VERMONT STATE PLAN
for
SCSEP (Senior Community Services Employment Program)
Program Years 2024 - 2027

<u>Background and Purpose:</u>

The 2006 Older Americans Act (OAA) Section 503(a)(1) and SCSEP funding criteria requires that Vermont submit a 4-year state plan to the U. S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration that will describe the long term, strategic plan for the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) to cover program years 2023 – 2027. The Vermont State SCSEP Plan is an independent document that outlines a 4-year strategy for the statewide provision of community service employment and other authorized activities for eligible, unemployed, low-income seniors who participate in the SCSEP grants of Vermont. The plan describes how Vermont's two SCSEP grantees, the state and the national programs, work to deliver services at the highest level of collaboration and mutual support. It describes current statewide partnerships and outcomes achieved by expanding partnerships with other programs, initiatives, and entities operating in the state. The plan reflects the development of initiatives and strategies we intend to implement over the course of the plan. It also conveys the importance of the state's role, to convene efforts of key stakeholders—including state and local boards under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)—to work collaboratively to accomplish SCSEP goals.

The Department of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living (DAIL) is the grantee and administrator of the state SCSEP awarded by the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL). Vermont Associates for Training and Development (VATD) is the non-profit operating the national SCSEP awarded by the USDOL. The WorkPlace (TWP) operates the state SCSEP as Vermont's sub-grantee. The specific requirements for the plan are located in 20 CFR 641.315(a).

Involvement of Organizations and Individuals

The input process is enhanced by the state's size and because collaborators are often divisions within the DAIL structure, DAIL sub-grantees, or community organizations that have long-standing relationships with DAIL and/or VATD. Additionally, VATD's parallel role as the operator of the national SCSEP provided a conduit for the cross-program alignment needed for a successful plan.

The State will seek input on this plan through various means from the following organizations and individuals with expertise on issues related to older workers:

- Representatives of the state and Area Agencies on Aging;
- State and local boards under WIOA;
- Public and private nonprofit agencies and organizations providing employment services, including each grantee operating a SCSEP project within the state, except as provided under section 506(a)(3) of OAA and 20 CFR 641.320(b);
- Social service organizations providing services to older individuals;
- Grantees under Title III of OAA;
- Affected communities;
- Unemployed older individuals;
- Community-based organizations serving older individuals;
- Business organizations; and
- Labor organizations.

The DAIL network includes Area Agencies on Aging, ten Aging, and Disabilities Resource Connections (ADRC) sites, Vocational Rehabilitation (VR), adult day service providers, grantees under Title III of the OAA, nursing homes, and home health agencies. The Vermont Department of Labor (VDOL) network includes Workforce Investment Opportunity Act (WIOA) partner organizations, business, labor, state government, community employment organizations, and the State Workforce Development Board (SWDB). The National grantee, VATD, has a well developed network, which includes non-profit host sites, post- secondary education, certification training programs, Vermont Chamber of Commerce, business and industry associations, and

numerous other partners. Our sub-grantee, TWP, is in the process of developing a similar network, with the assistance of DVR (please note, we are in the early stages of our relationship with TWP, they become the sub-grantee at the beginning the PY23).

Solicitation and Collection of Public Input

DAIL is requesting stakeholder input via e-mail alerts specifically soliciting input across these broad networks. Electronic alerts serve the rural geography of Vermont well by assuring statewide access for input more comprehensively than a centrally held public forum process. Links to the draft plan will be on the DAIL and the Department of Libraries website. DAIL will be notifying members of the public about the plan through notices in media statewide. The plan will be posted on the DAIL website for the period March 10th 2024 through March 23rd 2024. The plan may be updated to include the input gathered after the plan submission date.

Program Transition & Updates

The 2024 – 2027 Program Year will be the first with a new State Program Sub-Grantee, The WorkPlace (TWP). We have a shared goal of ensuring SCSEP functioning as a workforce development program, in collaboration with state workforce development partners & systems. We envision, to the extent possible, SCSEP Participant co-enrollment, providing the opportunity to braid services and supports, not only for the participant of service, but also the businesses within our labor markets.

Working in partnership with our Sub-Grantee, The WorkPlace (TWP), we look forward to the following service delivery.

Assessments and individual employment plans (IEPs): Assessments and individual employment plans (IEPs) will continue to be completed upon entry and then updated as needed, at minimum of every six months. Assessment and IEP development commences at the beginning of the intake and enrollment process. Based on the participant's progress made toward achieving the goals outlined in the IEP or the identification of new issues to be addressed, and IEP update is conducted. The IEP is updated when needed, no less than every six months. A

new skill development and needs assessment takes place and a revised/updated IEP is developed jointly between the participant, counselor and training site supervisor as needed. The IEP is jointly developed by the participant and the counselor. It is designed to improve the participant's skills and increase employability. All goals are written in the participant's own words—ensuring they are those of the participant. Both the participant and the counselor have responsibilities outlined for the plan's achievement. Once the goals, action steps to goal achievement are mutually agreed upon, the participant and counselor both sign the plan as acknowledgement that both parties agree to its content and work toward its achievement.

Assessment: A comprehensive assessment and knowledge of community resources are key in establishing realistic IEPs that can lead to unsubsidized employment. Consequently, prior to establishing a community service assignment, an assessment process is conducted identifying vocational interest, existing and needed skills for employment in that area, strengths and weaknesses, and barriers to employment. Assessments identify what participants may need to be successful including services that be acquired through other partner programs. Additional assessments are utilized, such as O*Net's interest profiler, My Next Move (including My Next Move for Veterans), and the labor market information to determine Bright Outlook employment in their geographic area that matches their employment interests. This assessment information is used by career counselors, who work to develop trusting, mutuallyrespectful relationships, to further explore the individual's interests and barriers as some barriers are not disclosed during initial conversations. Based on this information, a plan is jointly developed by the participant and counselor to address skills development needs and barriers to training participation and/or employment. Counselors introduce participants to community programs and providers who can assist in specific areas such as disability services (including, but not limited to, local rehabilitation services, mental health authorities and employment networks), services for veterans (including, but not limited to, the DVOPs and LVERS located within the American Job Center system, and services of the VA medical and community centers), and services for the aging (including, but not limited to, area agencies on aging, senior services and community action programs). Many of these organizations also coordinate transportation resources for specific populations such as elderly, veterans, and

individuals with disabilities. In addition, public transportation resources are utilized to determine which have disability navigator services which help the public in need of assistance to navigate the public transit system.

Community Service Work-Based Training: TWP will recruit and select host agency organizations based on relevant factors that determine the host agency's ability to provide quality job training. This process has three steps. The first step of this process is the distribution of an application to identify new host agencies. This enables TWP to develop an inventory of eligible host agencies. TWP reaches out directly to existing partners in its other programs throughout the proposed areas via host agency information sessions organized by staff and through public service announcements. Second, TWP asks its partners for referrals to potential host agencies. Staff reaches out to the agencies referred to inform them about SCSEP and initiate discussions about serving as a host agency. Third, TWP conducts an outreach campaign to other potential host agencies using email, and telephone contact to begin the engagement process.

TWP uses a community service assessment to determine whether the host agency will provide quality job training. This assessment asks the agencies about staffing, hiring needs, the number of services they provide, and various other factors that help determine their potential for providing quality job training. To qualify as a SCSEP host training sites, organizations must be able to provide real skill training for jobs available in the current labor market, provide adequate on-site participant supervision, make job openings known to qualified participants, encourage participants to apply for appropriate opportunities and to help them prepare for job interviews.

TWP determines whether potential host agencies' community service needs align with SCSEP's stated goals by administering a host agency screening tool. The screening tool aligns with SCSEP's goals and guides staff through their early conversations with potential host agencies. The screening tool also includes elements to help determine whether host agencies can provide appropriate training opportunities. These elements are based on the skill needs for industries and careers for which there are current employment opportunities and projected future growth. The host agencies selected must demonstrate their compatibility with SCSEP's goals

and capacity to provide training/experience valuable to employers.

Home-Based Training: TWP is open to home-based training options provided said options follows health and safety guidelines. TWP has provided a series of training initiatives to participants enrolled in the program in addition to community service training. Other training is determined by assessing the need for different types of general training, specialized training, and On-the-Job Experience among older, low-income workers—while acknowledging the realities of technology in current jobs. TWP takes these needs into consideration in developing its employment plans. Some participants may not possess the computer skills necessary to perform in today's job market. Providing such skill development helps our job candidates compete for unsubsidized employment. Computer skills training is offered in two ways. Those who learn best in a classroom environment receive instruction from providers on the WIOA Eligible Training Provider List. Where possible, *MaturityWorks* will leverage TWP's new RemoteWorks programming to support home-based training/work options for participants.

Orientation: *MaturityWorks* introduces program participants and host agencies to program requirements, roles, responsibilities, and activities at program orientation for participants or during new host agency development meetings. Participant orientation takes place upon enrollment and prior to placement in a community service assignment. Participants and host agencies each receive a program manual developed specifically for their use which outline program requirements, roles and responsibilities, permissible and non-permissible activities. Counselors review each page of the participant program manual during orientation; the participant initials the bottom of each page acknowledging a clear understanding of its contents. Host agencies manuals are reviewed during initial meetings with a new entity applying to become a host agency and reviewed again during quarterly host agency webinars. At any time needed, the manuals are used to reinforce and re-educate both participants and host agencies of program policies, procedures, etc.

