D. Needs Assessment

1. Describe the educational and job-training needs of individuals in the overall State population and of relevant subgroups of all the programs included in the unified plan.

The Commonwealth recognizes that effective needs analysis requires viewing an organization or system, involving multiple partners, from a number of different perspectives simultaneously, (e.g. policy implementation, program operation and customer service delivery are all connected and influence each other). Information and perspective of players at each level is crucial to needs assessment and the development of an appropriate response to service gaps. These players are involved in the identification of need so the Commonwealth is working with partners at the state level and local levels including; LWIBS, Career Center operators and line staff. Evaluation of responses and identification of anticipated issues is ongoing. Development of standards and selected data collection provides continuous information on performance and enables identification of service gaps. Specific methods of needs assessment include:

- Individual and group assessment takes place at local sites within the Career Center system of service providers. Assessment includes tools and activities that measure individual’s aptitude, skills, interests and readiness to participate in retraining or employment. An individual employment plan is created for all individuals receiving case management services. General technical assistance from the partners is provided on topics such as; assessment tools and their proper use, formulating individual employment plans, etc.

- Use of monthly operator meetings as a statewide venue to hear about concerns and issues impacting the capacity to provide service to WIA customers.

- Conduct needs analysis and work closely with the LWIBs individually and via their statewide association to create appropriate responses.

- Customer satisfaction training and technical assistance on use of tools and their implementation enable local areas and programs to collect ongoing customer feedback. Further technical assistance is provided on how to utilize customer feedback as a method to continually improve program processes, structure and specific services.

In answering the above question, if your unified plan includes:

**WIA Title I and Wagner-Peyser Act and/or Veterans Program:**
Identify the types and availability of workforce investment activities currently in the State. (WIA §112(b)(4)(D))

Currently the Commonwealth provides a variety of workforce investment activities for individuals and employers, they include but are not limited to: labor exchange activities, education and skill training programs, career counseling, subsidized employment, incumbent worker training, programs for linguistic minorities, specialized and customized training programs for employers and employees, and training in small business development. Availability of program services is limited by the regulatory requirements of the funding streams. Programs for incumbent
workers or low income individuals in need of training or education who are not receiving public assistance are very limited due to funding constraints.

Vocational Rehabilitation:

i) Asses the needs of individuals with disabilities in the State, particularly the vocational rehabilitation needs of assess the needs of individuals with the most significant disabilities (including their need for supported employment services), individuals with disabilities who have been unserved or under-served by the vocational rehabilitation program, and individuals with disabilities served through other components of the statewide workforce investment system. (§101(a)(15)(A)(i)(I-III) and §625(b)(2))

The Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission, in cooperation with the MRC Rehabilitation Council (R/C), has conducted a number of targeted needs assessments over the past three years in order to survey the rehabilitation needs of individuals residing within the State. Consumers – through the R/C, the Regional Advisory Councils, public hearings and the annual consumer conference – requested the surveys and studies discussed below (the Consumer Satisfaction Survey, the Long Term Cases Survey, and the Cerebral Palsy Task Force). Consumer committees of the Rehabilitation Council designed the survey instruments, formulated methodology, conducted evaluations of results, and reported back to the R/C. The resulting recommendations have provided concrete guidance for the Commission in addressing identified needs of persons with disabilities.

The Rehabilitation Council has chosen to conduct targeted assessments over a comprehensive, statewide needs assessment. The R/C, through effective participation from a range of knowledgeable consumers, has a solid comprehension of unmet needs and emerging trends. Consumers know that their voices will be heard through the Rehabilitation Council and other consumer involvement programs. At this time, the Rehabilitation Council has chosen to listen to the voices of consumers and follow their lead in selecting areas of study that address concrete, identified unmet needs.

Some of the areas projected for study during the next five years include:

• continuing outreach to ethnic, cultural and linguistic minorities;
• services and employment for homebound people with disabilities;
• services for people with learning disabilities and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder.

Implementation of coordination with other components of the statewide workforce investment system are currently under discussion. The Rehabilitation Council By-Laws have been amended to reflect new statutory requirements for consultation with the Massachusetts Jobs Council (the state workforce investment board) and for the inclusion of a representative from the Massachusetts Jobs Council on the R/C.

Massachusetts Commission for the Blind:

In 1998 the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind, the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission, and the Massachusetts Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing began a
cooperative effort to create a three-year vision of expansion of disability services to present
to the Massachusetts Legislature. The Disability Policy Consortium, a cross-disability
consumer organization, joined with the three disability commissions on providing
information on the needs of people with disabilities to Massachusetts Senators and
Representatives.

In the fall of 1998 and, again, in the fall of 1999, well-attended public hearings across the
state provided valuable input to the development of publications which presented unmet
needs and projected expansion of services to the Legislature. As a result of this effort, the
Massachusetts Commission for the Blind received more than $1 million in state funds to
provided needed expansion of its rehabilitation technology services, which has immensely
improved its provision of this most-needed service to vocational rehabilitation consumers.

The Commission in 1997 conducted a comprehensive, statewide assessment of the
rehabilitation and career needs of individuals with severe disabilities and the need for
supported employment services.

The Commission in 1983 published a book-length report of an in-depth, comprehensive
assessment of the rehabilitation needs of legally blind persons in Massachusetts. This study
required several years of full-time work by the involved staff. The agency uses this study as
a basis and a reference for its on-going comprehensive needs assessments. The study was
of the self-perceived needs of legally blind persons in the state. A random stratified sample
of 1,440 registered blind persons was selected; there were 922 respondents after intensive
follow-up contact. (The state of Massachusetts has for many years required that physicians
and optometrists register and report all legally blind persons to the Commission, with the
result that the agency's register of legally blind persons is thought to be the most complete in
the United States.) Demographic information was also collected and studied. The results
of the study, which were consistent with the results of an earlier, similar study, show that the
areas of highest need were:

1. recreation which was cited by one-third of the respondents;
2. transportation which was cited by one-fourth of the respondents;
3. homemaking or chore services which was cited by one-fourth of the respondents;
4. adaptive equipment or "rehabilitation engineering" information or services which
   was cited by 32% of the respondents. The need for information (32%) was much
   higher than the perceived need for equipment (16%);
5. employment/training services which was cited by more than half of the respondents
   between 15 and 65 years of age. The results pertaining to this need area will be
discussed more fully below.

Seven questions were included that specifically asked about perceived needs related to
employment/training. The questions and the percentage of respondents of all ages
answering affirmatively are given below:

1. Do you have employment needs or employment-related needs? 30%
2. Are you seeking employment or trying to change jobs? 21%
3. Would vocational counseling be helpful to you? 41%
4. When looking for a job, do you think it would be helpful if you had the assistance of
   a job placement counselor? 67%
5. To get the job you want do you need training or education? 50%
6. Would you like more information about the educational and employment services that are available at the Commission? 55%
7. How about financial assistance - do you need any to obtain the additional skills, education, or training you need? 35%

In addition, 28% of the respondents between the ages of 15 and 65 reported that they were seeking employment at that time. Only 26% of the respondents in this age group were then employed full-time; another 7.5% were employed part-time and 60.6% described themselves as unemployed. Non-white respondents were more inclined to cite a need for employment and training services than were white respondents. One-half of the non-white respondents and one-third of white respondents believed that they needed additional training and education in order to get the jobs that they wanted. One-third of the respondents reported that blindness limited their interest in employment/training and education. Approximately 20% of the respondents between the ages of 15 and 65 reported that fear of loss of benefits made them reluctant to apply for jobs.

A needs assessment component has been part of the agency's annual consumer satisfaction study since 1988. This is a mechanism for updating the previous needs assessments conducted by the agency. Consumers whose cases were closed in FY 1998 were asked to rate "problems" according to the relative importance for blind people desiring employment. The four most important problems in these respondents opinion were: 1) "transportation to school or work" (61%), 2) "Equipment, adaptive or general" (61%), 3) "information about new services" (56%); and; "Finding the best job for the person" (50%). These four problems have consistently been the frequently cited in these consumer satisfaction studies.

Open-ended questions were also included on the questionnaire about service gaps and the perceived needs of blind people for vocational success. The first open-ended question was presented to all participants whose cases were closed in FY 1998. The question requested information about which consumer needs had not been met in MCB Vocational Rehabilitation programs. Fifteen, or 34.9% of the 43 possible respondents enumerated 29 such unmet needs, or 1.9 needs per respondent.

Nine of the 29 needs, or 31%, were related in various ways to computers. These needs included general computer training and training in Windows and the use of adaptive equipment.

The Commission in FY 1993 conducted a survey of all agency vocational rehabilitation staff on the subject of consumer needs relative to community rehabilitation facilities. The majority of the staff (63%) believes that the number of consumers needing facility services is increasing. 55% believe that the facilities in their area are adequate to meet the need, while 45% believe that they are inadequate to meet the need. Opinion was also divided on the question of whether facilities offering supported employment services are adequate, with 45% saying they are, 41% saying they are inadequate, and 14% saying they do not know. When asked what new or expanded facilities services are needed, the most frequently mentioned were: placement (23%), work evaluation (23%),
transportation (23%), supported employment services (18%), and interpreter services for the deaf-blind (18%).

These studies show that there is broad consensus among vocational rehabilitation staff and former consumers that job placement and transportation are major problems for blind and deaf-blind consumers. The Commission has been active in the past several years in advocating expanded public transportation for disabled persons in Massachusetts communities. There have been improvements but progress is quite slow. The Commission will continue efforts in this area but the problem is very difficult except in the major cities. It is expected that the Americans with Disabilities Act will have a major positive impact on this situation in the coming years.

The Commission has, partly in response to these needs assessments, developed in the past several years several initiatives to improve job placement. The agency has developed a computerized job bank and has assigned specialist Central Office staff to coordinate regional placement resources, to operate the job bank, and to provide individualized help to consumers in resume preparation and job interviewing skills.

Needs for adaptive equipment are mentioned more frequently in all studies. The agency has an extensive rehabilitation engineering program, which has been expanded greatly in the past two years. There is now one rehabilitation engineer assigned to each of the agency’s six regions. This expansion has resulted in a substantial reduction in the time it takes to install and adapt needed equipment.

ii) include State estimates of the number of individuals in the State who are eligible for services under title I of the Rehabilitation Act, the number of such individuals who will receive services provided with funds provided under part B of title I and under part B of title VI (including, if the designated State agency uses an order of selection, estimates of the number of individuals to be served under each priority category within the order), and the costs of the services provided (including, if the designated State agency uses an order of selection, the service costs for each priority category within the order.) (§101(a)(15)(B))

Consistent estimates, based on U.S. Census Bureau data and other sources, find that the number of individuals in the Commonwealth who may be eligible for services under this State Plan on the basis of having a disability ranges between 250,000 and 300,000.

The number of individuals who will receive services provided with funds provided under Part B of Title I of the Act and under Part B of Title VI of the Act is estimated to range between 36,900 and 39,500. Due to the order of selection currently in effect in this State Agency, only individuals who are determined eligible for services as having a “most significant disability” will be served with these funds.
The costs for the purchase of services for those individuals determined eligible as having a “most significant disability” is estimated at approximately $24,000,000 for Title I. An inflationary factor, annually, affects this estimate.

Massachusetts Commission for the Blind:

The Massachusetts Commission for the Blinds estimates that approximately 1250 legally blind individuals will receive VR services as active consumers during FY 2001. Increases in the caseload over the past few years have been less than 3% per year. The opportunity for the caseload to grow substantially is limited by the fact that the agency only serves persons who are legally blind and deaf-blind. The 1997 Massachusetts Commission for the Blind Report of the Register shows that 81% of the newly registered legally blind persons in Massachusetts were aged 65 and older.

The projected cost of services for FFY 2001 is $6,747,958, of which $117,407 is from Supported Employment and $6,630,551 is from Section 110, the Basic Vocational Rehabilitation Program.

iii) provide an assessment of the need to establish, develop, or improve community rehabilitation programs within the State. (§101(a)(15)(A)(ii))

For any year in which Massachusetts revises the assessment, the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission will submit to the Commissioner a report containing information regarding revisions to the assessments.

