

Essex County

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

January 01, 2024 - December 31, 2025

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1. Administration

1.1 Administrative Structure

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

Essex County's Organizational Chart is attached.

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

St. Joseph's - Responsible for Substance Abuse Assessment and Treatment Plan
Access-VR - Vocational and Educational Training, Case Management, Support Services
CV-TECH - Adult Basic Education, HSE, Vocational and Educational Training
Employment Unit and TA eligibility staff- Conduct Employment Assessment and Plan, Job Search, Work Site Training, Referral's to Outside Agencies to build self-sufficiency.

1.2 TA and SNAP Employment & Training (SNAP E&T) Provider Agencies

- a. Table 1 lists the local contracts or agreements with agencies to provide employment services to TA and SNAP clients. These activities and services may include, but are not limited to: employability determinations; development of assessment and employment plans; conciliation and grievance activities; provision of work activities such as job readiness training; education and job skills training; monitoring and support for compliance with treatment plans for exempt individuals with the potential for restoration to self-sufficiency; job development; job placement and retention services; and other employment related activities.

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

Funding sources include, FFFS, SNAP E&T, Local or "other". Categories of clients served include Family Assistance (FA), Safety Net Assistance for households with dependent children (SNA Fam), Safety Net Assistance for households without dependent children (SNA Ind), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) 200%.

Contracts or Agreements with Agencies Who Provide TA and SNAP Employment Services

Provider	Total Contract Cost per Year	Funding Source(s)	Categories of Clients Served	Programs, Services or Activities Provided
ST. Joseph's	\$7,000	Local	FA SNA Family SNA Individual	Substance Abuse Assessments

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

Categories of clients served include Family Assistance (FA), Safety Net Assistance for households with dependent children (SNA Fam), Safety Net Assistance for households without dependent children (SNA Ind), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and TANF 200%.

Agencies and Providers to whom the District Refers for Employment Services

Provider	Funding Source(s)	Categories of Clients Served	Programs, Services or Activities Provided
Access VR	Others: NYSED	FA SNA Family SNA Individual	Vocational and Educational Training, Case Management, Support Services, HSE
CV-Tech	Others: NYSED	FA SNA Family SNA Individual	Adult Basic Education, Vocational and Educational Training, HSE
One Work Source	Local	FA SNA Family SNA Individual	HSE/GED, Job search
Adirondack Community Action Program Headstart	Local	FA SNA Family SNA Individual	Home visiting services

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

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

DSS monitors all contracts to ensure they are held to the terms, conditions, and specifications of the contract by each contracted agency. Our Deputy Commissioner monitors the contracts with each provider yearly to make sure they are upholding the contract/agreements. The employment unit regularly reviews contracts to make sure they are up to date and contacts the provider if necessary if they are not meeting the needs of our clients or the agreements.

1.3 OTDA Jobs Staff Agreement

- a. OTDA Jobs Program Services - Target Groups (reply yes or no to the options as they apply):

Services Provided by Jobs Staff

Yes or No:	Services Provided:
N/A	Assessment/Employment Plan
N/A	Supervised job search
N/A	Job readiness training
N/A	Job club
N/A	Job placement services
N/A	Grant diversion
N/A	Job development (employer outreach)
N/A	WOTC pre-certification

Jobs Staff Target Groups

Yes or No:	Target Groups:
N/A	Applicants
N/A	FA & SNA with children
N/A	SNA without children
N/A	SNAP
N/A	TANF 200%

- b. Described below are the additional services/duties Jobs Staff will be requested to perform (e.g., Welfare to Work Case Management System (WTWCMS) data entry, case conferencing, job fairs).

This district does not utilize OTDA Jobs Program Services.

1.4 Access to Services at New York State Career Centers

- a. Described below is how the district provides access to its programs and services with Career Center partners (reply yes or no to the options as they apply):

Programs and Services Provided at Career Centers

Yes or No:	Programs and Services Provided:
No	The district has employee(s) physically present at a Career Center
No	The district has contract staff physically present at a Career Center
No	The district makes available direct access to its program staff via phone or technology at a Career Center
Yes	The district makes available copies of the LDSS-2921 (Common Application) at a Career Center
No	Other (described here):

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

A referral form and partner registration form can be completed and faxed to our local One Work Source when needed for a district client. The employment worker tracks the progress by making contact with One Work Source on a monthly basis. This can be done via fax, phone, or email. Case notes are entered in to IEDR and verification is scanned as well.

2. Orientation, Assessment and Employment Plan

2.1 Orientation (Reference 18 NYCRR 385.5)

- a. How does the district provide orientation (reply yes or no to the options as they apply)?

District Orientation Procedures

Yes or No:	District Orientation:
Yes	The district provides orientation in accordance with 18 NYCRR 385.5 and no additional information is provided at orientation.
No	In addition to the requirements outlined in 18 NYCRR 385.5 of the regulations, the district's orientation provides the following:

- b. Described below is how the district completes the required orientation for all applicants and recipients of TA at application and recertification. Orientation can be held in-person, either in a group setting, individually, or a combination of both. It can also be held virtually, over the phone, or by sending orientation material to the client by mail. Please include the orientation procedure for exempt individuals and non-exempt individuals, if different:

Group applicant orientations are conducted by the DSS Employment Unit staff on a weekly basis. Individual orientations can be scheduled as needed. Recipients are seen by DSS for reassessment on an individual basis for recertification.

2.2 Temporary Assistance (TA) Employment Assessment

- a. How does the district conduct assessments as required by 18 NYCRR 385.6(a) and 385.7(a) (reply yes or no to the options as they apply)?

