

VERMONT STATE PLAN
for
SCSEP (Senior Community Services Employment Program)
Program Years 2020 – 2023 – 2-Year Modifications

Background and Purpose:

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 2020 – 2023. 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 sub-grantee operating the national SCSEP awarded by the USDOL. VATD also operates the state SCSEP as Vermont’s sub-grantee. The specific requirements for the plan are located in 20 CFR 641.300-641.300.

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 and state 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, Community of Vermont Elders (COVE), 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 Investment Board (SWIB). The sub-grantee, VATD, has developed a vast 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.

Solicitation and Collection of Public Input

DAIL is requesting stakeholder input via e-mail alerts specifically soliciting input across these broad networks. Because of the COVID-19 outbreak, we determined that we could not conduct a centrally held public form. 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 May 16th 2022 through May 30th 2022. The plan may be updated to include the input gathered after the plan submission date.

Modifications Due to COVID-19

Working in partnership with our Sub-Grantee, Associates for Training & Development (A4TD), we continued to refine innovations in training and service delivery developed throughout the pandemic. Despite decreased capacity to meet face-to-face with program participants as cases of the Delta and Omicron variants of COVID-19 escalated, all participants continued to receive staff support, training, wages and supportive service referrals. All participants trained in one or more of these categories: in-person Community Service Assignment (CSA) training, remote CSA training, non-CSA training, remote non-CSA training, or pre-site training.

As **Host Agencies** continued to be closed or were open on a limited basis that did not allow participants to train 20 hours on site, A4TD took measures to meet the severe challenges the lack of available host agencies presented. We reassigned participants to other open host agencies. We worked with participants and host agencies to provide interim hybrid training solutions, when, for example, the host agency could accommodate some participant on-site hours, but not the full 20 hours due to host agency reduced hours, reduced staff or reduced available space. A4TD program staff stay in contact with existing host agencies to maintain and

nurture established relationships until such time as we can place participants again. And we are engaged in outreach to expand our host agency base.

All participants are training in A4TD's "reimagined" SCSEP model. Participants agree that the traditional on-site CSA is preferred when it is safe. When it is not safe to be at their CSA, participants continue to train at home, or at a partner's site (American Job Center, if open).

They access online training through the A4TD portal and through partner webpages, sometimes using Chromebooks as provided by SCSEP through DAIL's & A4TD's ATSS. Non-CSA remote training options include hard copy workbooks as backup for participants without access to technology.

Additional Training Activities outside of CSAs

As the pandemic moves into a third year, training options conceived in difficult times may eventually become normative training in the future. Remote training itself becomes not merely the means to deliver training, but an essential work skill for future remote-based jobs.

Participants are acquiring knowledge about how work-from-home takes place. A meta-learning occurs as learners internalize how to manipulate the computer to achieve their training goals. They learn best practices to using a computer, video conferencing etiquette, appropriate clothing, and what makes an appropriate work setting in the home. All of these incidental learnings increase their ability to work remotely for a company in a work-from-home job.

With 53% of participants not able to train at their CSA, training options described in the quarter one narrative, defined below, continue to the success and delight of participants.

In quarter two, participants trained by:

- **Non-CSA Remote Training – Technology based**
 - A4TD vetted platforms such as [GCF Learn Free](#), [Coursera](#), [KLS](#), and [Kahn Academy](#) to establish a list of Approved Virtual Training Platforms. The local

MWRC staff assist participants in choosing classes based on their training need, job goal and IEP.

- Some participants who lack technology in their home are using Chromebooks and MIFI's provided by PY21 ATSS funds as part of A4TD's Loaner Technology Program. To facilitate computer learning, they receive peer assistance via A4TD's Peer Mentoring Program.
- **Non-CSA Remote Training – Non-technology based**
 - A4TD's Training Team published four Job Readiness workbooks, each providing 10 weeks of information and activities that help participants develop their foundational skills and understanding that will support success in their training, their job search, and their next job.
- The Loaner Laptop Program, and the corresponding Peer to Peer Mentoring Program are the two significant special projects currently in progress. As described previously in our report, participants have been loaned technology and/or an internet connection to complete virtual training. In parallel, over participants (mentees) are being mentored by fellow participants (mentors) in how to use the technology. Both of these projects are having a very positive impact on participants, and facilitating enhanced training that moves participants toward job readiness and employment. As one participant mentee stated:

“When I first received my Chromebook, I didn't know how to log in. A few months later, I am using email and video conferencing. I never thought I'd be able to do what I now can. It's amazing!”

With the ATSS approval, plans are underway to equip more participants with technology and/or internet access for remote training and job search activities.