Massachusetts Commission for the Blind

The Commission in FY 1993 conducted a survey of all agency vocational rehabilitation staff on the subject of consumer needs relative to the following types of community rehabilitation facilities: comprehensive rehabilitation facilities such as the Carroll Center for the Blind, sheltered workshops (operating under the Wagner-O'Day Act), and supported employment programs. The majority of the staff (63%) believes that the number of consumers needing such facility services is increasing. 55% believe that the facilities in their area are adequate to meet the need, while 45% believe that they are inadequate to meet the need. Opinion was also divided on the question of whether facilities offering supported employment services are adequate, with 45% saying they are, 41% saying they are inadequate, and 14% saying that they do not know. When asked what new or expanded facilities services are needed, the most frequently mentioned were: placement (23%), work evaluation (23%), transportation (23%), supported employment services (18%), and interpreter services for the deaf-blind (18%). This survey found that the Carroll Center for the Blind is the most often used rehabilitation facility for 60% of our counselors. A variety of other facilities and sheltered workshops are used throughout the state, in addition to the Lions World Services for the Blind facility in Arkansas.
The annual evaluation of the vocational rehabilitation program shows that for FY 1999, 78% of the consumers whose cases were closed after plan development were rehabilitated. Of these consumers, those who were provided services that are generally delivered through community rehabilitation programs had the following percentages rehabilitated:

- Physical and mental restoration services - 85%
- Adjustment training services - 83%
- Miscellaneous training services - 83%
- Business and vocational training services - 86%
- College and university training services - 85%

It will be seen from these statistics that community rehabilitation program services have been very effective for our consumers.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts requires a written contract for the provision of any paid services. Thus, cooperative agreements with private non-profit services providers are and will be part of such contracts.

2. Describe the key trends that are expected to shape the economic environment of the State during the next five years. Which industries and occupations are expected to grow? Which will contract? What are the workforce and economic development needs of the State? Identify the implications of these trends in terms of overall availability of current and projected employment opportunities by occupation, and for each of your customer segments, the job skills necessary in key occupations.

KEY TRENDS
The performance of the Massachusetts economy has been noteworthy since 1991. Over 460,000 new jobs have been created (almost four new jobs for every new person of working age). Employment is now at a record level with a high of approximately 3.25 million. The unemployment rate averaged 3.2 percent in 1999, tying with 1987 for the lowest rate in 30 years – and has dropped every year since peaking at 9.1 percent in 1991. Remarkably, wages have increased steadily without serious inflationary pressures. With a labor force participation rate of nearly 69 percent, almost 2 percentage points higher than the U.S rate, Massachusetts will face the challenge of drawing even more qualified workers into the labor force to meet an increasing demand for high skilled workers.

The Massachusetts economy will continue to be effected by a number of trends.
1. Technological Innovations.
Historically, Massachusetts’ proximity to academia and venture capital has fostered technological innovation. This cross-fertilization of ideas, capital, and entrepreneurship remains a stimulus for Massachusetts’ employment growth.

Massachusetts continues its crucial role in technological innovation. The Bay State is the third largest employer of software employees in the country. Massachusetts
will strive to retain its high rank nationally in total research and development performance and in both industry and academic research and development.

Four current technical innovations should impact Massachusetts’ industries in the future.

E-mail-commerce will effect employment in retail trade, financial services, passenger transportation arrangement, and software services. Even more retailers will have an on-line presence and increased numbers of financial institutions will offer on-line trading. The number of firms with on-line transactions will increase rapidly stimulating a demand for telecommunications specialists, webmasters, and order processors. The downside could be a decrease in demand for selected retail sales and clerical workers.

Wireless application protocols, designed for browsing Web pages by mobile phone, and short message services permitting the transmission of text messages by digital cell phones will increase employment in the telecommunications industry.

Distance learning, videoconferencing, and telecom hoteling will affect employment in education, hospitality, and telecommunications services, requiring increased media and equipment installation/maintenance skills.

Research and innovations in medical equipment and biotechnology such as the Human Genome project may result in the development of new drugs, the creation of tissue and organs, and improved diagnostic testing. These outcomes will impact employment in pharmaceuticals, research laboratories, and health care, requiring workers with updated medical/technical knowledge.

2. Productivity Improvements.
Massachusetts firms are focusing on productivity improvements. High value-added manufacturing with lean production processes is thriving in Massachusetts, even in traditional manufacturing sectors. Real manufacturing output per worker has increased at an annual rate of almost 5 percent per year, even though employment has been streamlined. Massachusetts’ manufacturers will persist in adopting new models of production including enterprise resource planning models, CAD/CAM, linked-cell manufacturing, and programmable logic controllers to keep their costs down. These new manufacturing process improvements will continue to alter the occupational distribution of employed persons in Massachusetts. In addition, Massachusetts’ transportation, public utilities, and financial services industries have invested heavily in computerization and telecommunications and will need to employ large numbers of data processing professionals.

The advances in automation, telecommunications, and software have permeated the corporate culture of large Massachusetts’ employers and will be adopted by smaller employers striving to remain competitive. Continued automation, telecommunications innovations, and the focus on quality will impact employment
in the manufacturing, public utilities, and financial services industries. Few manufacturing and utility jobs will require manual skills exclusively developed through demonstration and practice. Consequences include a need for workers with higher skill levels and the need to upgrade the skills of current production workers.

3. Global Competition
Massachusetts has increased its international presence in manufacturing, software, transportation, financial services, hospitality services, educational services, and engineering/management services. The internationalization of the Massachusetts’ economy is expressed through increased exports and imports, foreign-owned firms, global markets, and overseas investments. Massachusetts will continue to rank first in New England in international manufactured and software exports and maintain its high national export rank.

In response to the globalization of markets, Massachusetts manufacturers will persist in seeking ISO 9000 certification, meeting the packaging label standards of other nations, and including product instructions and advisories in world languages.

Non-manufacturing employers will continue to court international customers. The international visitors who travel to or within Massachusetts will increase beyond the current 7 percent. The number of foreign students enrolled in Massachusetts colleges and universities will surpass the almost 6 percent of present total foreign student enrollment in the United States. In addition, Massachusetts banks and mutual funds will increase their involvement in overseas investment and currency transactions.

The increased global competition for customers and the decreased costs of overseas production facilities will require Massachusetts’ workers to remain competitive. Managers in firms with global markets will be expected to have knowledge of trade policies, international standards, currencies translation, and cultural nuances. Employers will desire service workers in direct contact with international visitors to have cultural sensitivity and world language facility.

1. Increased Mergers and Acquisitions
Massachusetts firms participated in mergers, acquisitions, divestitures, and outsourcing, changing the corporate structure. Mergers and acquisitions in Massachusetts rose almost 45 percent to 403 in 1998. Of the mergers and acquisitions in the information technology industry, one-half were in software products and services. Massachusetts’ banks, insurance companies, defense manufacturers, and computer manufacturers participated in this wave of mergers, often switching or expanding product lines.

The Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act of November 1999 should have an impact on the products offered by Massachusetts’ already changing financial and accounting services industries. The Act eliminates many of the barriers separating areas of the financial services industry and reverses the Glass-Steagall Act of 1933, which
prohibited banks from selling securities and insurance. The new law allows an amalgamation of financial institutions such as banks, insurers, and mutual funds, under one holding company. At a minimum, the products offered by financial institutions should become diversified.

Acquisitions of firms for highly skilled professionals may not result in worker dislocation; whereas, those acquired for customers and distribution networks most likely will. Most often, mergers will result in employee layoffs as duplicative functions are eliminated. Dislocated workers will continue to need job search assistance and reskilling.

Another result of these mergers and acquisitions has been the restructuring of the Massachusetts economy. Employees were shifted from one entity to another, often, to an industry with a different classification. Remaining staff members were required to learn different job tasks or to upgrade their skill levels. As changes in industrial or corporate affiliation become increasingly frequent, the need to upgrade the skills of current workers will dramatically increase.

2. Employment Restructuring

Industry shifts

Manufacturing’s share of total employment declined to 14 percent in 1998, as the Services industry share increased to almost 36 percent. Although both industry divisions increased employment, the number of jobs created in the Manufacturing sector was less than one percent of the Services’ industry employment increase. In the next five years, Services industry employment is expected to expand to 39 percent of total employment; while Manufacturing employment contracts to an almost 12 percent share.

The change in the composition of the well paying high-technology industries paralleled this manufacturing job shift. Non-manufacturing high technology employment increased its share of high-tech employment by 8 percentage points, which was equivalent to the share decline of high tech manufacturing employment. The decline in high-technology manufacturing employment was entirely absorbed by the job increase in non-manufacturing high technology employment. Indeed, non-manufacturing high technology employment devoured the combined job losses in computer manufacturing and communications equipment.

In spite of automation and statistical control processes, the percent share of workers who identified their primary industry affiliation as manufacturing remained constant even through employment numbers increased slightly. The share of managers and professionals in the manufacturing industries has increased dramatically in the nineties as the share of production workers decreased. As a result of re-engineering
in manufacturing, production workers comprise 55 percent of Massachusetts manufacturing workers compared to a national share of 65 percent.

The Services industry division, which posted a gain of almost 159,000 positions, garnered much of its employment share increase in the Business Services and Engineering and Management Services industry groups. Business Services increased its percent share of total employment to 7 percent and Engineering and Management Services reached an employment share of almost 4 percent. The combined increase of over 77,000 positions in these two industry groups accounted for almost one out of two new service positions. The Health Services industry group remains the largest sector within the Services industries with over a 10 percent share of total employment. Industry restructuring was reflected in non-hospital health care service employment that increased its share by almost 0.2 percentage points, as hospitals’ share dipped at twice this rate. This shift share mirrored the almost 13 percent increase in non-hospital employment, contrasted to an almost one percent decline in hospital employment.

Business Services, the fastest growing industry group among the services industries, increased employment 42 percent. Within this industry group, data processing services jobs increased by almost 62 percent, followed by the personnel supply services, which increased by 57 percent. The growth in personnel services is partially attributable to continued efforts in manufacturing to reduce costs and improve production flexibility through outsourcing. Other sectors that expanded employment at a rate greater than 10 percent include Engineering and Management Services Social Services, and Educational Services. The major Services industry groups (Business, Health, Educational, Social, and Engineering and Management Services) contain many well paying professional, managerial, and technical occupations. Not surprisingly, individuals who identified the Service industries as their primary industry affiliation increased their percent share of total employment to over 30 percent of employed workers.

The jobs share of the Finance Insurance and Real Estate (FIRE) industry declined to almost 7 percent, even while posting an almost 10,000 jobs gain. However, much of this job increase was in the Security and Commodity Brokers sector which increased by over 14,000 positions. The almost one percentage point decline of workers whose primary industry affiliation was identified as finance reflected this percent share decline of FIRE employment. The FIRE percent share of total employment is expected to remain stable in the next five years.

Construction employment expanded its employment share by 0.4 percentage points while adding almost 22,000 positions. The construction percent share of total employment is projected to remain relatively consistent over the next five years. Needless to say, the number of workers who identified construction as their primary industry increased over 9 percent between 1994 and 1998.
Shifts in industry structure during the next five years will require constant upgrading of current workers and a rapid response to changing training needs by training providers.

**Occupational Shifts**

The number of persons whose primary occupational affiliation was professional, administrative, or technical occupations increased to an over 37 percent share of total employed workers. This job growth is expected to continue in the next five years as new professional and technical positions grow at a rate 1.5 times that of all occupations.

The percent share of workers whose primary occupational affiliation was service occupations increased to almost 15 percent of total employment. Continued employment expansion to an almost 17 percent share is anticipated in the next five years as service occupations increase at 1.1 times the rate of all occupations.

Precision production and machine operator positions are prevalent within the manufacturing industry division. Craft workers dominate the construction industry. The greatest occupational shift occurred in precision production and craft primary workers who increased their share of total employed workers to almost 11 percent. Simultaneously, the share of primary machine operators, assemblers, and inspectors decreased to a little under 5 percent of total workers. Although both occupational categories increased their number of workers, machine operator’s rate of employment increase was less than 10 percent of the precision production workers’ rate of increase. Precision production and craft occupations are projected to grow at a rate half that for all occupations whereas, machine operator positions will increase at an even slower pace.