District Assessment Procedures

Yes or No:	How the district conducts assessments
No	The district enters assessments directly into WTCMS.
Yes	The district uses the LDSS 4980 (New York State Assessment) and later enters information into WTCMS.
No	The district conducts assessments using a local equivalent tool, and later enters information into WTCMS. If applicable, the local equivalent contains additional elements beyond what is required:

- b. Described below is the district procedure for the completion of an employment assessment, including when initial assessments are conducted and whether an assessment is conducted in-person, virtually by phone, or a combination of both:

Immediately following the Group Orientation, all applicants, both exempt and non-exempt, complete an employment assessment with DSS Employment staff on an individual basis who will assist in completing the LDSS 4980. Individuals who do not claim any limitations from work and have not obtained a high school diploma or high school equivalency will be required to complete the ABLE (Adult Basic Learning Examination) - it is a screening battery for reading comprehension. There are 48 questions measuring grade levels from 1st grade to PHS. This test is manually administered and scored.

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

DSS Employment Staff

- d. Described below are the minimum qualifications of the employees conducting the assessment (refer to requirements listed in 18 NYCRR 385.6(c) and 385.7(c)):

Social Services Worker- (a) graduation from a regionally accredited or NYS registered two year college or university with an associate degree; or (b) graduation from high school or possession of a high school equivalency diploma AND two years of full time paid experience in examining, investigating or evaluating claims for assistance, financial support, veterans or unemployment benefits, insurance or similar program operating under established criteria for eligibility; or (c) an equivalent combination of training and experience as defined within the limits above.

- e. Are applicants in households with dependent children required to participate in completion of an employment assessment?

Yes

- f. Are applicants in households without dependent children required to participate in completion of an employment assessment?

Yes

- g. Are exempt adults in households without dependent children required to participate in completion of an employment assessment?

Yes

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

The district updates the assessment at each recertification and anytime that an individual goes from being exempt to non-exempt.

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

- a. How does the district develop individual employment plans as required by 18 NYCRR 385.6(a) and 385.7(a) (reply yes or no to the options as they apply)?

District Employment Plan Procedures

Yes or No:	How the district develops employment plans
No	The district enters employment plans directly into WTWCMS.
Yes	The district uses the LDSS-4987 (New York State Employment Plan) and later enters information into WTWCMS.
No	The district develops individual employment plans using a local equivalent tool. If applicable, the local equivalent contains the following additional elements beyond what is required:

- b. Who develops the employment plan (reply yes or no to the options as the apply)?

District Employment Plan Development

Yes or No:	Who develops the districts employment plans
Yes	The same administrative unit or contractor that conducts employment assessments also develops employment plans.
No	A different administrative unit or contractor develops employment plans and the contractor's qualifications include:

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

The employment worker will complete the LDSS 4978 developing an employment goal with the client, defining any barriers to employment, provide supportive services if needed, and assign clients who are able to work to a work activity.

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

An individuals employment plan will be updated by the employment worker as their employability status changes, at any recertification, employment reassessment, or medical review that changes their employability or need for supportive services. A copy of the employment plan is sent to the client after completion.

3. Engagement

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

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

Compliance with assessment, employment planning, all activities included in the individual’s Employment/Self-Sufficiency plan, including any need to attend treatment/rehabilitation programs, or any of the work activities listed in Section 4.1. Also included is pursuit of other forms of income such as SSI and SSDI.

- b. Described below is additional information regarding the district’s “Engaged in Work” requirements:

N/A

3.2 Strategies/Procedures for Accommodating Individuals with Limited English Proficiency

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

The district utilizes the Interpreter Services by calling the Office of Language Access at (518) 402-3096. The interpreter services desk guides are available to the workers and Essex County has the language poster located in the reception area for clients, as required by 06-ADM-05. The district does not employ a local Spanish speaking representative nor does the local school system.

3.3 Strategies/Procedures for Increasing Program Attendance

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

The District affords the client the opportunity to show good cause, reschedule if needed or will allow an absence without proof, if client does not abuse this policy. For example, they are allowed a one-time only reschedule without verification of illness. If the client seeks to reschedule more than one time, they are to submit supporting documentation showing good cause before they are allowed to reschedule or they are denied for a no show. Medical excuses, family emergencies, job interview are all examples of good cause that are allowed. Daycare referrals are given at time of employment assessment to reduce conciliations and sanctions. Transportation options are discussed as well at time of interview and again at orientation, such as bus tickets, taxis and gas cards.

3.4 Strategies/Procedures for Engaging Sanctioned TA Participants

- a. The following are strategies used to engage sanctioned participants. If a district uses one of the options, a description will be provided (reply yes or no to the options as they apply and provide a description for "yes" responses):

Strategies and Procedures for Engaging Sanctioned TA Participants

Yes or No:	Strategies and Procedures for Engaging Sanctioned TA Participants
Yes	Described here are the strategies the district uses to attempt to engage sanctioned participants as soon as they are sanctioned: If the client contacts the agency before the time frame is up the employment worker speaks to them directly and discusses the options available to end the sanction, depending on whether the sanction is durational and/or until compliance. The agency also conducts Sanction call in interviews with the employment worker and the Fraud worker. All options are discussed with the client by the employment worker as to how and when they can end the sanction. This is done on a monthly basis until the client either complies and is no longer sanctioned or the case closes, this begins the month after the sanction takes effect.
Yes	Described below are the strategies the district uses to attempt to engage sanctioned participants when the durational period of the sanction is completed: District designed letter giving option to end sanction is sent when the time frame has been reached along with the agreement to comply form. The employment

Yes or No:	Strategies and Procedures for Engaging Sanctioned TA Participants
	worker gives them a date and time to call the agency at which time they work out a plan as to what the client can engage in to end the sanction. An agreement to comply is sent along with the appointment letter. Once the client has returned the agreement to comply and has successfully engaged the sanction is lifted and the client's case is adjusted accordingly.
No	Described below are the strategies the district uses to attempt to engage sanctioned participants during different times in the sanction period:

3.5 Strategies for Reducing the Need for TA

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

Job search is offered at time of employment assessment.
 Referrals to specific employment based on client's work skills.
 Work site offerings to gain skills needed for paid employment.