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 2016 and 2026 include the following: Natural Resources and Mining (Crop Production and Animal Production), Manufacturing (Beverage Manufacturing and Textile 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						
2016 - 2026						
NAICS Industry	2000 Employment	2016 Employment	2026 Employment	Annual Growth %		
				Actual 2000 - 2016	Projected 2016 - 2026	
Private Industry						
Natural Resources and Mining						
111	Crop Production	532	875	1,107	3.2%	2.4%
112	Animal Production	1,017	1,853	2,276	3.8%	2.1%
113	Forestry and Logging	185	189	135	0.1%	-3.3%
115	Agriculture and Forestry Support Activities	346	320	345	-0.5%	0.8%
212	Mining (except Oil and Gas)	972	622	579	-2.8%	-0.7%
213	Support Activities for Mining	na	n	n	na	na
Utilities						
221	Utilities	1,692	1,343	1,177	-1.4%	-1.3%
Construction						
236	Construction of Buildings	4,216	4,099	4,289	-0.2%	0.5%
237	Heavy and Civil Engineering Construction	2,070	1,484	1,468	-2.1%	-0.1%
238	Specialty Trade Contractors	8,614	9,693	10,078	0.7%	0.4%
Manufacturing						
311	Food Manufacturing	4,192	5,340	5,150	1.5%	-0.4%
312	Beverage & Tobacco Product Manufacturing	244	822	1,249	7.9%	4.3%
313	Textile Mills	279	99	146	-6.3%	4.0%
314	Textile Product Mills	287	86	67	-7.3%	-2.5%
315	Apparel Manufacturing	701	345	321	-4.3%	-0.7%
316	Leather and Allied Product Manufacturing	n	n	n	na	na
321	Wood Product Manufacturing	3,007	1,646	1,285	-3.7%	-2.4%
322	Paper Manufacturing	1,722	723	685	-5.3%	-0.5%
323	Printing and Related Support Activities	2,374	1,036	1,030	-5.1%	-0.1%
324	Petroleum and Coal Products Manufacturing	n	n	n	na	na
325	Chemical Manufacturing	1,044	1,476	1,608	2.2%	0.9%
326	Plastics and Rubber Products Manufacturing	1,849	1,174	1,205	-2.8%	0.3%
327	Nonmetallic Mineral Product Manufacturing	2,191	1,555	1,447	-2.1%	-0.7%
331	Primary Metal Manufacturing	592	n	n	na	na
332	Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing	2,621	1,885	1,614	-2.0%	-1.5%
333	Machinery Manufacturing	4,439	2,859	2,539	-2.7%	-1.2%
334	Computer and Electronic Product Mfg.	11,128	4,870	4,408	-5.0%	-1.0%
335	Electrical Equipment and Appliances Mfg.	1,407	1,148	1,169	-1.3%	0.2%
336	Transportation Equipment Manufacturing	3,315	1,765	1,446	-3.9%	-2.0%
337	Furniture and Related Product Mfg.	3,295	1,376	1,122	-5.3%	-2.0%
339	Miscellaneous Manufacturing	1,585	1,526	1,577	-0.2%	0.3%
Wholesale Trade						
423	Merchant Wholesalers, Durable Goods	4,560	3,855	3,724	-1.0%	-0.3%
424	Merchant Wholesalers, Nondurable Goods	5,006	4,772	4,784	-0.3%	0.0%
425	Wholesale Electronic Markets, Agents, Brokers	85	669	896	13.8%	3.0%
Retail Trade						
441	Motor Vehicle and Parts Dealers	4,743	5,152	5,178	0.5%	0.1%
442	Furniture and Home Furnishings Stores	1,106	909	851	-1.2%	-0.7%
443	Electronics and Appliance Stores	884	719	684	-1.3%	-0.5%

