independence and opportunity. Audits of federally funded workforce and social services programs in Louisiana identified a need for a unified vision, integrated service delivery, stronger coordination, partnership, and improved oversight.

Recognizing this opportunity, in March of 2024, Governor Jeff Landry signed executive order number JML-24-44 establishing the Louisiana Workforce and Social Services Reform Task Force (LA WASS). The order states that “Louisiana’s public workforce system is a maze of confusing and inefficient programs and is not meeting the challenges faced by employers and workers.”<sup>3</sup>


The LA WASS is composed of 17 members, including the leaders of 12 state agencies and governing bodies, with responsibilities, including:

- 1.** Conducting research and collect data on state models for coordinating and fully integrating workforce, social services, education, child care, and health care programs and develop alternative approaches that Louisiana should consider to achieve proposed outcomes.
- 2.** Conducting research and collect data on performance outcomes of various workforce programs, including analysis of the number of common participants enrolled in multiple programs across state agencies.
- 3.** Conducting an asset map that incorporates office locations, case management systems, and customer intake and eligibility procedures for above service programs.
- 4.** Issuing a final report containing recommendations for the integration of the aforementioned services and programs, including any state department or agency reorganizations needed to achieve desired outcomes.

In April 2024, the Task Force met and agreed upon the vision to “Strengthen Louisiana’s employers and fuel economic growth through the integrated system of workforce and social services designed to lift Louisiana’s most vulnerable citizens out of poverty into self-sufficiency.” Between April and December the task force met monthly, established relevant workgroups, undertook data collection, and constructed its recommendations.

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<sup>3</sup> Executive Office of the Governor, State of Louisiana, Executive Order Number JML 24-44, “Establishment of the Louisiana Workforce and Social Services Reform Task Force,” (2024), <https://www.doa.la.gov/media/lmefj2jc/jml-24-44-establishment-of-the-louisiana-workforce-and-social-services-reform-task-force.pdf>



The following workgroups were established: Business Services, Case Management, Infrastructure, Performance and Accountability, and Service Delivery. The Task Force assigned each work group a set of purposes and responsibilities. This report is a careful consolidation of the Task Force meeting minutes, considerations, research collected, and final recommendations, which are included in the Appendix to this report.

## **Audit Findings**

The executive order came after a series of influential Louisiana Legislative Auditor (LLA) performance audit reports that highlighted key issues and opportunities to reform Louisiana’s workforce and social services programs. Starting in 2021, the Louisiana Legislature passed Senate Resolution 107 requesting that the LLA conduct an efficiency audit of the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) administration of TANF.<sup>4</sup> Published in December 2021, the audit found problems in the Louisiana TANF system. Louisiana had the lowest TANF Work Participation Rate in the nation (3.5%) in 2020.

In 2022, through House Resolution 248 and 184, respectively, the Legislature called for two more audits, one of the DCFS administration of SNAP and one of Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC) administration of WIOA.<sup>5</sup> The audits of SNAP identified significant errors in the tracking of data as well as in the reporting on financial status of recipients. Further, the audit identified that over eighty percent of participants lost services due to non-financial reasons (e.g. reporting issues), many of whom would reenter the system less than 90 days later.

In 2023, House Resolution 100 called for an audit to evaluate the coordination of the programs.<sup>6</sup> The coordination audit was finalized in March 2024 and revealed ineffective coordination and fragmentation of the systems. Even though Louisiana has included SNAP, TANF, WIOA, and a few smaller federal programs into a Combined State Plan, the coordination and integration of service delivery for those programs is absent. The report identified a lack of a unified vision and a lack of consistent performance-based outcomes or measures. As in the prior audits, related problems were identified, including challenges in leading customers to self-sufficiency; a lack of efficient outcomes; lagging work programs, despite growing assistance rolls; and insufficient data and performance metrics collection. The audit recommended greater emphasis on data collection, program completion, and oversight.

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4 Louisiana Legislative Auditor, “Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Department of Children and Family Services,” (December, 2021).

5 Louisiana Legislative Auditor, “Administration of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services,” (March, 2023); Louisiana Legislative Auditor, “Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program – Employment and Training, Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services,” (April, 2023) ; Louisiana Legislative Auditor, “Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Louisiana Workforce Commission,” (September, 2023).

6 Louisiana Legislative Auditor, “Coordination of Public Assistance and Workforce Development Programs,” (February, 2024).

Taken together, the various audits revealed severe issues caused by Louisiana's fragmented system. The siloed approach of the programs has led to a lack of coordination among the agencies that are responsible for administering the programs. The lack of a unified program delivery plan has led to inefficiencies and missed opportunities for supporting participants.

The audits also emphasized a lack of robust performance metrics and outcomes data. As a result, Louisiana has lacked a comprehensive assessment of the effectiveness of the programs. Additionally, it is difficult to determine if the programs are achieving their intended goals of improving employment, self-sufficiency, and long-term labor force attachment.

## **The Opportunity**


The issues that were highlighted in the executive order, and in the audits, and that were the focus of the Task Force's research reveal a key opportunity for Louisiana to promote upward mobility for Louisianans who are currently facing difficulties with economic self-sufficiency.

Over the next five years, Louisiana is expected to have 61,918 new job openings alongside \$3.3 billion in new private investment and \$3.9 billion in federal investments in roads and bridges. A key to unlocking economic growth potential offered by these investments is increasing the labor force participation rate. Louisiana should seek to promote upward mobility through gainful employment and meaningful careers for all Louisianans—a desired outcome for the integration of workforce development and social services programs.

This starts with making services easier to access for businesses and employers. Employers are forced to maneuver through a maze of different programs and staff to access job training and other employment programs. Given constraints on time and effort, this means that many employers, particularly small and mid-size establishments, are not accessing the resources that are available to garner and support a skilled workforce.

Social services programs provide key support for low income individuals and families. These services should be structured to promote transitions to increased family income through gainful employment. The efficiencies that can be gained through the integration of workforce development and social services programs provide a unique opportunity to expand opportunities and to provide better services for Louisianans.

Currently, recipients of workforce and social services face barriers that are exacerbated by program fragmentation. For the intensive needs population (e.g., TANF, FITAP, and STEP recipients), barriers include mental health issues, domestic violence, and substance abuse. For the work eligible population (e.g., SNAP, WIOA, and CSE E&T population), barriers include lack of child care, transportation, and behavioral or health issues in a state that is



ranked 50th for health outcomes.<sup>7</sup> For the work ready population (e.g., WIOA and SNAP E&T program graduates) barriers include failure to connect with opportunities for work and failure to connect with training or credentialing programs.

The most prominent barrier for every population of recipients is navigating the complex set of requirements for demonstrating eligibility for numerous independent programs. Therefore, **customers’ experience and positive short-term and long-term outcomes are central to all recommendations and service delivery improvements—programs must be bound by what is best for individuals being served instead of what is best for programs or systems.** By integrating and modernizing, Louisiana is prioritizing the customer experience.

## The Vision

*Louisiana should modernize and transform its workforce development and social services system through the implementation of an integrated administrative and service delivery model. This model could streamline the administration of state and local programs and access to services, while simultaneously promoting fiscal integrity and resource efficiency.*

The Task Force Vision was guided by several key features of integration:

- A need for **leadership and collaboration** led by the Governor is essential.
- **Information sharing and transparency** are vital to achieving a unified vision.
- Increased **data sharing** in the face of bureaucratic siloing should be implemented to allow a more holistic view of individual needs and to coordinate service delivery.
- **Consistent service delivery** alongside responsiveness to **local economic changes** can be best achieved by an integrated service delivery model that improves the customer experience.
- Reforming **performance based outcomes**, through the implementation of measurable targets and metrics which would track program effectiveness, should guide decision-making and program direction.

To meet the ambitious vision of a streamlined workforce and social services delivery system, the Task Force recommends that Louisiana form a new state agency and an integrated service delivery structure. The development of a new state agency and an integrated service delivery structure could be accomplished by realigning and restructuring in three key areas: (1) program alignment, (2) service delivery structure, and (3) financial integration. Successful implementation of specific components in each of these three areas would ensure Louisiana meets its vision and goal for serving Louisiana’s employers, workers, job seekers, and residents.

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<sup>7</sup> Louisiana Workforce Commission, “Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Louisiana’s Combined State Plan – PY 2024-2027,” [https://www.laworks.net/PublicRelations/WIOA\\_StatePlan.asp](https://www.laworks.net/PublicRelations/WIOA_StatePlan.asp)



# Program Alignment

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How programs are organized and administered at the state level is the first element of workforce and social services reform. Achieving consolidation at the state administrative level has a number of positive benefits. Most notably, such consolidation allows for the development of an integrated “system” versus the administration of various separate programs that are delivered through separate locations and staffing.

Louisiana administers a number of different workforce and social services programs through different state agencies. Table 1 outlines key programs, including number of participants and funding levels.

**Table 1: Current Program Structure, Size, and Costs<sup>8</sup>**

Program	Participants	Benefits/Program Cost	Source	Federal Administrative Cost	State Administrative Cost	Agency
SNAP	891,649	\$2.55 billion	Federal	\$111 million	\$80 million	DCFS
SNAP E&T	1,669	\$4.8 million	Federal	\$3 million	N/A	DCFS
TANF *Fiscal Year 2021	NA	TANF Pre-K: \$45.6 million TANF Child Welfare: \$41.47 million Other TANF: \$18.87 million TANF SSBG: \$16.1 million TANF Worker, Education, Training \$1.2 million	Federal	\$16.1 million	\$56,2 million	DCFS
TANF Cash Assistance	FITAP: 7,523 KCSP: 2,959 STEP: 1,767	\$37 million	Federal	\$12 million	N/A	DCFS
WIOA: Title I	Adult: 3,477 Dislocated Worker: 957 Youth: 2,229	\$47 million	Federal	\$4.63 million	\$1.98 million	LWC
WIOA: Wagner-Peyser	23,301	\$11.2 million	Federal	N/A	N/A	LWC
WIOA: Vocational Rehabilitation	167,774	\$44.2 million	Federal	N/A	N/A	LWC
WIOA: Adult Education	29,920	\$12.6 million	Federal	\$2.4 million	N/A	LCTCS

8 Louisiana Legislative Auditor, “Coordination of Public Assistance and Workforce Development Programs,” (February, 2024), [https://drive.google.com/drive/u/o/folders/12\\_3roL3pHWJbsiYv-7dOAtiqgKznB-3l](https://drive.google.com/drive/u/o/folders/12_3roL3pHWJbsiYv-7dOAtiqgKznB-3l)