4. Work Activities

4.1 Allowable Work Activities

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

Allowable Work Activities by Case Type

Activity and Definition	Case Type
Unsubsidized Employment – Full time or part time employment in the public or private sector that is not subsidized by TANF or any other public program (excluding employer tax credits). Unsubsidized employment includes self-employment and/or paid internships.	FA SNAFAM SNA SNAP
Work Experience – Unpaid work performed at a public or not-for-profit organization to enable a participant who has not obtained unsubsidized employment to improve his or her employability. Work experience provides participants with an opportunity to acquire training, knowledge, work habits, and work references necessary to obtain and retain employment. Participation in work experience includes training required for the participant to complete the work experience assignment. For example, an individual who is expected to provide clerical support in a government agency may be provided training to develop or refine filing and data entry skills as needed to perform the tasks required as part of the work activity assignment.	FA SNAFAM SNA SNAP

Activity and Definition	Case Type
<p>Job Search – The act of seeking or obtaining employment or preparing to seek or obtain employment and will include: looking for suitable job openings in a group or individual setting; making contact with potential employers; learning appropriate workplace expectations and behaviors in preparation for submitting job applications and interviewing; preparing and applying for, and/or interviewing for jobs and related activities.</p>	<p>FA SNAFAM SNA SNAP</p>
<p>Vocational Education – Vocational education is defined as an organized educational program that directly relates to the preparation of individuals for current or emerging occupations that require training up to a four-year degree. Vocational education does not generally include basic or remedial education or English as a Second Language (ESL) but may include work focused general education and language instruction that is a regular or integral part of a vocational education program. Social services districts are responsible for ensuring that any such remedial education or ESL is a regular part of the program for participants with similar skill sets as the TANF/SNA MOE client, is determined necessary by the program provider, and is limited in hours to less than one half of program participation. Vocational education programs include the completion of activities that provide individuals the knowledge and skills to perform a specific trade, occupation or vocation. Vocational education must be provided by an education or training organization.</p>	<p>FA SNAFAM SNA SNAP</p>
<p>Secondary School – Regular attendance in accordance with the requirements of the secondary school or a course of study at a secondary school or other State accredited institution leading to a high school equivalence (HSE) diploma, in the case of a recipient who has not completed secondary school or received a certificate of general equivalence. Secondary school participation may include general adult basic education or ESL if it is linked to attending secondary school or leading to a HSE diploma as determined necessary by the educational institution. Secondary School or HSE programs that routinely include ESL, career training, alternative school, tutoring, dropout prevention, teen pregnancy or parenting programs as a requirement of program participation as determined by the educational institution will also be permitted.</p>	<p>FA SNAFAM SNA SNAP</p>
<p>Job Skills Training – Training or education in job skills to improve a participant's employability, to ensure clients have the basic skills competencies required by employers to support job entry and/or to advance or adapt to the changing demands of the workplace. Where identified as needed, such training may include the development of basic workplace skills including professional workplace behaviors and decision-making skills. Job skills training may include customized or technical training designed to provide participants with additional workplace skills, post-secondary education courses leading to a bachelor's or other advanced degree, or other training included under the definition of vocational education training. Job skills training may include literacy instruction, English language instruction, or other basic education for an individual who has already obtained a high school diploma or equivalency when determined from a client's assessment that such instruction is needed to improve the participant's employability.</p>	<p>FA SNAFAM SNA SNAP</p>

Activity and Definition	Case Type
<p>Education Training – Education directly related to employment for a recipient who has not received a high school diploma or equivalency must be related to a specific occupation, job or job offer or otherwise determined based on a client assessment as necessary to improve the participant's employability to support job entry, retention or advancement. Education directly related to employment may include courses designed to provide the knowledge and skills for general or specific occupations or work settings to ensure clients have the basic skills competencies required by employers and may also include Adult Basic Education (ABE), ESL instruction and education leading to a high school equivalency diploma as determined as necessary to improve the participant's job opportunities in potential occupations. Where identified as needed such training may include the development of basic workplace skills including professional workplace behaviors and decision-making skills.</p>	N/A
<p>Job Readiness Training (JRT) Activities – Participation in programs that include seeking and preparing for work. JRT includes two types of activities: (1) traditional activities of resume preparation, training in interviewing skills, and instruction in workplace expectations, training in effective job seeking, including life skills training; and (2) activities that improve an individual's employability, such as substance abuse treatment, mental health treatment, or rehabilitation activities in which a qualified medical or mental health professional has certified that such treatment is necessary.</p>	N/A
<p>Subsidized Private Sector Employment – Employment in the private sector for which the employer receives a subsidy from TANF or other public funds (excluding tax credits) to offset some or all of the wages and costs of employing and training a recipient in accordance with New York State Social Services Law 336-f. Subsidized private sector employment will include positions subsidized through grant diversion/Transitional Employment Advancement Program (TEAP), supported employment programs, and paid college work study programs at private institutions. Individuals participating in subsidized private sector employment are paid wages and receive the same benefits as unsubsidized employees who perform similar work. An employment situation will be subsidized for up to the full amount of wages/benefits provided to the program participant and will be subsidized for the length of time as determined appropriate by the State or social services district.</p>	FA SNAFAM SNA SNAP
<p>Subsidized Public Sector Employment – Employment in the public sector for which the employer receives a subsidy from TANF or other public funds (excluding tax credits) to offset some or all of the wages and costs of employing and training a recipient in accordance with New York State Social Services Law 336-e. Subsidized public sector employment will include positions subsidized through grant diversion/TEAP, supported employment programs, and paid college work study programs at public institutions. Individuals participating in subsidized public sector employment, and work study unless otherwise permitted under a federal work study program, are paid wages and receive the same benefits as unsubsidized employees who perform similar work. An employment situation will be subsidized for up to the full amount of wages/benefits provided to the program participant and will be subsidized for the length of time as determined appropriate by the State or social services district.</p>	FA SNAFAM SNA SNAP