444	Building Material and Garden Supply Stores	3,209	3,635	3,783	0.8%	0.4%
445	Food and Beverage Stores	9,774	10,029	10,079	0.2%	0.0%
446	Health and Personal Care Stores	1,836	1,994	2,004	0.5%	0.1%
447	Gasoline Stations	3,640	3,938	3,902	0.5%	-0.1%
448	Clothing and Clothing Accessories Stores	2,608	2,318	1,941	-0.7%	-1.8%
451	Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book and Music Stores	2,158	1,764	1,569	-1.3%	-1.2%
452	General Merchandise Stores	3,916	3,234	3,323	-1.2%	0.3%
453	Miscellaneous Store Retailers	3,132	2,124	2,065	-2.4%	-0.3%
454	Nonstore Retailers	2,719	2,304	2,368	-1.0%	0.3%
Transportation & Warehousing						
481	Air Transportation	223	114	117	-4.1%	0.3%
482	Rail Transportation	245	n	n	na	na
483	Water Transportation	n	n	n	na	na
484	Truck Transportation	2,760	2,081	1,899	-1.7%	-0.9%
485	Transit and Ground Passenger Transport	1,259	1,271	1,307	0.1%	0.3%
487	Scenic and Sightseeing Transportation	42	36	36	-1.0%	0.0%
488	Support Activities for Transportation	438	484	534	0.6%	1.0%
492	Couriers and Messengers	1,184	1,101	1,219	-0.5%	1.0%
493	Warehousing and Storage	1,024	1,313	1,431	1.6%	0.9%
Information						
511	Publishing Industries (except Internet)	2,552	1,820	1,776	-2.1%	-0.2%
512	Motion Picture and Sound Recording Industries	534	342	382	-2.7%	1.1%
515	Broadcasting (except Internet)	803	702	674	-0.8%	-0.4%
517	Telecommunications	2,039	1,052	761	-4.1%	-3.2%
518	Data Processing, Hosting, and Related Services	518	230	244	-4.9%	0.6%
519	Other Information Services	459	491	501	0.4%	0.2%
Financial Activities						
522	Credit Intermediation and Related Activities	4,777	4,223	4,098	-0.8%	-0.3%
523	Securities, Commodity Contracts, & Investments	781	796	869	0.1%	0.9%
524	Insurance Carriers and Related Activities	3,976	4,013	3,912	0.1%	-0.3%
531	Real Estate	1,708	2,171	2,359	1.5%	0.8%
532	Rental & Leasing Services	1,262	784	751	-2.9%	-0.4%
533	Lessors of Nonfinancial Intangible Assets	46	15	11	-6.8%	-3.1%
Professional and Business Services						
541	Professional, Scientific & Technical Services	12,230	14,332	15,348	1.0%	0.7%
551	Management of Companies and Enterprises	n	2,084	2,105	na	0.1%
561	Administrative and Support Services	7,455	10,327	11,266	2.1%	0.9%
562	Waste Management and Remediation Services	787	1,056	1,155	1.9%	0.9%
Educational and Health Services						
611	Educational Services (incl. Public Education)	33,802	37,327	36,066	0.6%	-0.3%
621	Ambulatory Health Care Services	13,602	17,031	18,974	1.4%	1.1%
622	Hospitals (incl. State Hospital)	9,859	14,032	15,752	2.2%	1.2%
623	Nursing and Residential Care Facilities	6,187	7,473	7,668	1.2%	0.3%
624	Social Assistance	5,463	12,538	14,820	5.3%	1.7%

Leisure and Hospitality						
711	Perf. Arts, Spectator Sports, & Rel. Industries	564	851	1,049	2.6%	2.1%
712	Museums, Historical Sites, Zoos and Parks	364	504	585	2.1%	1.5%
713	Amusement, Gambling & Recreation	2,380	2,899	3,232	1.2%	1.1%
721	Accommodation	11,752	11,788	12,482	0.0%	0.6%
722	Food Services and Drinking Places	17,949	20,210	21,205	0.7%	0.5%
Other Services						
811	Repair and Maintenance	2,932	2,715	2,771	-0.5%	0.2%
812	Personal and Laundry Services	2,180	2,061	2,072	-0.4%	0.1%
813	Religious, Grantmaking, Civic, & Prof. Orgs.	n	5,605	5,529	na	-0.1%
814	Private Households	1,167	658	549	-3.5%	-1.8%
Total Private Industry Employment *		261,560	284,683	292,685	na	0.3%
Total Federal Government Employment		6,063	6,945	7,245	0.9%	0.4%
Federal Government (excl. Postal Service)		3,646	5,332	5,756	2.4%	0.8%
Postal Service		2,417	1,613	1,489	-2.5%	-0.8%
State Government (excl. Education, Hospitals)		8,895	9,808	10,004	0.6%	0.2%
Local Government (excl. Education)		7,019	9,871	11,365	2.2%	1.4%
Total Government Employment		21,977	26,624	28,614	1.2%	0.7%
Total Wage & Salary Employment **		283,537	311,307	321,299	na	0.3%
Self-Employed and Unpaid Family Workers		53,500	60,100	60,500	0.7%	0.1%
Total Employment **		337,037	371,407	381,799	na	0.3%
<i>n - data do not meet disclosure standards</i>						
<i>na - not available</i>						
<i>* Total Private Industry employment includes public education and state hospital employment.</i>						
<i>** Employment totals include suppressed values and do not equal the sum of the disclosed industry line items</i>						
<i>NAICS Refers to the North American Industry Classification System.</i>						
<i>Growth rates are compound average annual rates.</i>						
<i>last updated July 2018</i>						

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 program year 2018, 75% of the jobs obtained by Vermont's SCSEP participants were within those four areas.