Traditionally, the Financial Services and Trade industries have employed large numbers of clerical workers. The number of workers whose primary occupational affiliation was administrative support personnel decreased over 11 percent between 1994 and 1998 as advances in automation such as scanning and voice mail reduced demand. Administrative support occupations are expected to grow at a pace a little over a third of the all occupations rate. Even so, clerical occupations in five years will represent 16 percent of total employment.

3. Increased Labor Force Participation

Massachusetts has traditionally had a higher employment-population ratio than the United States. Recruitment of skilled workers in a state with a high labor force participation rate (almost 69 percent) is compounded by the slow growth rate of the natural population. Massachusetts will continue to meet this challenge by recruiting work force members from both within the state and outside the state.

Massachusetts has averaged 16,400 foreign immigrants per year during the nineties. The Massachusetts Institute for a New Commonwealth estimated that the almost 177,000 new foreign immigrants represented 173 percent of the Massachusetts’
population change and 300 percent of the labor force growth. Immigration, particularly through the H1B visa program, will remain an important source of engineering workers for numerous manufacturers and of systems analysts for many software employers. Seasonal foreign workers will continue to be critical to the tourist industry on Cape Cod and the Islands and to the farms of Pioneer Valley.

Employment of foreign-born workers has been and will continue to be an important source of workers for the manufacturing, software services, engineering services, retail trade, health services, and personal services industry groups. For those with minimal fluency, English-as-a Second language training will be desirable. For more advanced speakers, business writing skills will be advantageous for career advancement.

Massachusetts continues to draw workers from adjacent states into its labor pool. The Census indicated that the net in flow of workers from other states was over 61,000, with the largest number commuting from the adjacent states of New Hampshire and Rhode Island. Road improvements and increased commuter rail transportation will likely increase interstate and long-distance commuting.

Another source of labor for Massachusetts has been enrollees and the skilled graduates of Massachusetts’ colleges. Efforts are underway to increase the number of graduates who remain in Massachusetts. A Massachusetts Technology Collaborative survey found that the portion of engineering graduates who stay in the Commonwealth after graduation has remained relatively constant, at approximately 50 percent. Recruitment of students from out of state will continue by Massachusetts’ 123 institutions of higher education. These recruitment efforts should yield greater than the 26 percent of the first-time freshmen that migrated from outside New England to the Massachusetts higher education system. Frequently, these undergraduate students, non-domestic graduate students, and/or their spouse work part-time while pursuing their degrees.

4. Higher Wages
Massachusetts ranks third in the nation for average annual pay and third in personal per capita income. The managers, professionals, technicians, sales agents, precision production workers, and craft workers whose skills are in demand will continue to earn above average wages. Although Massachusetts ranked third nationally for the lowest percentage of persons below the poverty level in 1998, there are residents who have difficulty earning a wage adequate for their family size. For these workers, the higher income levels in Massachusetts relative to the rest of the United States are offset to some extent by the higher cost of living in Massachusetts.

Entry level occupations such as cashiers, retail salespersons, food preparation workers, housekeeping cleaners, and packers pay modest wages. Some individuals work multiple jobs or accept overtime hours to boost their wages. Others who do not supplement their primary wages or have the skills to advance find it difficult to support families.
Massachusetts’ employment in personnel supply services increased by over 79 percent to over 71,000 jobs during the nineties. Nationally, median weekly earnings of full-time contingent workers are 77 percent of the earnings of noncontingent workers. Individuals working intermittently as temporary or on-call workers or holding multiple part-time positions are more likely to experience difficulties earning living wages. Temporary help agency workers are concentrated in administrative support and operator, fabricator and laborer occupations and in the manufacturing and services industries.

Philip Moss and Chris Tilly of the University of Massachusetts, Lowell report that 80 percent of entry level positions in the City of Boston firms required a high school diploma and 78 percent required general experience. Fewer than 5 percent of employers are willing to hire workers with no high school diploma, other training, or experience. Individuals lacking basic and technical skills will likely experience greater difficulty in moving from entry-level jobs and accessing a higher paying position. For workers without a high school diploma, adult basic education is crucial for increasing wages. Workers who become aware of occupational fields with viable career paths will be able to move beyond low paying entry-level occupations.

(ii) Reduced business costs
Massachusetts aggressively lowered the cost of doing business in Massachusetts during the 1990s. Both workers’ compensation and unemployment compensation taxes were lowered. Worker’s compensation premiums were lowered for the fifth consecutive year and employer-paid unemployment compensation rates were frozen. Further UI administrative reform legislation will increase Massachusetts' competitiveness.

GROWING INDUSTRIES

From 1994 to 1998, employment in the services industries grew over 17 percent to an almost 35 percent share of insured employment. Business Services employment, the fastest growing industry group among the services industries increased 42 percent. The services industry groups with the largest shares of Massachusetts’ employment were Health Services (over 10 percent) and Business Services (almost 8 percent).

The five industry groups anticipating the most new jobs are business services, health services, engineering and management related services, social services, and eating and drinking places.

The five industry groups with the largest projected growth rates are business services, security and commodity brokers, social services, engineering and management related services, and legal services. Collectively, these 7 industry groups are projected to provide almost 4 out of 5 new jobs.
Seven clusters of industry groups, which share similar skill requirements and knowledge preparation, are expected to generate 2 out of every 3 new jobs in Massachusetts.

1. Massachusetts’ employment in computer software and related services, whose share of national employment is 5 percent, is projected to increase 8 times faster than the all industries average, with the addition of almost 56,000 new jobs.

2. Health services should add approximately 80,000 new jobs for an expansion rate twice that of the all industries average. The largest gains are projected for home care and health practitioner’s offices. Employment at private hospitals is expected to grow at a much slower pace than the all industries’ average. The demand for health care by an aging population remains strong, but third party reimbursements will continue to influence both the delivery of services within industry groups and temper the demand.

3. Direct care services, including residential care facilities and child day care services will add 18,500 new jobs for a growth rate 4 times the all industries average.

4. Security and commodity brokers and nondepository holding and investment services, which manage billions of funds in Massachusetts, are projected to grow by almost 20,000 jobs at a rate 3 times the all industries average.

5. Jobs in engineering and management related services, whose employment share is approximately 4 percent of national employment, are expected to increase by over 37,000 jobs.

6. The Communications industry group, particularly the telecommunications portion, is expected to generate more than 4,000 new jobs for a growth rate somewhat faster than average.

7. Hospitality services (hotels and lodging services, amusement and recreation services, and eating and drinking places) should generate in excess of 37,000 new jobs at a rate about as fast as average.

Data Sources: Current Employment Statistics, ES-202, and Industry Projections

CONTRACTING INDUSTRIES
Manufacturing employment represents over 14 percent of all jobs in Massachusetts. Although total manufacturing employment is projected to shrink, selected industry groups are expected to generate increased employment opportunities. Most recently, the durable goods manufacturing sectors adding the most new positions were computer storage devices and telephone and telegraph apparatus. Nondurable goods manufacturing sectors creating almost 1,500 positions included commercial printing and plastic products, n.e.c. Four manufacturing industry groups (electronics components and accessories, transportation equipment, medical instruments, and chemicals and allied products) should generate 8,600 new jobs for a growth rate of 11 percent.

The five industry groups that are expected to experience the largest employment declines are industrial machinery and equipment, instruments and related products,
general merchandise stores, apparel and other textile products, and printing and publishing. The five industry groups with the most rapid rates of job decline are leather and leather products, apparel and other textile products, paper and allied products, lumber and wood products, and stone, clay, and glass products. Eight of these nine industry groups are within manufacturing.

A complexity of forecasting manufacturing employment is the diminished ability to count workers engaged in manufacturing activities. The rise of temporary help agencies and leasing firms blurs the count of those who work for a manufacturing firm and those who work at a manufacturing facility. The outsourcing of advertising and custodial functions has contributed to a decline in reported manufacturing employment and an increase in business services jobs. In addition, the outsourcing of lock-box and payroll services performed for manufacturing firms have transferred manufacturing-funded jobs to the financial and accounting services industries.

The paradox for Massachusetts’ manufacturing employment is continued growth for manufacturers who have adopted more efficient, high-tech processes, increased demand for high skilled workers, and job loss through attrition and layoffs of less skilled workers. The share of managers and professionals in the manufacturing industries will continue to increase dramatically in the nineties as the share of production workers decreases. The upgrading of the skills of existing employees may minimize layoffs, but the attrition of less skilled workers and some layoffs of workers lacking computation and mechanical skills will result in reduced manufacturing employment. Skill training to upgrade current employees will be crucial in the areas outside Greater Boston where manufacturing dominates the economy.

Data Sources: Current Employment Statistics, ES-202, and Industry Projections

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT NEEDS
In the next five years, job opportunities will continue to exist for all levels of education and training. However, jobs for more skilled workers will increase at a faster rate than jobs for less skilled workers. Moreover, skill levels for all occupations will rise, as the workplace becomes more complex and integrated with the global economy. In terms of new jobs being created in Massachusetts, almost 60 percent will require post-secondary training. Nearly half of the new jobs will require a bachelor’s degree or higher. Already, the percentage of Massachusetts’ adults with a Bachelor’s Degree is 1.3 times higher than the national percentage.

The second largest number of new jobs (30%) can be learned in one month or less. Many of the service occupations have minimal training requirements including 2 of the top 10 fastest growing occupations: home care aides and home health aides. The surveys of the Center for Business Research, University of Massachusetts at Dartmouth found that Greater New Bedford area employers indicated that less than a high school education would be acceptable for 20 percent of existing positions.
Nevertheless, many employers will prefer workers with prior working experience or brief training.

Increased post-secondary education and technical training will be necessary to gain the skills needed for the sixty percent of the new positions requiring post-secondary training. Coordination between academic institutions and employers will be necessary to develop programs to meet changing skill needs. As Massachusetts becomes more entrenched in the global economy, international and national standards will become more critical to maintaining competitiveness. More employers will require Certificates of Mastery and Certifications from employees to demonstrate that the workers meet the quality standards necessary for contract reimbursement or industry regulations.

Some Massachusetts regions are experiencing acute labor shortages for specific job titles. Improved road and public transportation will increase worker access to areas with labor shortages from areas experiencing labor surpluses. Telecommunications infrastructures such as the Internet have already increased software employment in the Northern Berkshires and have the potential to increase year-round employment in Barnstable County.

Local and state initiatives to expand affordable housing within areas such as the City of Boston and Cape Cod will make it possible to attract and retain workers for the important hospitality and health services industries.

The increased availability of childcare and elder care will meet the demands of workers as even more women enter the workforce and as the parents of the current workforce age.

**GROWTH OCCUPATIONS**

During the next five years, managerial, professional, and services occupations combined will generate 3 out of 4 new jobs. The fastest growing occupational divisions are professional and technical, followed by managerial, with service occupations ranking a strong third.

Within the professional specialty occupations, the largest projected numerical increase will be health practitioners and technicians. Computer and math occupations are expected to have the fastest expansion rate.

Within service occupations, the health service occupations are expected to exhibit the largest numerical increase and the fastest growth rate. Food/beverage preparation services will generate the second largest number of new jobs. Selected personal service occupations are expected to expand at a faster than average rate.

Five occupational clusters will generate significant numbers of new positions.
1. Within the information technology industries, computer and math occupations will increase much faster than average for over 30,000 jobs. The Massachusetts Technology Collaborative surveyed a wide-range of high technology industries and found that more than half of the vacant positions was in engineering. Positions expected to expand at a rate almost 5 times the average include Systems Analysts, Computer Engineers, Database Administrators, and Computer Support Specialists. Simultaneously, Technical Writers, Data Processing Equipment Repairers, and Telephone/Cable TV Installers/Repairers positions will increase at a pace more than twice as fast as average.

Although the industrial mix of the health care industry is in flux, health related occupations are expected to swell by over 68,400 jobs, with the largest growth rate in the health services occupations. Occupational titles generating large numbers of new jobs include Registered Nurses, Nursing Aides, Medical Assistants, and Home Health Aides. An allied occupation, Medical Secretaries is projected to grow at a faster than average rate.