Activity and Definition	Case Type
<p>Community Service – A structured program in which participants perform work for the direct benefit of the community under the auspices of public or nonprofit organizations. Community service placements must be projects that serve a useful community purpose in fields such as health, social services, environmental protection, education, urban and rural redevelopment, welfare, public recreation, public facilities, public safety, and childcare. Community service programs are designed to improve the employability of participants not otherwise able to obtain unsubsidized employment. Participation in community service may include training that is directly required for the participant to complete the community service assignment. For example, an individual who is expected to provide clerical support to a food pantry may be provided training to develop or refine filing and data entry skills.</p>	N/A
<p>Provision of Childcare for Individual Participating in Community Service – Providing unpaid childcare to enable another TA (TANF/SNA MOE funded) recipient to participate in a community service program.</p>	N/A
<p>SNAP E&T Supervised Job Search – The act of seeking or obtaining employment through a job search that is directly supervised and may include: case management services, career exploration, interview preparation, job application assistance, learning appropriate workplace expectations and behaviors in preparation for submitting job applications and interviewing, job leads, and direct job referrals.</p>	N/A
<p>On-the-Job-Training (OJT) – Training in a public or private sector employment setting during which the participant receives work-essential paid training while he or she is engaged in productive work that provides the knowledge and skills essential to attain full and adequate performance of the job.</p>	N/A
<p>Other – Any work activity that does not meet the criteria of any of the above countable activities constitutes participation that is not countable toward federal and State participation rates.</p>	FA SNAFAM SNA SNAP

4.2 Job Development

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

Yes

How does the district participate in job development activities (reply yes or no to the options as they apply)?

How the District Participates in Job Development Activities

Yes or No:	How the district participates in job development activities
Yes	District staff contacts employers to solicit jobs for TA and/or SNAP participants. Describe how this is done, including number of staff, frequency of contact, etc.: N/A
Yes	District contacts or has an agreement with another agency to contact employers and solicit jobs for TA and/or SNAP participants. Described here is how this is done, including number of staff, frequency of contacts, etc.: Yes, we send our

Yes or No:	How the district participates in job development activities
	participants to the local One Work Source for assistance in contacting employers. Our employment worker makes contact with One Work Source to verify that the client has made contact and is searching for employers in their data base. The client is expected to complete the job search form and submit one per week to our employment worker.

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

- a. Described below is how the district identifies appropriate education program providers for services of Adult Basic Education (ABE), High School Equivalency (HSE) diploma preparation, and English Language Instruction that are available to clients whose assessment indicates such services would be an appropriate work activity assignment. Please ensure to include providers the district partners with for the provision of ABE, HSE, and English language instruction in Table 1 or Table 2 under section 1.2 of this Plan.

The only available provider in Essex County is CV-Tech (BOCES) and they have a full-time onsite HSE/Adult Education instructor at the local One-Stop. Referrals are made on an ongoing basis using the One Work Source Partner Referral Form.

- b. Described below is how the district identifies appropriate program providers of Vocational Education and Job Skills Training programs that are available to clients whose assessment indicates such services would be an appropriate work activity assignment. Please ensure to include the current providers the district partners with for the provision of Vocational Education and Job Skills Training in Table 1 or Table 2 under section 1.2 of this Plan.

Essex County is a rural county and does not have a centralized location for all providers of Vocational Education and Job Skills Training programs. The limited array of providers is approved by the local WIA agency, ACAP, Inc., who is located near the district office.

- c. Described below are the district’s process and guidelines workers follow to ensure that individuals who have not attained a basic literacy level and/or have not attained a high school diploma are offered the opportunity to participate in an educational activity. This includes individuals who are 18 and older and individuals aged 16 or 17 who are not attending secondary school or its equivalent.

Essex County is a rural county and does not have a centralized location for all providers of Vocational Education and Job Skills Training programs. The limited array of providers is approved by the local WIA agency, ACAP, Inc., who is located near the district office. A referral is made to our local One Stop who refers the individual to CV-Tech for ABE and HSE.

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

As part of the individual's Employment Plan, all nonexempt participants may be referred to and required to participate in educational activities if they are not in possession of a high school diploma or HSE. This is tracked by the employment worker on a monthly basis by sending the school or GED instructor a timesheet to be completed. Individuals between the ages of 16 and 18 may be excused from secondary school attendance if it is determined, through an assessment, that further attendance is not likely to result in attainment of a high school diploma or its equivalent, and the individual participates in another educational activity designed to lead to the attainment of a diploma or equivalent, or in job skills training designed for youths.

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

Appropriate skills and capabilities required for enrollment in specific training.
Completion of the Employment Plan.
History of compliance with prior activity participation.
District approval of training program resulting in sustainable employment.

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

Providers will be evaluated based on the ability of the training to increase the participant's progress in or to competitive, unsubsidized employment in a demand occupation in the local district or region.

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

Applicants/recipients are advised at time of assessment and orientation of approved training providers if appropriate.

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

Notification of enrollment in an activity is sent to the individual via US Mail within 10 days of the report date and time.

- i. Described below is how the district will monitor the high school attendance for 16-18 year-olds in order for them to retain their TA exempt status.

High School enrollment is monitored through submission of report cards and/or school statements that verify attendance; documentation is requested as part of the initial and/or recertification process.

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

As part of the process for appropriate placement in a work activity, the DSS Employment staff will review each individual's medical status as documented through completion of the exemption determination process. Work activity providers are notified in writing of an individual's limitations prior to final site assignment.

4.4 Post-Secondary Education Approval and Enrollment Policies

- a. Described below is the highest level of post-secondary level education that the district will approve as a work activity, up to a four-year college program (please ensure to include the current providers the districts partners with for the provision of post-secondary education programs in Table 1 or Table 2 under Section 1.2 of this plan):

If applicable, the district will approve up to four-year college program taking into consideration that the individual's curriculum will result in a job field that is available in the area.