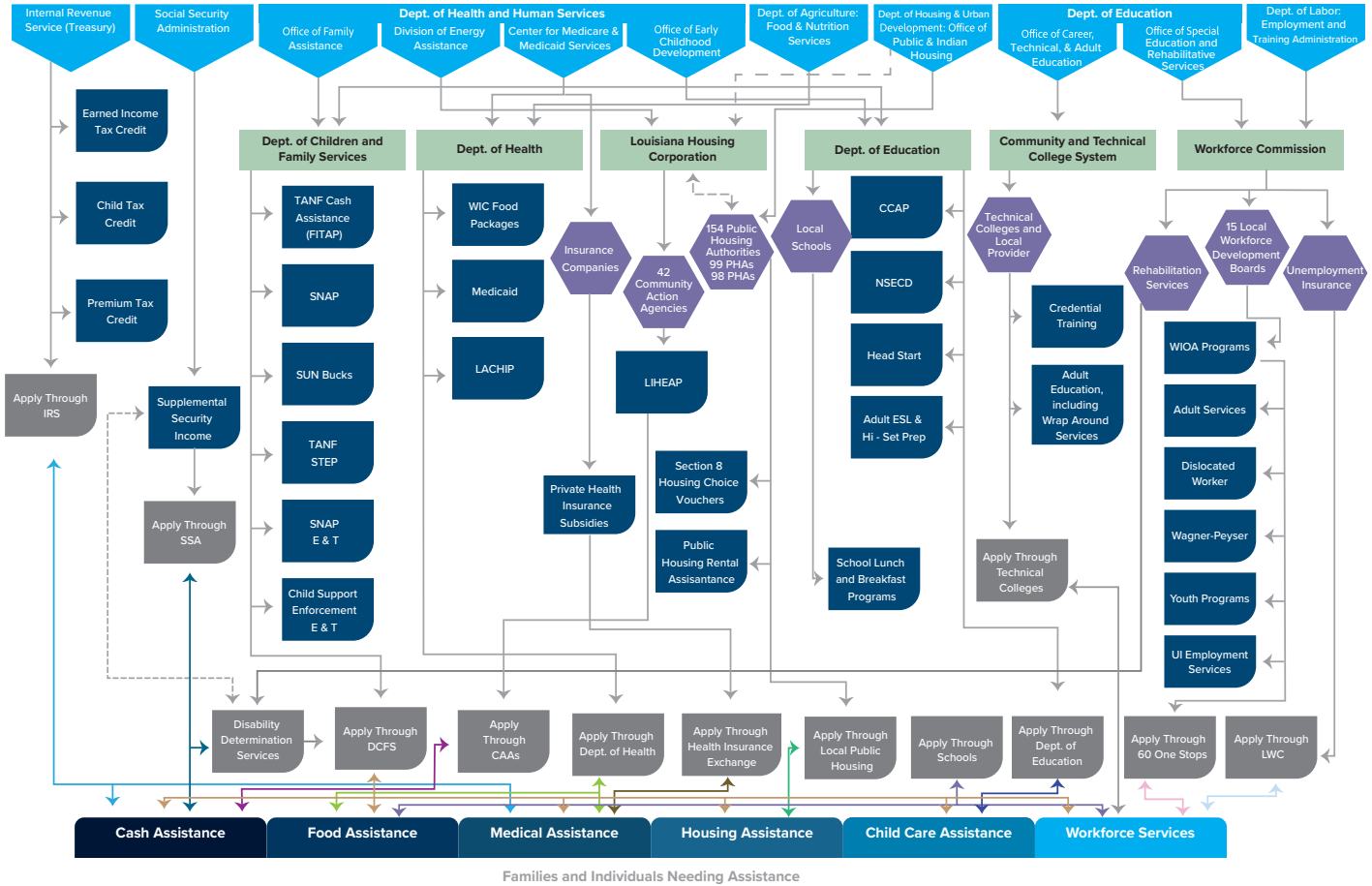
Unemployment Insurance	41,565 claims	\$114.1 million (Employer Tax)	Employer Tax	\$38.5 million	N/A	LWC
RESEA	24,053	2.1 million	Federal	\$571,000	N/A	LWC
Child Care Assistance Program	21,326	\$188 million	Federal	\$4.96 million *state and federal combination	combination of federal and state dollars through state match program	LDOE

The Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC) administers WIOA Title I programs – Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth, as well as the Wagner Peyser Employment Service, and RESEA through partnerships with 15 Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDB). LWC also manages vocational rehabilitation services directly through Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS) delivered at regional LRS service centers and the LWDBs. LWC also administers the state’s unemployment insurance system, with benefit determination done by state employees as required by federal regulations.

Meanwhile, social services programs (SNAP, TANF, SNAP E&T) are accessed through the Department of Children and Family Services. Adult Education Services and Literacy programs are administered by the Louisiana Community & Technical College System (LCTCS), with applications and intake occurring separately. The Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) is administered by the Department of Education (LDOE). Each of these agencies administers its own case management and service delivery, and each agency has its own physical and virtual infrastructure. Federal funding flows into and out of each of these agencies separately.


Figure 1 illustrates the Louisiana workforce development and social services system along with the partner programs.

**Figure 1: Program Structure of Louisiana Workforce and Social Services Programs**



## A New State Agency

A top recommendation of the Task Force is to strategically realign workforce development, job training, and supportive service programs to create a seamless, results-driven system that empowers job seekers, supports workers, and meets the evolving needs of businesses, thereby driving economic growth and opportunity statewide. In order to meet the vision of reducing fragmentation, achieving administrative efficiencies, and improving the customer experience, Louisiana should create a new cabinet-level state agency that integrates and consolidates programs from various state agencies in order to implement a one-door service delivery system. Such a system would ensure a consistent customer service experience across the state while allowing for regional flexibility that is aligned to regional workforce and economic development priorities.



The Task Force notes that in the discussion of centralizing services, there are two components: (1) program administration and policy development, and (2) eligibility services for various programs. For program administration and policy development, the Task Force recommends consideration of integrating federally funded workforce and social services programs (initially TANF, SNAP, SNAP E&T, DDS, WIOA, WP, UI, and CCAP) under one administrative state agency.

For eligibility services, some programs such as Medicaid could be considered for electronic/virtual integration to create a single, seamless eligibility unit for most workforce and social services programs. In the Medicaid example, Medicaid eligibility workers would electronically/virtually sit alongside eligibility workers from other programs, so the workers, administration and policy of Medicaid could remain in a separate agency.

Integrating both administration and eligibility of federally funded workforce and social services programs would achieve administrative efficiencies, which, in turn, would allow resources to be reallocated in order to focus more services on facilitating employment. Taking disparate programs and systems and realigning them into a new state agency would allow the combined staff and stakeholders to better identify best practices and to develop a new organizational culture and structure. It is suggested that during the consolidation process the new agency should be promoted as a “merger of equals” and not as a takeover or acquisition by one agency over others.

Administrative integration would also support the customer experience by introducing statewide consistency in the service delivery approach, by implementing streamlined case management, and by creating more seamless referrals to other partners and services. Importantly, an integrated state agency would promote opportunities to streamline eligibility services and to reduce the complexity in developing and managing data sharing agreements, all while holistically serving customers. Task Force members affirmed that while increased collaboration, regular communication, and clearer performance measures between state agencies and between state and local level leaders could improve the current situation, an integrated model is what will most likely achieve the most positive outcomes for moving Louisianans from poverty to independence and opportunity.

### **Program Alignment in a New State Agency**

While the vision outlined by the Task Force is clear, implementation of the vision will take planning, discussion, and a combination of legislative and executive actions. To that end, below is a recommended course of action:

## Phase 1:

It is recommended that the following agencies form the foundation for the new state workforce agency:

- ✓ **Louisiana Workforce Commission**
- ✓ **Office of Family Support which is currently within the Department of Child and Family Services (Note that child support enforcement would remain within DCFS, which would allow DCFS to deepen its focus on this important responsibility.)**

## Phase 2:

It is recommended that the following agency unit should be further examined for possible consolidation into the new state workforce agency:

- ✓ **Child Care Assistance Program, which is currently within the Department of Education**

It is recommended that the following agency unit should be further examined for collaboration efforts with the new state workforce agency:

- ✓ **Louisiana Adult Education Agency (WorkReady U), which is currently within the Louisiana Community and Technical College System**

Table 2 outlines programs that could be included in the new state workforce agency, along with programs marked with an asterisk (\*) that may be incorporated pending further analysis.

**Table 2: Key Programs Integrated into a New State Workforce Agency**

<b>Workforce and Education Programs</b>	<b>Social Services Programs</b>
WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth (Title I)	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families
Wagner Peyser Employment Service	Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
Unemployment Insurance (UI)	Child Care Assistance
Vocational Rehabilitation	Community Services Block Grant
Trade Adjustment Assistance	Housing Assistance*
Jobs for Veterans Programs	
Labor Market Information and Data	
Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker (MSFW) Program	
Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)	
Registered Apprenticeship Programs and Other Work-Based Learning programs	
Adult Education and Literacy*	

## Administrative Features of the New State Agency

Recognizing that further discussion and negotiations are necessary, the Task Force recommends that the administrative design of the new state agency contains improvements in two key areas: (1) the administrative structure for service delivery, and (2) consolidated eligibility services. Both of these features are intended to improve customer service and make it easier for Louisiana residents to access all of the workforce and social services programs and benefits needed for self-sufficiency and upward mobility.

With the exception of WIOA title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth services, the remaining programs listed in Table 2 and under consideration for administrative consolidation in a new state agency are delivered by state agency personnel. In fact, in some cases, such as UI and WP employment services, federal regulations mandate that state merit staff must provide those services.

In contrast, WIOA Title I dollars flow through a designated state agency (currently LWC) and then to 15 local workforce development boards and designated local workforce development areas.<sup>9</sup> WIOA Title I programs are the only workforce and social services programs that are federally mandated to be operationalized this way.

Because of the federal mandates regarding various state and local program delivery, rationalizing a seamless administrative structure is challenging. However, the Task Force recommends steps that can be taken to improve upon the current situation under the guise of a new state agency.

First, further research on other state models on administrative integration and delivery should be further examined with an analysis of which features would work best in Louisiana. On one end of the spectrum is Utah, which created a single state area model and administers all programs through a consolidated state agency. Larger states, such as Texas, have worked to consolidate and streamline their service delivery structure through the local workforce development boards with oversight by one or more state agencies. The key principle in whichever approach Louisiana takes is ensuring statewide consistency of services balanced with regional flexibility and input to address issues unique to Louisiana communities.