Direct Care occupations are projected to generate over 15,000 new job openings. Occupational titles projected to grow at faster than average rates are Human Service Workers, Residential Counselors, Personal/Home Care Aides and ChildCare Workers.

Bank/Security/Finance/Credit Workers occupations are projected to expand about as fast as average. Within the evolving Financial Services industries, positions for Financial Managers, Adjustment Clerks, Financial Sales Representatives, Loan Officers, and Brokerage Clerks should increase at a faster than average rate.

Within the Engineering and Management Services industry group, occupational titles such as Engineering, Engineering Technicians, and Architects combined are projected to increase by over 22,000 jobs. Occupations within the Research and Testing Services industry group, such as Physical Scientists and Biological Scientists will generate over 1,200 jobs.

Data Sources: Occupational Projections

SKILLS

An analysis of the Workforce Training Fund applications in Massachusetts suggests that Massachusetts’ workers need Basic Skills, Technical Skills, and Interpersonal/Problem Solving Skills.

Basic Skills

Employers expect basic skills, which include number facility, oral comprehension, oral expression, reading comprehension, written comprehension, and written
expression. Job seekers lacking these basic skills will need Adult Basic Education and/or English as a Second Language training.

Mathematics
Harry Holzer, Michigan State University economics professor, found that even low wage; high turnover jobs require the ability to do basic arithmetic. Sixty-five percent of the entry-level positions require workers to do arithmetic daily. A spokesperson for a local telecommunications company recently stated “We do face a challenge finding people who can meet our employment testing standards in basic math.” A Massachusetts bank spokesperson was quoted “If you don’t like math, that’s a red flag for us.” In Mass Insight Corporation’s recent report, Made in Massachusetts, most employers contacted were disappointed with the math skills among workers and applicants, particularly with basic math operations such as using percentages. The Center for Business Research, University of Massachusetts at Dartmouth, found that most employers in the Greater New Bedford area need workers who can compute basic math. Many employers bemoaned the lack of basic math skills among their younger employees.

Mathematics skills will be more important in the future because of the widespread use of computers for controlling equipment, as well as record keeping and quality control. Massachusetts intends to make the improvement of math skills of students a priority. Mathematics applications such as percentages, algebra, statistics, and accounting will be increasingly critical for workers in Information Technology, Telecommunications, Financial Services, Precision Manufacturing, and Engineering/Management Services as quality control and process improvement initiatives are implemented. Growth occupations requiring advanced mathematics skills are as varied as accountants, computer engineers, electrical engineers, financial analysts, and medical scientists.

Written Expression Skills
Holzer’s study found that 31 percent of entry-level jobs required writing paragraphs daily. Personnel specialists in the Information Technology, Telecommunications, Financial Services, and Research and Testing industries seek workers with strong written expression skills. The increased use of E-mail communications will require clear and precise written expression. Employers will continue to value business correspondence, report writing, and technical writing skills. Growing occupations requiring strong writing skills include electrical engineers, financial managers, medical scientists, systems analysts, and technical writers.

Reading Comprehension Skills
Holzer found that 54 percent of entry-level jobs require reading instructions of at least a paragraph daily. Complex equipment operation, safety standards, and quality control require reading written instructions. Growth occupations requiring advanced reading comprehension include occupations as diverse as computer programmers, physician’s assistants, and technical writers.
Oral Communication Skills
Holzer found that over fifty percent of entry-level positions required workers to talk face to face with customers or to talk on phones with customers. Most employers in the Health Service and Direct Care Services will recruit workers with strong business-oriented communication skills. The abilities to speak clearly and to understand oral instructions will continue to be critical to these industries. Growth occupations within the administrative support category requiring conversational skills include hotel desk clerks, reception/information clerks, and customer service representatives. Telephone techniques will remain essential for front-office personnel and order takers. The University of Massachusetts at Lowell researchers in their report quote an employer “It’s becoming more and more important that people have good communication skills and (that) they’re people-oriented.”

Technical Skills
Holzer reports that 51 percent of entry-level positions required using computers daily, particularly for data entry. Most employers in the Greater New Bedford area surveyed by the Center for Business Research, University of Massachusetts at Dartmouth were seeking workers with computer skills. A human resource professional at a Massachusetts hospital noted that “many of the jobs require at least keyboarding skills, if not outright computer mastery.” The growing Information Technology, Telecommunications, Financial Services, and Research and Testing industries will require many workers with business-oriented software skills. Fast growing occupations requiring programming skills include Computer Engineers and Systems Analysts.

Employers in the Construction, Telecommunications, Precision Manufacturing, and Engineering/Architectural Services industries will desire employees with CAD/CAM/blueprint reading skills.

Knowledge of medical terminology, medical coding, or first aid will give workers an edge in Health Care Services. Increasingly, secretaries will be expected to have administrative skills combined with specific knowledge such as medical, legal, or financial terminology.

Interpersonal/Problem Solving Skills
Most employers in the Health and Direct Care Services will recruit workers with therapeutic/counseling skills or experience. Employers in the Computer Software Services, Health Services, Financial Services, Direct Care Services, and Management Consulting Services industries will seek individuals with strong interpersonal skills. Growing occupations as diverse as Computer Support Specialists, Licensed Practical Nurses, Personal and Home Care Aides, Residential Counselors, and Financial Services Sales Agents require high levels of social perceptiveness.
In addition, human resource personnel at local manufacturers, retail trade stores, food stores, and hospitals rate strong customer service skills as crucial for job success. The Center for Business Research, University of Massachusetts at Dartmouth, confirmed that future skills in demand include customer services skills.

Team building skills will be desirable for managers and professionals in the Manufacturing, Computer Software Services, Health Services, and Engineering and Management Services industries.

Most employers value problem solving and planning skills, particularly among managers, professionals, technicians, and mechanics/repairpersons. Human resource personnel will seek Engineers and Computer Support Specialists with strong complex problem solving skills.

Sources: O*NET and Workforce Training Fund

**Also describe how the program services provided relate to State and regional occupational opportunities. (WIA §112(b)(4) and Perkins §122(c)(15))**

- Specific needs of local area program services related to regional occupational opportunities are identified in the current REB Blueprint reports and will also be forthcoming with the submission of local plans. These reports, created under the leadership of the LWIBs, utilize a variety of research methods to assess workforce and economic development need and formulate a recommended strategic plan (“blueprint”) to guide workforce development partners in determining demand occupations.

- The Commonwealth convenes groups of local level leaders (including business representatives on LWIBs), and service delivery entities and develops capacity of networks to assure that current and emerging, regional occupational opportunities are identified and services to customers are responsive.

- Labor market information, both local and state level, is updated and made accessible to customers and workforce development service providers through IT resources and regional and statewide networks of employer resource experts.

**E. State and Local Governance**

1. **What is the organization, structure and role/function of each State and local entity that will govern the activities of the unified plan?**

In answering the above question, if your unified plan includes:

*WIA Title I and Wagner-Peyser Act and/or Veterans Programs:*

i) **Describe the State Workforce Investment Board, or the authorized alternative entity including a description of the manner in which the Board collaborated on the State plan. (WIA §112(b)(1) and §111(e))**

39
The Governor created the State Workforce Investment Board by Executive Order in July 1999. Rather than choose an alternative entity, the Governor chose to create a new board, built upon the membership of the Commonwealth’s Human Resource Investment Council. The Board consists of 65 members:

The Governor of Massachusetts  
Three members of the Senate, two appointed by the Senate President and one by the minority leader  
Three members of the House, two appointed by the Speaker of the House and one by the minority leader  
The Director of the Department of Labor and Workforce Development  
The Director of the Department of Economic Development  
The Secretary of the Executive Office of Health and Human Services  
The Deputy Director of the Division of Employment and Training  
The Commissioner of the Department of Transitional Assistance  
The Commissioner of the Department of Education  
The Chancellor of the Board of Higher Education or another official appointed by the Governor representing education and training issues  
The Deputy Director of Workforce Development  

The following members shall be appointed by the Governor:  
Two mayors or chairs of boards of selectmen  
Two persons with experience with respect to youth activities  
Two persons with experience and expertise in the delivery of workforce investment activities, including one president of a community college  
Eleven persons representing local government, public secondary and post-secondary education, and organizations representing or providing services to trainees, including at least three representatives of organized labor, two of whom shall be selected from among individuals nominated by state labor federations  
Thirty-three persons representing business and industry in the Commonwealth selected from among individuals nominated by state business associations and trade organizations, including at least three chairs of Regional Employment Boards [to become Local Workforce Investment Boards] and  
Such members as the Governor in his discretion may choose to appoint.  

The members shall be appointed to represent diverse regions of the state, including urban, suburban, and rural areas. Members shall serve two-year terms at the pleasure of the Governor and shall serve without compensation.  

The Chair of the Board shall be chosen by the Governor from among the members who are representatives of business and industry and shall serve as Chair at the pleasure of the Governor.
Staff to the JTPA HRIC, the MassJobs Council, were members of the WIA Steering Committee and various sub-Committees. As such, they voted on policies that were included in the plan and reviewed the draft plan. The draft plan was placed on the World Wide Web and copies were sent to the members of the SWIB for review and comment. A meeting of the SWIB was held prior to the submission of the plan to USDOL, with final approval by the SWIB.

ii.) describe the State-imposed requirements for the statewide workforce investment system. (§112(b)(2))

The Commonwealth is not imposing additional requirements for the workforce investment system beyond those identified in the WIA.

iii.) identify the local areas designated in the State and include a description of the process used for the designation of such areas. (§112(b)(5))

The designated local workforce investment areas are denoted in the list, which follows. Boston is the only area, which was automatically designated; therefore, the other 15 areas received temporary designation. These are the exact same areas that existed under JTPA, therefore, the size and number of the areas is the same as under JTPA.

1. Berkshire County
2. Boston
3. Bristol County
4. Brockton
5. Cape Cod, M.V. and Nantucket
6. Central Massachusetts
7. Franklin/Hampshire
8. Greater Lowell
9. Greater New Bedford
10. Hampden County
11. Lower Merrimack Valley
12. Metro North
13. Metro South/West
14. North Central
15. South Coastal
16. Southern Essex

The above designated regions are consistent with the local labor market areas and have a twenty year track record of coordinating workforce development planning consistent with local labor market needs. The areas are also consistent with the Commonwealth’s post-secondary educational system. This system and the local workforce development system have a long and successful track record in ensuring the coordination and integration of workforce and economic development activities with educational services and programs for employers, job seekers, youth and incumbent workers.
iv) describe the appeals process referred to in §116(a)(5).  
(§112(b)(15))

In the event that a unit of local government wishes to appeal designation of an area the following appeals process has been established by the Commonwealth:

Any unit of general local government or grant recipient that requests, but is not granted, designation as a local area by the Governor has the right to a hearing before the Director of the Department of Labor & Workforce Development upon written application to the Director received by the Director no later than 10 days after notice of denial of designation. If no written request for hearing is received within 10 days of notice of denial, the decision regarding designation shall become final.

If a hearing request is received within 10 days of notice of denial, the Director shall schedule said hearing no later than 14 days after receipt of the request and shall issue a final decision no later than 14 days after the date of the hearing. The provisions of Chapter 30A of the Massachusetts General laws shall govern the conduct of the hearing.

Any party aggrieved by a final decision of the Governor may appeal directly to the State Workforce Investment Board. Said appeal must be received by the Chair of the State Board no later than 14 days after the date of the final decision issued by the Director.

Upon receipt of an appeal, the Chair of the State Workforce Investment Board shall schedule a hearing no later than 14 days after the date of receipt of said appeal. Said appeal shall be heard by a panel of seven members of the State Workforce Investment Board consisting of the Chair who shall also chair the panel, and six additional private sector members selected by the Chair. The panel shall issue its final decision no later than 14 days after the hearing date.