- b. In accordance with 18 NYCRR 385.9(b), regardless of whether the college program is approved for the participant as an employment work activity, the district will approve as a work activity a work-study, internship, externship or other work placement that is part of a non-graduate student's curriculum unless one or more of the following conditions applies as described below (reply yes or no to options as they apply):

Conditions For Disapproval of Work Activities For Individuals Enrolled in College

Yes or No:	Conditions for disapproval of work activity
Yes	It has been determined that the student voluntarily quit their job or reduced earnings to qualify for initial or increased TA.
Yes	A job or on-the-job training position that is comparable to the work-study, internship, externship or other work placement cannot reasonably be expected to exist in the private, public or not-for-profit sector.
Yes	The student is not maintaining a cumulative C average (or the equivalent). The district may disregard this provision if the student documents an undue hardship.
Yes	The institution or student fails to monitor and report information regarding the student's attendance and performance as required.
Yes	The student fails to progress toward the completion of a course of study without good cause, as determined by the district.
Yes	The student has previously enrolled in work-study, internship, or other work placement and failed to complete the work placement without good cause as determined by the district.
No	Additional reasons as stated here:

5. Work Requirements

5.1 Meeting TA Work Requirements

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

The district plans to meet participation rate requirements through a process of ongoing screening, assessment, determination, involvement in work activities in a timely manner, striving for gap-free service provision, and tracking of participation status via available reporting tools such as COGNOS and WTWCMS. Specifically, at time of application, all nonexempt individuals will be engaged in a job search activity enabling their participation to begin at case opening. Once a case opens, or there is a change from exempt to nonexempt, the individual is scheduled via US Mail for a work activity meeting with a DSS Employment staff member within 10 calendar days. Unless barriers to participation are evident, a placement in a work activity usually takes place within two weeks. The district will make every attempt to engage recipients up to 40 hours per week.

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

Number of Individuals Who Receive Employment Services

Household Type	Number Served
Households with Dependent Children Average Monthly	20
Households without Dependent Children Average Monthly	45

- c. Described below is how the district uses work participation management reports available through COGNOS or other reports and activities to monitor district progress toward meeting work participation requirements and ensuring full engagement by adults in work or work preparation activities:

WTWCMS and COGNOS reports including Participation and Engagement Status Report, Employability Code Change and Duration Reports, and Earned Income/Employment Report to assist in identifying deficiencies.

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

Yes

Applicant Job Search

Applicant Job Search	Min. Contacts	Min. Hours	Additional Information
TANF and SNA MOE	5	10	Weekly meetings
SNA Individuals	5	10	Client speaks to employment worker during orientation or re-assessment and is given instruction on what is expected. They are then sent a letter regarding job search expectations, along with a job search handbook with the dates due each week.

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

Yes

TA Recipient Job Search

Recipient Job Search	Min. Contacts	Min. Hours	Additional Information
TANF and SNA MOE	2	10	Weekly meetings
SNA Individuals	5	10	Weekly meetings

- f. Described below is the district’s process and policy used for determining whether participation in self-employment is approved as part of an individual's required work activities, including the guidelines workers follow. If the district always approves self-employment as part of an individual’s required work activities, please note this policy below:

The district will approve self-employment as part of an individual's required work activities only if the self-employment income is equivalent to the current minimum wage and meets the countable hours toward participation. The district may require within 30 days that the individual submit proof to the Agency that they are now doing so.

5.2 Informing SNAP Applicants and Recipients of Work Requirements

The district informs SNAP households where at least one member is subject to a work requirement of the applicable work rules at certification, recertification, and when a previously exempt household member or new household member becomes subject to work requirements. Notification is provided verbally and in writing.

- a. Described below is how SNAP applicants and recipients are informed in writing of SNAP work requirements (reply yes or no to options as they apply).

Written Information Provided to SNAP Applicants and Recipients

Yes or No:	How written information is provided to SNAP applicants and recipients
Yes	Eligibility staff use the LDSS-5193 <i>Important Information about SNAP Work Rules (General, Mandatory E&T, and ABAWD)</i> and the LDSS-5193A <i>Important Information about SNAP Work Rules (General and Mandatory E&T)</i> as appropriate.
No	Eligibility staff use a local equivalent consolidated work requirements notice to inform SNAP applicant and recipient households of their work requirements. Please attach a copy of the district's OTDA approved local equivalent.

- b. Described below is the process eligibility staff follow to provide a comprehensive oral explanation to SNAP households of work requirements, including General SNAP Work Rules, Mandatory SNAP E&T, and ABAWD Rules which pertain to non-exempt individuals in the household.

Clients are verbally told at interview and any time their employment status is changed to employable from an exempt status. They are also sent the LDSS-5193A and it is documented in the case file.

- c. Described below is how the district documents in the case record how the written information about SNAP work requirements was provided to the household (reply yes or no to options as they apply).

How the District Documents the Written Requirement in the Case Record

Yes or No:	How written information is provided to SNAP applicants and recipients
Yes	The district retains copies of all LDSS-5193/LDSS-5193A in the case record.
No	The district retains copies of local equivalent notices provided to the household in the case record.

- d. Described below is the district's process for documenting in the case record how the oral explanation of SNAP work requirements was provided to the household (reply yes or no to options as they apply).

How the District Documents the Oral Requirement in the Case Record

Yes or No:	How oral information is provided to SNAP applicants and recipients
No	Eligibility staff complete the LDSS-4826C and retain a copy in the case record.
No	Eligibility staff use a locally developed oral explanation tool and retain a copy in the case record.
Yes	Eligibility staff document the case record through case notes/comments.

5.3 Meeting SNAP Work Requirements

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

The district does not mandate SNAP E&T work activity assignments.

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

N/A

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

NTA SNAP applicants and recipients are informed of Job Search availability at intake and recertification either through face-to-face or telephone interview.

5.4 Advising Households of Employment and Training Services

At the time of recertification, non-exempt SNAP recipients who are members of certain TA/SNAP and NTA/SNAP households must be advised of the availability of employment and training services within the district and/or region. This requirement applies non-exempt recipients in households containing at least one adult, with no elderly or disabled individuals, and with no earned income at their last certification or required report.