Second, in addition to developing an administrative structure with defined operational divisions/departments, the new state agency should have a defined regional structure that meets the key principle of consistent service delivery and regional flexibility. This regional structure may be incorporated within the agency itself or maintain some level of external stakeholder engagement depending upon which administrative model is incorporated. For instance, local planning boards could be part of the new state agency providing input regarding services that are needed in the regions with that role codified in state law or

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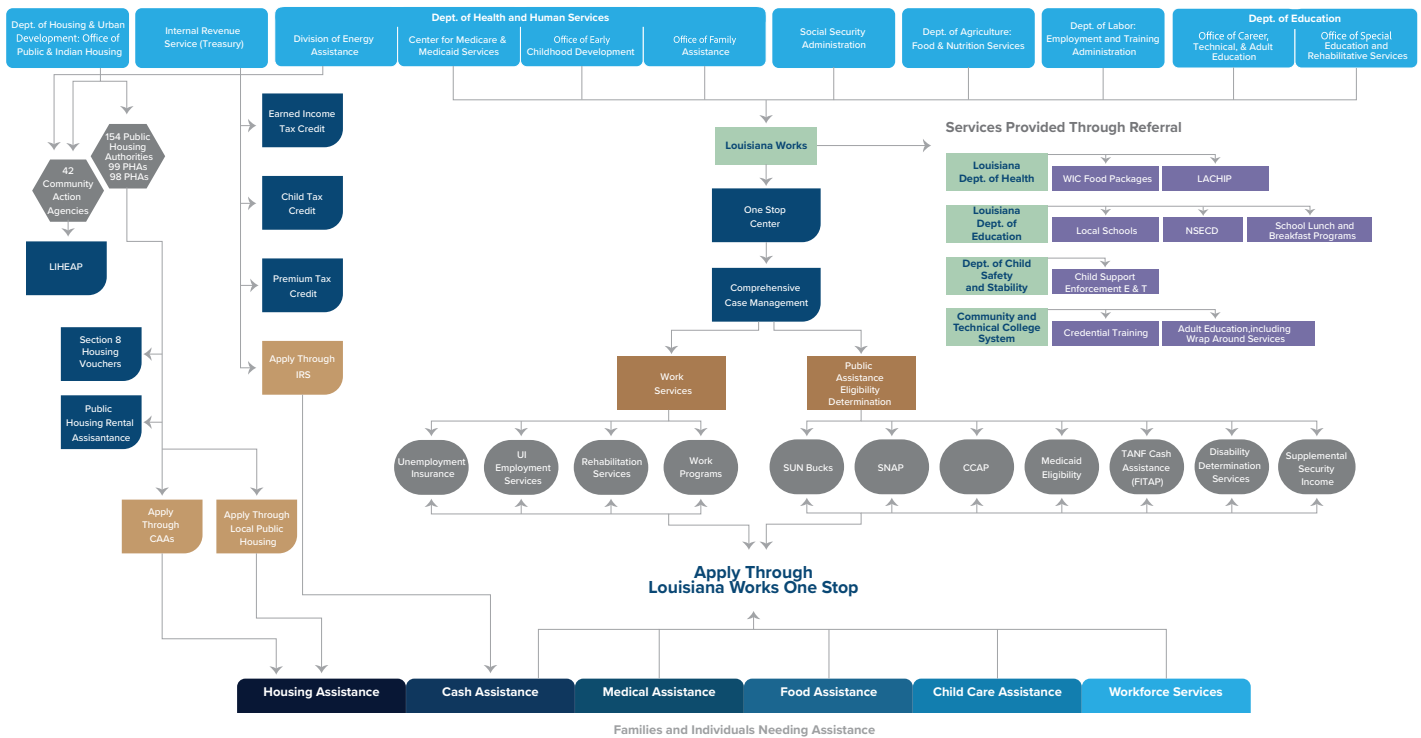
<sup>9</sup> Under current federal law, 85% of the Adult and Youth allotment to a state must go to local workforce development areas and 60% of the Dislocated Worker allotment must go to local workforce development areas.

could remain external to the new state agency as current local workforce development boards are currently. In either case, it will be critical that Louisiana designs the structure that is most effective and efficient in helping customers obtain the services needed.

Consolidated eligibility services is another important feature of the administrative design of the new state agency. The Task Force recommends that additional discussion and details emerge that incorporate an administrative and service delivery design that seeks to focus customer intake on understanding a customer’s issues and needs, developing employment goals and plans, and creating initial service plans rather than eligibility for programs. The first interaction a customer has with a redesigned workforce system should be on these important priorities versus eligibility for programs. Once a customer has concluded initial needs determination and planning, their case is remotely handled for eligibility determination across the host of workforce and social services programs. Administratively designing and structuring this will be important moving forward.

Figure 2 outlines a potential structuring of a new state workforce agency in Louisiana.

**Figure 2: New Agency Program Structure**



# Service Delivery

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Realigning programs and creating a new state workforce agency should occur in conjunction with reevaluating how services will be delivered throughout Louisiana. The integrated service delivery design and structure should incorporate physical and virtual access to services, a consolidated model for intake and eligibility, an integrated case management structure, and streamlined metrics and accountability.

## **Current Service Delivery**


Currently, customers who are eligible for WIOA services can access WIOA Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth, WP employment services, and vocational rehabilitation programs at Louisiana American Job Centers that are jointly administered by LWC and the 15 local workforce boards. While structured similarly, due to resource and other constraints, obtaining consistent services across the 15 local workforce areas is lacking. Additionally, each local workforce area can market and brand itself individually, maintain their own websites and information portals, and negotiate the extent to which other program partners are engaged.

Each local workforce area is mandated by federal law to have one comprehensive center where partner programs negotiate area to area their engagement levels. Sixty affiliate one stop centers throughout the state where at least two partner programs are available for customers are also managed by the local workforce boards. Centers provide services for job seekers, workers, and employers through self-assisted and staff-assisted services, and through virtual and online services. Alongside these services, LWC also manages the UI system through a HiRE online portal. A client who is eligible for UI can fill out applications at AJCs or online.

Recipients who are eligible for social services programs access them through DCFS, using the agency's own application and case management services. DCFS relies on a separate Cafe portal, online applications, phone applications, fax applications, or in person applications. DCFS has separate virtual and physical infrastructure. During the application for SNAP, referrals are made for the STEP program or the SNAP E&T program. Separately, Louisiana has thirty-nine SNAP E&T providers, each of which has its own case management service delivered by the provider. SNAP Works is used to manage cases. Twenty-two parishes do not have in-person SNAP E&T services available, resulting in coverage gaps. DCFS also operates and funds TANF programs, which are managed by various contracted entities and subcontractors. Eligibility determinations and guidelines are similar, however, receiving services varies between entities.

Separately, LDOE administers the CCAP program using a Cafe portal that is similar to DCFS's portal. Adult education and literacy eligible recipients navigate through the LCTCS programs and the virtual LOLA program.

The current structure of case management and service delivery causes significant problems with achieving clear communication regarding services and eligibility. For instance, a significant portion of SNAP recipients fall through the cracks due to issues



with reassessment of their financial eligibility. The LLA’s audit of SNAP identified that 81.1 percent of cases were closed for non-financial reasons. The reasons were primarily failing to submit follow up information and reassessment information by the required deadlines. Most SNAP recipients who lose benefits get them again within three months, as a result.

Streamlining and integrating eligibility process and case management would simplify reporting and would ensure that customers’ redetermination requirements are noticeable and clear. It would also standardize program delivery and engagement that currently varies different from one community to the next. Employers, workers, and job seekers do not experience consistency in addressing skills shortages and in attempting to increase opportunities for employment.

Service gaps currently exist across the system. For example, the state charged LDOE and BESE with consolidating early childhood care and education, which includes CCAP. While those agencies have diligently focused on child safety, learning, and development consistent with their educational mission, no agency has been charged with supporting the CCAP parents or the legal guardians of the children in progressing towards employment and self-sufficiency. CCAP recipients (which are the parents) must be employed twenty hours per week, be seeking employment, or be enrolled in either school or training full-time, but no supports are provided to guide them toward high-value, high-demand occupations that pay a living wage, allow for upward mobility, and lead to economic opportunity. As another example, the state provides supportive services to students who are enrolled in postsecondary institutions, but the level of services provided differs across institutions. Students often have needs that exceed the level of support that these institutions are able to provide.

## **Service Delivery Vision**

The Service Delivery Work Group of the LA WASS Task Force met throughout 2024 to identify federal and state workforce and social services programs that should be incorporated into the design of an integrated, customer-focused service delivery system. The consolidated recommendations support a vision for a cost-efficient and effective service delivery system for workers, job seekers, and businesses, while considering federal and state legal requirements and aiming for an optimal solution that may require state legislative and executive actions.

An integrated service delivery model would provide a seamless customer experience across workforce and social services programs, including a common intake, assessment, and referral processes. This work should include the state’s postsecondary education institutions, which can serve as an education and training providers for high demand and high wage employment leading to careers that promote economic sustainability. Eligibility services for programs such as Medicaid and Housing assistance should also be considered for electronic/virtual integration to allow for improved case management and benefit access. To the extent that some agencies or institutions cannot be integrated, the state should ensure a “no wrong door” policy to ensure that individuals can access the full

spectrum of workforce development and social services regardless of where they first engage with the system.

## Operations and Structure

Data on operations and structure of various workforce development and social services programs, including office locations, administrative structures, and service region alignments, was collected by the Task Force. That data revealed duplicative infrastructure, both physically and virtually. Even though WIOA outlined the framework for a one-stop system to bring disparate programs and funding under one service delivery mechanism, Louisiana still maintains various delivery systems and locations. Workers, job seekers, and low-income residents are often required to access two or more systems and locations when seeking supportive services.

The map on the following page shows the infrastructure assets of the core workforce and social service agencies. Each dot corresponds to an infrastructure asset and is color coordinated by agency.

Within each region there are separate physical infrastructure related to DCFS, Application Centers, American Job Centers, and LWC infrastructure. There are many examples of where infrastructure assets could be streamlined in some communities while expanding the service delivery footprint in others.