Transportation/Support Services: TWP will offer several services to participants through the program. These services include transportation subsidies, work gear, and educational services

such as classes and books where applicable. This funding comes from SCSEP resources only after other funding such as WIOA is exhausted. Similar supportive services are offered to participants once they are placed in unsubsidized jobs to help them retrain those positions and can include financial counseling, professional attire, etc.

TWP has found this wraparound approach to service delivery has increased accessibility, participation in, and commitment to the SCSEP program as a whole. Older workers often have unique needs that they cannot support on smaller incomes. By connecting these individuals to the resources, they need, the program produces a higher quality of work and improved participant outcomes.

I.   Economic Projections and Impact

A. **Long term projections for job growth in occupations in the state that may provide employment opportunities for older workers**

The source for Table 1 below is the *Vermont Department of Labor: Economic & Labor Market Information*

Vermont's Growing Industries

Industries that have the fastest growing segments between the years 2020 and 2030 include the following: Natural Resources and Mining (Crop Production and Animal Production), Manufacturing (Beverage Manufacturing and Textile / Apparel Manufacturing), Wholesale Trade (Electronic Markets, Agents and Brokers), Leisure and Hospitality (Performing Arts, Spectator Sports and Related Industries) and Health Services (Social Assistance).

Table 1-Industry Growth

VERMONT LONG TERM INDUSTRY PROJECTIONS

2020 - 2030

NAICS Industry	2000 Employment	2020 Employment	2030 Employment	Annual Growth %	
				Actual 2000 - 2020	Projected 2020 - 2030
Private Industry					
Natural Resources and Mining					
111 Crop Production	532	1,173	1,551	4.0%	2.8%
112 Animal Production	1,017	1,809	1,788	2.9%	-0.1%
113 Forestry and Logging	185	196	218	0.3%	1.1%
115 Agriculture and Forestry Support Activities	346	320	311	-0.4%	-0.3%
212 Mining (except Oil and Gas)	972	578	547	-2.6%	-0.5%
213 Support Activities for Mining	na	n	n	na	na
Utilities					
221 Utilities	1,692	1,199	1,178	-1.7%	-0.2%
Construction					
236 Construction of Buildings	4,216	3,978	4,322	-0.3%	0.8%
237 Heavy and Civil Engineering Construction	2,070	1,357	1,331	-2.1%	-0.2%
238 Specialty Trade Contractors	8,614	8,946	9,856	0.2%	1.0%
Manufacturing					
311 Food Manufacturing	4,192	5,226	5,425	1.1%	0.4%
312 Beverage & Tobacco Product Manufacturing	244	918	1,684	6.8%	6.3%
313 Textile Mills	279	122	134	-4.1%	0.9%
314 Textile Product Mills	287	56	71	-7.8%	2.4%
315 Apparel Manufacturing	701	385	518	-3.0%	3.0%
316 Leather and Allied Product Manufacturing	n	n	n	na	na
321 Wood Product Manufacturing	3,007	1,439	1,465	-3.6%	0.2%
322 Paper Manufacturing	1,722	656	612	-4.7%	-0.7%
323 Printing and Related Support Activities	2,374	873	867	-4.9%	-0.1%
324 Petroleum and Coal Products Manufacturing	n	59	65	na	1.0%
325 Chemical Manufacturing	1,044	1,399	1,466	1.5%	0.5%
326 Plastics and Rubber Products Manufacturing	1,849	1,205	1,225	-2.1%	0.2%
327 Nonmetallic Mineral Product Manufacturing	2,191	1,432	1,533	-2.1%	0.7%
331 Primary Metal Manufacturing	592	n	n	na	na
332 Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing	2,621	1,756	1,698	-2.0%	-0.3%
333 Machinery Manufacturing	4,439	2,592	2,466	-2.7%	-0.5%
334 Computer and Electronic Product Mfg.	11,128	4,341	4,127	-4.6%	-0.5%
335 Electrical Equipment and Appliances Mfg.	1,407	1,042	1,035	-1.5%	-0.1%
336 Transportation Equipment Manufacturing	3,315	1,784	1,848	-3.1%	0.4%
337 Furniture and Related Product Mfg.	3,295	1,139	1,200	-5.2%	0.5%
339 Miscellaneous Manufacturing	1,585	1,595	1,706	0.0%	0.7%
Wholesale Trade					
423 Merchant Wholesalers, Durable Goods	4,560	3,808	3,979	-0.9%	0.4%
424 Merchant Wholesalers, Nondurable Goods	5,006	4,621	4,673	-0.4%	0.1%
425 Wholesale Electronic Markets, Agents, Brokers	85	293	303	6.4%	0.3%

Retail Trade					
441 Motor Vehicle and Parts Dealers	4,743	4,684	5,470	-0.1%	1.6%
442 Furniture and Home Furnishings Stores	1,106	740	814	-2.0%	1.0%
443 Electronics and Appliance Stores	884	523	445	-2.6%	-1.6%
444 Building Material and Garden Supply Stores	3,209	3,595	3,900	0.6%	0.8%
445 Food and Beverage Stores	9,774	9,419	9,753	-0.2%	0.3%
446 Health and Personal Care Stores	1,836	1,654	1,606	-0.5%	-0.3%
447 Gasoline Stations	3,640	3,543	3,496	-0.1%	-0.1%
448 Clothing and Clothing Accessories Stores	2,608	1,324	1,574	-3.3%	1.7%
451 Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book and Music Stores	2,158	1,418	1,652	-2.1%	1.5%
452 General Merchandise Stores	3,916	2,993	3,292	-1.3%	1.0%
453 Miscellaneous Store Retailers	3,132	1,615	1,874	-3.3%	1.5%
454 Nonstore Retailers	2,719	2,191	2,213	-1.1%	0.1%
Transportation & Warehousing					
481 Air Transportation	223	115	119	-3.3%	0.3%
482 Rail Transportation	245	n	n	na	na
483 Water Transportation	n	n	n	na	na
484 Truck Transportation	2,760	2,006	1,886	-1.6%	-0.6%
485 Transit and Ground Passenger Transport	1,259	1,009	1,381	-1.1%	3.2%
487 Scenic and Sightseeing Transportation	42	n	n	na	na
488 Support Activities for Transportation	438	499	509	0.7%	0.2%
492 Couriers and Messengers	1,184	1,264	1,492	0.3%	1.7%
493 Warehousing and Storage	1,024	1,222	1,477	0.9%	1.9%
Information					
511 Publishing Industries (except Internet)	2,552	1,461	1,460	-2.8%	0.0%
512 Motion Picture and Sound Recording Industries	534	216	357	-4.4%	5.2%
515 Broadcasting (except Internet)	803	622	579	-1.3%	-0.7%
517 Telecommunications	2,039	824	692	-4.4%	-1.7%
518 Data Processing, Hosting, and Related Services	518	390	430	-1.4%	1.0%
519 Other Information Services	459	450	656	-0.1%	3.8%
Financial Activities					
522 Credit Intermediation and Related Activities	4,777	4,152	3,970	-0.7%	-0.4%
523 Securities, Commodity Contracts, & Investments	781	848	896	0.4%	0.6%
524 Insurance Carriers and Related Activities	3,976	4,051	4,106	0.1%	0.1%
525 Funds, Trusts, and Other Financial Vehicles	na	20	22	na	1.0%
531 Real Estate	1,708	2,253	2,605	1.4%	1.5%
532 Rental & Leasing Services	1,262	577	717	-3.8%	2.2%
533 Lessors of Nonfinancial Intangible Assets	46	23	25	-3.4%	0.8%
Professional and Business Services					
541 Professional, Scientific & Technical Services	12,230	15,070	17,259	1.0%	1.4%
551 Management of Companies and Enterprises	n	2,061	2,100	na	0.2%
561 Administrative and Support Services	7,455	10,284	12,580	1.6%	2.0%
562 Waste Management and Remediation Services	787	1,104	1,123	1.7%	0.2%
Educational and Health Services					
611 Educational Services (incl. Public Education)	33,802	36,198	39,119	0.3%	0.8%
621 Ambulatory Health Care Services	13,602	16,335	18,808	0.9%	1.4%
622 Hospitals (incl. State Hospital)	9,859	14,059	15,342	1.8%	0.9%

623 Nursing and Residential Care Facilities	6,187	7,125	7,843	0.7%	1.0%
624 Social Assistance	5,463	11,781	14,829	3.9%	2.3%
Leisure and Hospitality					
711 Perf. Arts, Spectator Sports, & Rel. Industries	564	503	1,122	-0.6%	8.4%
712 Museums, Historical Sites, Zoos and Parks	364	446	634	1.0%	3.6%
713 Amusement, Gambling & Recreation	2,380	2,237	3,067	-0.3%	3.2%
721 Accommodation	11,752	7,829	12,082	-2.0%	4.4%
722 Food Services and Drinking Places	17,949	14,978	20,878	-0.9%	3.4%
Other Services					
811 Repair and Maintenance	2,932	2,652	2,882	-0.5%	0.8%
812 Personal and Laundry Services	2,180	1,577	1,984	-1.6%	2.3%
813 Religious, Grantmaking, Civic, & Prof. Orgs.	n	4,907	5,272	na	0.7%
814 Private Households	1,167	514	565	-4.0%	1.0%
Total Private Industry Employment *	274,913	262,250	296,790	na	0.2%
Total Federal Government Employment	6,063	7,371	7,648	1.1%	0.4%
Federal Government (excl. Postal Service)	3,646	5,764	6,073	2.6%	0.5%
Postal Service	2,417	1,607	1,575	-2.2%	-0.2%
State Government (excl. Education, Hospitals)	8,895	9,416	9,906	0.3%	0.5%
Local Government (excl. Education)	7,019	8,011	8,635	0.7%	0.8%
Total Government Employment	21,977	24,798	26,189	0.7%	0.5%
Total Wage & Salary Employment **	296,890	287,048	322,979	-0.2%	1.2%
Self-Employed and Unpaid Family Workers	40,147	41,200	44,600	0.1%	0.8%
Total Employment **	337,037	328,248	367,579	-0.1%	1.1%

n - data do not meet disclosure standards

na - not available

* Total Private Industry employment includes public education and state hospital employment.