- a. Described below is who the district provides information about employment and training services to (reply yes or no to the options as they apply):

Who the District Provides Employment and Training Services Information to

Yes or No:	Who the district provides employment and training services information to:
Yes	Required population only
No	Other groups described here:

- b. Described below is the method the district uses to advise SNAP recipients of available employment and training services at recertification (reply yes or no to the options as they apply):

How the District Provides Employment and Training Services Information

Yes or No:	How the district provides employment and training services information
Yes	Materials and information provided in print form
No	Materials and information provided on a website. Described here is how individuals are made aware the information is available on the website:
No	Material and information provided via email.

5.5 Provider Determinations

- a. Not every activity assignment/referral to training might be the right fit for every participant. As such, districts are required per federal regulations at 7 CFR 273.7(c)(18) to have procedures in place for when a provider/contractor determines an individual is not a good fit for a particular activity or program they are referred or assigned to. This is called the provider determination process. Described below is the district's process for provider determination, including the process for screening individuals prior to referral to a provider, how to communicate information related to provider determinations with the district, how workers communicate information related to provider determinations with the client, and documenting provider determinations.

The district contacts the worksite before placing the client to arrange a meeting/interview. The client is spoken to concerning this process and notified verbally of what is expected from them along with a written notification from CMS with the date, time, where, whom they are meeting and appropriate dress etc. The client's interests and previous work

experiences are taken into consideration before placing them as well. We utilize the assessment to make sure it's a good fit to their expertise.

- b. Described below is the district process for informing providers of their authority and responsibility to determine if an individual is not a good fit for a particular activity or program.

Providers are sent a notice from CMS that states what their responsibilities are in regard to this process. They are verbally told during the set-up process by the district to make the district aware as soon as possible if there is an issue of any kind. The provider is made aware that they must notify the district within 10 days of determining that an individual is not a good fit for the particular activity or program.

- c. Described below is the district process for provider oversight to ensure that provider determinations are not unfair or used to discriminate against protected classes.

The district contacts the client when they are notified by the provider that there is an issue to ascertain their perspective on why it is not a fit or if they know why it is not working out at the site. If at any time the district feels there is a violation of any kind on the provider's part appropriate action is taken.

6. Quality Assurance/Work Verification

6.1 Quality Assurance Process - Random Case Sampling

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

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

The district will sample cases from each month within the (6 month) semi-annual period. The October to March review will be due by May 20th. The April to September review will be due by November 20th. The results of these audits will enable the district to identify policies, processes or cases that may need corrective action.

After each self audit is completed, the district must submit a summary of findings to OTDA A&QI at AQI.WV.SelfAudits@otda.ny.gov for State review including specific information on each of the errors identified. In addition, when monitoring reveals substantial problems, the district must describe the corrective action it will take.

The Quality Assurance (QA) plan must include the following elements:

- Ensure that documentation of wages and actual hours of employment is verified and accurately projected/reported and present in the case file, is actual and is projected correctly;
 - Ensure that the documentation for actual hours, supervision/attendance, excused absences, and holidays in other activities is present in the case file;
 - Assess whether participation in the work activities reported for work eligible individuals meets the approved federal definition for the activity;
 - Assess that the data entered into either WTWCMS, the Self-Sufficiency, Employment, Assessment and Management System (SEAMS) or other automated systems used for reporting work activities is accurate, including actual hours, excused absences and holidays; and is based on documentation in the case record; and
 - Ensure that documentation necessary to determine an individual to be exempt due to being the parent caretaker of a disabled household member (TA Employability Code 38 or 48), and/or parent or caretaker relative of a child in the household under 12 months of age, (TA Employability Code 31), is present in the case file and that individuals meet the exempt status based on the required documentation.
- a. Below is the number of random sample cases of participation in paid work activities the district will review semi-annually. Refer to the Instruction Guide for the minimum number of cases per district and guidance regarding review requirements.
- 6
- b. Below is the number of random sample cases of participation in unpaid work activities the district will review semi-annually. Refer to the Instruction Guide for the minimum number of cases per district and guidance regarding review requirements.
- 6
- c. Below is the number of random sample cases in which a case member is reported as an TA Employability Code 38 – “Parent needed in the home full time to care for an incapacitated/disabled household member” or TA Employability Code 48 – “Needed in the home to care for an incapacitated child full time – time limit exemption”. Refer to the Instruction Guide for the minimum number of cases per district and guidance regarding review requirements.
- 3

- d. Below is the number of random sample cases in which a case member is reported as an TA Employability Code 31 – “Parent or caretaker relative of a child under 12 months of age”. Refer to the Instruction Guide for the minimum number of cases per district and guidance regarding review requirements.

3

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

6.2 Use of Outside Providers/Vendors

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

No

- b. If Yes, does the district’s provider/vendor documentation collection, data entry and management of WTCMS follow the same process that would be used by the district worker?

N/A

- c. If No, describe below the process used:

N/A

7. Supportive Services

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

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

Mileage reimbursement for gas costs of vehicle will be at the IRS medical/moving rate
Relocation assistance including security deposit to alleviate transportation barrier License or other work related fees Tools or equipment Clothing/Uniforms DMV fees, car insurance and repairs (Expenditure will be authorized only when deemed to be the least costly means of providing transportation.) North Country Legal Services to assist in settling legal disputes presenting as barriers to employment All Support Services will be provided to participants on a case-by-case basis and are not to exceed the maximum of \$2000. Anything over the \$2000 threshold will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis to determine if the need will benefit the client any further or if the client's plan needs to be updated to insure self-sufficiency is met.

- b. Indicated below are the services the district will use to assist those participants who need transportation to and from an approved work activity site, including any applicable mileage reimbursement rate, and the method used by the district to arrive at that reimbursement rate. OTDA policy establishes a mileage reimbursement rate of no less than the IRS established rate for medical/moving purposes. In all instances, should the actual cost of transportation needed to participate in an assigned work activity exceed the reimbursement rate determined by the district, the district will reimburse for the actual costs based on reasonable documentation submitted by the work activity participant (reply yes or no to the options as they apply).