Any party aggrieved by a decision of the State Board shall have the right of appeal to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Labor pursuant to Sec. 166(a)(5) of the Workforce Investment Act.

v) identify the criteria the State has established to be used by the chief elected officials in the local areas for the appointment of local Board members and establishment of youth councils based on the requirements of §117. (WIA §112(b)(6))

The Commonwealth has established the following criteria for use by the Chief Elected Official in the appointment of local WIB members and the establishment of youth councils:
CRITERIA FOR LOCAL WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD MEMBERSHIP IN THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

The implementation of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 provides the Commonwealth, through its designated Local Workforce Investment Boards (LWIBs), the opportunity to develop a comprehensive and locally designed Workforce Investment System. LWIBs will be responsible for the planning and oversight of activities that prepare adults and youth to enter the workforce and encourage local employers to continue and expand their investments in the skill development of their employees. The LWIB will also be responsible for the establishment of a Youth Council.

The following paragraphs are intended to both describe the legal requirements of the Act and provide guidance as to additional considerations for membership criteria at the local level.

Section 117(b)(2)(A) of the Workforce Investment Act requires that at least 51% of the members of the LWIB come from private sector businesses which are representative of the primary employers in the region. The LWIB must elect a chairperson from among the business representatives on the board (WIA sec. 117(b)(5)).

The balance of the membership shall represent education, organized labor, community-based agencies, and the One-Stop Career Center partners. More detail on the specific requirements for these additional members will be found in the following pages.

The Workforce Investment Act states that “representatives from each sector shall be CEOs and owners or others with optimum policy making or hiring authority”.

Additional Required Criteria:

The Commonwealth has established additional required criteria relative to LWIB membership as follows:

- Local Workforce Investment Board members who have been appointed by the Chief Elected Official as required under the Workforce Investment Act shall constitute the official voting membership of the Board;

- A minimum of four voting members of the LWIB must also serve on the Youth Council;

- Boards are required to establish a diversity goal to the extent possible within the diversity of its population and the requirement that mandatory
representatives to the LWIB be CEOs or optimum decision makers. Each LWIB must submit a plan as part of its certification package that demonstrates how the LWIB will ensure the broadest diversity possible;

- LWIB membership must be reasonably representative of the entire geographic region's and critical and/or emerging industries.

- Each LWIB must develop a fair and impartial review process which incorporates in its by-laws a conflict of interest statement in compliance with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts conflict of interest laws (MGL Chapter 268A and B) see attached. This statement will ensure that no LWIB member may participate in discussions or vote on proposals in which they have a financial or other interest as described in the statement. Signed Conflict of Interest Statements for each member must be kept on file; (sample form attached)

- Each LWIB must ensure that it will conduct business in an open manner consistent with Section 117(e) of the Workforce Investment Act and consistent with the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law.

**Additional Required Criteria-Youth Council**

The Commonwealth has established the following required criteria relative to the membership of the Youth Council:

- A minimum of four voting members of the LWIB must also serve on the Youth Council.

**Identify the circumstances which constitute a conflict of interest for any State or State Board and Local Boards member, including voting on any matter regarding the provision of service by that member or the entity that s/he represents, and any matter that would provide a financial benefit to that member or his or her immediate family. (§112(b)(13))**

In addition to any matter that would provide a financial benefit to that member or his/her immediate family, State and/or local Board members may not engage in any activity determined by the Governor to constitute a conflict. Members must notify the Chair or Executive Director of the State WIB or LWIB of any situation they believe has the potential of being in conflict or the appearance of being in conflict. Members are provided with copies of the following General Laws of Massachusetts: Chapter 268A. Conduct of Public Officials and Employees and, Chapter 268B. Financial Disclosure by Certain Public Officials and Employees.
Board members must sign an acknowledgement form related to the Conflict of Interest Laws.

Describe the procedures the local boards will use to identify eligible providers of training services for the Adult and Dislocated worker programs (other than on-the-job training or customized training) (§112(b)(17)(A)(iii))

The following procedure shall be used by all Local Workforce Investment Boards to process and review applications by service providers applying for initial status as approved training program providers. This process shall be used for determining initial eligibility only. A separate process will be used to determine subsequent eligibility of a service provider which allows the Local Workforce Investment Boards to use higher levels of performance and additional verifiable program information then required by the State. Programs, not providers are certified as eligible through this process. Service providers must submit an application for each program they wish to be eligible. It is possible for a service provider to apply for eligibility for several training programs and have only one program approved.

I. APPLICATION PROCESS

A. Notice
Notice to the service provider community will be accomplished by multiple methods. Each Local Workforce Investment Board (LWIB) shall provide to CBWL a mailing list of training service providers to which the LWIB wishes an application package sent. In addition, solicitations will be done through legal notices in newspapers across the state, direct mailings, and other appropriate means.

B. Mailing/Availability of Application Packages
The application package will be distributed by the widest possible means. In addition to the application mailings by CBWL, copies of the application package will be made available to all LWIBs for distribution to service providers in their area. Further, the application package will be posted on the state WIA web site for download by any interested party.

C. Submission
To avoid confusion and duplication on the part of the service providers, completed application packages will be submitted to CBWL as a single point of contact for further processing.

II. REVIEW PROCESS
A. **CBWL Completeness Review**

Upon initial receipt of an application package from a service provider, CBW will log in and review the application for completeness only. Complete application packages will be forwarded to the appropriate LWIBs for their review. Depending upon the nature and extent of the missing information, application packages missing required information will be returned to the service provider without further processing or held aside at CBWL until the contacted service provider provides the missing information.

B. **Local Workforce Investment Board Initial Eligibility Review Process**

1. **Reviewers** - Local Workforce Investment Areas subject to the procurement requirements of 29 CFR Part 95 or Part 97 may appoint a single individual to review service provider applications. Local Area Workforce Investment Areas subject to stricter procurement requirements may appoint a standing committee, of no less than three persons, to review each individual application. All reviewers are subject to the WIA and State conflict of interest laws.

2. **Determining Eligibility** – Reviewers will use the standard criteria established by the state to determine the initial eligibility of service provider’s program(s). A Price analysis will be included in the review. A standardized Review Form which will serve as documentation of the review process will be used.

3. **Submission of Eligible/Ineligible Providers** – Each Local Workforce Investment Board shall submit to CBWL a local list of those service providers and programs determined to be initially eligible in their area. In addition the LWIB shall submit to CBWL a local list of those service providers determined to be ineligible in their area with a short explanation why each provider was ineligible.

4. **Review and Submission Period** – Reviewers must complete the review and submission process of an application within 30 days of its receipt by the Local Workforce Investment Board. CBWL shall independently determine the initial eligibility of a service provider if it does not receive a determination of initial eligibility from the applicable LWIB within the 30-day period.

III. **VERIFICATION AND PLACEMENT ON THE STATEWIDE ELIGIBLE SERVICE PROVIDER LIST**

a) Service Providers determined to initially eligible by the LWIBs shall have key information verified for accuracy by CBWL prior to being placed on the Statewide Eligible Service Provider List. CBWL shall 30 days to verify the information relating to the eligible provider. After CBWL verifies the information or 30 days has elapsed, whichever is first, the provider will be placed on the State list. The State List will display information for each eligible service provider/program including in which local areas the service provider/program is eligible. The Statewide Eligible Service Provider List will
be made available to all Local Workforce Investment Boards and Local One-Stop Career Centers.

Describe how the locally operated ITA system will be managed in the State to maximize usage, select services providers, and improve the performance on training providers. (§112(b)(14), 112(b)(17)(A)(iii))

The WIA promotes a market-based system for training services that is accessible to all customers, that provides maximum consumer choice, and that features performance accountability. For customers to successfully navigate a market-based system, they need knowledge of the market’s products and services. Under WIA, the consumer report system is the individual adult customer’s primary source of training and education information. The system will rely on technology to make large quantities of information universally available to a diverse customer base.

The consumer report system, as defined in WIA regulation, is “the vehicle for informing the customers of the One-Stop delivery systems about the performance of training providers in the local area. It is built upon the State list of eligible providers developed through the procedures described in WIA section 122 and this subpart. The consumer report system must contain the information necessary for an adult or dislocated worker customer to fully understand the options available to him or her in choosing a program of training services.”

The CRS is one critical element of the Commonwealth’s comprehensive performance management function that includes quality oversight of all workforce investment services. Integrated planning and development of individual components of the performance accountability system is of prime importance, since information must be shared across components. The development of the consumer report system will rely on accessing participant information from the Massachusetts One-Stop Employment System (MOSES), UI wage data from the Department of Revenue, training program inventory data from a number of sources, and annual program performance data from the provider community. In order to develop a useful consumer report system for customers, the state will integrate information from all of these data sources, put it in an easily digested format, and make it universally accessible.

v) Identify the criteria to be used by local boards in awarding grants for youth activities, including criteria that the Governor and local boards will use to identify effective and ineffective youth activities and providers of such activities. (§112(b)(18)(B))
WIA funded grants will be awarded on a competitive basis based upon the recommendation of the local Youth Council, utilizing procurement procedures that are in accordance with the Procurement Policy set forth by the Commonwealth. Over time, as WIA performance data become available, Youth Councils will consider performance, as an indicator of program quality, as one factor in the decision to approve a youth service provider.

The Commonwealth expects each Youth Council to take a leadership role in promoting the quality of all youth services, especially by approving programs that contain elements that have proven successful. In recent months, the Massachusetts Statewide Steering Committee for At-Risk and Out-of-School Youth has developed a Program Assessment Tool based on the national criteria for inclusion in PepNET. This Tool helps an organization assess its own program against critical program elements, and look at the ways to improve its practices over time. The Commonwealth envisions the eventual adoption and use of this Program Assessment Tool by Youth Councils within Massachusetts.

Each local Workforce Investment Area (through the joint leadership of LWIBs and Youth Councils), will be responsible for determining selection criteria for youth service providers on a competitive basis. Local WIBs will be encouraged to use independent reviewers to avoid conflict of interest. In addition to these local criteria,

Youth service providers must demonstrate organizational capacity, including:

- adequate financial resources or the ability to obtain them;
- the ability to meet program design specifications at a reasonable cost, as well as the ability to meet performance goals;
- a satisfactory record of past performance, including information showing previous program outcomes;
- a satisfactory record of integrity, business ethics, and fiscal accountability,
- the necessary organization, experience, accounting and operational controls; and
- the technical skills to perform the work required.

Youth service providers must demonstrate program capacity, including:

- the ability to offer youth a broad range of programmatic offerings selected from the WIA ten required program elements;
- the connection of program services to at least one of the four system standards (academic, work-based learning, career development, or postsecondary readiness);
- prior experience working with disadvantaged youth; and
- beginning in PY2002, and where data should be reasonably available, measures of effectiveness related to each youth provider according to the local and state Consumer Report System.
Youth service providers must demonstrate system knowledge and capacity, including:

- the degree to which proposed services conform to the local area's goals and priorities (as articulated in the Youth Plan);
- demonstrated knowledge of community resources available and a commitment to work with other local youth programs and providers to meet the development needs of eligible youth;
- a description of current or proposed linkages with community organizations, state agencies, employers, etc., including a commitment to participate in efforts to map youth resources that are available within the community;
- an agreement to provide performance data necessary for the LWIB to provide required WIA performance measures;
- the agreement to use performance data as an element of continuous program improvement; and
- beginning in PY2002, a plan to use the Program Assessment Tool, or its equivalent, as an element of continuous program improvement.

vi) Describe the processes that will be used at the State level to award grants and contracts for activities under Title I of WIA. (§112(b)(16))

For funds that are not distributed through the formula allocations, the State advertises available grants and contracts through a variety of media, including the Internet. In addition to public notice, all requests for proposals or bids will be issued via WIA Communication Policies that are issued to all partner agencies, Workforce Investment Boards and chief elected officials. The state also maintains a 'bidder list' — an accumulated list of individuals and organizations that have expressed an interest in being notified of procurement opportunities, or that have responded in past procurements — that is used whenever an appropriate grant or contract is made available.

State WIA procurement policy will provide a strong framework for ensuring open competition in the awarding of grants and contracts. While the emphasis of this policy is on the value of competition in as many procurement actions as possible, it provides for non-competitive processes where dictated by extraordinary circumstances. Documentation is maintained of the justifications and exigencies for any non-competitive procurement that results in a sole-source award.