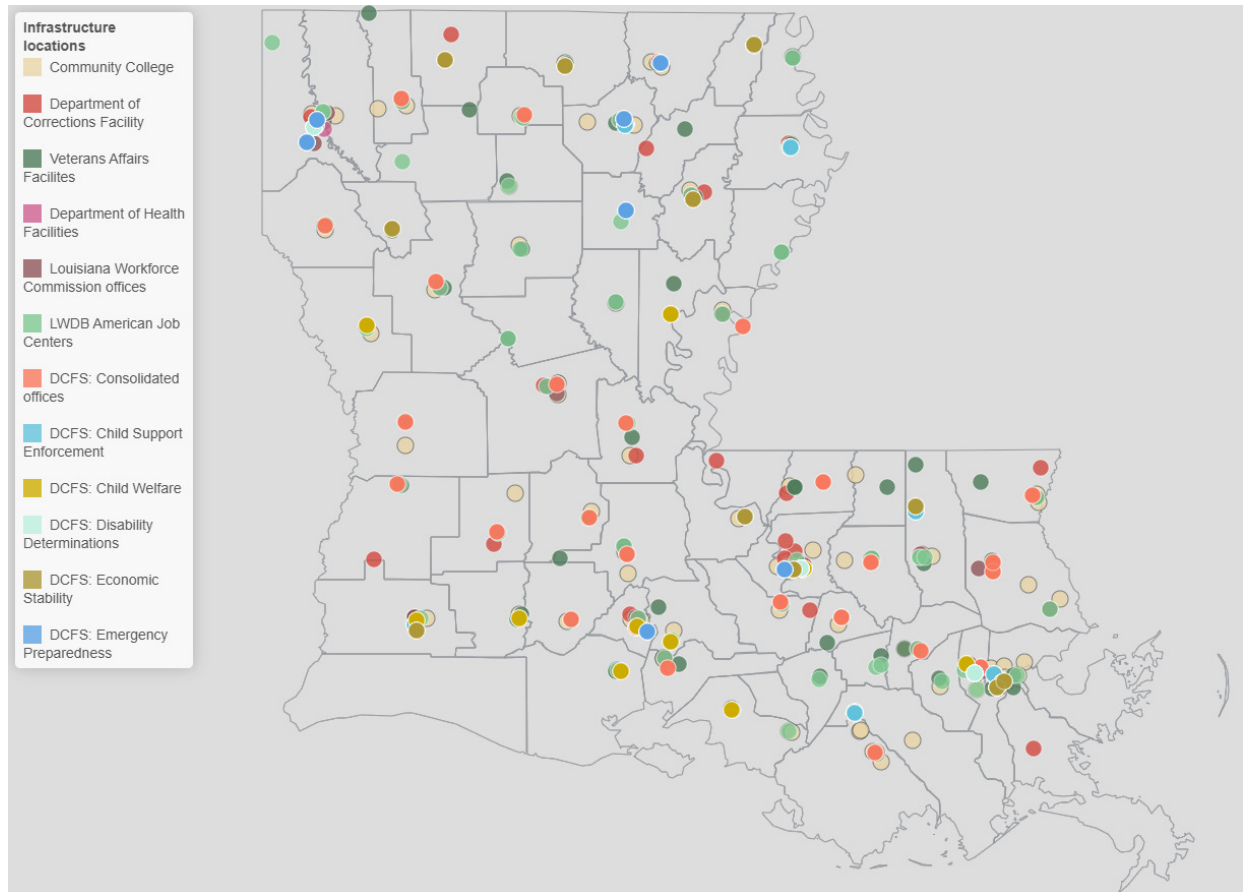
For example, in DeSoto Parish the only infrastructure is located in Mansfield. In Mansfield, there are three Application Centers, a DCFS location, and an LWDB location within close proximity to one another and close to an LCTCS technical college. Another example is Winnsboro in Franklin Parish. There are two Application Centers, two DCFS locations, a DOC, an LWDB, and an LCTCS location all within a short drive of one another. Another example for potential co-location is in downtown Baton Rouge, in zip code 70806, a region of 8.8 square miles with a population of 28,706, where there are 28 infrastructure assets including 19 Application Centers.

While some communities have multiple different agency locations, others have very few assets. There is only one infrastructure asset located in Tensas Parish, an LWDB office within the Tensas Parish Police Jury. There are no assets located in Cameron Parish. There is substantial variation in the amount of infrastructure by the RLMA Region. Regions One and Two, New Orleans and Baton Rouge regions respectively, have 257 and 248 pieces of infrastructure while Region 3 (Houma) has only 55 and Region 5 (Lake Charles) and Region 6 (Alexandria) also have less than 100 pieces of infrastructure. There are also many more Application Center facilities (938) than there are facilities for other agencies: 77 DCFS, 19 DOC, 42 LWC, 62 LWDB, and 75 LCTCS locations.

In addition to duplicative infrastructure, there were also indications of other disconnects between agencies. The differences in regional and area definitions causes information sharing and use issues, and communication issues between cases. DCFS does not use

the RLMA Regions in its reporting. Instead, it listed 9 regions only loosely correlated to the RLMA Regions. There are administrative burdens in coordinating across regional definitions.

### Map 1: Overlapping Infrastructure



Virtual infrastructure is equally inconsistent, with significant inefficiencies and gaps hindering seamless service delivery. Current systems for case management, referrals, eligibility determination, and benefits calculations are duplicative and fragmented, leading to redundancy and inefficiency. Data-sharing agreements between agencies are insufficient, limiting coordination and collaboration. Although IT services are centralized through the Office of Technology Services (OTS), customers face a disjointed experience when accessing various online portals to apply for services. Eligibility determinations differ across programs, and information collection processes often require repeated input from users, exacerbating frustration and reducing effectiveness. LWC uses the HiRE platform to assess eligibility for unemployment insurance (UI) and to manage cases for WIOA eligible customers. DCFS and CCAP use the Cafe platform for their services. LCTCS uses the LOLA platform. DPS has its own platform as well. Data sharing agreements are in place; however, the LLA’s audit reports found that the agreements are not fully utilized and lack in coverage, and that data prohibitions hamper sharing between agencies. As a result, customers often have to share the same information multiple times across the agencies with which they are interacting in order to receive services.

## Co-locating and Consolidating Physical and Virtual Infrastructure


To unify Louisiana's infrastructure and build an accessible, cost effective, and unified service delivery model, the Task Force recommends creating a one-door system, through integration of services into the new state workforce agency and/or by co-locating services in strategically positioned centers, leveraging virtual platforms, and optimizing existing public facilities. To the extent that integration is feasible, it will further the vision of an accessible, cost-effective, and unified service delivery model to better serve Louisiana's workforce and social services needs.

Under a new state workforce agency, a common set of physical locations would contain access to all the services and programs integrated into the new agency, as well as provide a common process for accessing such services. With this vision, Louisiana's workforce and social services customers would be able to access services without the need to secure transportation to multiple locations. Considering that transportation issues present a significant problem for this population, the consolidation of programs would help to alleviate a significant hurdle to accessing workforce and public assistance services. Having a common set of physical and virtual access points that are commonly branded and marketed would provide an immediate and enhanced customer experience in a cost effective way.

In coordination with the programs consolidated in the new state workforce agency, Louisiana could further the services footprint through additional co-location of services with partner programs and agencies. One Door Centers would be placed in areas that would best serve the citizenry of Louisiana. Centers could be strategically positioned for accessibility and convenience, especially in underserved regions. American Job Centers and LCTCS campuses could be used as One Door Centers in order to leverage existing infrastructure and reduce costs. Physical and virtual service points should be interconnected, thereby allowing for coordinated and seamless user experiences.

Through an integration and co-location strategy using state-owned facilities, Louisiana would minimize expenses associated with new construction and with leases. Louisiana should conduct a comprehensive audit of physical infrastructure including information on the condition of the facility, available space, ownership, lease details, and cost-effectiveness. The audit should also identify opportunities to consolidate leased spaces and if possible to relocate services to state-owned properties. The assessment of service offerings across the state agencies will also identify redundancies.

Regarding the provision of virtual services, Louisiana should establish a common website to provide virtual access to all services including additional applications for UI financial assistance, Medicaid, housing, and child care. The centralized, unified, and interactive portal would allow individuals to apply for multiple programs and services, in one place. Case management support across programs should be provided, thereby allowing staff to coordinate and streamline assistance and to reduce the burden on participants who are



navigating multiple services. Consolidating virtual infrastructure, including online portals and virtual service options, would enable efficient customer outreach, intake, and service provisions for those who prefer or require online options.

With the integration of technology and systems (including case management systems, referral systems, performance reporting systems, benefit calculation, issuance systems, and accounting systems), there would be greater opportunities to improve systems design and their responses to changing conditions. With integrated systems, it would be easier to ensure continuous improvement through feedback that is robust and ongoing, and that incorporates customer, staff, and partner organization voices. This feedback loop would allow the service delivery system to be more responsive to evolving needs, to make necessary adjustments, and to ensure that the integrated model remains efficient and customer centric.

The Task Force also identified a need for further integrating IT systems across workforce, social services, and educational institutions to foster collaboration, reduce redundancies, and streamline data collection. A common set of technology tools should be available to support service delivery across the divisions, departments, and geographical locations of the new state workforce agency. These include, but are not limited to, an integrated eligibility system, common case management system, common customer relationship management platform, and a common administrative system for managing human resources, payroll and procurement and for evaluating outcomes related to performance measurements

## **Pilot Program**

Louisiana could begin this consolidation process by building upon the pilot program that is currently being planned and will involve the integration of services that are provided by LWC, Local Workforce Board Area #20, and DCFS. This pilot program is planned to officially begin in May 2025, but important work has already begun. The pilot seeks to create a one-door model of service delivery. Staff from all three organizational entities will be available to provide services at each location. Key features of the pilot include:

- All participants will engage in a standard circular referral and assessment process that can inform the eventual design of an integrated technological system.
- Participants with DCFS and LWBA #20 will experience the same shared, researched based case management model.
- Participants will be engaged with career readiness tools and financial literacy training that are designed to plan for the benefits cliff that occurs as they begin to increase their income.
- Staff will receive cross training to familiarize each direct service provider with information to link participants to the most appropriate service option.
- Federal funding will be aligned to provide the most cost-effective service delivery.

This pilot will create a multidisciplinary approach to assist citizens who are receiving public benefits or who are currently not participating in the labor market so they can achieve sufficient income to support their families. At the same time, the pilot will conduct continuous programmatic assessments to ensure that the client experience is improved and that there is a faster connection to training and work placement. As the pilot progresses, more social service programs can collaborate in integration of services. The data and program design of the pilot can inform a standard operating procedure for integration throughout the state.

## **Intake, Eligibility, and Case Management**


Currently, case management processes are different across agencies. Each agency operates its own case management system and procedures. This leads to a lack of coordination and to limited information sharing between programs to ensure that the same individuals served across different programs are comprehensively supported toward opportunity and self-sufficiency. This results in customers navigating multiple systems and interacting with case managers who vary widely in their roles, qualifications, experience, and focus. These disparities not only create inefficiencies but also hinder the delivery of seamless and effective support to customers. Standardizing processes and improving information sharing across agencies would significantly enhance the consistency and quality of case management services.

Significant overlap exists, as many customers are simultaneously enrolled in, and receiving, benefits and services from multiple programs (e.g., SNAP, Medicaid, CCAP, housing, and workforce programming supported through WIOA) that are currently housed in different agencies. In many cases, each agency uses its own case management system, thereby limiting access across programs to data and information about the same customers, which prevents case managers from working together to optimize successful outcomes.

Through consolidation efforts, Louisiana could realize increased collaboration among agencies, programs and stakeholders. The LA WASS Case Management Committee recommends that Louisiana should establish one centralized statewide programmatic system, including an integrated online portal, for customers to access and apply for all (or as many as possible) of Louisiana's available workforce development and social services programs. As referenced in a recent report by the Louisiana Legislative Auditor, Colorado, Michigan, Texas, Utah, and Washington are currently utilizing such centralized systems. Those systems are proving beneficial for citizens in need, by enabling them to access food assistance, cash assistance, health care coverage, child care assistance, energy assistance, transit assistance, and workforce training all through one portal.