Transportation Services Provided to Clients

Yes or No:	Transportation Assistance Provided
Yes	Bus pass/token
Yes	Gas card/voucher
No	Mileage reimbursement at the IRS Business rate (effective 1/1/2023 is 65 cents per mile)
Yes	Mile reimbursement at the IRS Medical/Moving rate (effective 1/1/2023 is 22 cents per mile)
No	Other mileage rate (the methodology used to establish reimbursement rate is described here):

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

Participants may be required to walk up to a maximum of two miles to participate in a work activity due to the rural nature of the county and lack of public transportation services. Weather, childcare, and medical limitations are taken into consideration when making these determinations. Every attempt by the district will be made to use alternate methods of transport.

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

As long as funds are available, the following work-related expenses will be authorized for applicants and recipients of Temporary Assistance when deemed necessary by DSS staff, to enable the individual to accept or retain employment. Approval is based upon documented evidence of a job and funds from other sources must be sufficient to meet the individual's needs:

Post Employment services/counseling

Transportation- bus tickets or tokens/ gas cards/ actual travel reimbursement for mileage at the IRS medical/moving rate

Relocation assistance including security deposit

Work related clothing, not limited to uniforms or footwear, tools or equipment, licensing or other work related fees

Vehicle repairs, insurance premiums, DMV fees, and car or lease payments (documented evidence of ownership/title and valid driver's license is required)

All Support Services requested for diversion will be on a case by case basis and are not to exceed the maximum of \$2,000.

7.2 Post-Employment/Transitional Supportive Services

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

Post Employment services provided by DSS Employment staff such as, gas cards, clothing allowances, budgeting household income, job skills referrals if needed.

- b. Described below are the support services (for up to 90 days after case closing) the district will provide to individuals whose TA cases have closed due to employment:

One month's rent

Three month's medical insurance premium

Expense to obtain or retain phone services needed for job retention

Post Employment services

Gas cards

Car insurance

Car repairs

Transportation costs for up to one week if vehicle is in repair and deemed cost effective

Services referenced in Section 4.1

The district maximum for the above mentioned services is not to exceed \$2,000.

7.3 Extended Support Services

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

Gas cards

Car repairs

Auto insurance

Auto registration

Tires

Uniforms/work clothing

Case management/Post Employment services

Other emergency support services deemed necessary to assist in job retention and prevent an individual from returning to assistance on a case by case basis

The district maximum for the above mentioned services is not to exceed \$2,000.

8. Conciliation, Sanction and Dispute Resolution Procedures

8.1 Conciliation

- a. The district's conciliation process for TA applicants and recipients must be conducted in accordance with 18 NYCRR 385.11(a). Indicate below how conciliations are conducted (reply yes or no to the options as they apply).

How the District Conducts Conciliation for TA Applicants and Recipients

Yes or No:	How conciliation is conducted
Yes	In person
Yes	By phone
Yes	By mail

The districts process for conduction TA conciliations is described below:

Once the district becomes aware of a participant's failure to comply, a notice is sent to the non-compliant participant to inform them of the right to conciliation. If the TA recipient responds to the conciliation, the reasons for non-compliance are collected and a decision is made by the DSS Employment worker and his/her Employment Supervisor

- b. Who makes the TA good cause/willfulness determination (reply yes or no to the options as they apply)?

How the District Makes the Good Cause/Willfulness Determination for TA Applicants and Recipients

Yes or No:	Who makes the TA good cause/willfulness determination?
No	The client's employment worker
Yes	A supervisor in the district
No	A separate entity (described here):

- c. The district's conciliation process for SNAP applicants and recipients must be conducted in accordance with 18 NYCRR 385.11(d). Indicate below how conciliations are conducted (reply yes or not to the options as they apply).

How the District Conducts Conciliation for SNAP Applicants and Recipients

Yes or No:	How conciliation is conducted
Yes	In person
Yes	By phone
Yes	By mail

The district's process for conducting SNAP conciliations is described below:

The district will send a notice to the non-compliant SNAP recipient to inform them of their right to conciliation. The notice will advise the SNAP recipient to contact the DSS Employment worker to discuss their desire to demonstrate compliance to avoid a SNAP sanction.

- d. Who makes the SNAP E&T good cause/willfulness determination (reply yes or no to the options as they apply)?

How the District Makes the Good Cause/Willfulness Determination for SNAP Applicants and Recipients

Yes or No:	Who makes the TA good cause/willfulness determination?
No	The client's employment worker
Yes	A supervisor in the district
No	A separate entity (described here):

- e. Described below is the district's procedure for engaging SNAP recipients in a work activity to demonstrate compliance to avoid a SNAP E&T related sanction:

If the SNAP recipient responds to the conciliation notification and advises of their willingness to demonstrate the necessary compliance, the DSS Employment worker will send the SNAP recipient the district's Demonstrate Compliance with SNAP Work Activity form allowing them to obtain and submit for Agency review the required five (5) job searches needed for the individual to be deemed as in compliance. Should the non-compliance issue involve the individual's failure to have an employment assessment, it would be necessary that the individual actually complete an assessment to avoid a SNAP E&T sanction.

8.2 Sanction

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

They would be required to perform a work activity deemed appropriate by the district for five (5) consecutive days before the sanction will be discontinued and they are to be considered as compliant. Benefits are restored retroactive to the date the individual indicated a willingness to comply (but no earlier than the expiration of the minimum duration period).

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

Since the district does not mandate SNAP E&T activities for its NTA-SNAP population, a person whose SNAP employment sanction has expired may simply reapply for SNAP

benefits once the SNAP employment sanction has expired. Non-exempt SNAP applicant/recipients also receiving TA may reestablish SNAP benefits after the end of the disqualification period by participating in the offered job search component requiring submission of 5 verified employer contacts. Previously sanctioned SNAP individuals requesting SNAP benefits and who are now considered as exempt will have their sanction ended once the exemption from work requirements has been verified by the Agency and their eligibility determined.

8.3 Dispute Resolution

- a. The district’s procedure for individuals who wish to dispute their work activity assignments, including individuals who dispute the district’s response to their request for health-related accommodations must be conducted in accordance with 18 NYCRR 385.11(c). Indicate below who mediates the grievance (reply yes or no to the options as they apply).