Vocational Rehabilitation:

Designate a State agency as the sole State agency to administer the plan, or to supervise the administration of the plan by a local agency, in accordance with §101(a)(2)(A). (§101(a)(2)(A))

The Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission, under authority of the Governor of the
Commonwealth is designated as the Sole State Agency to administer programs of the Federal Rehabilitation Act, except for those individuals who are legally blind. Citations of law are on file at the MRC, Fort Point Place, Boston, Massachusetts 02210.

**Massachusetts Commission for the Blind:**

The Massachusetts Commission for the Blind is the sole state agency designated to administer the provision of vocational rehabilitation services to legally blind persons in Massachusetts. The agency was created by an act of the Massachusetts Legislature in 1906. The agency became the sole state agency for the provision of vocational rehabilitation services to legally blind persons in the mid-1940’s when the United States Congress expanded eligibility for vocational rehabilitation services to include legally blind persons.

**Welfare-to-Work:**

Provide a description of the implementation of this program by PICs (or Local Boards) across the State, including the roles and responsibilities of the State WtW Administrative Agency and the TANF agency; a list of the substate areas and the local entities responsible for program administration; and the program's implementation target dates.

At the local level, the REB’s administrative entity has access to the eligible population through the TANF database which will be updated monthly from DTA to DLWD. In addition, REBs will look for referrals from the local TANF offices, develop a network of service providers (including but not limited to the Division of Employment and Training, One Stop Career Centers, housing authorities, community action agencies, education and training programs and providers, rehabilitation and mental health organizations, and day care centers) who will identify and refer appropriate participants. In response to planning guidelines issued by the state, REBs identified local targeting strategies, activities to be conducted, project governance, and strategies to prevent duplication and to maximize utilization of services.

**ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE STATE WTW ADMINISTRATIVE AGENCY AND THE STATE TANF AGENCY:**

The WTW interagency steering committee, under the leadership of DLWD will be responsible for:
- Overall administration of the WTW funds.
- Developing the state plan, in consultation with other state and local stakeholders, as required by the regulations.
- Distributing WTW funds.
- Conducting oversight and monitoring activities.
- Providing program technical assistance.
- Providing technical assistance on regulatory/technical matters.
- Obtaining, coordinating, and disseminating technical assistance from the TANF agency and other agencies to REBs.
Ensuring coordination of TANF and WTW programs.
Managing the 15% WTW funds.
Ensuring worker protections are observed and establishing required grievance procedures.
Collecting and providing comments on competitive grant applications.
Coordinating with federal HHS on the evaluation of WTW programs.
Providing technical assistance to REBs.
Establishing reporting requirements and procedures and ensuring reports are prepared and submitted correctly and in a timely manner.
Researching, collecting, and disseminating “best practice” models of work first and transitioning from welfare to work.
Developing, in consultation with state and local agencies, and conducting workshops on “best practice” models to provide guidance to REBs on potential program designs and initiatives.
Coordinating activities of state agencies involved in WTW.
Acting as broker where appropriate to coordinate industry-wide or region-wide activities with employers.
Providing technical assistance and staff training on topics such as mentoring, dealing with hard-to-employ clients, and post-placement services, such as incumbent worker training and education.
Developing and overseeing a performance management system to ensure federal and state goals and objectives are met for formula funds.
Developing in consultation with appropriate local and state stakeholders, evaluation designs for any program conducted with 15% funds.
Conducting or overseeing evaluation of 15% funds and preparing reports on outcomes.
Ensuring competitive grant applications are reviewed in accordance with applicable regulations.

The creation of the Massachusetts WTW State Plan was a strong collaborative effort by all members of the Steering Committee. Many of the responsibilities will be done in tandem or shared between state partners. Below is an example of responsibilities and whether those activities will be coordinated or the responsibility of an individual entity:

**Coordinated Activities**
Researching, collecting, disseminating “best practice” models of work first and transitioning from welfare to work
Acting as broker where appropriate to coordinate industry-wide or region-wide activities with employers
Providing comments on Competitive Grant applications
Ensuring coordination of TANF and WTW funds

**Agency Specific Activities**
Overall fiscal administration of the WTW funds: the Corporation for Business, Work and Learning (the State Administrative Agency)
Ensuring worker protections are observed and establishing required grievance policies: CBWL
Collecting Competitive Grant information: CBWL
Providing Technical Assistance to REBs: CBWL
Distributing WTW funds: DLWD and CBWL
Compiling TANF client data and sharing that data with appropriate agencies: the Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA, the state TANF agency)

SUBSTATE AREAS AND ADMINISTRATIVE ENTITIES

Boston EDIC/Office of Jobs and Community Development
Metro North Employment Resources, Inc.
South Coastal South Coastal Career Development Administration
Northern Worcester North Central Career Center (Title II)
Mt. Wachusett Community College (Title III)
Southern Worcester City Manager’s Office of Employment and Training
Metro South/West Metro South/West Employment and Training Administration
Lower Merrimack Department of Training and Development
Northern Middlesex Lowell Office of Employment and Training
Southern Essex Lowell Office of Employment and Training
Brockton Brockton Area Private Industry Council
Bristol Bristol County Training Consortium
New Bedford New Directions
Cape Cod/Martha’s Job Training and Employment Consortium
Vineyard/Nantucket
Berkshire Berkshire Training and Employment Program
Franklin/Hampshire Franklin/Hampshire Employment and Training Consortium
Hampden Hampden County Employment and Training Consortium

Initial implementation of the Year 1 program began on or near March 1, 1998.
Initial implementation of the Year 2 program began on or near September 24, 1999.

F. Funding

1. What criteria will the State use, subject to each program's authorizing law, to allocate funds for each of the programs included in the unified plan? Describe how the State will use funds the State receives to leverage other Federal, State, local, and private resources, in order to maximize the effectiveness of such resources, and to expand the participation of business, employees, and individuals in the statewide workforce investment system. (WIA §112(b)(10))

In answering the above question, if your unified plan includes:

WIA Title I and Wagner-Peyser Act and/or Veterans Programs:
describe the methods and factors the State will use in distributing funds to local areas for youth activities and adult employment and training activities under sections 128 (b)(3)(B) and 133(b)(3)(B), including a description of how the individuals and entities represented on the State board were involved in determining such methods and factors of distribution and how the State consulted with chief elected officials in local areas throughout the State in determining such distributions. (§112(b)(12)(A))

Attachment A  Title I Adults - (Not yet available – formula decision pending)
Attachment B  Title I Youth – (Not yet available – formula decision pending)
Attachment C  Title I Dislocated Workers

The Commonwealth appointed an Allocations Subcommittee to make recommendations to the Governor and the State Board. Members of the Allocations Subcommittee were reflective of many state board members; representatives of local boards and local elected officials were committee co-chairs and members; while these formulas may be reviewed during the public comment period by all interested parties.

describe the formula prescribed by the Governor for the allocation of funds to local areas for dislocated workers in Employment and Training activities. (§112(b)(12)(C))

The Workforce Investment Act requires states to distribute at least 60% of the state’s dislocated worker allotment to local workforce investment areas based on a formula prescribed by the Governor. The Commonwealth’s approach to the development of the formula included the identification of a few key principles, as follows:

First, for any factor used in the formula, a local area’s share would be determined by calculating its relative percentage of the state total on that factor (This represented a change from current practice where some factor values were determined by points assigned by rank order and not proportional shares).

Second, while the most recent data available should be used for factors, it would be preferable to use data sources that represented totals or averages for a full year and, to the extent possible, to use the same program year period for all factors.
Third, the development of formula factors should be limited to the types of information listed in the Act, i.e., additional, optional types of information were not necessary for an effective and equitable formula.

The table on the following page summarizes the Commonwealth’s FY’2001 Dislocated Worker Formula.

(iii) **Describe in detail the plans required under Section 8 of the Wagner-Peyser Act which will be carried out by the State (§112(7))**

The overall success of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) implementation in Massachusetts depends on the ability of the partners, both at the State and the Local level, to coordinate services and avoid duplication. The WIA Steering Committee brings together, at the highest level, representatives of the all required and additional partners, as well as other stakeholders. The mission of the Steering Committee is to see that the necessary policies are in place that will assure an overall integration of services.

While the administration of Titles I and III of the Act are the responsibility of two different agencies, the Corporation for Business Work and Learning (CBWL) and the Division of Employment and Training (DET), the overall responsibility for these agencies and the Workforce Investment system in general is assigned to the Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DLWD). This positions DLWD in a role where, though not actually involved in the actual administration of program, they are ideally suited to assure coordination and prevent duplication among the myriad of partners, DLWD oversight will focus on the local plans and Memoranda of Understandings between the local partners to insure coordination and integration of services.

The implementation of the Massachusetts One Stop Employment Service System will enable all major partners to use and common data collection and reporting system for all activities and programs at the One-Stop Career Centers.

The State will assist the local areas in the development and implementation of fully operational One-Stop Career Centers through on-going technical assistance. However, it should be noted that all local areas will have fully chartered One-Stop Centers in place at the beginning of FY’01. This will mark the culmination of five years of development and evolution from a system of scattered, non-integrated program to a one-stop system where many of the partner programs are already in place. The further development of these programs, to include the remaining partners and a closer integration of budgets and services will be enhanced by a commitment to on-going technical assistance and training for the local WIB’s and Career Center Operators.
iv.) describe the guidelines, if any, the State has established for Local Boards regarding priority when adult funds have been determined to be limited. (§112(b)(17(A)(iv) and 134(d)(4)(E))

The State’s policy is that public assistance and other low-income individuals will receive priority for services under WIA Title I, and that decisions on how to prioritize are to be made locally. Due to the complexity of Massachusetts’ economy and demographics, and the wide variability in access to alternative employment and training resources across the state, local areas are in the best position to determine how to give priority to low-income adults for intensive and training services. The State suggests that indicators such as educational attainment, language ability, literacy/numeracy, etc. be used locally in establishing priority. The state will provide guidance and technical assistance to local areas to enable them to determine the number of low-income adults in their areas, and the alternative resources available to serve those adults. Through that process, workforce investment boards will determine whether a shortage exists and whether that shortage creates a need to give priority to recipients of public assistance and other low-income individuals.

v.) specify how the State will use the 10 percent Wagner-Peyser Act funds allotted to it under section 7(b) in accordance with the three provisions of allowable activities: performance incentives; services for groups with special needs; and extra costs of exemplary service delivery models. (§112(b)(7) and 20 CFR 652.204)

The Commonwealth will utilize the 10 percent Wagner-Peyser funds to facilitate the implementation of the One-Stop Career System at the local level. These resources may be used in accordance with the three allowable activities at the LWIBs discretion based on local needs and circumstances. A small amount of these funds will be retained at the State for system wide initiatives.
## FY 2001 Dislocated Worker Formula

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TYPES OF INFORMATION FOR DISLOCATED WORKER FORMULA</th>
<th>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FY2001 WIA DISLOCATED WORKER FORMULA FACTORS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. Insured Unemployment Data                      | • **UI Claimants, FY’99 Monthly Average**  
* Factor Weight: 20.0%  
Source: DET Statewide Survey of UI Claimants |
| 2. Unemployment Concentrations                    | • **Unemployment Rate, FY’99 (7/98-6/99)**  
* Factor Weight: 25.0%  
Source: DET Local Area Unemployment Statistics |
| 3. Plant Closings and Mass Layoffs                | • **UI Claimants in Mass Layoff Events, FY’99**  
* Factor Weight: 25.0%  
| 4. Declining Industries Data                      | • **Industries with Statewide Job Loss, 1995-1998**  
* Factor Weight: 10.0%  
Source: DET ES-202 Employment and Wages Data |
| 5. Farmer Economic Hardship Data                  | • **Not Significant; No Factor Recommended**  
* Factor Weight: 0.0%  
Note: WIA allows for the exclusion of types of information if justified in State Plan. |
| 6. Long Term Unemployment Data                    | • **UI Claimants, 15 or More Weeks, FY’99**  
* Factor Weight: 10.0%  
• **UI Exhaustees, Total Count, FY’99**  
* Factor Weight: 10.0%  
Source: DET Statewide Survey of UI Claimants |
| 7. Other (Optional)                               | • **No Optional Factors Recommended**  
* Factor Weight: 0.0% |

Note: WIA allows for the exclusion of types of information if justified in State Plan.
Welfare-to-Work:

Describe the State's plans for the expenditure, uses and goals of the 15% funds.