Case management should be integrated so that staff have access to an array of services and supports that are needed to address barriers to employment and self-sufficiency. Case managers should be assigned to customers but should not be responsible for determining eligibility. Rather, case managers should focus on planning for employment, addressing barriers to employment, enhancing knowledge and skills for employment (education and





training services), and monitoring progress toward employment and self-sufficiency goals. Case managers may be organized by program expertise, but cross-training and professional development to expose case managers to the appropriate suite of services would occur ongoing.

Currently the data-sharing mechanisms that are used for departments to refer participants to additional services rely on MOUs. The Task Force recognizes a need to go beyond MOUs. There should be cross-departmental access to cases and data, thereby enabling holistic service delivery. Louisiana should eliminate information “silos” by integrating data and case management IT systems so as to enable caseworkers to input and access a more complete picture of customers’ needs as they progress across various programs. This would also allow caseworkers to better support end users toward resolution, employment, and self-sufficiency. Such integrated systems could be established through the implementation of one or more new IT systems or through the modification of existing. Preliminary feedback from IT staff indicates that the modification of existing systems would most likely be the most cost effective method of achieving the desired integration, at least in the short-term. Given limited financial resources, the state should pursue all possible options to arrive at the most cost-effective solutions that support these integrated needs.

The Task Force also identified different requirements and expectations for case management staff across agencies. For example, staff who support intake and eligibility activities require different skills than staff who support case management activities which require interacting with customers who often are experiencing trauma and/or are in a crisis situation. The separation of eligibility and case management would allow for optimization of staff based on their skill sets.

In the process of integrating case management systems, Louisiana should pursue greater alignment of civil service laws and regulations to what is required for effective case management, including:

- a. Considering the full spectrum of case management roles and career progression, from intake specialists to senior case management staff;
- b. Considering the appropriate workload of case managers to effectively perform assigned tasks and to deliver high quality service and support to customers; and
- c. Providing competitive compensation to recruit and retain case management staff.

The new state workforce agency should create clear case management staff requirements, training, professional progression, and benefits. The new agency should increase opportunities for cross training and upward movement. Further, the new agency should increase financial literacy training for case managers which would enable them to effectively help clients address the benefits cliff as they gain employment and increase income.



## Business Services

Streamlining and integrating service delivery will significantly benefit employers by aligning workforce services with regional economic needs, a critical component of advancing Louisiana's workforce and social services mission. Through Act 330 of the 2024 Regular Legislative Session, the new integrated state workforce agency will take the lead in building this framework and serving as the primary coordinator of business workforce solutions. This centralized leadership would ensure consistent service delivery, improved collaboration, and greater responsiveness to the needs of businesses across the state.


A key component of this model is establishing regionally-based business services. Each region would have a dedicated single point of contact for employers, simplifying navigation of state and local workforce resources. These regional coordinators will act as triage points, assessing employer needs and directing them to the most appropriate solutions, whether through workforce development programs, educational partnerships, or training resources. This structure will not only align workforce services with the unique economic conditions of each region but also improve employer satisfaction by fostering a more responsive and accessible system.

To support these efforts, a shared customer relationship management (CRM) system would centralize employer engagement efforts, streamline data collection, and eliminate redundancies. This system would enhance communication, track interactions with employers, and enable data-driven decision-making to improve responsiveness and effectiveness in meeting business needs.

The Business Services Work Group also recommends establishing a state-level advisory group comprised of state agency executives and business leaders, similar to the Workforce Investment Council, but smaller and with the participation of agency executives as opposed to their representatives, to strengthen coordination between Louisiana's agencies and employer stakeholders. This group would provide a platform for ongoing collaboration, ensuring employer input shapes the development and delivery of workforce solutions.

Currently, the absence of a single point of contact between service providers and employers has led to weak connections between individuals seeking employment and businesses in need of talent. By addressing this gap through regionally-based business services, Louisiana would provide businesses with a consistent suite of services, including workforce development solutions, referrals to educational and training partners, and tailored support for industry-specific needs.

A dedicated, well-trained business services team, with staff strategically located across the state and equipped with tools to connect employers with resources from workforce, education, and economic development agencies, would ensure consistent and comprehensive support. These teams would align workforce services with local economic



priorities, create pathways for upskilling and reskilling workers, and foster stronger employer relationships. Through these efforts, the new state workforce agency would establish a cohesive and responsive business services framework, positioning Louisiana as a leader in workforce innovation and employer engagement.

## **Performance and Accountability**

To support the new integrated service delivery model, Louisiana should implement a common performance and accountability infrastructure that aligns the various federal program requirements and provides an integrated reporting functionality. Additionally, this integrated framework should provide reports to the Louisiana Legislature and should serve as a continuous improvement mechanism where strategic decisions can be made on empirical results. The common performance and accountability framework would bridge the technology and program integration work that should occur in order to develop effective methods for Louisiana to report and plan.

Beyond a common framework, the Task Force identified a need for Louisiana to establish a performance and accountability analytics team that is tasked with developing and maintaining meaningful performance and accountability metrics that focus on outcome based measures. The team would collect, analyze, and synthesize data from various state agencies offering workforce and social services. It would monitor implementation progress to ensure agencies are meeting deliverables and it would regularly publish reports on program effectiveness rooted in customer outcomes. The team would also develop internal monitoring metrics to identify program gaps and evaluate effectiveness. Integrating IT systems and data sharing across workforce, social services, and education institutions would foster collaboration, reduce redundancies, and streamline data collection. Data sharing would allow for streamlining of eligibility and program identification to minimize duplicative processes.

The Task Force recommends that the Louisiana Legislature encourage state agencies, with the support of the LLA's performance auditors, to set clear performance metrics for program effectiveness. The new state workforce agency should track outcomes data to assess positive impacts and consider utilizing performance based contracts, to the extent allowed and feasible. This would allow for the measurement of results relative to program goals. Currently, metrics are input based, such as the number of sessions held, which offers little insight into the efficacy of the programs. Metrics should shift to be outcome-focused and incorporate a longitudinal design to fully capture employment and earnings gains tied to various service interventions.

Table 3 includes current performance metrics for the array of workforce and social service programs administered in Louisiana.

**Table 3: Metrics Collected by Louisiana Social Services and Workforce Agencies<sup>10</sup>**

Program	Administrator	Metrics
SNAP	DCFS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reciprocity rate</li> <li>- Accuracy rate</li> <li>- % of SNAP applications processed within timeframes</li> <li>- % of SNAP</li> </ul>
SNAP E&T	DCFS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- % achieving unsubsidized employment in 2nd and 4th quarters following participation</li> <li>- % completing educational/training/work components</li> <li>- Median wages post-E&amp;T</li> </ul>
TANF Cash Assistance	DCFS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- % of cases leaving TANF returning within 12 months</li> <li>- % of TANF applications/redeterminations processed timely</li> <li>- % STEP families in work activities/employment</li> <li>- % STEP caseload that gain unsubsidized employment</li> <li>- % STEP case closures with earned income</li> <li>- STEP overall participation rate</li> </ul>
Unemployment Insurance	LWC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Percent of first payments for the benefit year made within 14/21 days</li> <li>- Non-monetary determinations made within 21 days of detection of any non monetary issue that had the potential to affect the claimant’s benefit rights</li> <li>- Percentage of non separation determinations with quality scores equal to or greater than 95 points</li> <li>- Percentage of separation determinations with quality scores equal to or greater than 95 points</li> <li>- Average age of pending lower authority and higher authority appeals</li> <li>- Percentage of lower auth appeals with qual scores &gt;= 85</li> <li>- Potential points new employer status determinations made within 90 days of the last day in the quarter in which the business became liable</li> <li>- Assessment of the accuracy and completeness of the tax program</li> </ul>
RESEA	LWC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Employment rate (2nd/4th quarter post-exit) and median earnings (2nd quarter post-exit)</li> </ul>

<sup>10</sup> Louisiana Legislative Auditor, “Coordination of Public Assistance and Workforce Development Programs,” (February, 2024)

CCAP	LDOE	- Total annual child care payments - Number of children receiving monthly assistance
LCTCS (Workforce Programs)	LCTCS	

Currently, data collection is guided by compliance with federal requirements, is contained within each individual program, and is only accessible through data sharing agreements. Agencies report what is required by the federal government and rarely share data strategically with state partners or transparently with the public.

The siloing of information is exacerbated by current obstacles to data sharing, which include restrictions regarding personally identifiable information, federal requirements, and data prohibitions. There is a need to bridge the gaps and overcome these barriers in order to effectively measure and report true progress toward self-sufficiency goals.

The Task Force’s Performance and Accountability work group’s research and LLA Audits indicate several areas of improvement for the tracking of metrics and performance indicators for workforce and social service programs. Agencies administering public assistance metrics currently do not have accurate or informative performance benchmarks to show their progress towards self-sufficiency. This makes it difficult to determine whether programs are meeting their stated goals. The metrics that are currently collected do not show impact on the outcome of the programs, namely self-sufficiency of customers. Instead, they emphasize program inputs. Information on outcomes should be collected regularly and consistently.



# Financial Integration

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Louisiana workforce and social services are funded through various federal appropriations and federal agencies, and they are administered by different state agencies. Each agency receives funding from the federal government and is responsible for administering the funds for each service and program.

Local Workforce Development Boards use MOUs to align partner services and infrastructure agreements in order to cost allocate shared services at the one-stop centers. MOUs are established with one-stop partners to align the core and partner programs at the local level. MOUs contain cost sharing agreements and provide a mechanism for resolving shared services issues as required by WIOA authorization.<sup>11</sup>


Specifically, each of Louisiana's 15 local workforce development boards establish MOUs with the agencies that are overseeing the required partner programs. These programs are housed in various areas such as LWC (Wagner Peyser Employment Service, Vocational Rehabilitation, Jobs for Veterans State Grant, Trade Adjustment Assistance, and Unemployment Compensation programs), LCTCS (Adult Education and Literacy, and Perkins Career and Technical Education), and DCFS (TANF), and other agencies, Job Corps, Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker, Native American, Youth Build, Community Services Block Grant, Senior Community Service Employment, Second Chance Act Grant, and Department of Housing and Urban Development Employment and Training Programs. The MOUs cover issues such as "whether their staff will be co-located in the LWDB's one stop center(s), referral processes, available services, and resources for cost sharing."

However, the MOU structure is an ineffective patchwork which should be reformed. The responsibility for the MOU's should be moved to the state level since the agreements must occur with state level or managerial level authorization. Responsibility for negotiating MOUs and Infrastructure Funding Agreements rests with the LWDBs under WIOA; however, the LWDBs maintain no federal or state statutory authority to sanction partners who are noncompliant with an MOU or Infrastructure Funding Agreement. Moving the responsibility to the state would allow for cabinet level agreements that would assist with integration and shared services. The audit reports and WIOA state plan both identify a lack of comprehensive MOUs. The WIOA state plan reads, "The lack of comprehensive memorandums of understanding (MOUs) among Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) and partner programs undermines the potential for a cohesive service delivery program."