Grievance Mediation

Yes or No:	Who makes the TA good cause/willfulness determination?
No	An independent entity which has an agreement with the district.
No	Supervisory staff who are trained in mediation and who have no direct responsibility for the individual’s case.
Yes	Designated supervisory staff who have no direct responsibility for the individual's case and who are not trained in mediation.

9. Disability Determinations, Documentation and Requirements of Exempt Individuals

9.1 Disability Determination Process and Tools

- a. The district’s process for determining an individual’s disabilities and/or work limitations must be in accordance with 18 NYCRR 385.2(d). Indicate below what the district’s process is for determining an individual’s disabilities and/or work limitations (reply yes or no to the options as they apply).

Process for Determining Disabilities and/or Work Limitations

Yes or No:	How the district determines an individual’s disabilities and/or work limitation
No	District participates in the OTDA managed contract for independent medical evaluations.
No	District contracts directly with a physician to provide independent medical evaluations.
Yes	District accepts physician’s statement provided by participant.
No	District accepts physician’s statement provided by participant but refers for an independent evaluation when deemed necessary.

Yes or No:	How the district determines an individual's disabilities and/or work limitation
Yes	Other process: To determine an individual's disability and/or medical limitations, a current medical statement is required at application, recertification or at intervals determined by the circumstances. The DSS medical or mental evaluation is completed and submitted to the department within 10 days; once received, is reviewed to determine initial ability to work or address work limitations. Once all documentation to be reviewed is obtained and a determination is made, the individual will be notified of such, and the right to a fair hearing. The district will inform work activity providers of any individual's limitations; to ensure the worksite is responding to the respective limitations of each participant, the DSS Employment staff contacts the site supervisor regularly, making adjustments in work assignment/location when necessary, or as warranted upon receipt of updated medical statements. The district will inform providers of any limitations in writing.

- b. Described below is the district's procedure for notifying an individual of their exempt or non-exempt determination whenever an individual alleges to be unable to participate, or the individual otherwise participates in the employability disability review, including when an individual is notified that their status changes from exempt to non-exempt:

The district sends the client an LDSS-4005 or 4005A dependent on if they are exempt or not. It is specific to the medical doctor's diagnosis and prognosis. This is determined by the Senior Social Services Worker once all pertinent documentation has been submitted and is sent after review by them. If needed the Senior worker will contact the provider for more in-depth information concerning diagnosis, prognosis, limitations, or duration. The client is notified within 10 days of determination.

- c. Described below is how the district notifies an individual of their exempt or non-exempt determination (reply yes or not to the options as they apply):

Process for Notifying an Individual of Their Exempt or Non-Exempt Status

Yes or No:	District's process for reviewing medical documentation
Yes	The district sends the LDSS-4005 or LDSS-4005a and a retains a copy in the case record.
No	The district sends a local equivalent and retains a copy in the case record.

- d. Indicated below is the process for reviewing the medical documentation to determine if the individual is exempt, nonexempt, or work limited and describe the process by which the determination is made (reply yes or no to the options as they apply).

Process for Reviewing Medical Documentation

Yes or No:	District's process for reviewing medical documentation
No	District directs the contracted physician or individual's physician to determine status.
No	District review team reviews and determines status (described here):

Yes or No:	District's process for reviewing medical documentation
No	Specialized disability/medical staff or unit reviews and determines status (described here):
Yes	Other process: Medicals submitted by the participants from their practitioner are used for employability determination by the Employment Supervisor & staff to determine what, and if, any activities can be done within the documented limitations/restrictions listed. Additional medical or psychological evaluations may be requested should the district feel it is warranted

9.2 Mental Health Screening and Assessment

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

No

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

N/A

- c. What screening tools does the district use (reply yes or no to the options as they apply)?

Screening Tools the District Uses

Yes or No:	Screening Tools
N/A	LDSS 5009 - Mental Health Screening Tool
N/A	The computer assisted version of the Modified Mini Screening tool (MMS)
N/A	Other Screening tool (described here):

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

N/A

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

N/A

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

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

Described below is the district's procedure for determining if an individual, who is unable to work due to mental or physical impairment, has the potential through treatment or other rehabilitative activities to improve the ability to work. This determination is different from the determination of the individual's disability exemption as covered in Section 9.1 of this Plan. Indicate who makes or assists in this determination that an individual can restore or improve employability through treatment or other rehabilitative activities (e.g., medical practitioner, employment worker, TA worker, local review team, etc.). Also indicate the source and type of information used to make the determination (e.g., information from individual's medical practitioner, district contracted provider, specialist evaluation obtained as result of district referral, etc.).

The DSS employment staff will review the medical evidence provided to the Agency and determine based upon the physician/provider information whether or not the individual may be capable of being restored to self-sufficiency. In some instances, the DSS employment staff may feel it necessary to contact the provider to clarify the medical information submitted (i.e.: definition of moderately limited).

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

The DSS employment staff will review all medicals submitted and based upon the recommendations from the provider will notify the individual that as a condition of eligibility they are required to follow through with the treatment recommendations listed on the current medical (i.e.: physical therapy, neurological consult, etc.) The DSS Employment staff will be responsible for tracking cooperation of the individuals on a case-by-case basis.

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

The DSS Employment staff will be responsible for the monitoring of all treatment requirements and will obtain monthly time sheets from rehabilitation providers which will then be entered onto the WTWCMS in a timely manner. Progress reports will be periodically sent to the providers and the updating of the treatment plan will be determined on a case by case.

10. District Certification

10.1 Certification

As a condition of the receipt of federal and State funds the Local District Commissioner of Essex County Department of Social Services submits this Temporary Assistance (TA) and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Employment Plan (Plan) to the New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance. The Plan outlines the administration of employment services for TA and SNAP applicants and recipients for the period January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2025. Submission of this Plan certifies that the district has read and accepts the terms of this certification and hereby affirms that employment services programs will be administered in accordance with all applicable federal and State policies, laws, regulations, and provisions of this Plan.

11/30/20232
Angie Allen
Commissioner