** Employment totals include suppressed values and do not equal the sum of the disclosed industry line items

NAICS Refers to the North American Industry Classification System.

Growth rates are compound average annual rates.

last updated July 2022

B. Growth Occupations that Offer Career Opportunities for SCSEP Participants

Vermont's SCSEP project provides training in occupations that are shown to be high growth, high demand, and also have opportunities that are accessible to the SCSEP population. Such targeted occupations that provide career opportunities for participants include healthcare occupations (such as Licensed Nursing Assistants, Personal Care Attendants, Medical Assistants,

Pharmacy Technicians, and Medical Receptionists), retail sales occupations (such as cashiers, sales clerks, and stock clerks), customer service occupations (such as customer service representatives, receptionists, call center agents, and front desk clerks) and food preparation and service (such as cooks, cafeteria workers, bakers, and hosts/hostesses). In addition, many participants express interest in the human service sector because they can contribute life experience, maturity, and make a difference in their communities and towns.

Vermont has targeted growth industries from which to guide host site development and needed ancillary training provided by training partners within the community and online. The following table presents the range of high growth jobs, their corresponding training tracks, and the types of host agencies needed for work experiences, skill training, or the on-the-job experiences needed for employment in growth occupations.

Table 2 - Growth Jobs and Related Host Agencies

High Growth Industries	Jobs in Demand	Host Training Sites
Health Care	Licensed Nursing Assistants, Home Health Aide, Personal Care Attendant, Medical Assistant, Pharmacy Technician	Medical centers, hospitals, continuing care facilities, State Health Dept, Red Cross, nursing homes
Environmental Services	Waste management, environmental recovery/reuse, environmental protection, energy efficiency technicians	Municipalities, regional planning commissions, energy audit firms
Education	Teacher, teacher aide, instructional aide, paraeducator	Schools, libraries, adult education services
Finance and Insurance	Teller, IT, support staff, Bookkeeper, A/P Clerk	Town offices, non-profits, finance firms, credit unions

Hospitality	Service staff, IT, telemarketing, front desk, housekeepers	Nutrition programs, homeless shelters, cafeterias, nursing homes, senior centers
Human Services	Activity Coordinator, Information & Referral Specialist, Outreach Specialist	State & Area Agencies on Aging, Veterans Outreach & Assistance, Catholic Charities, senior centers
Retail & Customer Service	Greeter, merchandiser, sales clerk, Asst. Manager	Hospital gift shops Goodwill Industries, Salvation Army thrift shop
Manufacturing	Shipping/receiving clerk, supervisory, warehouse	Emergency management centers, National Guard, warehouses, food shelves
Child Care, Adult/Senior Care	Child Development Specialist, Adult Day Program Aide	Parent-child centers, disability programs, senior, and advocacy centers
Food Preparation, Food Service	Cooks, chefs, cafeteria workers, Servers, Hosts/Hostesses, Line Cooks, food preparation workers	Meals on Wheels, senior centers, schools, adult day centers, hospitals
Jobs in variety of industries that require basic math, reading, computer literacy, communication & problem-solving skills	Customer Service, Data Entry, Reception, Admin Assistant, Security	Historical museums, local and state arts councils, community and faith-based organizations

Host sites are developed to assure that participants gain skills that will lead to the best match in high demand occupations by locating sites that will not only comply with all SCSEP requirements but also will authentically support the participants' skills development and job searches. Vermont combines meaningful training—that will enhance unsubsidized employability—with host sites that are willing and able to teach quality marketable skills that

reflect the occupations in Table 2. The quality of host agencies directly affects the participants' abilities to transition into meaningful and satisfying unsubsidized employment. Host sites that have the potential to hire the participant are prioritized.

Vermont SCSEP encourages and supports participants to engage in additional training alongside their community service assignments. Through our partnerships with training organizations, and by leveraging other types of funding such as through WIOA and VSAC, Vermont participants are able to enroll in classroom and/or community-based trainings that align with their training needs. Examples include the ServSafe Food Handler Certification, and courses such as Managing Customer Service. Since digital literacy and basic computer skills are pre-requisites for almost any job, all program participants engage in computer training as well. One–Stop Career Centers, community colleges, senior centers, adult vocational technical centers, community action organizations, and many other partner organizations provide ancillary skill development.

Vermont SCSEP encourages participants who arrive with pre-requisite skills and aptitudes pertinent to healthcare occupations to explore the many opportunities for employment in that sector. To this end, Vermont has created partnerships with for-profit and non-profit healthcare providers, as well as training providers that provide education related to the healthcare field. Vermont's has worked with the Visiting Nurse Association and technical education centers to collaborate on training opportunities for participants. These efforts have provided opportunities for certifications and credentials that qualify participants for careers such as Licensed Nursing Assistants, Personal Care Aides, Medical Receptionists, Medical Coders, Pharmacy Technicians, and Companion Care. We have also developed partnerships in the for-profit sector with large employers like CVS Health, which has opened its doors to program participants for job shadowing, practice interviewing, and guidance in completing applications for employment. Many more opportunities for partnership exist within the healthcare industry and will remain a key area of strategic focus.

The example of development in this growth area illustrates how Vermont works to develop a broad range of host agencies to assure that positions are relevant to the needs, interests, and abilities of the participants and to the high growth jobs identified in Vermont's labor market.

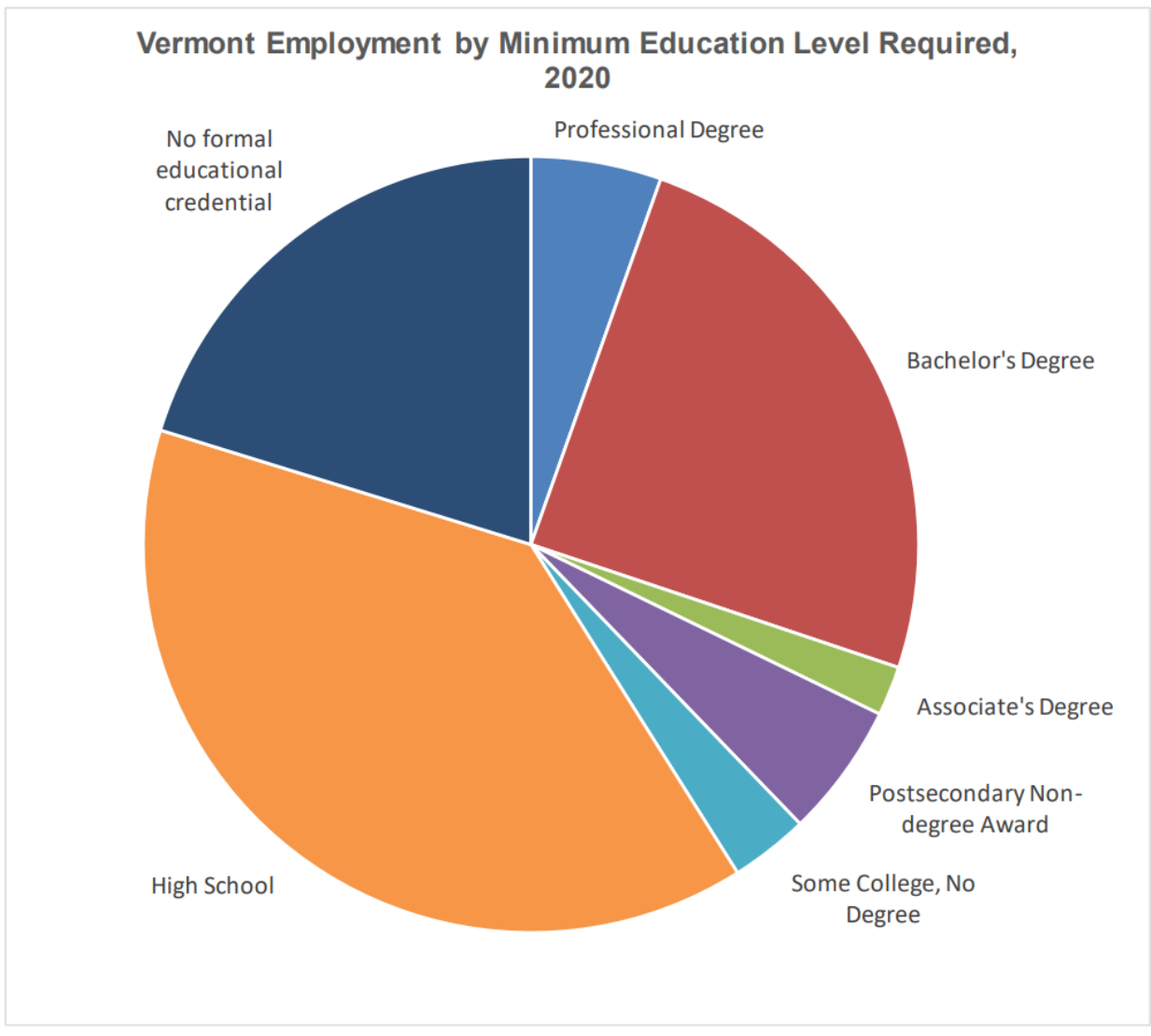**C. Occupations with the Largest New Job Growth or Openings**

Table 3 represents the estimated number of positions available annually based on a combination of openings due to industry growth and employee turnover. Therefore, occupations with the most openings include those with the most additions, but also those that have a significant turnover. Vermont projections for jobs with the highest annual openings are retail and cashier, personal health care (practitioners, care aides & support), and food service. (Its source is also the Vermont Department of Labor: Economic and Labor Market Information).