## **Financial Integration Vision**

Currently, federal funds flow into Louisiana to assist low income individuals through a large variety of federal agencies and the commensurate requirements create a complex patchwork of available services. State agencies allocate the funding for these services across all the related programs and they report the spending of the funds separately to each federal agency that is responsible for providing the allotted funding. The current

11 WIOA State Plan [https://www.laworks.net/Downloads/WIOA/WIOA\\_State\\_Plan\\_2024.pdf](https://www.laworks.net/Downloads/WIOA/WIOA_State_Plan_2024.pdf)



process that is required for managing the federal funds is overly time consuming. Further, there is significant overlap in the provision of services to similar populations.

The goal of financial integration would be to alleviate the burdens for staff and to lessen the administrative time that is required for activities such as creating MOUs and conducting cost allocation negotiations across local workforce development areas and implementing a streamlined system that can achieve approval by the federal government. Financial integration is a means by which the full array of programs that would be within the new integrated state workforce agency could more efficiently support customers with impactful services that improve economic mobility.

### **Cost Allocation**

Louisiana should pursue a similar strategy to Utah’s system, called “Random Moment Time Sampling.” This system is an approved cost allocation model that apportions dollars to programs based upon intermittent daily statistical sampling of employee activities as the employees perform their work duties within the integrated state agency. It is a statewide approach that puts the burden within a single financial unit at the state level. This cost allocation approach would require negotiations with multiple federal agencies.

### **Braided Funding and Financial Systems**


In the absence of an approved cost allocation system, Louisiana should pursue a common funding system by braiding funding from a variety of sources. The Random Moment Time Sampling or something similar could be structured and used at the point of service, local or regional level to assess the braiding of funding and its usage. This structure would support the provision of services for customers from a variety of programs once eligibility for the programs is determined. Braiding laces together funding from multiple programs to support a common goal, but each funding source maintains its identity. The state or locality is required to report expenditures program by program. Louisiana should braid federal funds to the extent possible and seek federal waivers where available. The goal of braided funding is to streamline accounting and reporting to the federal government and to have a consolidated process for cost allocation as an alternative to the current local MOU process.





# Conclusion

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Louisiana faces a generational opportunity to modernize and transform its workforce development and social services programs to deliver better results for Louisiana residents and employers. This is needed now, more than ever, as the state faces challenges regarding preparation of its citizens for the high tech, growing jobs of today and tomorrow and employers needing skilled workers for well-paying jobs across sectors and industries.

Louisiana's vision is to be the national leader and champion in providing high-quality employment, training, and social services that bolster individual self-sufficiency and economic opportunity, labor force participation, career advancement, and business growth throughout the state. But this will only happen through bold action and keeping the customer first in all decisions that need to be made.

Through this work, the LA WASS Task Force recommendations have been guided by the following principles:

Promoting **upward mobility** through gainful employment and meaningful careers for all Louisianans is the core outcome for the integration of workforce development and social services programs.

**Bold action requires difficult decisions**, which must be made with the best information and data available.

**Customer experience** is central to all decisions—programs must be bound by what is best for individuals being served versus what is best for programs or systems.

Social services programs provide key support for low income households and people and should be structured to **promote transitions to increased family income** through gainful employment.

Efficiencies gained through integration of workforce development and social services programs provide a unique opportunity to **expand opportunities and receive better services** for Louisianans.

# Appendix- Committee Charters and Recommendations

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# Case Management Committee

## One Door Case Management Committee Charter

### **I. Purpose of Committee**

The One Door Case Management Committee (Committee) is responsible for developing a recommendation for an integrated case management approach for workforce and social services programs in Louisiana. The Committee shall develop a final Case Management Report to the Louisiana Workforce and Social Services Task Force (LA WASS) detailing methods for an integrated case management approach and technology solution(s) for supporting the recommended integrated case management approach.

### **II. Committee Responsibilities**

The Committee shall provide a vision and recommendations for achieving integrated case management in support of workforce and social services customers that promotes better transitions to livable wage employment. Recommendations shall incorporate both methods of case management and technology solution(s) in support of integrated case management.

Specific information the Committee shall include as part of the final Report:

- Description of how case management occurs across the array of workforce and social services programs
- Current technology used for case management across workforce and social services programs
- Locations of staff and job titles of staff conducting case management
- Educational or other specific requirements for conducting case management for programs
- Description of any specific program requirements for providing case management services
- Opportunities for cross-training of staff in case management methods commonly used in multiple programs
- Opportunities to integrate intake, assessment, and case management practices

### **III. Committee Membership**

The following Task Force members are assigned to the One Door Case Management Committee:

### **Voting Members:**

Drew Maranto, Louisiana Department of Health, Work Group Chair

Mellynn Baker, Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE)

Brandee Patrick, Louisiana Department of Veterans Affairs (LDVA)

Aly Rau, Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS)

James Garvey, Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC)

### **Subject Matter Experts (SMEs):**

Erin Bendily, Pelican Institute for Public Policy, Facilitator

Terri Mitchell, LWDB

Mason Bishop, WorkED Consulting

Kelly Ebey, LWC

Sonya Williams, LWC

Osmar Padilla, LWC

Matthew Vince, OTS

Erin Landry, LCTCS

Nichole Braxton, LCTCS

## **Final recommendations of the Case Management Work Group**

*As adopted on November 19, 2024*

In light of these challenges and opportunities, the members of the Case Management Work Group offer the following recommendations:

1. Louisiana should work to establish one centralized statewide programmatic system, including an integrated online portal, for customers to access and apply for all (or as many as possible) of Louisiana's available social services and workforce development programs. As referenced in a recent report by the Louisiana Legislative Auditor, Colorado, Michigan, Texas, Utah, and Washington are currently utilizing such a system that is proving beneficial for citizens in need, enabling them to access food assistance, cash assistance, health care coverage, child care assistance, energy assistance, transit assistance, and workforce training all through one portal.
2. To the extent possible, the centralized statewide system should also direct users to where they can access information and apply for other services (those not included in the integrated system) offered by the state that largely benefit the same populations.
3. The State should integrate data and case management IT systems to enable caseworkers to input and access a more complete picture of customers' needs to progress across various programs and better support end users toward resolution,

employment, and self-sufficiency. Such integrated systems could entail one or more new IT systems or modification of existing systems to enhance customers' experience and enable case management staff to more easily access and share information about customers being served. Given limited financial resources, the State should pursue all possible options to arrive at the most cost-effective solutions that support these integrated needs.

4. State leaders should ensure that, in integrating the above systems, policy is written and implemented to guide consistent high-quality case management across all programs; applicable federal and state laws and regulations are followed; and all possible sources of funding are leveraged to achieve efficiencies in support of more effective outcomes for Louisiana citizens in need.
5. The State should pursue greater alignment of Civil Service laws and regulations to effective case management needs, including:
  - a. Considering the full spectrum of case management roles and career progression, from intake specialists to senior case management staff;
  - b. Consider the appropriate workload of case managers to effectively perform assigned tasks and deliver high quality service and support to customers; and
  - c. Provide competitive compensation to recruit and retain case management staff.

# Service Delivery Committee


## One Door Service Delivery Design Committee Charter

### **I. Purpose of Committee**

The One Door Service Delivery Design Committee (Committee) is responsible for providing a final recommendation to the Louisiana Workforce and Social Services Task Force (LA WASS) on a customer-focused, integrated service delivery system, including which federal and state workforce and social services programs are incorporated into the design.

### **II. Committee Responsibilities**

The Committee shall seek to develop a recommendation on a workforce and social services service delivery system where workers, job seekers, businesses can access the array of services available to them in the most cost efficient and effective means. While the Committee will take into account certain federal and state legal requirements, the goal of the Committee's work shall be to develop an optimum solution that includes state legislative and executive actions needed to implement the solution.



Specific information the Committee shall include as part of the final recommendation:

- Federal and state programs included in the integrated service delivery design and information on how those programs are delivered currently, including both in-person and virtual services
- Research and analysis regarding various programs service delivery structures, including regional alignment
- How customer flow occurs into the programs, such as intake, assessment, case management, and job placement
- How customer referrals are made to other programs, particularly for social services to support employment and skills training
- Who is responsible for providing services, ways that service providers are procured, and who has fiscal accountability and performance accountability
- The types of staff training and professional development currently utilized for various program and agency staff involved in workforce and social services delivery

The final recommendation on integrated service delivery design shall include:

- A full customer service map detailing entry into the system, case management and service provision, exit from the system, and follow-up services
- Discussion of how various target populations are served through a new, integrated service delivery system
- Details on utilization of either “up front teams” or a single case manager and how various programs are blended to support customers and a high level of integration
- How eligibility is determined for various programs based upon the employment and supportive service needs of the customer
- Opportunities for integrating and blending virtual service delivery
- An optimal regional design, incorporating both administrative regions and service delivery regions, taking into account opportunities to define regions in state code
- Methods for cross-training staff on various programs and case management principles to promote integrated service delivery
- Methods for incorporating continuous improvement into service delivery

### **III. Committee Membership**

The following Task Force members are assigned to the One Door Service Delivery Design Committee:



### **Voting Members:**

Rep. Barbara Freiberg, Chair

Tina Roper, Director of Workforce Development, LWDA 20

Michael Williamson, United Way of Southeast Louisiana

Chandler LeBoeuf, Louisiana Community and Technical College System

Mellynn Baker, Louisiana Department of Education

Drew Maranto, Louisiana Department of Health

Susana Schowen, Louisiana Workforce Commission

Aly Rau, Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services

James Garvey, Louisiana Workforce Commission

### **Subject Matter Experts**

Daniel Erspamer, Louisiana Pelican Institute

Lorrie Briggs, Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services

Benny Soulier, Louisiana Workforce Commission

Mason Bishop, WorkED Consulting

Rebecca Harris, Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services

Derek Williams, Office of Technology Support

Erin Landry, Louisiana Community and Technical College System

Osmar Padilla, Louisiana Workforce Commission

Sonya Williams, Louisiana Workforce Commission

## **Recommendations from the Service Delivery Committee**

### **Final Report and Recommendations of the Service Delivery Work Group**

*Adopted December 16, 2024*

The Service Delivery Work Group of the Louisiana Workforce and Social Services (LA WASS) Reform Task Force met throughout 2024 to identify federal and state workforce and social services programs that should be incorporated into the design of an integrated, customer-focused service delivery system. The Work Group was charged with developing a cost-efficient and effective service delivery system for workers, job seekers, and businesses, considering federal and state legal requirements and aiming for an optimal solution that may require state legislative and executive actions.