Detailed plans for the expenditure of the governor’s 15% discretionary funds (Year 1 amount: $3,103,844; Year 2 amount: $2,889,052) are not yet finalized. Uses currently under discussion for discretionary funds reflected in each of the plans filed with USDOL include:

Innovative programs and activities not addressed in individual REB plans;
To provide services that may cross individual administrative entity boundaries, for example programs that are more efficiently run at the State level such as a voucher program for post placement training;
To fill gaps which may exist within a specific REB region;
To augment, supplement, and complement activities currently provided or proposed to be provided by the Commonwealth and by individual REBs; and
For the costs of information technology needed for tracking or monitoring under the WTW grant.

The recommendations for the use of the 15% may be altered by the changes to the WTW legislation that were recently enacted by Congress. The WTW Steering Committee is waiting to review the regulations pertaining to those changes.

Vocational Rehabilitation:

(i) describe how the State will utilize funds reserved for the development and implementation of innovative approaches to expand and improve the provision of vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities under the State plan, particularly individuals with the most significant disabilities. (§101(a)(18)(B))

Innovation and expansion projects will be discussed and planned in consultation with the MRC Statewide Rehabilitation Council.

“Requests for Responses” (requests for proposals) will be issued to solicit organizations and/or for expansion projects.

Projects may or may not include: efforts in expanding services to underserved populations; expansion of diversity efforts in reaching out to potentially eligible consumers; expanding community based work opportunities for the “most significantly disabled” who may be in facility based work programs.

Some MRC Title I funded initiatives and programs that reflect innovation and/or expansion projects in State Fiscal Year 2000 were:
• A contract with the Mass. Easter Seal Society for delivery of rehabilitation technology to homebased and ruraly isolated consumers.

• Development and funding of the Minorities with Disabilities Advocacy Center/Vivienne Thomson Center that focuses on inner city outreach and development of self advocacy services to persons designated as minority.

• Funding of several consumers to compose a handbook and guide for consumers accessing and utilizing MRC services. This funding is being used for Individual Consumer Consultation.

• Expansion of services to persons with multiple chemical sensitivities.

• Expansion of bilingual vocational rehabilitation counselor staff and services to non-English speaking consumer groups.

• Expansion of services to disabled college students through collaboration with the Board of Higher Education.

Other innovation and expansion project grants or awards can be reviewed by the Regional staff of the Rehabilitation Services Administration.

**Massachusetts Commission for the Blind**

**Goal I**

To increase the employment of legally blind and deaf-blind consumers through the use of one-stop career centers.

**Objective**

To develop relationships with one-stop career centers that will be on-going and result in partnerships dedicated to increasing the employment of legally blind and deaf-blind persons in Massachusetts.

**Approach**

The approach to be followed is for MCB to purchase a specific enhanced service for eligible MCB referred consumers from one-stop career centers so that they may obtain suitable employment.

**Nature, Purpose, and Scope**

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts, with the support of the US Department of Labor, has established a statewide network of One-Stop Career Centers to provide integrated workforce development services to residents of the Commonwealth. Services offered include:
1. Reception and intake
2. Career center orientation
3. Skills/interests assessment
4. A customer conference
5. Case management
6. Resume development workshops
7. On-line job listings
8. Access to a multi-media resource library
9. A customer satisfaction evaluation

MCB and other human services agencies have been involved in discussion and planning with the MassJobs Council and the existing centers for several years. This network is now evolving into a one-stop network to carry out the provisions of the Workforce Investment Act, in conjunction with the Division of Employment and Training and the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development. A statewide Memorandum of Understanding is currently being drafted and reviewed. Each of the agency’s six Regional Directors are in touch with the local one-stops and are preparing to negotiate local Memoranda of Understanding.

It has been decided that MCB’s financial participation will continue to be performance-driven and based on job placement outcomes. MCB entered into an inter-agency service agreement with the existing centers in FY 1999; six consumers were rehabilitated as a result of their participation in FY 1999. A similar agreement has been reached for FY 2000. The agreement provides that, in order for services to be purchased, the following criteria must be met:

1. The consumer must be legally blind and eligible for vocational rehabilitation services.
2. The Massachusetts Commission for the Blind must have referred the consumer to the career center.
3. The consumer must be offered the full and complete array of accessible core services available at a one-stop career center.
4. Each consumer will have the opportunity to develop a customer action plan, blending professional staff assistance and accessible self-service, tailored to his or her needs.
5. The consumer must obtain suitable employment as a direct and documented result of the provision of enhanced services in accordance with an individualized plan.
6. The employment obtained must be community-based, competitive work, either full-time or part-time.
7. The employment must pay at least the minimum wage in Massachusetts.
8. The consumer must maintain the employment for at least ninety calendar days.
The agency had set aside funds to reimburse the centers for services to up to 30 consumers at a per capita rate of $3,000, upon successful placement. MCB consumers will have their choice of which career center to use. Career centers are encouraged to work with MCB counselors to assure that needed support services are coordinated and provided. These support services may include job site analysis, provision of recommended adaptive equipment, and other appropriate services directed at assisting a blind or deaf-blind person to obtain employment.

Criteria for Measuring and Documenting Results

The following criteria had been established to measure the results of the implementation of this objective:

1. The number of consumers rehabilitated into competitive employment as a direct result of the enhanced job placement services provided by the one-stop career center.

   The centers have been able to document that 6 consumers were rehabilitated as a result of their services in FY 1999. It is believed that this number will be exceeded in FY 2000.

2. Vocational rehabilitation counselor and consumer reports on whether access to and relationships with the one-stop career centers are productive and satisfactory.

   Counselor reports to date indicate that the jobs obtained through the centers have been good opportunities for consumers.

Goal II

To improve the capacity of consumers to apply for and secure employment.

Objective

To provide Internet access and training to job-ready vocational rehabilitation consumers.

Approach

The development of a capacity to allow legally blind and deaf-blind consumers access to the employment-related resources available on the Internet.

Criteria for Measuring and Documenting Results

The following criteria will be used to measure the results of the implementation of this objective:

1. The number and percentage of participants who obtain suitable employment;

2. The number of consumers rehabilitated into competitive employment;

3. The number and percentage of job-ready consumers who participate in the Program;
4. The number of consumers who use the Internet who say that the resources identified enhanced their job search. A computer has been placed in the agency library and equipped with Internet access, speech access, a scanner, large print software, and JAWS for Windows software. This computer is accessible to agency consumers and counselors and rehabilitation teachers. It is used by staff and consumers to evaluate consumers' skills and to teach new skills. It is used by consumers to find vocational information on the Internet and to practice to newly learned skills.

In addition, each regional office has at least one computer with Internet access that may be used by counselors to search for job and other vocational information.

During the past year, a large number of consumers have been provided Internet training though a variety of mechanisms--training at the Carroll Center for the Blind or a community college, training at MCB offices, training at home by an agency rehabilitation teacher. A community computer training center in New Bedford that has staff members who are proficient in adaptive hardware and software is also available.

Goal III

To support the work of the Vocational Rehabilitation Advisory Council in order to enable it to effectively accomplish its mission.

Objective

To provide staff support and technical assistance to the Vocational Rehabilitation Advisory Council.

Criteria for Measuring and Documenting Results

The following criteria will be used to measure the results of the implementation of this objective:

1. The extent to which Council members' needs for information and technical assistance are met;

2. The extent to which Council members' needs for ancillary services such as interpreters and transportation are met.

A staff assistant acts as the principal liaison for the Council members to request information, technical assistance, etc. That staff member coordinates the work of other agency staff in responding to the Council's requests. The staff assistant was hired by the Commissioner with the advice of the Chairperson of the RC. The Director of Information Services and the Policy Development Manager also work closely with the Council on occasion to assure that the Council is fully informed of all pertinent developments. Interpreters for deaf-blind persons, necessary transportation for Council members, and other needed incidental services are provided.

It has been possible to meet the members' needs for ancillary services during FY 1999 and, thus far in FY 2000, in line with the Council's resource plan. The plan assumes that
the RC will meet five times each year, four general meetings and one separate committee meeting. Resources include accessible materials, interpreter services, transportation reimbursements, e-mail equipment and training. Appropriate MCB staff are authorized and expected to spend sufficient time on RC related business.

Goal IV
To expand career opportunities of legally blind and deaf-blind vocational rehabilitation consumers through the provision of enhanced opportunities to pursue self-employment.

Objective
To develop methodology to enhance opportunities for consumers to pursue self-employment.

Criteria for Measuring and Documenting Results
The following criteria are being used to measure the results of the implementation of this objective:

1. The number and percentage of participants who obtain suitable employment;
2. The number of consumers rehabilitated into competitive employment;
3. The number and percentage of job-ready consumers who participate in the Program;
4. Participating consumers’ satisfaction with and evaluation of the effectiveness of the program;
5. Long-term follow-up of program participants and the extent to which their businesses succeed.

A draft revision of Massachusetts Commission for the Blind's current policy on small business enterprises had been prepared. Several issues are as yet unresolved. Services toward self-employment goals are currently being provided under MCB's existing policies. It is hoped that a revised policy that better addresses consumer needs may be finalized during FY 2000. The Rehabilitation Council and the agency have jointly developed a priority in this area for FY 2000:

Provide greater opportunities for self-employment when appropriate.

Considerations:

A) Must be provided through direct purchase of necessary services
B) Consumer must have pre-existing knowledge of the business that is being considered or of a closely related business; or be willing to undertake practical training in the business area as part of the employment plan, whether in an institution or in an on-the-job training position.
C) Consultation with the Service Corps of Retired Executives of the Small Business Administration and/or the local Small Business Development Center should be
encouraged to enhance the consumer’s business knowledge and to help with the overall business plan.

Goal V

To increase the capacity of the agency to evaluate consumer satisfaction with the vocational rehabilitation services provided.

Objective
To develop in-depth information about specific areas of consumer satisfaction or dissatisfaction. The approach being followed is to conduct small focus groups of current and former consumers.

Criteria for Measuring and Documenting Results

1. The participant's evaluation of the focus group process, which will be measured by a telephone survey done several weeks later.

The evaluation of the focus groups is ongoing. The majority of the participants have said that they would recommend attendance at an MCB focus group to a friend and that they were comfortable expressing their opinions and had sufficient opportunity to do so.

2. The extent to which other areas for improvement or additional investigation are identified.

A major area that has been identified as needing improvement is the communication between counselor and consumer around the issue of case closure and the rehabilitation process. It has become apparent in each group that consumers find this issue very confusing. Many assume that their "case" will or should remain open indefinitely even after they are successfully employed. Some feel that they have been "dropped" when informed that their case will be closed, even when it has been explained to them that they may reapply at any time. It seems that consumers would feel better about this issue if the entire rehabilitation process were explained better at the beginning of the process. The agency intends to develop a written explanation of the process from application to closure to be given to consumers. The importance of this issue to consumers has been conveyed to agency counselors during FY 2000.

Four focus groups have been held so far, one including Region VI consumers (Boston area), one including Region IV consumers (Metropolitan Boston area), one including Region III consumers (Northeastern Massachusetts area), and one including Region V consumers (Southeastern Massachusetts area). The first three were held on Saturday afternoons. The group in New Bedford was held on a weekday afternoon because very few consumers accepted an invitation to a Saturday meeting. We are considering holding future meetings on weekdays, because it may actually be more convenient for consumers. The RC member and three MCB staff members involved believe that the project has been very successful so far in its objective of eliciting more in-depth information about consumer satisfaction and understanding of MCB than emerges through written surveys. A preliminary analysis of the focus groups held so far has been prepared for review by the Rehabilitation Council and agency managers. A comprehensive analysis of the issues will be prepared after focus groups are completed in each region.
(ii) describe the quality, scope, and extent of supported employment services authorized under the Act to be provided to individuals who are eligible under the Act to receive the services. (§625(b)(3))

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts through its Human Service agencies and its secondary school special education programs, has been developing and expanding integrated work opportunities for individuals with disabilities, since 1978 because it became very evident that there was a vast number of people with disabilities for whom there were limited work options because of the nature and extent of support services they require in order to maintain employment. With the leadership of the Executive Office of Health and Human Services, Massachusetts human service agencies began to examine ways in which integrated work opportunities could be extended to persons with severe disabilities who need extensive support services to remain in the work setting as productive employees. Throughout the past 15 years, the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission, the Department of Mental Health, the Department of Mental Retardation, the Commission for the Blind and the Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing have been working together to shift and to share resources to create opportunities. The Department of Mental Health and the Department of Mental Retardation have shifted programs and funding to develop and expand long-term support services at integrated work sites. Through its provider contracts for EEP, the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission has set goals for conversion of sheltered work to supported employment and has worked with providers to develop more substantive support services that are long term and based on consumers' choices.