Table 3 – Occupations with the Most Growth

Occupational Projections and Wages, by Educational Level, Vermont, 2020-2030

Table 1

Typical Education Level for Entry	% Share of Employment 2020	Change in Employment 2020-2030	% Change in Employment 2020-2030	Annual Openings 2020-2030	Median Annual Occupational Wage, 2021
Professional Degree	5%	2,214	12.4%	1,478	n/a
Bachelor's Degree	25%	9,574	11.8%	7,803	n/a
Associate's Degree	2%	577	8.5%	678	$49,260
Postsecondary Non-degree Award	6%	1,813	9.9%	2,115	n/a
Some College, No Degree	3%	605	5.6%	1,134	$47,210
High School	39%	12,255	9.6%	15,847	$45,720
No formal educational credential	20%	12,293	18.5%	12,047	$29,850
Total	100%	39,331	12.0%	41,722	$46,002

Vermont Employment by Minimum Education Level Required, 2020

Professional Degree Most Openings	Growth	Openings	Med. Wage
Educational, Guidance, School, and Vocational Counselors	1.1%	108	$28.54
Lawyers	1.1%	97	$37.73
Postsecondary Teachers, All Other	0.5%	73	$100,060/yr
Mental Health and Substance Abuse Social Workers	1.4%	72	$22.96
Education Administrators, Elementary and Secondary School	0.7%	67	$98,500/yr
Education Administrators, Postsecondary	0.7%	64	$36.08
Librarians and Media Collections Specialists	1.3%	63	$27.16
Nurse Practitioners	4.4%	58	$48.94
Rehabilitation Counselors	1.0%	58	$18.51
Healthcare Social Workers	1.5%	57	$23.90
Physical Therapists	2.1%	53	$37.66
Instructional Coordinators	0.9%	38	$29.85
Physicians, All Other; and Ophthalmologists, Except Pediatric	0.3%	28	n/a
Speech-Language Pathologists	2.0%	27	$37.17
Physician Assistants	2.7%	25	$61.17
English Language and Literature Teachers, Postsecondary	0.6%	22	$80,710/yr
Pharmacists	0.1%	21	$61.87
Veterinarians	2.2%	20	$47.32
Clinical, Counseling, and School Psychologists	0.9%	20	n/a
Counselors, All Other	1.2%	19	$18.52
Occupational Therapists	1.6%	15	$37.38
Biological Science Teachers, Postsecondary	1.1%	15	$81,440/yr
Dentists, General	0.7%	15	$63.35
Nursing Instructors and Teachers, Postsecondary	2.0%	14	$63,740/yr
Acupuncturists & Healthcare Diagnosing or Treating Practitioners, All Other	1.0%	14	n/a

Professional Degree Fastest Growth	Growth	Openings	Med. Wage
Nurse Practitioners	4.4%	58	$48.94
Statisticians	2.8%	11	$38.07
Physician Assistants	2.7%	25	$61.17
Veterinarians	2.2%	20	$47.32
Physical Therapists	2.1%	53	$37.66
Curators	2.1%	7	$12.35
Economists	2.1%	4	$39.28
Speech-Language Pathologists	2.0%	27	$37.17
Nursing Instructors and Teachers, Postsecondary	2.0%	14	$63,740/yr
Occupational Therapists	1.6%	15	$37.38
Healthcare Social Workers	1.5%	57	$23.90
Philosophy and Religion Teachers, Postsecondary	1.5%	4	$81,250/yr
Medical Scientists, Except Epidemiologists	1.4%	6	$28.91
Mental Health and Substance Abuse Social Workers	1.4%	72	$22.96
Librarians and Media Collections Specialists	1.3%	63	$27.16
Engineering Teachers, Postsecondary	1.3%	9	n/a
Counselors, All Other	1.2%	19	$18.52
Anthropologists and Archeologists	1.2%	8	$28.41
Biological Science Teachers, Postsecondary	1.1%	15	$81,440/yr
Educational, Guidance, School, and Vocational Counselors	1.1%	108	$28.54
Lawyers	1.1%	97	$37.73
Nurse Anesthetists	1.0%	5	$80.98
Chiropractors	1.0%	4	$36.06
Rehabilitation Counselors	1.0%	58	$18.51
Acupuncturists & Healthcare Diagnosing or Treating Practitioners, All Other	1.0%	14	n/a

*Med. Wage is median hourly wage, except where noted, from May 2021 Occ. Emp. and Wage estimates

Bachelor's Degree Most Openings	Growth	Openings	Med. Wage
General and Operations Managers	1.3%	524	$36.85
Registered Nurses	1.0%	446	$36.24
Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education	0.6%	307	$61,220/yr
Software Developers and Software Quality Assurance Analysts and Testers	2.1%	272	n/a
Coaches and Scouts	3.2%	262	$47,800/yr
Accountants and Auditors	1.0%	254	$33.43
Secondary School Teachers, Except Special & Career/Technical Education	0.7%	230	$61,130/yr
Substance Abuse, Behavioral Disorder, and Mental Health Counselors	2.0%	227	$22.75
Project Mgmt Specialists and Business Operations Specialists, All Other	0.7%	202	n/a
Compliance Officers	0.6%	194	$37.60
Management Analysts	1.8%	191	$43.89
Teachers and Instructors, All Other, Except Substitute Teachers	1.8%	169	n/a
Substitute Teachers, Short-Term	1.3%	169	$14.00
Medical and Health Services Managers	2.9%	162	$47.51
Market Research Analysts and Marketing Specialists	2.3%	141	$29.32
Financial Managers	1.9%	134	$48.97
Construction Managers	1.5%	133	$38.54
Child, Family, and School Social Workers	1.3%	130	$23.72
Human Resources Specialists	1.2%	114	$29.65
Social and Community Service Managers	1.1%	114	$29.76
Administrative Services and Facilities Managers	1.0%	94	n/a
Public Relations Specialists	1.4%	93	$24.06
Middle School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education	0.7%	90	$60,340/yr
Writers and Authors	1.3%	84	$24.42
Buyers and Purchasing Agents	-0.2%	84	$29.45

Bachelor's Degree Fastest Growth	Growth	Openings	Med. Wage
Data Scientists and Mathematical Science Occupations, All Other	4.0%	5	n/a
Coaches and Scouts	3.2%	262	$47,800/yr
Information Security Analysts	3.0%	12	n/a
Medical and Health Services Managers	2.9%	162	$47.51
Interpreters and Translators	2.9%	29	$23.29
Logisticians	2.8%	23	$30.75
Meeting, Convention, and Event Planners	2.5%	42	$22.67
Operations Research Analysts	2.5%	16	$37.71
Market Research Analysts and Marketing Specialists	2.3%	141	$29.32
Camera Operators, Television, Video, and Motion Picture	2.2%	19	$18.91
Multimedia Artists and Animators	2.1%	7	$30.02
Software Developers and Software Quality Assurance Analysts and Testers	2.1%	272	n/a
Athletic Trainers	2.1%	13	$59,320/yr
Producers and Directors	2.1%	27	$23.68
Substance Abuse, Behavioral Disorder, and Mental Health Counselors	2.0%	227	$22.75
Financial Managers	1.9%	134	$48.97
Management Analysts	1.8%	191	$43.89
Teachers and Instructors, All Other, Except Substitute Teachers	1.8%	169	n/a
Web Developers and Digital Interface Designers	1.7%	42	n/a
Museum Technicians and Conservators	1.6%	5	$22.89
Art Directors	1.6%	44	$38.92
Construction Managers	1.5%	133	$38.54
Education Administrators, All Other	1.5%	24	$28.87
Advertising and Promotions Managers	1.5%	6	$45.74
Community and Social Service Specialists, All Other	1.5%	51	$22.46