As the Work Group sought and received pertinent information from various agencies and stakeholders, it was asked to consider the following:

- ✓ Federal and state programs to be included in the integrated service delivery design
- ✓ Current delivery methods of these programs, including in-person and virtual services
- ✓ Research and analysis of various program service delivery structures, including regional alignment
- ✓ Processes for intake, assessment, case management, and job placement.
- ✓ Methods for referring customers to other programs, especially social services supporting employment and skills training.
- ✓ Detailed map of customer entry, case management, service provision, system exit, and follow-up services
- ✓ How various target populations are served through the integrated system
- ✓ Utilization of “up front teams” or a single case manager to blend various programs and support high-level integration
- ✓ Optimal regional design incorporating administrative and service delivery regions, and potential state code definitions
- ✓ Methods for cross-training staff on various programs and case management principles to promote integrated service delivery
- ✓ Methods for incorporating continuous improvement into service delivery

Based on information received as well as recent performance audit reports and recommendations from the Louisiana Legislative Auditor, members affirmed that while increased collaboration, regular communication, and clearer performance measures between state agencies and between the state and local level leaders could improve the status quo, an integrated model is what will most likely achieve the most positive outcomes for moving Louisianans from poverty to independence and opportunity.

Integrating federally funded workforce and social services programs (including but not limited to Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP); SNAP Employment & Training; Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA) and other LWC-administered programs; Child Support Enforcement, Employment, and Training Program; and Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP)) under one managing agency would achieve great efficiencies for Louisianans in need. A true one-stop opportunity would greatly reduce their transportation costs, time requirements, and overall outcomes. From the perspective of the state, the potential efficiencies created could greatly reduce costs which would allow for more services to be provided, thereby directly enhancing the workforce participation rate of the state. From both perspectives, the current problem of missed opportunities to identify eligible recipients could be significantly reduced because of the enhanced sharing of eligibility information between the services.

An integrated service delivery model would provide a seamless customer experience across workforce and social services programs, including common intake, assessment,




and referral processes. This work should include the state’s postsecondary education institutions, which can also expedite services and reduce barriers for those needing temporary assistance while preparing to pursue a job paying a living wage. To the extent that some agencies or institutions cannot not integrated, the state should ensure a “no wrong door” policy to ensure that individuals can access the full spectrum of workforce development and social services regardless of where they first engage with the system.

Louisiana should also consider adopting a centralized portal like those used in states such as Utah and Washington, allowing individuals to apply for multiple programs and services, in one place. It should provide case management support across programs, allowing staff to coordinate and streamline assistance, reducing the burden on participants by navigating multiple services. To ensure continuous improvement, feedback must be robust, ongoing, and incorporate feedback from customers, staff, and partner organizations. This feedback loop will allow the service delivery system to be responsive to evolving needs, make necessary adjustments, and ensure that the integrated model remains efficient and customer centric.

Such a shift will require clearly mapping numerous federal funding and programmatic requirements to determine where there are common items and items of differences which would require federal waivers or changes in programmatic design.

The state can begin this shift by building upon the current integrated services pilot involving the Louisiana Workforce Commission, Local Workforce Board Area #20, and the Department of Children and Family Services. DCFS, LWBA #20 and LWC are developing a pilot integrating service delivery in the two Departments. This pilot will create a multidisciplinary approach to assist citizens receiving public benefits achieve sufficient income to support their families. The University of Louisiana at Lafayette Blanco Center is a partner in this work and can provide a data analysis of the outcomes measured in the pilot. As the pilot progresses, more departments can collaborate in integration of services. The data and program design of the pilot can inform a standard operating procedure for integration throughout the state.

The pilot seeks to create a one-door model of service delivery. DCFS staff and LWBA #20 staff will co-house. DCFS staff will provide services, in person, at the American Job Centers. Participants will have access to employment services at initial requests for food and cash assistance. All participants will engage in a standard circular referral and assessment process that can inform the eventual design of an integrated technological system. Federal funding will align to provide the most cost effective service delivery. Participants with DCFS and LWBS#20 will experience the same shared, researched based case management model. Staff will receive cross training to familiarize each direct service provider with information to link participants to the most appropriate service option. Participants will be engaged with a tool and financial literacy training designed to plan for the benefits cliff that occurs as they begin to increase their income. The pilot will begin in May of 2025 and there



will be continuous programmatic assessments to ensure the client experience is improved and there is a faster connection to training and work placement.

As the state works to deliver services in an integrated manner, it should also more intentionally leverage the partnership of non-profits and other community-based organizations throughout the state. State leaders should coordinate with the non-profit community to align the use of private philanthropic investments, grants, or endowments (and braiding such funds with public funds, as feasible) with a “One Door” customer/client-focused service delivery model aimed at achieving successful outcomes. This includes any grants received by the newly formed Louisiana Workforce Association, a 501(c)3 organization consisting of all the state’s 15 local workforce agencies.

# Performance and Accountability Committee

## One Door Performance and Accountability Committee Charter

### **I. Purpose of Committee**

The One Door Performance and Accountability Committee (Committee) is responsible for developing recommendations for integrating performance and accountability for the array of workforce and social services programs in Louisiana. The Committee shall develop a final Performance and Accountability Report to the Louisiana Workforce and Social Services Task Force (LA WASS) detailing opportunities for integrating performance reporting, conducting evaluations, and ensuring accountability for the array of workforce and social services programs.

### **II. Committee Responsibilities**

The Committee shall provide recommendations for promoting accountability in program outcomes through streamlined and integrated performance management. Recommendations shall take into account program definitions and requirements and look for ways to develop cross-cutting performance dashboards and metrics that inform policymakers, stakeholders, agency staff and the public regarding effectiveness of integrated service provision.

Specific information the Committee shall include as part of the final Report:

- Description of current program performance requirements and definitions
- An analysis of common performance elements and metrics across programs and areas of difference

- Data collection methods used by various agencies engaged in workforce and social services programming
- Methods for reporting performance to federal agencies, the Louisiana Legislature, and the public
- Technology used for performance accountability, including data warehouse, data analysis, and performance reporting
- Types of program evaluations conducted, including the level of rigor, any recent evidence based practices incorporated as a result of evaluations, and how evaluation agendas are developed
- Opportunities to align data collection, performance reporting, and performance metrics
- Options for developing additional performance metrics that measure effectiveness of service provision and integrated service delivery

### **III. Committee Membership**

The following Task Force members are assigned to the One Door Performance and Accountability Committee:

#### **Voting Members:**

Randy Davis, Chairman, Louisiana Division of Administration

Chris Magee, Louisiana Legislative Auditor

Tina Roper Director of Workforce Development, LWDA 20

Matthew Dickerson, Mid South Extrusion

Aly Rau, Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services

James Garvey, Louisiana Workforce Commission

#### **Subject Matter Experts**

Jamie Tairov, Louisiana Pelican Institute

Leslie Ford, Ford Policy Institute

Michael Allison, Louisiana Office of Technical Support

Erin Landry, Louisiana Community and Technical College System

Natasha Thomas, Louisiana Workforce Commission

Kelly Ebey, Louisiana Workforce Commission

Sunae Villivaso, Orleans Local Workforce Development Board

Rebecca Harris, Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services

Osmar Padilla, Louisiana Workforce Commission

## Recommendations from the Performance and Accountability Committee

*LaWASS Performance and Accountability Workgroup, October 28, 2024*

Recommendations from stakeholders to include in the final LaWASS task force report.

### **Recommendation Set #1:**

Establish a Performance and Accountability Analytics Team, whether internal or external to the agency, for the purpose of:

- Developing and maintaining meaningful Performance and Accountability metrics and indicators.
- Collecting, synthesizing and analyzing data shared by the various State agencies providing Workforce and Social Services support programs.
- Preparing and periodically publishing, for the benefit of all stakeholders, Performance and Accountability reports and dashboards measuring the effectiveness of Louisiana Workforce and Social Services Programs.
- Monitoring the progress of implementation and integration to ensure the agencies stay on target with promised deliverables to manage expectations as the process moves along a set timeline.
- Developing internal monitoring metrics as integration is occurring to highlight areas of concern, gaps in program deliverables, and overall program effectiveness.

The long-term vision of the workgroup is to create integrated systems that seamlessly share data and systematically analyze and report performance and accountability metrics with real-time information. However, budgetary constraints, time, and resource requirements for converting, combining, and modernizing existing systems, and the complexities of integrating software and case management applications from existing, siloed operating systems will likely push these capabilities into the distant future. By utilizing shared data that is currently available, an analytics team will accelerate the process of measuring the outcomes of the state's workforce and social services programs through the development of meaningful performance and accountability metrics.

### **Recommendation Set #2:**

#### **Collaboration/Streamlining**

The Louisiana Legislature may consider reviewing the composition of the Workforce Investment Council (WIC) to streamline its membership and encourage the council to explore opportunities for greater collaboration by assessing service pathways.

### **Common Portal/Accessibility**

To improve accessibility, the Louisiana Legislature could promote the development of a centralized website listing all public assistance programs and how to access them. The Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC) should ensure accurate information on One-Stop Centers is available online and collaborate with Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) to adopt unified branding and naming conventions to enhance statewide outreach.

### **Data Sharing/Use/Oversight**

Addressing barriers to data sharing among state agencies and promoting technological integration could improve service delivery. The Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) should regularly analyze data from the SNAP Works system to assess service sufficiency and use expenditure data to monitor compliance with the SNAP Employment and Training (E&T) program.

### **Performance Metrics**

The Louisiana Legislature may encourage agencies to set clear targets and performance metrics to evaluate program effectiveness. LWC and DCFS should use detailed outcome data to ensure their programs achieve positive results, with DCFS focusing on setting and tracking specific metrics for the SNAP E&T and TANF programs. Additionally, DCFS should require contractors to measure outcomes, particularly for TANF programs aimed at reducing out-of-wedlock pregnancies.

### **Services**

LWC and DCFS should work with stakeholders to find ways to expand access to services. This includes increasing the number of eligible individuals receiving training and support through programs like SNAP E&T and ensuring that those who could benefit from these services receive the necessary assistance.

### **Recommendation Set #3**

- Consider better coordination, including consolidated efforts that include the office of workforce development and the office of family support to create efficiencies and better measurement of participant outcomes.
- Strengthen internal audit capacity and conduct regular performance evaluations, with a minimum of two assessments per year.
- Performance metrics should focus on actual outcomes rather than just the number of individuals served or the completion of service delivery.
- To gain a clearer picture of program effectiveness, performance reviews should span at least three years, exceeding the federal one-year minimum requirement.
- Additionally, former participants who continue to face challenges should be re-engaged and offered further support services, if needed.