Vermont has been very successful at placing participants in employment, and we are far exceeding our goals for employment in the current program year of 2019. For instance, year to date, our employment rate in the 2nd quarter after exit is 80%, compared to a goal of 41%. Our employment rate in the 4th quarter after exit is 50%, compared to a goal of 33%. The majority of host sites hiring Vermont trainees upon completion of training offer these occupations on which the program focuses. Although this requires constant development of new host sites, participants at non-profits, municipalities, and social service organizations often report higher satisfaction than working in entry-level service jobs that are prevalent in Vermont. 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 ED2Go 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 sub-grantee 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, 2016 - 2026

<u>Typical Education Level for Entry</u>	<u>% Share of Employment</u>	<u>Change in Employment</u>	<u>% Change in Employment</u>	<u>Annual Openings</u>	<u>Median Annual Occupational Wage, 2017</u>
Professional Degree	6%	1,245	5.7%	1,550	\$75,790
Bachelor's Degree	20%	3,449	4.7%	6,296	\$66,420
Associate's Degree	3%	357	3.8%	811	\$56,600
Postsecondary Non-degree Award	6%	556	2.4%	2,370	\$38,800
Some College, No Degree	3%	-249	-2.0%	1,217	\$39,910
High School	40%	2,667	1.8%	16,423	\$38,800
Less Than High School	22%	2,367	2.8%	12,833	\$25,490
Total	100%	10,392	2.8%	41,500	\$38,640

Professional Degree Most Openings	Growth	Openings	Med. Wage
Mental Health and Substance Abuse Social Workers	1.2%	130	18.13
Mental Health Counselors	1.4%	107	na
Educational, Guidance, School, and Vocational Counselors	0.4%	88	22.95
Lawyers	0.1%	83	44.60
Rehabilitation Counselors	1.3%	79	21.60
Librarians	-0.2%	66	20.75
Education Administrators, Elementary and Secondary School	-0.3%	61	na
Physical Therapists	1.9%	59	36.44
Instructional Coordinators	0.3%	58	23
Healthcare Social Workers	1.6%	57	26.39
Clinical, Counseling, and School Psychologists	0.5%	55	31.33
Nurse Practitioners	2.2%	43	48.51
English Language and Literature Teachers, Postsecondary	-0.2%	40	na
Physicians and Surgeons, All Other	0.3%	36	100.00+
Education Administrators, Postsecondary	-0.1%	29	31.70
Physician Assistants	2.5%	28	48.11
Art, Drama, and Music Teachers, Postsecondary	0.0%	26	na
Pharmacists	0.3%	24	66.93
Occupational Therapists	1.6%	23	37.54
Speech-Language Pathologists	0.3%	22	34.43
Postsecondary Teachers, All Other	-0.2%	21	na
Foreign Language and Literature Teachers, Postsecondary	0.0%	20	na
Biological Science Teachers, Postsecondary	0.3%	19	na
Urban and Regional Planners	0.7%	16	24
Health Diagnosing and Treating Practitioners, All Other	0.8%	16	34.07

Professional Degree Fastest Growth	Growth	Openings	Med. Wage
Physician Assistants	2.5%	28	48.11
Statisticians	2.5%	4	33.24
Nurse Practitioners	2.2%	43	48.51
Physical Therapists	1.9%	59	36.44
Healthcare Social Workers	1.6%	57	26.39
Occupational Therapists	1.6%	23	37.54
Mental Health Counselors	1.4%	107	na
Rehabilitation Counselors	1.3%	79	21.60
Health Specialties Teachers, Postsecondary	1.3%	9	na
Mental Health and Substance Abuse Social Workers	1.2%	130	18.13
Nurse Midwives	1.0%	3	43.49
Curators	0.9%	5	26.84
Veterinarians	0.9%	14	46
Health Diagnosing and Treating Practitioners, All Other	0.8%	16	34.07
Urban and Regional Planners	0.7%	16	24
Archivists	0.7%	4	na
Business Teachers, Postsecondary	0.6%	15	na
Clinical, Counseling, and School Psychologists	0.5%	55	31.33
Dentists, General	0.5%	9	74.77
Educational, Guidance, School, and Vocational Counselors	0.4%	88	22.95
Optometrists	0.3%	4	na
Biological Science Teachers, Postsecondary	0.3%	19	na
Pharmacists	0.3%	24	66.93
Physicians and Surgeons, All Other	0.3%	36	100.00+
Instructional Coordinators	0.3%	58	23.42

*Med. Wage is median hourly wage from May 2017 Occupational Employment and Wage estimates

Bachelor's Degree Most Openings	Growth	Openings	Med. Wage
Registered Nurses	1.1%	229	30.18
Accountants and Auditors	0.8%	116	31.23
Managers, All Other	0.6%	96	48.72
General and Operations Managers	0.5%	88	45.47
Secondary School Teachers, Except Special & Career/Technical Educ	-0.1%	71	na
Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education	-0.1%	66	na
Coaches and Scouts	0.4%	61	na
Compliance Officers	1.0%	56	30.25
Market Research Analysts and Marketing Specialists	2.0%	54	23.76
Child, Family, and School Social Workers	0.6%	44	18.66
Management Analysts	1.5%	30	37.76
Network and Computer Systems Administrators	0.6%	30	34.97
Medical and Health Services Managers	1.3%	30	40.53
Construction Managers	0.6%	28	39.97
Software Developers, Applications	1.6%	26	37.31
Human Resources Specialists	0.4%	26	26.86
Middle School Teachers, Except Special & Career/Technical Educ	-0.1%	26	na
Training and Development Specialists	0.4%	26	26.03
Graphic Designers	0.2%	25	19.50
Civil Engineers	0.7%	25	33.98
Mental Health and Substance Abuse Social Workers	1.0%	23	18.75
Software Developers, Systems Software	2.3%	22	46.62
Financial Managers	0.5%	22	51.03
Personal Financial Advisors	1.6%	20	26.43
Social and Community Service Managers	0.6%	20	31.52