Some College** Most Openings	Growth	Openings	Med. Wage
Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks	0.3%	532	$22.70
Teaching Assistants, Except Postsecondary	0.8%	417	$36,360/yr
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	0.3%	382	$23.52
Nursing Assistants	0.8%	338	$17.59
Automotive Service Technicians and Mechanics	0.3%	200	$22.43
Medical Assistants	1.6%	164	$17.88
Hairdressers, Hairstylists, and Cosmetologists	2.3%	151	$11.79
Computer User Support Specialists	1.3%	120	$28.90
Massage Therapists	2.7%	102	$23.00
Preschool Teachers, Except Special Education	1.5%	100	$17.54
Heating, Air Conditioning, and Refrigeration Mechanics and Installers	0.5%	100	$28.55
Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	1.0%	90	$28.27
Paralegals and Legal Assistants	1.3%	87	$23.68
Medical Dosimetrists, Medical Records Specialists, and Health Technologis	1.1%	74	n/a
Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedics	1.0%	68	n/a
Order Clerks	-1.3%	52	$14.32
Veterinary Technologists and Technicians	1.7%	44	$17.61
Dental Assistants	0.9%	39	$22.55
Dental Hygienists	0.9%	39	$36.74
Radiologic Technologists	0.8%	37	$29.62
Phlebotomists	1.4%	31	$17.59
Computer Network Support Specialists	1.2%	26	$29.71
Psychiatric Technicians	1.0%	26	$17.87
Library Technicians	-0.1%	26	$18.18
Audio and Video Equipment Technicians	3.8%	25	$18.48

Some College** Fastest Growth	Growth	Openings	Med. Wage
Audio and Video Equipment Technicians	3.8%	25	$18.48
Physical Therapist Assistants	2.9%	19	$29.44
Massage Therapists	2.7%	102	$23.00
Respiratory Therapists	2.3%	13	$29.30
Hairdressers, Hairstylists, and Cosmetologists	2.3%	151	$11.79
Computer Numerically Controlled Tool Programmers	2.2%	12	$29.40
Motorcycle Mechanics	1.8%	8	$22.45
Veterinary Technologists and Technicians	1.7%	44	$17.61
Medical Assistants	1.6%	164	$17.88
Diagnostic Medical Sonographers	1.6%	10	$38.16
Preschool Teachers, Except Special Education	1.5%	100	$17.54
Phlebotomists	1.4%	31	$17.59
Computer User Support Specialists	1.3%	120	$28.90
Paralegals and Legal Assistants	1.3%	87	$23.68
Computer Network Support Specialists	1.2%	26	$29.71
Health Information Technologists, Medical Registrars, Surgical Assistants,	1.1%	6	n/a
Ophthalmic Medical Technicians	1.1%	15	$21.98
Medical Dosimetrists, Medical Records Specialists, and Health Technologis	1.1%	74	n/a
Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedics	1.0%	68	n/a
Psychiatric Technicians	1.0%	26	$17.87
Dietetic Technicians	1.0%	15	$14.02
Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	1.0%	90	$28.27
Surgical Technologists	0.9%	6	$22.42
Dental Assistants	0.9%	39	$22.55
Dental Hygienists	0.9%	39	$36.74

**Some College includes an Associate's Degree, a Postsecondary non-degree award, or Some College, No Degree.*

High School Most Openings	Growth	Openings	Med. Wage
Home Health and Personal Care Aides	2.9%	1,345	$14.44
Stockers and Order Fillers	1.5%	617	$14.23
Farmers, Ranchers, and Other Agricultural Managers	0.5%	559	n/a
Customer Service Representatives	0.2%	540	$18.13
Secretaries & Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Execut	-0.4%	507	$18.21
Social and Human Service Assistants	1.7%	466	$17.71
First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	0.1%	451	$22.60
Carpenters	0.8%	446	$22.94
Childcare Workers	0.9%	364	$14.07
Light Truck or Delivery Services Drivers	1.0%	333	$18.14
Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	1.6%	320	$22.30
Office Clerks, General	0.0%	318	$18.26
Receptionists and Information Clerks	0.7%	292	$17.22
First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers	2.7%	267	$21.54
Self-Enrichment Education Teachers	3.2%	240	$22.42
Sales Representatives, Wholesale & Mfg, Except Technical/Scientific Prodι	0.6%	233	$29.00
First-Line Supervisors of Office and Administrative Support Workers	0.2%	210	$29.19
Medical Secretaries	0.9%	209	$18.01
Recreation Workers	1.9%	206	$14.77
Miscellaneous Assemblers and Fabricators	-0.2%	204	$17.18
Hotel, Motel, and Resort Desk Clerks	3.6%	195	$14.02
Fitness Trainers and Aerobics Instructors	3.8%	188	$28.47
Security Guards	2.5%	169	$16.03
Chefs and Head Cooks	3.4%	163	$23.09
Driver/Sales Workers	2.0%	163	$14.58

High School Fastest Growth	Growth	Openings	Med. Wage
Baggage Porters and Bellhops	4.6%	13	$12.42
Concierges	4.1%	9	$14.57
Separating, Filtering, Clarifying, Precipitating, & Still Machine Setters, Ope	4.1%	63	$23.24
Fitness Trainers and Aerobics Instructors	3.8%	188	$28.47
Nonfarm Animal Caretakers	3.6%	158	$14.24
Hotel, Motel, and Resort Desk Clerks	3.6%	195	$14.02
Chefs and Head Cooks	3.4%	163	$23.09
Umpires, Referees, and Other Sports Officials	3.3%	10	$38,120/yr
Animal Trainers	3.3%	6	$17.71
Self-Enrichment Education Teachers	3.2%	240	$22.42
Home Health and Personal Care Aides	2.9%	1,345	$14.44
Tour and Travel Guides	2.8%	24	$16.93
First-Line Supervisors of Personal Service & Entertainment & Recreation W	2.7%	83	n/a
First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers	2.7%	267	$21.54
Crematory Operators and Personal Care and Service Workers, All Other	2.7%	9	n/a
Photographers	2.5%	61	$23.59
Security Guards	2.5%	169	$16.03
Bicycle Repairers	2.2%	31	$17.56
Industrial Machinery Mechanics	2.2%	72	$26.69
Molders, Shapers, and Casters, Except Metal and Plastic	2.1%	64	$18.09
Food Service Managers	2.0%	128	$29.02
Driver/Sales Workers	2.0%	163	$14.58
Reservation and Transportation Ticket Agents and Travel Clerks	2.0%	33	$14.24
Motorboat Mechanics and Service Technicians	2.0%	8	$23.19
Farm Equipment Mechanics and Service Technicians	1.9%	12	$22.47

No Formal Educational Credential Most Openings	Growth	Openings	Med. Wage
Cashiers	-0.1%	1,384	$13.74
Retail Salespersons	1.1%	1,279	$14.23
Fast Food and Counter Workers	2.3%	1,051	$13.78
Waiters and Waitresses	3.4%	860	$13.79
Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	1.2%	771	$15.37
Landscaping and Groundskeeping Workers	1.6%	546	$18.21
Cooks, Restaurant	5.5%	474	$17.73
Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	2.1%	435	$14.54
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	1.0%	383	$17.53
Bartenders	4.2%	373	$13.11
Passenger Vehicle Drivers, Except Bus Drivers, Transit and Intercity	2.8%	358	n/a
Construction Laborers	1.3%	326	$18.12
Dishwashers	3.1%	233	$13.55
Dining Room and Cafeteria Attendants and Bartender Helpers	3.7%	221	$13.73
Farmworkers and Laborers, Crop, Nursery, and Greenhouse	2.0%	211	$17.56
Cooks, Institution and Cafeteria	1.3%	193	$17.77
Amusement and Recreation Attendants	4.3%	191	$13.42
Hosts and Hostesses, Restaurant, Lounge, and Coffee Shop	3.7%	171	$13.84
Bakers	2.1%	137	$17.45
Packers and Packagers, Hand	0.8%	131	$14.22
Lifeguards, Ski Patrol, and Other Recreational Protective Service Workers	3.7%	113	$14.34
Painters, Construction and Maintenance	1.1%	109	$22.80
Food Servers, Nonrestaurant	1.7%	99	$14.37
Counter and Rental Clerks	1.8%	95	$17.83
Cleaners of Vehicles and Equipment	1.3%	93	$14.35

No Formal Educational Credential Fastest Growth	Growth	Openings	Med. Wage
Cooks, Restaurant	5.5%	474	$17.73
Amusement and Recreation Attendants	4.3%	191	$13.42
Bartenders	4.2%	373	$13.11
Miscellaneous Entertainers and Performers, Sports and Related Workers	4.1%	20	n/a
Lifeguards, Ski Patrol, and Other Recreational Protective Service Workers	3.7%	113	$14.34
Hosts and Hostesses, Restaurant, Lounge, and Coffee Shop	3.7%	171	$13.84
Dining Room and Cafeteria Attendants and Bartender Helpers	3.7%	221	$13.73
Waiters and Waitresses	3.4%	860	$13.79
Demonstrators and Product Promoters	3.2%	25	$17.59
Dishwashers	3.1%	233	$13.55
Passenger Vehicle Drivers, Except Bus Drivers, Transit and Intercity	2.8%	358	n/a
Crossing Guards	2.6%	78	$17.48
Cooks, All Other	2.5%	7	$14.99
Musicians and Singers	2.3%	18	$29.22
Motor Vehicle Operators, All Other	2.3%	18	$11.75
Fast Food and Counter Workers	2.3%	1,051	$13.78
Parking Lot Attendants	2.1%	18	$14.19
Bakers	2.1%	137	$17.45
Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	2.1%	435	$14.54
Farmworkers and Laborers, Crop, Nursery, and Greenhouse	2.0%	211	$17.56
Counter and Rental Clerks	1.8%	95	$17.83
Food Servers, Nonrestaurant	1.7%	99	$14.37
Laundry and Dry-Cleaning Workers	1.7%	44	$14.38
Landscaping and Groundskeeping Workers	1.6%	546	$18.21
Cleaners of Vehicles and Equipment	1.3%	93	$14.35

II.   **Service Delivery and Coordination**

A. Detailed Descriptions of Actions

1. Actions to Coordinate SCSEP Activities with WIOA Title 1

Vermont SCSEP has staff collaborating with the One-Stop Centers, which serve as the central clearinghouse for all workforce development programs under WIOA. This allows staff to connect older workers with VDOL services, potentially meeting specific needs. The shared resources and space also serve to increase older workers' utilization of the One-Stop Centers. Vermont will continue to collaborate closely with VDOL via cross referrals, committee work, shared initiatives and, most importantly, to assure that seamless services to access all available resources is maximized between SCSEP and VDOL. The individual's SCSEP training plan requires participants be fully engaged at their One-Stop Career Centers in Vermont.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Vermont State Workforce Development Board and the Required and Additional Partners of the America Job Center Network was signed on April 9th 2022. The MOU serves as a framework for developing and aligning Vermont's workforce preparation and employment system so that it meets the needs of businesses, job seekers, and those who want to further their careers. As a result of the MOU, the quantity and appropriateness of participant referrals among workforce and community partners has increased, and the coordination and delivery of career services has improved. Individuals are more able to access opportunities for employment education, training, and support services.