Several years ago, the Executive Office of Health and Human Services with the assistance of the Statewide Employment Services Department at the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission organized a group "Strategic Alliances" whose plans included the development of a comprehensive employment system that would:

1. Increase the number of people with disabilities engaged in appropriate employment services.

2. Create a consistent definition, and support services structure regardless of the agency through which the service is provided.

3. Establish a contracting process and reimbursement mechanism for employment services, which would be guided by the same rules, regulations and guidelines regardless of the administering agency, and based on client choice.

4. Permit the evaluation of funding strategies for employment services through tracking, gap identification and service and budget advocacy.

There continues to be a very positive climate for the enhancement of this process in both the Administrative and Legislative branches of State government. The recent release of the joint initiative for Community Based Employment Services and redesign of the dollars allocated for Extended Employment supports this initiative.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts has clearly come to understand this great void in employment opportunities for many individuals with the most significant disabilities and has made a firm commitment to begin to fill this void. Title VI C funded programs and services represent a crucial component in the Commonwealth's overall plan for supported employment.
As several State agencies develop long-term, State-funded supported employment services and programs, the Title VI C program is instrumental in bridging the gap between unemployment or under employment to competitive employment with long-term support services, for several persons with disabilities.

In FY'98 The Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission qualified over 60 providers to offer Supported Employment services. These programs, located throughout the State, have served persons with an array of severe disabilities including autism/deaf/severely hearing impaired, severely physically disabled, long-term mentally ill, traumatic brain injured and dual diagnosed persons with mental retardation and long-term mental illness, and multiply disabled individuals.

All Title VI C program participants who were enrolled in the supported employment program completed not more than 18 months of services funded by Title VI C. All necessary long-term support services have been arranged to continue \textit{without} use of Title I or Title VI C funding. Funding for extended long-term support services is available from several sources depending on the nature of the client's disability and the resources available to each service provider agency. Sources include:

- IRS Section 44
- United Cerebral Palsy Funding
- Department of Mental Health
- Department of Mental Retardation
- Private Sector Business Natural Supports
- Massachusetts Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
- Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission Statewide Head Injury Program
- Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission State Revenue
- Social Security Work Incentives
- Natural Supports

Due to the vigorous emphasis on supported employment in Massachusetts, which has been spearheaded by the Executive Office of Health and Human Services, and the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission Statewide Employment Services Department a collaborative effort has resulted in funding for long term support services.

In FY'97, a five-year Request for Qualification was reissued for Title VI C funded Supported Employment as well as other state agencies employment programs. This has allowed the Commission to accomplish the following:

1. Strengthen existing quality programs and replace ineffective/inefficient programs with new ones. Seventy providers have qualified to date.

2. Focus Title VI C funding on under-served or unserved consumers such as those who are severely physically disabled deaf or brain injured.

3. Establish a large, statewide pool of programs interested in and able to provide Supported Employment Programs and services, including long-term supports.

\textbf{Massachusetts Commission for the Blind:}
The purpose of the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind's Supported Employment Program is to create and provide paid employment opportunities for blind and deaf-blind persons with severe secondary disabilities within integrated work settings. We will continue to develop new supported employment opportunities in FY 2000 within each of MCB's six regional territories to benefit twenty to thirty agency consumers identified via regional needs assessments. Services will include: an individual evaluation of rehabilitation potential via supported employment, the provision of job development services, to include job analysis and engineering accommodation as reasonable and appropriate; intensive on-the-job training provided by skills trainers; regular observation and supervision of individual participants at the work/training site; the provision and/or arrangement for other support services (e.g., transportation; counseling) that will be necessary to further support individuals participating in the program. We will provide such services for no more than eighteen months (unless a need for a longer period to achieve job stabilization has been justified and planned for in the IEP) before transition is made to extended services provided through another funding source. The agency has a limited amount of state social services funds to provide extended services such as job coaching to deaf-blind consumers who have completed VR supported employment services. When natural supports are planned for as appropriate extended services, the IEP will establish a definite plan of services to be provided by the source of natural support and the VR counselor will closely monitor the carrying out of the plan during the follow-up period in Status 22. The case will not be closed until the counselor is satisfied that the plan for extended services is workable and appropriate to the consumer's needs. In all cases the provision of extended services will meet the minimum requirements of the federal regulations.

(iii) **in the event that vocational rehabilitation services cannot be provided to all eligible individuals with disabilities in the State who apply for services, indicate the order to be followed in selecting eligible individuals to be provided vocational rehabilitation services and provide the justification for the order. (§101(a)(5)(A)-(B))**

The Commission has determined that funds are insufficient to provide vocational rehabilitation services to all eligible individuals who have not yet received vocational rehabilitation services. Funds are insufficient to provide vocational rehabilitation services to all eligible individuals determined to be individuals with the most significant disabilities (Priority Category IA). Funds are insufficient to serve eligible individuals who are not considered to be individuals with most significant disabilities.

Thus, the Commission continued an order of selection and implemented a waiting list for individuals assigned to individuals with the most significant disabilities (Priority Category IA) according to date of application for vocational rehabilitation services. Individuals with most significant disabilities (Priority Category IA) shall be moved from the waiting list and into service by the date of their signed application.

Eligible individuals who are not considered to be individuals with most significant disabilities shall not be selected to receive vocational rehabilitation services.

A waiting list went into effect on January 15, 1999 for individuals with the most significant disabilities (Priority Category IA) for whom an individual written rehabilitation program / individual plan for employment has not been developed, agreed to, and approved as of January 15, 1999. Also, effective January 15, 1999 eligible individuals who are not considered to be
individuals with most significant disabilities (Priority Categories IB, II,) shall not be selected to receive vocational rehabilitation services.

Vocational rehabilitation services to individuals for whom an individual written rehabilitation program / individual plan for employment had been developed, agreed to, and approved were not be affected and will not be affected until such time as the individual written rehabilitation program / individual plan for employment is terminated for reasons other than achievement of the employment objective of the individual or available funds have been exhausted.

Selected individuals shall receive vocational rehabilitation services necessary to render them employable consistent with an individual written rehabilitation program / individual plan for employment and subsequent amendments.

The Commission will periodically, but at least quarterly, determine which eligible individuals who have not been selected to receive vocational rehabilitation services may be selected. Commission staff will be notified in writing of such determinations. Counselors will advise individuals who are selected of their selection and take actions necessary to provide vocational rehabilitation services to individuals selected.

**Priority Categories**

Based on functional assessment, the eligible individual is assigned to a Priority Category for services within the MRC-VR Order of Selection.

**Priority Category IA:** This individual is an individual with a most significant disability because he/she has a significant physical or mental impairment which seriously limits multiple functional capacities (such as mobility, communication, self-care, self-direction, interpersonal skills, work tolerance, or work skills) in terms of an employment outcome and vocational rehabilitation can be expected to require multiple vocational rehabilitation services over an extended period of time.

**Priority Category IB:** This individual is an individual with a significant disability because he/she has a significant physical or mental impairment which seriously limits at least one functional capacity (such as mobility, communication, self-care, self-direction, interpersonal skills, work tolerance, or work skills) in terms of an employment outcome; and vocational rehabilitation can be expected to require multiple vocational rehabilitation services over an extended period of time. (An individual who has been determined to have a disability pursuant to Title II [SSDI] or Title XVI [SSI] of the Social Security Act is considered is to be an individual with a significant disability.

**Priority Category II:** This individual is an individual with a disability but is not an individual with a most significant disability nor an individual with a significant disability.

An individual who has been determined to have a disability pursuant to Title II [SSDI] or Title XVI [SSI] of the Social Security Act is considered is to be an individual with a significant disability but may be determined to be an individual with a most significant disability when the significant impairment seriously limits multiple functional capacities.

Note: Implementation of amendments to the Rehabilitation Act relative to order of selection required elimination of any priority to public safety officers injured in the line of duty.

**Massachusetts Commission for the Blind:**
During the current and preceding fiscal years, the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind has provided assessment services and the full range of services, as appropriate, to all eligible individuals. The agency has not delayed through waiting lists, or other means, determinations of eligibility, or provision of services for eligible individuals for whom Individual Plans for Employment have been developed.

The Commission’s analysis of its past experience and its current budget and personnel resources (which are not diminished) lead the agency to confidently conclude that it will be able to:

- continue to provide services to all consumers currently receiving services;
- provide assessment services to all individuals expected to apply for services in the next fiscal year;
- provide services to all individuals who are expected to be determined eligible in the next fiscal year; and
- meet all vocational rehabilitation program requirements.

Thus, a decision has been made not to establish an order of selection. In the agency’s estimation, all eligible legally blind and deaf-blind consumers in Massachusetts have a high priority need for effective and comprehensive vocational rehabilitation services. Referral forms are available to all ophthalmologists and optometrists in the state. New supplies are sent to all doctors periodically. The agency conducts outreach efforts to serve blind and deaf-blind individuals who have been unserved or underserved by the VR system.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts has for decades had a law mandating that all physicians in the State report to the Commission for the Blind any person who is found to be legally blind. The unique effectiveness of this law in providing outreach to almost all legally blind has led the United States Centers for Disease Control to base its US Year 2000 projections of diabetic eye disease, visual impairment and blindness on data from the Register of the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind. The United States Centers for Disease Control and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health several years ago completed a study at the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind that made recommendations to increase the effectiveness of this reporting system. The recommendations included: dissemination of information about mandatory reporting in medical schools and schools of optometry; the development of a brochure on mandatory reporting and service provision for eye care professionals; and the development of new educational materials for patients and families to be distributed in doctors offices and eye care facilities. All of these recommendations have been implemented. An increase in the already high level of reporting has occurred as a result of these increased outreach efforts.

When a person is reported to the Commission as legally blind, the person is registered in the Commission's Central Register and a referral is made to a direct service worker. The direct service worker then contacts the person to arrange a visit to explain the services of the Commission, including vocational rehabilitation services.

When the person registered is of working age, a vocational rehabilitation counselor makes this first outreach. When the person is older or younger than the normal working age, a social worker makes the first outreach, explains the vocational rehabilitation program along with other programs and offers referral to a vocational rehabilitation counselor if the consumer is interested in these services.
In addition, the agency conducts a census of all registered legally blind persons (more than 35,000) about once every two years. The most recent census was conducted in May 1998. An important component of the census is an inquiry about the person's current need for services. All responses, which describe a need for employment-related services, are followed up by contact from a vocational rehabilitation counselor. We believe that this systematic outreach, along with more common referral and outreach methods offers the agency a good opportunity to offer services to all potentially eligible legally blind persons in the Commonwealth.

The agency has always in the past and expects in the foreseeable future to have sufficient funds to provide vocational rehabilitation services to all eligible individuals who apply. The agency's vocational rehabilitation caseload has not increased considerably in recent years and the number of registered legally blind persons of working age has remained fairly stable. Trend analyses do not indicate that a significant increase in the number of legally blind persons of working age is to be expected. The trend for a number of years has been a continuing and substantial increase in the number of legally blind persons over age 65.

All rehabilitation teaching services and a significant proportion of orientation and mobility services are provided by salaried professional employees of the agency which reduces costs considerably. If in the future, the situation changes and the agency is unable to serve all eligible individuals, the agency would adopt an order of selection in conformity with the Rehabilitation Act, as amended.