Bachelor's Degree Fastest Growth	Growth	Openings	Med. Wage
Operations Research Analysts	2.9%	3	34.90
Software Developers, Systems Software	2.3%	22	46.62
Computer Systems Analysts	2.1%	14	34.35
Market Research Analysts and Marketing Specialists	2.0%	54	23.76
Cartographers and Photogrammetrists	1.9%	2	25.11
Interpreters and Translators	1.8%	6	18.36
Personal Financial Advisors	1.6%	20	26.43
Conservation Scientists	1.6%	7	25.29
Sales Representatives, Wholesale & Manufacturing, Tech & Sci Prods	1.6%	17	39.33
Software Developers, Applications	1.6%	26	37.31
Food Scientists and Technologists	1.5%	7	28.12
Actuaries	1.5%	3	na
Management Analysts	1.5%	30	37.76
Marketing Managers	1.4%	18	51.60
Hydrologists	1.4%	2	36.60
Dietitians and Nutritionists	1.4%	3	na
Biological Technicians	1.3%	5	19.57
Environmental Engineers	1.3%	6	32.51
Chemists	1.3%	5	28.05
Medical and Health Services Managers	1.3%	30	40.53
Technical Writers	1.3%	3	27.48
Social Workers, All Other	1.2%	3	30.97
Information Security Analysts	1.2%	2	35.60
Substance Abuse and Behavioral Disorder Counselors	1.2%	7	24.11
Athletic Trainers	1.2%	5	na

Some College** Most Openings	Growth	Openings	Med. Wage
Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks	-0.4%	634	19.19
Teacher Assistants	-0.3%	471	na
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	-0.1%	449	20.21
Nursing Assistants	0.5%	418	13.91
Automotive Service Technicians and Mechanics	0.3%	252	18.17
Hairdressers, Hairstylists, and Cosmetologists	0.3%	218	12.93
Massage Therapists	0.7%	121	23.29
Preschool Teachers, Except Special Education	0.1%	114	14.57
Heating, Air Conditioning, and Refrigeration Mechanics and Installers	0.2%	106	23.10
Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	0.3%	101	23.01
Computer User Support Specialists	0.7%	102	23.25
Industrial Engineering Technicians	-0.7%	93	29.50
Medical Assistants	1.6%	86	17.05
Paralegals and Legal Assistants	0.8%	79	23.66
Library Technicians	0.0%	71	16.25
Web Developers	0.8%	71	29.39
Telecommunications Equipment Installers and Repairers, Except Line Ins	-1.8%	60	24.18
Dental Assistants	0.3%	59	21.23
Dental Hygienists	0.3%	47	33.49
Veterinary Technologists and Technicians	1.3%	39	16.40
Civil Engineering Technicians	0.6%	36	24.92
Medical Records and Health Information Technicians	1.0%	36	18.65
Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedics	0.6%	33	16.31
Skincare Specialists	0.3%	32	14.23
Computer Network Support Specialists	0.8%	30	22.25

Some College** Fastest Growth	Growth	Openings	Med. Wage
Diagnostic Medical Sonographers	2.2%	6	36.38
Physical Therapist Assistants	1.9%	24	25.73
Respiratory Therapists	1.9%	15	29.55
Medical Assistants	1.6%	86	17.05
Occupational Therapy Assistants	1.5%	11	27.63
Environmental Science and Protection Technicians, Including Health	1.4%	12	20.14
Fire Inspectors and Investigators	1.4%	4	26.22
Veterinary Technologists and Technicians	1.3%	39	16.40
Phlebotomists	1.2%	28	16.19
Health Technologists and Technicians, All Other	1.2%	14	19.77
Cardiovascular Technologists and Technicians	1.2%	3	na
Environmental Engineering Technicians	1.1%	9	22.61
Surgical Technologists	1.1%	8	17.68
Radiologic Technologists	1.1%	27	28.48
Medical and Clinical Laboratory Technicians	1.0%	19	na
Dietetic Technicians	1.0%	3	13.95
Radiation Therapists	1.0%	2	42.75
Magnetic Resonance Imaging Technologists	1.0%	2	37.14
Medical Records and Health Information Technicians	1.0%	36	18.65
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Workers, All Other	1.0%	5	19.55
Legal Support Workers, All Other	0.9%	10	na
Audio and Video Equipment Technicians	0.9%	11	17.34
Web Developers	0.8%	71	29.39
Paralegals and Legal Assistants	0.8%	79	23.66
Computer Network Support Specialists	0.8%	30	22.25