2. Planned actions to coordinate activities of SCSEP grantees' activities in the State under other titles of the OAA

Vermont State Agency of Human Services has located SCSEP and the Older American Act (OAA) administration within DAIL, which administers both. Coordination happens as a matter of course under the direction of the Commissioner of DAIL and the team assigned to OAA activities and grants. The day-to-day administration of the SCSEP program falls under DAIL's Vocational Rehabilitation Division (VR). The Business, Legislative & Community Outreach Manager position within VR will manage SCSEP. This will enable DAIL to have close

partnership with AHS's Division of HireAbility Vermont and the employer community. It will also provide further opportunities to align SCSEP with other programs for mature workers.

At the local level, community senior centers provide health, wellness, and recreational activities. Vermont has five Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) that either provide or arrange OAA services that consist of case management; health promotion and disease prevention; information, referral and assistance; and legal assistance and family caregiver support. DAIL is also the administering entity for the Aging and Disabilities Resource Connections (ADRC), which has a statewide presence. Their outcome has been to improve continuity across the aging network, to bridge gaps, and to improve the information and referral system. The Vermont 211 service is a statewide information and referral service capturing all services for the aging population in one place.

3. Actions to coordinate SCSEP with other private/public entities providing services to older Americans such as community and faith-based organizations, transportation programs and programs for those with special needs or disabilities.

Many of the local organizations previously identified have close working connections to public/private entities in their regions as well as on-going partnerships with local faith-based establishments and transportation providers. Vermont's rural environment requires local partnership development and dependence especially in the area of transportation because there are very few public transportation systems in the state. With the SCSEP program being coordinated within the Vocational Rehabilitation Division (VR) of DAIL, there is excellent coordination with the state's disability service providers and overall community. In addition, referrals exchanged between SCSEP and VR are being reviewed to make this process into a seamless partnership. It is clear the resources of each of these programs enhances the other.

4. Actions to coordinate activities of SCSEP with other labor market and job training programs

Activities are being carried out in the state under title I of WIOA, including plans for using the WIOA One-Stop delivery system and its partners to serve individuals aged 55 and older. Vermont collaborates closely and effectively with the One-Stop Centers. From the leadership perspective, Commissioners and key managers of VDOL have actively engaged with SCSEP over the years, reaching out to invite SCSEP participation in One-Stop and WIOA initiatives, which assures that SCSEP is integrated into the One-Stop deliver system. VDOL and its regional centers collaborate to coordinate the provision of services to older workers under the One-Stop model. Staffs that are co-located at One-Stop Centers ensure that SCSEP participants register for relevant training services. They regularly search the job database for job matches that meet the participants' goals, and they partner with One-Stop Career Center staff on employer engagement strategies such as mature specific workshops, career exploration and the One-Stop rapid response to business closures.

5. Actions the State will take to ensure that SCSEP is an active partner in the one-stop delivery system and the steps the state will take to encourage and improve coordination with the one-stop delivery system (see II. A.1 and 4)

6. Efforts to work with local Economic Development Offices

The state's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), originating in 2014, resulting in the Vermont 2020 CEDS document and recommendations, is a statewide economic development plan approved at the national level. It identifies the key sectors that have the greatest potential for economic growth, and it lists statewide strategies to be implemented at the local level, that will make this economic growth possible. It also describes the state's assets that will be tapped to implement effective strategies. One of the assets identified is the state's mature worker population, recognizing the potential to expand their participation in the workforce to make up for the shortage of new workforce entrants. DAIL is actively working with Vermont's Agency of Commerce and Community Development (Regional Economic Development Agencies are housed in this agency) to align its SCSEP program with the agency's work in

economic development at the local level. The higher education community and the Vermont Department of Labor are also partnering in these efforts.

B. The Long-Term Strategy for Engaging Employers to Develop and Promote Opportunities for the Placement of SCSEP Participants in Unsubsidized Employment

1. Increasing placements

Vermont has established commendable partnerships with businesses in the Vermont labor market to assure the seamless placement of participants into unsubsidized jobs. The Vermont SCSEP program strives to establish solid working relationships and regular communication with the business sector in order to remain current with the competencies that participants need in the competitive job market. Close interface with VDOL, HireAbility Vermont, business associations, and individual employers has allowed Vermont to create training tracks specific to the industry standards and the cultural expectations of the market from the outset of the program. Assessments completed at the time of program application ascertain a participant's interests and aptitudes, and that information is used to steer the person toward occupations for which they are well suited. The goal of unsubsidized employment is reinforced upon intake and at every stage of training activities. The IEP, developed by the participant with the aid of SCSEP staff, clearly maps the skill acquisition process and activities with VDOL that will lead to employment opportunities, as expeditiously as possible. The IEP serves as a case management tool to benchmark participants' existing skills and identify the training plans needed to reach their job goals. This approach leads to higher-level skills that enhance participant employability.

2. Engaging and developing partnerships with employers

Vermont SCSEP staff maintains consistent employer contacts to remain current in their knowledge of actual and projected job openings. In addition, staff maintains relationships with Chambers of Commerce and economic development agencies, and they make use of the job orders and other resources provided by the Vermont One-Stops. The Vermont SCSEP benefits greatly from the State's Division of Vocational Rehabilitation's role as one of the Governor's appointees on the State Workforce Development Board (SWDB). SWDB represents older

workers in their regional work to develop partnerships with the private sector to identify business skill shortages and demand jobs.

HireAbility Vermont (HAVT) is an initiative of the Agency for Human Services (AHS) that offers a consolidated and coordinated approach to employment services that provides equal access to meaningful work in the competitive job market for all AHS program participants. HAVT offers the business community a robust set of services that helps them access qualified candidates to help meet their recruitment, training, retention and promotion needs. All services are of no cost to businesses in Vermont.

HAVT Business Account Managers and Employment Consultants are available statewide to review business needs, offer qualified candidates, and develop training plans that help prepare candidates for employment. The goal of HAVT is to provide a streamlined recruitment, training, retention and promotion services for Vermont businesses while at the same time offering career exploration, assessment, training and support to the many Vermonters who find entering,or re-entering the workforce challenging. HAVT offers many innovative ways to introduce employers to potential workers, and training programs can be designed to meet employers' specific needs and are customized according to the skill level of the trainee.

Vermont is aligning its SCSEP with HAVT to maximize the employment and training potential for mature workers.

C. The Long-Term Strategy for Serving Minority Older Individuals under SCSEP

Vermont SCSEP has proactively recruited and enrolled minorities to achieve a minority participation level relative to the minority distribution within the state. Vermont ensures that minority participants achieve similar outcomes to those achieved by non-minority participants through partnerships with minority associated service organizations. Diverse support services for minorities provided by an array of collaborating organizations have helped to reinforce consistent outcomes across SCSEP participants. Religious organizations, behavioral health

organizations, and the Vermont Refugee Resettlement Program engage in extensive outreach to minorities, which often leads to referrals to SCSEP for their clients over age 55. In addition, the smallness of Vermont's communities serves the minority goal well, because non-profits and helping organizations have tight connections within each county of the state. Partnerships with entities such as English as Second Language (ESL) programs, faith-based organizations, refugee-resettlement employment programs, and specific job programs at VDOL are cultivated without difficulty due, not only to small geography, but also to a shared vision that centers on the inclusion of minorities in Vermont's workforce. A strategy that has been very effective is host site development within the minority oriented service provider agencies. Finally, Vermont's sub-grantee bolsters referrals of minority applicants to SCSEP by placing staff in regular contact with all partnering programs.

D. Community Services that are Needed and Where they are Needed

Vermont's distribution of community services is in accordance with the equitable distribution of available program positions. Vermont will provide community services in areas based on the census of the eligible population and will provide services to target populations relative to their distribution within the state. In a time of scarce federal as well as state resources, Vermont shares resources equitably among all eligible populations and localities. The specific distribution of positions by county is in the Equitable Distribution chart found further on in this plan.

Vermont selects community service sites based on achieving a balance between the training needs of the participant and the operational needs of the community organization. The Vermont SCSEP identifies a variety of community service sites to accommodate the diversity in participants, so the scope of community services are as diverse and varied as are the individual participants. Of primary concern is the on-going process of balancing the participants' community giving while meeting their IEP goals, therefore community service assignments need to be reciprocal.