#### Recommendation Set #4

- **The workforce development and the social services programs should continue, and expand, the current efforts to move from measuring and evaluating mostly inputs and process steps and move to more of a focus on measuring outcomes, results and improvements.** Currently there are efforts underway to focus less on measuring inputs and process steps to measuring outcomes and improvements. But those efforts have only recently started and have not progressed as far as they can and should go. Measures of inputs such as the number of sessions conducted or the number of individuals served do not provide as much guidance for managers as, for example, the new plan for TANF to soon report outcomes such as the number of individuals who achieve and maintain employment at higher salary levels after services are delivered. We should continue those efforts and expand them to measure other beneficial outcomes. Establishing these measurements of outcomes instead of inputs will help with comparisons across programs based on common measurements such as employment-placements-per-dollar-spent.
- **Workforce development and social services programs should require targets and outcome measures in all subcontracts.** There is a generally recognized reform movement underway to transition from focusing on measuring inputs and process steps to a greater focus on measuring outputs and beneficial results. That movement can be supported and accelerated by aligning subcontractors with that effort. One way to align subcontractors with that effort, some would say the best way, is to explicitly incorporate into the contracts some targets and goals for the expected outputs and beneficial results.
- **Consolidate the various workforce and social services case management software packages into one single software package so that the level of achievement of goals and targets for various programs can be more easily compared.** In order to allocate funds efficiently, the levels of achievement of goals and targets by various programs should be compared so as to determine which programs are producing the best return per dollar allocated. Errors and inaccuracies are more likely to occur when the various programs are using different software packages. Moving to a single consolidated software package would reduce the chances of those errors and inaccuracies. Moving to a single software package would also reduce the amount of time and effort that would be required to produce the comparison reports.

#### Recommendation Set #5

Create outcome metrics for service providers that are consistent across all programs that align with all programs goals. All programs and training providers should meet the same measurable goals.

The purpose of this is to allow for consistent measures across programs that are serving joint customers with an overall outcome of workforce engagement. By using the measures currently part of WIOA performance all programs will be able to have comparable and



measurable objectives. LWC has a mechanism to collect and measure these areas through HiRE and Future Works.

By recommending these measures the state will move from a nominal process measure of people served to a performance-based measure looking at outcomes. To measure success then there will need to be defined outcomes, and these outcomes measures need to support each other. You cannot have work-based programs with high measures and have training provider outcomes low. The two must be comparable.

# Infrastructure Committee

## One Door Infrastructure Committee Charter

### **I. Purpose of Committee**

The One Door Infrastructure Committee (Committee) is responsible for developing a baseline understanding of physical and virtual infrastructure used to deliver services for workforce and social services programs in Louisiana. The Committee shall develop an Infrastructure Landscape Report to the Louisiana Workforce and Social Services Task Force (LA WASS) detailing the types of infrastructure, location(s) of various infrastructure (buildings, etc.), recommendations on opportunities to leverage various infrastructure, and an estimate of the cost savings of such leveraging of infrastructure.

### **II. Committee Responsibilities**

The Committee shall provide a complete picture of the infrastructure landscape across a variety of workforce development and social services programs in Louisiana. The final Infrastructure Landscape Report should include a discussion of Louisiana Community and Technical College campus locations alongside details of traditional workforce and social services physical and virtual infrastructure. Infrastructure does not include case management, customer referral, or customer relationship management (CRM) systems, as those tools are the focus of a different committee.

The Committee shall detail the programs included and provide a comprehensive picture of the physical and virtual infrastructure maintained to serve worker, job seeker, and business customers. Specific information the Committee shall include as part of the final Report:

- An inventory of all physical locations for workforce and social services programs, including Louisiana community and technical college campuses
- An inventory of all virtual tools used for customer outreach and intake
- To the extent possible, information on whether physical locations are state owned, state leased, owned or leased by local government, or other arrangements. For leased locations, information on the length of the lease and general terms should be included.

- Recommendations on opportunities to consolidate or share infrastructure under an integrated One Door service delivery system
- To the extent possible an estimate on cost savings that can be achieved by consolidating operations
- The types of staff training and professional development currently utilized for various program and agency staff involved in workforce and social services delivery
- Recommendations on standards and criteria for an integrated One Door physical location taking into consideration any federal requirements

### **III. Committee Membership**

The following Task Force members are assigned to the One Door Infrastructure Committee:

#### **Voting Members:**

Toby Comeaux, Chairman, Louisiana Community and Technical College System

Chandler LeBoeuf, Louisiana Community and Technical College System

Andrea Buttross, Louisiana Department of Public Safety and Corrections

Aly Rau, Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services

James Garvey, Louisiana Workforce Commission

Randy Davis, Louisiana Division of Administration

#### **Subject Matter Experts**

David Carter, Emergent Method

Bryan Moore, Louisiana Local Workforce Development Board

Benny Soulier, Louisiana Workforce Commission

Stephen Barnes, Louisiana Blanco Center

Erin Landry, Louisiana Community and Technical College System

Osmar Padilla, Louisiana Workforce Commission

## **Recommendations from the Infrastructure Committee**

### **LA WASS Task Force**

### **Infrastructure Workgroup Preliminary Recommendations**

*October 30, 2024*

#### **Introduction**

The LA WASS Infrastructure Workgroup recommends a strategic approach to enhance Louisiana’s workforce and social services infrastructure through a unified “One Door” system. Recommendations focus on maximizing accessibility and efficiency by co-locating services in strategically positioned centers, leveraging virtual platforms, and optimizing existing public facilities. The Work Group’s approach aims to build an accessible, cost-effective, and unified service delivery model to better serve Louisiana’s workforce and social service needs.

#### **Preliminary Recommendations**

##### **Integrated “One Door” Service Centers**

- Establish multiple One Door service centers in each geographic region/metropolitan area, as well as a One Door call center and interactive website, allowing citizens statewide to access services through a unified platform.
- Co-locate workforce, social services, and educational resources at One Door centers, strategically positioned for accessibility and convenience, especially in underserved regions. Use Louisiana Community and Technical College (LCTCS) campuses as central service hubs to leverage existing infrastructure and reduce costs.
- Ensure that all physical and virtual service points are interconnected, allowing coordinated service delivery and a seamless experience for users.
- Develop a strategic plan to expand One Door service centers, enhancing access and minimizing travel for citizens.

##### **Data Integration and Cross-Agency Collaboration**

- Implement data-sharing agreements and integrate IT systems across workforce, social services, and educational institutions to foster collaboration, reduce redundancies, and streamline data collection.
- Utilize integrated virtual platforms to improve agency collaboration, track program outcomes, and support efficient service delivery.
- Coordinate efforts across state agencies to streamline program identification for eligible citizens and minimize service duplication.

## **Infrastructure Utilization and Cost Efficiency**

- Prioritize leveraging LCTCS campuses and other state-owned facilities as primary service hubs, minimizing expenses associated with new construction or leases.
- Conduct a comprehensive audit of all physical locations used by workforce and social services programs, documenting ownership, lease details, and cost-effectiveness.
- Identify opportunities to consolidate leased spaces or relocate services to state-owned properties to cut costs and enhance accessibility.

# Business Services

## One Door Business Services Committee Charter

### **I. Purpose of Committee**

The One Door Business Services Committee (Committee) is responsible for developing recommendations for integrated business services for workforce and social services programs in Louisiana. The Committee shall develop a final Business Services Report to the Louisiana Workforce and Social Services Task Force (LA WASS) detailing methods for integrating business services, including opportunities to enhance work-based learning approaches as a core strategy for building worker skills.

### **II. Committee Responsibilities**

The Committee shall provide recommendations for achieving integrated business services across workforce and social services programs. Recommendations shall incorporate both methods for conducting integrated business services and opportunities to utilize a common customer relationship management (CRM) system for business services.

Specific information the Committee shall include as part of the final Report:

- Description of how business services occurs across the array of workforce and social services programs
- Current technology used for tracking business services activities across workforce and social services programs
- The current landscape of work-based learning occurring within workforce and social services programs, including type of work-based learning, current strategies for engaging businesses in work-based learning opportunities, and expenditures in support of different types of work-based learning
- Any evidence or performance metrics for different types of work-based learning
- Any current approaches or use of sector strategies or sector partnerships and any performance or other results of these efforts

- Catalog of the ways businesses are asked to engage with workforce and social services programs
- Opportunities to integrate business services and CRM technology
- Ways that small businesses can be supported through integrated business services and coordination with programs designed to support small businesses
- Ways that workforce and social services programs are coordinating activities with state and regional economic development agencies and community and technical colleges, including opportunities for better coordination

### **III. Committee Membership**

The following Task Force members are assigned to the One Door Business Services Committee:

#### **Voting Members**

Matthew Dickerson, Chairman, Mid South Extrusion

Tedra Cheatham, Louisiana Economic Development

Drew Maranto, Louisiana Department of Health

Aly Rau, Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services

James Garvey, Louisiana Workforce Commission

Andrea Buttross, Louisiana Department of Public Safety and Corrections

Mellynn Baker, Louisiana Department of Education

#### **Subject Matter Experts**

David Helveston, Louisiana Association of Builders and Contractors

Doretha Bennett, Louisiana Local Workforce Development Board

Katreena Moses, Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services

Osmar Padilla, Louisiana Workforce Commission

Jeremy Deal, Louisiana Office of Technical Support

Erin Landry, Louisiana Community and Technical College System

Amy Cable, Louisiana Community and Technical College System

Quincy Mouton, Louisiana Secretary of State

Jessica Vallelungo, Louisiana Department of Education

## Recommendations from the Business Services Committee

### LAWASS

#### Business Services Work Group

#### Preliminary/Draft Recommendations

12/17/2024

**1) Recommendation 1: Implement a Shared, Statewide CRM for Employer Engagement:**

Implementing a shared CRM across agencies like LWC, DCFS and LCTCS will streamline employer engagement by centralizing data and reducing duplication of data systems. This system will improve communication, track employer interactions, and enable data-driven decision-making. Training and clear data-sharing protocols will ensure successful adoption and ongoing refinement.

**2) Recommendation 2: Implement a Regionally Base Single Point of Contact for Triaging Employer Inquiries and Needs:**

Establishing a single point of contact for employers in each region will simplify navigation of state and local workforce resources. Regional coordinators can triage employer needs, directing them to appropriate solutions and fostering a more responsive system. This structure will align workforce services with regional economic needs and improve employer satisfaction.

**3) Recommendation 3: Develop a State-Level Advisory Group and Business Advisory Group with Membership Including Agency Heads from the Louisiana Agencies that Administer Workforce Programs and Social Services and Representatives from Regional Business Groups:**

Creating a state-level advisory group will enhance coordination among Louisiana's workforce development agencies and employer stakeholders. Regular meetings will ensure alignment of strategies, share employer feedback, and address inter-agency challenges. This collaborative approach will strengthen employer engagement and support Act 330 goals.

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[1] House Resolution 107: <https://legis.la.gov/legis/ViewDocument.aspx?d=1229057>

[2] House Resolution 248: <https://legis.la.gov/legis/ViewDocument.aspx?d=1288158>

[3] House Resolution 184: <https://legis.la.gov/legis/ViewDocument.aspx?d=1288009>

[4] House Resolution 100: <https://legis.la.gov/legis/ViewDocument.aspx?d=1325117>