**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
Personal Care Aides	2.6%	1,435	na
Carpenters	0.1%	637	20.22
Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and E	-1.1%	549	16.70
First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	-0.3%	474	21.25
Farmers, Ranchers, and Other Agricultural Managers	0.5%	468	na
Customer Service Representatives	0.2%	452	17.24
Childcare Workers	0.0%	417	12.71
Substitute Teachers	-0.2%	401	12.17
Stock Clerks and Order Fillers	0.3%	353	12.70
Social and Human Service Assistants	1.0%	339	16.17
Receptionists and Information Clerks	0.1%	334	15.21
Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	0.7%	308	18.66
First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers	0.4%	285	19.09
Light Truck or Delivery Services Drivers	0.1%	283	15.40
Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Except Technical a	0.2%	267	27.61
Recreation Workers	0.7%	254	12.90
Fitness Trainers and Aerobics Instructors	0.6%	205	17.87
First-Line Supervisors of Office and Administrative Support Workers	0.0%	197	26.94
First-Line Supervisors of Construction Trades and Extraction Workers	0.5%	194	30.21
Office Clerks, General	-0.5%	189	15.64
Insurance Sales Agents	0.0%	184	24.75
Bus Drivers, School or Special Client	0.3%	173	17.10
First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers	-0.2%	171	28.73
Executive Secretaries and Executive Administrative Assistants	-2.2%	166	24.78
Shipping, Receiving, and Traffic Clerks	-0.3%	165	15.81

High School Fastest Growth	Growth	Openings	Med. Wage
Solar Photovoltaic Installers	3.2%	65	18.11
Home Health Aides	2.9%	94	13.49
Separating, Filtering, Clarifying, Precipitating, and Still Machine Setters, C	2.7%	19	18.33
Personal Care Aides	2.6%	1,435	na
Court, Municipal, and License Clerks	2.4%	92	18.42
Dental Laboratory Technicians	2.0%	25	19.92
Helpers--Production Workers	2.0%	99	13.56
Physical Therapist Aides	1.8%	12	na
Food Cooking Machine Operators and Tenders	1.8%	9	14.09
Lodging Managers	1.7%	74	26.16
Septic Tank Servicers and Sewer Pipe Cleaners	1.4%	15	17.12
Nonfarm Animal Caretakers	1.4%	126	11.55
Security and Fire Alarm Systems Installers	1.3%	10	25.45
Medical Secretaries	1.3%	126	18.03
Veterinary Assistants and Laboratory Animal Caretakers	1.2%	21	14.39
Hazardous Materials Removal Workers	1.1%	17	18.70
Community Health Workers	1.1%	55	14.30
Bus Drivers, Transit and Intercity	1.1%	61	18.94
Tour Guides and Escorts	1.0%	41	na
Medical Equipment Preparers	1.0%	15	15.74
Social and Human Service Assistants	1.0%	339	16.17
Construction and Building Inspectors	1.0%	24	22.50
Healthcare Support Workers, All Other	1.0%	17	18.54
Cargo and Freight Agents	1.0%	6	17.66
Helpers--Pipelayers, Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters	1.0%	7	14.22

Less than High School Most Openings	Growth	Openings	Med. Wage
Cashiers	-0.4%	1,770	11.13
Retail Salespersons	-0.2%	1,366	11.97
Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food	1.0%	1,264	11.45
Waiters and Waitresses	0.6%	1,118	14.40
Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	0.5%	749	13.68
Landscaping and Groundskeeping Workers	0.6%	642	14.63
Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	0.4%	545	11.70
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	0.3%	407	12.88
Cooks, Restaurant	0.7%	385	14.14
Bartenders	0.1%	324	13.58
Food Preparation Workers	0.4%	308	11.80
Construction Laborers	0.1%	268	15.98
Counter Attendants, Cafeteria, Food Concession, and Coffee Shop	0.0%	245	10.93
Dishwashers	0.0%	222	11.24
Taxi Drivers and Chauffeurs	1.1%	221	11.54
Farmworkers, Farm, Ranch, and Aquacultural Animals	1.7%	210	12.88
Dining Room and Cafeteria Attendants and Bartender Helpers	0.2%	184	11.61
Cooks, Institution and Cafeteria	0.4%	165	14.40
Painters, Construction and Maintenance	-0.3%	154	18.05
Farmworkers and Laborers, Crop, Nursery, and Greenhouse	1.7%	145	15.24
Hosts and Hostesses, Restaurant, Lounge, and Coffee Shop	0.3%	142	11.97
Counter and Rental Clerks	0.2%	120	15.15
Packers and Packagers, Hand	0.4%	120	12.32
Bakers	0.4%	111	13.81
Refuse and Recyclable Material Collectors	1.2%	100	15.33