Host agencies provide relevant work experiences for participants to achieve their employment goals, and they meet their organizational goals by providing meaningful assignments for participants. By collaborating with SCSEP, organizations often expand their community contribution, which creates the win-win partnership for which SCSEP is known. Vermont utilizes a diverse network of community and faith based organizations to achieve this reciprocity. In addition to the traditional types of community service activities, Vermont concentrates on developing host site placements that can train particular high demand occupations based on labor market information and direct input from employers.

The selection of community assignments is made based on relevance to the IEP and the capacity to add value to the community via community service. SCSEP staff continually develops new training opportunities with eligible organizations. The challenge is to provide service while training for high growth jobs. Vermont has been able to create this balance in community service through organizations that understand the importance of utilizing the participants' skills, interests, aptitudes, but also endorse unsubsidized employment within a specified period. Over the next four years, an ongoing goal will be to diversify sites, increasing training in high growth, valued sectors.

Vermont is a small state and community service needs are generally consistent across the state. Needed community services include: assistance in affordable housing; access to adequate nutrition; affordable energy, particularly heat in the winter; access to relevant training including computer skills, job search skills, and job readiness; and transportation, in particular outside of Chittenden county, where communities become more rural.

To address the community service needs of the SCSEP eligible population in the state, we will continue to build relationships with community social service organizations. The most important ones include Community Action Programs, Area Agencies on Aging, Adult Basic Education and Technical Education providers, food pantries, local housing authorities, senior housing communities, and town municipalities. We circulate updates about these partner programs to participants, ensuring they have up-to-date information about services available in their area. We

also welcome service providers to address participants directly at monthly participant meetings. For example, Community Action Agencies share information about fuel assistance programs; and VT's SASH Program (Support and Services at Home) presents about health and disease self-management practices that helps people stay well, a critical qualifier for sustainable employment.

E. The State's Long-Term Strategy to Improve SCSEP Services, Including Changes to the Design of the Program and Planned Changes in the use of SCSEP Grantees and Operators to Better Achieve the Program Goals; this may Include Recommendations to the Department

The state recognizes SCSEP as a key service in workforce development, as Vermont remains one of the oldest states in the nation, as the average age of our workforce continues to increase. At the same time, across the state, employers routinely report an inability to fill positions due to a shortage of applicants. The state will continue to promote the program as part of its increased attention to older worker issues at large, including efforts to educate businesses about the availability and value of the older workforce.

1. **Policies that address employment opportunities for older workers in Vermont**

- Identify employer best practices regarding flexibility in the work culture to encourage older workers to remain employed. Consider flexibility like:
    o Flex-time work schedules;
    o Part time positions;
    o Flex-leave (partial year work);
    o Flex-careers (worker sabbaticals); and,
    o Flex-place (telecommuting).
- Work with state agencies to position Vermont as a model for the employment and retention of older workers through innovative training, re-training, and benefits programs in state government jobs
- Proactively recruit employers, employees, and government agencies having regulatory jurisdiction or a clear policy interest such as VDOL, DAIL, Economic Services,

Economic Development, and State Human Resources to participate in the initiatives. (Modeled on the State of Vermont Division of Vocational Rehabilitations' State of Vermont HR / HAVT Hiring Initiative)

- Publicize the needs of the labor market to fully engage older workers
- Continued development of state initiatives focused on improving employer outreach and education. This includes public relations efforts to combat inaccurate stereotypes of older workers with the aim of reducing discriminatory practices.

2. **Education and training activities that support older workers to remain in or re-enter the workforce.**

- Enhance training, educational, and life-long learning resources;
- Identify a list of Vermont employers who are pro-active in hiring older workers and connect older Vermonters to them. Promote these employers through public relations to raise awareness of the benefits of hiring older workers and to advance the proposition that hiring older workers is good business practice;
- Government reports have raised concerns that the federal performance standards used in the WIOA programs have resulted in a bias against serving older workers. WIOA performance standards via earnings gains and retention measures favor workers with low prior earnings who, subsequent to training enter higher paid, full time jobs. These measures could lead to a bias against serving older workers, many who have relatively high prior earnings or who may want to transition from high paying full-time positions to lower paying part time employment *(Government Accountability Office Study 2003).* Continued action is needed to make access to workforce development programs more available to older workers seeking training/re-training for lateral career moves.
- Many older workers need computer training. We need to continue to explores and access the number of free or low-cost venues for computer training geared to the older worker. This could include free computer classes at One-Stop Career Centers, the regional technical centers, Community College of Vermont, basic adult education providers, and community libraries, etc.

3. Policies to enhance successful job transitions for older workers.

To remain in the labor force into their retirement years will require many older workers to change employers since many seek a change in activity, work schedule, etc.

- A best practice is to place older worker information in the One-Stop Centers, which serve as the central clearinghouse for all workforce development programs under WIOA. This would direct older workers to services for their specific needs and potentially help older workers feel more comfortable at the One-Stops. Expand the model to ensure that older workers are represented at all One-Stop Career Centers in Vermont;

- Develop new information tools and improve existing systems that provide outreach to older workers and connect them to employment opportunities utilizing existing partnerships among state agencies and public and private partners; and,

- Support existing programs and partnerships such as SCSEP that meet the specific needs of older workers by providing general career information, peer career counseling, job placement, networking, life planning seminars, special services, assessments, computer training and other resources.

Vermont's four-year strategic SCSEP Plan emphasizes partnerships that are well coordinated, work effectively and have been in existence for many years. It identifies partners and initiatives to support as part of the 2024 – 20237 State SCSEP plan.

F. The Strategy for Continuous Improvement in the Level of Performance for Entry into Unsubsidized Employment

1. Targeting jobs effectively

A number of SCSEP participants are hired by their host sites. In large part, this happens because of the remarkable relationships that develop between supervisors, co-workers, and the older worker who has brought enthusiasm and commitment to the organization. Their contribution, coupled with the customer service provided to the sites by SCSEP staff, has spurred host site managers to locate funding and create new positions for the older worker. As an additional placement strategy, Vermont encourages the host agency to become part of the participant's

personal employment network and job search team. The host agency supervisor routinely evaluates the participant's skill development against the benchmarks established in the IEP. When the participant attains the intended skill level, further assistance is provided such as job referrals, written job references, and assistance preparing for interviews.

Another effective strategy is to have participants meet regularly with staff to discuss methods of overcoming job search barriers by developing positive work habits necessary to obtain and retain employment. Participants develop skills in self-evaluation, receive constructive input from their peers, and learn group networking skills to advance their job search.

Non-profits, social service organizations, and State of Vermont departments represent other successful hires and retentions. Vermont will continue to target jobs in the non-profit world because it is a consistent and proven placement sector. However, Vermont will also work to develop strategies for increasing and diversifying placements in all of the private sector industries targeted as growth areas.

2. Managing durational limits effectively

The USDOL mandates that SCSEP participants may remain in the program for a maximum duration of 48 months. As part of the Durational Limit Policy approved by USDOL, Vermont SCSEP regularly assesses where participants are in the timeline and keeps participants aware of the allocated time in which to acquire unsubsidized employment. It is very rare that a participant exhausts the 48-month limit in the program, but when they approach that limit, they are provided with an enhanced IEP called an "Exit Transition IEP". It includes a strong emphasis on job search activities (maintaining current resume, creation of an employment portfolio, and active job search) and additional one-on-one support is made available to help the participant submit quality applications for appropriate jobs. For those participants for whom an exit for employment is not appropriate or realistic (for example, individuals who have become frail or severely disabled and are unable to work) plans are put into place to responsibly help them transition out of the program in a way that maintains their opportunity for social contact and personal dignity. Coaching on financial management and financial planning is made available through

partnerships with local agencies and/or financial institutions. Host agency supervisors are also made aware of the timeline so that when a durational limit date arrives, no party is left surprised or unprepared.

3.Training participants effectively

Vermont has established proactive policies to increase the caveat that unsubsidized placement is the goal of each participant. The development of very functional IEPs to guide meaningful and timely training on a continuum all set the stage for training participants effectively. Of particular note is the use of OJE as an effective training tool used as the capstone for the participant's SCSEP training experience when an employer commits to hire a participant.

Vermont strategies for transitioning participants into unsubsidized employment in occupations that support the regional economy are founded on job and community development as an ongoing process that requires establishing rapport and continuity with each employer. This is a process that begins immediately upon enrollment rather than being a discrete task undertaken as participants near their final IEP. All services reinforce that SCSEP is a transitional program by which to secure unsubsidized employment. Mentoring participants to focus on training related to growth areas early in the process, sets the tone of a work search and influences positive exits within the durational limits of the program

III.   Location and Population Served, including Equitable Distribution

A. **The Ratio of Eligible Individuals in each Area to the Total Eligible Population in the State**

Data from the Center for Public Health Statistics, US Census Bureau, and the Vermont Department of Health 2022 Vermont Population Estimates identifies the following distribution and demographics of program eligible Vermonters for program year 2023.

Table 4 – Individuals Age 55+

Counties	Total Population	2023 Eligibility % (rounded)	Eligible Population
Addison	37,578	38%	14,151
Bennington	37,392	40%	15,123
Caledonia	30,579	38%	11,587
Chittenden	169,301	29%	49,481
Essex	5,994	45%	2,687
Franklin	50,731	32%	16,475
Grand Isle	7,489	42%	3,137
Lamoille	26,090	33%	8,636
Orange	28,846	40%	11,793
Orleans	27,666	38%	10,603
Rutland	60,366	41%	24,604
Washington	60,048	36%	21,694
Windham	45,842	42%	19,118
Windsor	58,142	41%	24,088
Vermont Total	647,064	365%	233,168
Source: 2022 VT Population Estimates by County, Town and Age-Vermont Department of Health			

B. - C. Equitable Distribution Program Year 2023

USDOL Distribution of Vermont State SCSEP Slots

County	State
Vermont	
Addison County, Vermont	5
Bennington County, Vermont	6
Caledonia County, Vermont	0
Chittenden County, Vermont	10
Essex County, Vermont	0
Franklin County, Vermont	0
Grand Isle County, Vermont	0
Lamoille County, Vermont	0
Orange County, Vermont	0
Orleans County, Vermont	0
Rutland County, Vermont	6
Washington County, Vermont	0
Windham County, Vermont	10
Windsor County, Vermont	9
Totals	46

D. **The Long-Term Strategy for Achieving Equitable Distribution of SCSEP Positions within the State that:**

1. Moves positions from over-served to underserved locations within the state.

The equitable distribution of the slots in the state and national programs are well coordinated between DAIL, the State Sub-Grantee and the National SCSEP Grantee (Associates for Training & Development – A4TD). Work has being done where there is variance in equitable share per county and the distribution of authorized slots. If the demographics change, and a county is under or over served, consultation between DAIL, the respective grantees and USDOL will occur to achieve balance by moving slots from one county to another. Movement of positions is facilitated without disruption to participants.

2. Equitably serves rural and urban areas.

Vermont is a small, rural state generally classified as rural and of its 14 Counties, the only urban classification—assigned by the Rural Urban Commuting Area (RUCA) data in the USDOL-SCSEP database— is Chittenden County where Burlington, the largest city is located. The following bedroom communities of Burlington are, in reality, extremely rural but have been included in Chittenden County's urban classification due to their proximity to Chittenden County. They are Cambridge, Charlotte, Fairfax, Ferrisburg, Grand Isle, Hinesburg, Huntington, Jeffersonville, Jonesville, Bolton, Richmond, South Hero, Starksboro, Underhill, Westford, and Moretown. As an example of the rural character of these towns, all but Richmond have only one or two convenience stores and a gasoline station, and several have neither. Twelve of these fourteen towns have no manufacturing or industrial base. Given an almost statewide rural classification, serving the rural population occurs as a matter of course with both the State Sub-Grantee and the National Grantee coordinating SCSEP coverage serving the entire state. Vermont has a statewide network of local training centers located with each labor market region; some co-located in the VDOL One-Stop venues. The rural and urban areas are served with parity and adequate resources to promote the SCSEP program.

The intention is to serve the number of modified positions for each county. Our ability to resolve slot imbalances is impacted by program need, which is highly variable in this state. Factors that weigh on that need include unemployment rates, the availability and volume of supportive

services, general economic conditions, the nature of industry in each area, rurality, and the proliferation of nonprofit agencies. For instance, Chittenden County is a highly populated area, but with so many programs serving low income people, so many hiring businesses, and so little unemployment, SCSEP demand is relatively low. To help address these imbalances, we and our sub-grantee are working with partners to increase applicant referrals and host agency capacity in underserved areas. Community Action Programs and Area Agencies on Aging organizations are two examples of entities that are well-positioned to refer the people and areas where SCSEP is most needed. We would also consider a gradual shift in positions should they open from over-served counties to under-served counties, which would support and slot imbalances over time.

3. Serves individuals afforded priority for service.

Vermont does well in serving minorities and priority populations. This includes individuals who are age 65+; have a disability; limited English proficiency or low literacy skills; reside in a rural area; are veterans or qualified spouses; have low employment prospects; have failed to find employment after utilizing services provided through the One-Stop; or are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. Development of outreach and recruitment strategies ensures equitable participation for these important groups of the eligible population. For the Vermont program year 2022, final year to date data was not fully available from the USDOL database.

E-F. **The Relative Distribution of Eligible Individuals who:**

1. Reside in the State and in urban and rural areas.

The 2022 population of Vermont was 647,064 of which 233,168 were age 55 or over.
(See Table 4 for county breakouts of total population vs eligible)
Thirteen of Vermont's fourteen counties are classified as rural and the only urban classification is Chittenden County with a census of 169,301 as compared to the thirteen rural counties with a total census of 477,763.

2. Have the greatest economic need.

The Vermont Department of Labor *estimates* reported that approximately 14% of the eligible population were living at the poverty level during that period. Per the department's estimates, at the time of this report, 2.7% of the eligible population were unemployed. The ratios are dispersed below by county.

Table 5 – Economic Need

Counties	Classification	Total Population	Eligible Population	Poverty Level 2020 US Census (Greatest Econ. Need)	Unemployment 2020 Vermont Department of Labor (Greatest Economic Need)
Addison	Rural	37,578	14,151	7.1%	2.8%
Bennington	Rural	37,392	15,123	11.3%	4.3%
Caledonia	Rural	30,579	11,587	12.1%	3.7%
Chittenden	Urban	169,301	49,481	11.2%	2.8%
Essex	Rural	5,994	2,687	14.1%	4.8%
Franklin	Rural	50,731	16,475	9.8%	3.5%
Grand Isle	Rural	7,489	3,137	6.3%	3.9%
Lamoille	Rural	26,090	8,636	12.4%	4.0%
Orange	Rural	28,846	11,793	9.7%	3.2%
Orleans	Rural	27,666	10,603	12.3%	4.6%
Rutland	Rural	60,366	24,604	10.9%	4.2%
Washington	Rural	60,048	21,694	10.2%	3.0%
Windham	Rural	45,842	19,118	13.4%	4.4%
Windsor	Rural	58,142	24,088	9.4%	3.3%
Vermont Total		647,064	233,168	10.2%	2.2%
Source: VT Economic and Demographic Profile Series 2018 www.vtlmi.info VT Department of Labor					

3. Formerly Incarcerated Individuals
With formerly incarcerated individuals now a priority of service, we and our Sub-Grantee (The WorkPlace), continue to seek referrals from partner organizations who also serve those that were incarcerated and are re-entering their communities. Those organizations include the VT Dept. of Labor (American Job Center), community action agencies, area agency on aging, transitional housing though shelters/mission organizations and/or senior housing, probation and parole offices, food banks and other food service organizations, etc. Our staff also partner with county re-entry groups to make sure those formerly incarcerated are aware of SCSEP

From the list provided above, VDOL, the Area Agency on Aging, and housing facilities are the organizations who provide the most referrals. Also, HAVT is a potential source of referrals due to their ongoing work with Vermont Department of Corrections and the Offender Re-Entry Program.
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We seek to ensure the organizations listed above have our marketing materials that explain SCSEP and provide our contact information, and the opportunity to host orientation sessions for interested individuals, host agency partners, etc.

In general, we have never had an issue recruiting those with a criminal background. We continue to collaborate with related community partners and will seek ongoing feedback from those stakeholders.

4. Are Minorities.
Vermont's average non-white population estimate in 2022 was 8.1% of its 647,064 residents (US Census Bureau). The highest ratio occurring in Chittenden County, the only urban area of the state. The remaining 13 counties are very rural with much small minority populations.

5. Are limited English proficient (US Census Bureau 2014 - 2018).
Vermont population census for all residents who spoke a language other than English at home is 5.7%. Chittenden County ranks highest at 10.2%, Essex County is 6.5%, Orleans County is 5.5%, and Addison County is 5.7%. These higher rates are due to one county having a very active refugee resettlement program and two are close to the Canadian border, where many speak French as their first language at home. The remaining 11 counties have rates that range from 3.1% to 4.7%.

6. Have the Greatest Social Need.
 The following areas comprise the greatest social need in Vermont:
   a. Physical and mental disabilities: The US Census Bureau, 2022 ACS 5-Year Estimates say that approximately 68,589 Vermonters have a disability. That represents 10.6% of the population.
   b. Language barriers: Language barriers exist in an environment where people who do not have English as their primary language speak English less than "very well". The 2017 ACS Estimates say that the percent of Vermont's population with this barrier is 1.4%, or, 8,745.
   c. Cultural, Social or Geographic Isolation: Although Vermont is a rural state, most of the isolation that is experienced is the result of cultural and social barriers associated with linguistic isolation.

G. Steps Taken to Avoid Disruptions to the Program when Positions are Redistributed, when New Census or other Reliable Data Become Available, or when there is Over-Enrollment for any other Reason

When new census data indicate that a shift in the location of the eligible population has occurred, or when there is over-enrollment for any other reason, SCSEP positions are re-distributed through attrition to avoid any disruption of SCSEP services. The Vermont program has a positive participant flow rate because of its success in assisting participants to find unsubsidized employment. This creates available slots to re-fill in an underserved area of the state. The recovery of slots by attrition is a reliable tool because the quality of Vermont's host sites coupled with the broad array of training and support services provided by community partners expedites job placements.

The mutually supportive collaboration between the State's Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and their Sub-Grantee The WorkPlace allows for co-enrollment and potentially, the gradual shift of positions from over-served areas to under-served areas. Consultation and approval from DAIL and USDOL will always occur prior to moving slots from one county to another. Redistribution of positions between DAIL and The WorkPlace will occur as an intentional and thoughtful process to assure that there is no disruption to participants.