Less than High School Fastest Growth	Growth	Openings	Med. Wage
Cooks, Institution and Cafeteria	0.4%	165	14.40
Helpers--Brickmasons, Blockmasons, Stonemasons, and Tile and Marble	0.4%	21	15.90
Bakers	0.4%	111	13.81
Food Servers, Nonrestaurant	0.4%	56	12.15
Packers and Packagers, Hand	0.4%	120	12.32
Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	0.4%	545	11.70
Meat, Poultry, and Fish Cutters and Trimmers	0.4%	30	15.94
Food Preparation Workers	0.4%	308	11.80
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	0.3%	407	12.88
Hosts and Hostesses, Restaurant, Lounge, and Coffee Shop	0.3%	142	11.97
Cement Masons and Concrete Finishers	0.3%	30	17.84
Industrial Truck and Tractor Operators	0.3%	98	17.54
Food Preparation and Serving Related Workers, All Other	0.3%	13	11.93
Roofers	0.2%	49	17.23
Dining Room and Cafeteria Attendants and Bartender Helpers	0.2%	184	11.61
Counter and Rental Clerks	0.2%	120	15.15
Demonstrators and Product Promoters	0.1%	15	13.32
Construction Laborers	0.1%	268	15.98
Bartenders	0.1%	324	13.58
Dishwashers	0.0%	222	11.24
Counter Attendants, Cafeteria, Food Concession, and Coffee Shop	0.0%	245	10.93
Food Processing Workers, All Other	0.0%	6	16.78
Slaughterers and Meat Packers	0.0%	5	na
Graders and Sorters, Agricultural Products	0.0%	49	11.89
Parts Salespersons	-0.1%	72	16.70

II. Service Delivery and Coordination

A. Detailed Descriptions of Actions

1. Actions to Coordinate SCSEP Activities with WIOA Title 1

Vermont SCSEP has located staff at several of the One-Stop Centers, which serve as the central clearinghouse for all workforce development programs under WIOA. This allows staff to steer older workers into VDOL services to meet their 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 aging 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 Coordinator position within VR will manage SCSEP. This will enable DAIL to have close

partnership with AHS's Creative Workforce Solutions 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. An association called the Community of Vermont Elders (COVE) provides advocacy, training, and support for care providers. 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. Efforts have been underway to examine the data on VR's older clientele and their concentrations of disability types. In addition, referrals exchanged between SCSEP and VR are being reviewed to make this process into a seamless partnership. It is clear that 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 50+ job fairs, 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 (Economic Development is 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 workforce 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, Creative Workforce Solutions, 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 VATD role as the Governor's appointee on the State Workforce Investment Board (SWIB). SWIB represents older workers in their regional work to develop partnerships with the private sector to identify business skill shortages and demand jobs.

Creative Workforce Solutions (CWS) 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. CWS offers the business community a simplified staffing service that helps them access qualified candidates to help meet their staffing needs. All services are free to businesses in Vermont.

CWS 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 CWS is to provide a streamlined recruitment and retention service for Vermont businesses while at the same time offering training and support to the many Vermonters who find entering, or re-entering the workforce challenging. CWS 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 CWS to maximize the employment and training potential for mature workers.

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

According to American Community Survey, Vermont has a 5.8% minority population rate. In the quarter ending 12/31/17, SCSEP was serving a 10.4% minority population rate, exceeding the minority average for the state by a factor slightly less than two.

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, a goal will be to again diversify sites to increase training in high growth sectors such as healthcare.

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 especially outside of Chittenden and Rutland counties, 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 Agency 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, and as the average age of our workforce continues to increase. At the same time, across the state, employers routinely report an inability to fill entry-level jobs because of 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:
 - Flex-time work schedules;
 - Part time positions;
 - Flex-leave (partial year work);
 - Flex-careers (worker sabbaticals); and,
 - 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, State Human Resources, and the Treasurer's Office to participate in the initiatives. (Modeled on the GAO recommendation for Executive

Action, *Older workers, Labor Can Help Employers and Employees Plan Better for the Future* December 2005);

- Publicize the needs of the labor market to fully engage older workers; and,
- 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;
- Create incentives for employers to train older workers;
- Offer free or reduced tuition to Vermont's state colleges and regional technical centers as space is available in classes and/or as some percentage of class size;
- 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;
- Recent 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*). Legislation is needed to make access to workforce development programs including the Workforce Education and Training Fund, the Next Generation Initiative, the Vermont Training Program Grants, etc. more available to older workers seeking training/re-training for lateral career moves and necessary and important yet potentially lower paid positions and part time employment; and,

- Many older workers need computer training. Increase 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 specialist in the One-Stop Centers, which serve as the central clearinghouse for all workforce development programs under WIOA. This specialist would direct older workers to services for their specific needs and potentially help older workers feel more comfortable at the One-Stops. The state sub-grantee has located older worker staff at VDOL for many years through SCSEP. Expand that 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.

In summary, Vermont's four-year strategic SCSEP Plan exemplifies partnerships that are well coordinated, work effectively and have been in existence for many years. It also clearly identifies new partners to develop as part of the 2020 – 2023 State SCSEP plan.

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

1. Targeting jobs effectively

A great 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. No opportunity for extension is offered by Vermont SCSEP. As part of the Durational Limit Policy approved by USDOL, Vermont SCSEP regularly assesses where participants are in the timeline and keeps participants cognizant 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 banks. 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 use of the Enrollee Wage and Fringe Waiver to provide funding for the skill training; the use of On-the-Job-Experience (OJE) to provide training for specific jobs; and 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 2018 Vermont Population Estimates identifies the following distribution and demographics of program eligible Vermonters for program year 2019.

Table 4 – Individuals Age 55+

Counties	Total Population	2018 Eligibility % (rounded)	Eligible Population
Addison	36,973	35%	13,092
Bennington	35,631	39%	13,997
Caledonia	30,302	37%	11,143
Chittenden	164,572	28%	46,298
Essex	6,250	36%	2,278
Franklin	49,421	31%	15,367
Grand Isle	7,090	40%	2,833
Lamoille	25,300	32%	8,070
Orange	28,999	38%	11,142
Orleans	26,907	38%	10,299
Rutland	58,672	39%	22,831
Washington	58,140	35%	20,335
Windham	42,756	40%	17,169
Windsor	55,286	41%	22,392
Vermont Total	626,299	35%	217,696
Source: 2018 VT Population Estimates by County, Town and Age-Vermont Department of Health			

B. - C. Equitable Distribution Program Year 2021

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	<hr/> 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 and the single SCSEP vendor that operates both; work is 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 VATD and DAIL and the USDOL occurs 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 and the national SCSEP 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 hugely 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 aggressively 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 are also allowing for a gradual shift in positions as they open from over-served counties to under-served counties, which will even our 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. Vermont program year 2018, final year to date data indicate that:

- 40% of participants have disabilities
- 26% of participants are age 65 years or older
- 100% of participants have low employment prospects
- 85% reside in rural area

- No instances of under-service to any minority category

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

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

The 2014 population of Vermont was 626,299 of which 217,696 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 164,572 as compared to the thirteen rural counties with a total census of 461,727.

2. Have the greatest economic need.

The Vermont Department of Labor *estimates* reported that approximately 12.3% of the eligible population were living at the poverty level during that period. Per the department's estimates, 2010-2014, 4.1% 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 2016 US Census (Greatest Econ. Need)	Unemployment 2017 Vermont Department of Labor (Greatest Economic Need)
Addison	Rural	36,959	13,092	9.7%	2.8%
Bennington	Rural	36,191	13,997	13.9%	3.6%
Caledonia	Rural	30,333	11,143	13.5%	3.7%
Chittenden	Urban	161,531	46,298	9.6%	2.3%
Essex	Rural	6,176	2,278	15.7%	4.7%
Franklin	Rural	48,915	15,367	10.5%	3.1%
Grand Isle	Rural	6,919	2,833	8.8%	3.5%
Lamoille	Rural	25,333	8,070	12.1%	4.0%
Orange	Rural	28,919	11,142	10.6%	3.1%
Orleans	Rural	26,863	10,299	15.5%	5.1%
Rutland	Rural	59,310	22,831	13.3%	3.5%
Washington	Rural	58,504	20,335	10.8%	3.0%
Windham	Rural	43,145	17,169	12.7%	3.1%
Windsor	Rural	55,496	22,392	10.0%	2.6%
Vermont Total		624,594	217,696	11.3%	3.0%

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 (A4TD), 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 through 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, participants have also referred formerly incarcerated individuals (we call it our ambassador program).

Where possible during the pandemic, ensuring the organizations listed above have our marketing materials that explain SCSEP and provide our contact information, having virtual orientation sessions for interested individuals, host agency partners, etc., is best practice.

Generally speaking, we have never had an issue recruiting those with a criminal background. We have not altered our marketing materials.

4. Are Minorities.

Vermont's average non-white population estimate in 2019 was 5.8% of its 623,989 residents (US Census Bureau). The highest ratio is 9.9% occurring in Chittenden County, the only urban area of the state. The remaining 13 counties are very rural with minority populations that range from 3.2% to 6.7%.

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, 2017 ACS 5-Year Estimates say that approximately 89,639 Vermonters have a disability. That represents 14.5% 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 and the national SCSEP slots allows 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 VATD will occur, as an intentional and thoughtful process to assure that there is no disruption to participants.