

**Workforce Development System
Technical Advisory #21-06.2
July 26, 2024**

To: Workforce Development Community

SUBJECT: Revised guidance for implementation of the New York Systems Change and Inclusive Opportunities Network (NY SCION) Program

PURPOSE

Provide guidance to Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) on their implementation of the NY SCION Program to enhance employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities.

POLICY

Effective January 1, 2024, each LWDB participating in the NY SCION program must hire, designate, or have on staff at least one (1) Disability Resource Coordinator (DRC) dedicated to enhancing employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities. This requirement will continue until further notice.

DRC positions can be part-time (15-29 hours) or full-time (30+ hours), though LWDBs must provide a clear explanation/justification for hiring/designating a part-time DRC in their Implementation Plan (see [Section B.1.](#) below).

LWDBs outside of New York City (NYC) will receive up to \$100,000 in State-level Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funds and up to \$30,000 in New York State (NYS) Office of Mental Health (OMH) funds annually through the period of performance. NYC will receive the balance of available funds, less a reserve for State-level activities, but no less than \$500,000 annually through the period of performance.

These funds can be used to pay for the DRC's salary and fringe benefits, allocated costs, and direct Non-Personnel Services costs. Funds may also be used for additional activities that further the mission of NY SCION, including but not limited to, the salary, fringe benefits, and allocated and direct Non-Personnel Services costs of designated staff that support DRC activities and DRC supervision. Up to 10% of funds can also be spent on Administrative costs (legal, fiscal, and human resources management costs). Allowable and unallowable costs must meet WIOA requirements.

A full description of the DRC position, their duties, and responsibilities, as well as recommended minimum qualifications is included in **Attachment A: Disability**

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Resource Coordinator (DRC) Job Description and Recommended Minimum Qualifications.

ACTION

- A. Role of the DRC** – As described above, LWDBs must hire, designate, or have on staff at least one (1) DRC dedicated to enhancing employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities.

The DRC plays many roles under NY SCION, which must be prioritized as follows:

1. Service Coordination

Whenever possible, DRCs must work on behalf of job seekers in a service coordination role, the specifics of which are outlined below:

- a. Integrated Resource Teams (IRT) – IRTs are a person-centered, collaborative service coordination model that must be emphasized under NY SCION. IRTs offer providers the opportunity to share in more substantial employment outcomes for shared customers; benefit from the coordinated application of other systems' resources and expertise in the context of their own service plans; and meet or exceed their outcome measures while reducing the amount of staff time needed to effectively implement service plans.

DRCs must work with Career Center staff and partners to form these collaborative groups to support the chosen education, training, employment, and/or career pathway goal(s) of any individual job seeker with a disability who is facing multiple barriers to employment.

DRCs must strive to ensure that IRTs are customer-led. IRTs must be comprised of stakeholders within the disability services community and representatives of the workforce development system. Those stakeholders may include, but should not be limited to, Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) service providers, VR Counselors (VRCs), Integrated Employment Specialists, Independent Living Center staff, job coaches, Business Services Representatives (BSRs), Labor Services Representatives (LSRs), Employment Counselors, businesses, and/or Veteran Services staff.

More information on IRTs can be found on the NY SCION Resources [webpage](#).

- b. Support and Coordination of Employment-Related Activities – DRCs must consult with, and provide technical assistance and support to, Career Center and partner staff who are providing individualized career services (e.g., comprehensive assessments, individual counseling, workforce preparation activities) to individuals with disabilities.

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Note that within their scope of work, DRCs must prioritize service coordination and continuous improvements of systems that serve individuals with disabilities (see [Section A.3.](#) below) over direct service provision. Accordingly, before accepting any direct referral from Career Center staff, DRCs must first determine the appropriateness of the referral, and whether coaching and/or technical assistance for the referring staff member would better meet the needs of the customer.

2. Continuous Improvement of Systems that Serve Individuals with Disabilities

DRCs must be committed to continuous improvement of their Local Workforce Development Area's (LWDA) capacity to serve individuals with disabilities. Activities must include, but should not be limited to:

- a. Business Education, Outreach, and Engagement – Conduct outreach to businesses to discuss partnerships, work experiences, training, and referrals, as well as challenges related to recruiting, hiring, training, retaining, and advancing employees with disabilities.
- b. Outreach & Recruitment – Increased traffic of individuals with disabilities coming to Career Centers as a result of direct outreach and recruitment will reveal gaps in both physical and programmatic accessibility. Once identified, DRCs must work with the LWDB and partner staff to respond to these gaps.

Note that the United States Department of Labor (USDOL) Employment and Training Administration (ETA) has provided guidance that clarifies the allowable use of WIOA funds for outreach activities in Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) [03-23](#).

- c. Capacity Building and Support – DRCs must enhance the Career Center's capacity to effectively serve individuals with disabilities by identifying, sharing, and leveraging disability-related resources and partnerships for maximum support. Note that these capacity-building activities do not end at the staff level. USDOL ETA's "[Promising Practices in Achieving Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity: Section 188 Disability Reference Guide](#)" provides numerous examples of actions DRCs and LWDBs can take to ensure equal access to programs and activities. DRCs must consider these best practices when engaging in capacity-building activities.
- d. Topic Training – Assist and train stakeholders (e.g., LWDB, Career Center staff, businesses, community colleges, and training providers) on critical topics, including the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) requirements and rights, WIOA Section 188, Ticket to Work (TTW), accommodations, assistive technology, and assessments.
- e. Data Entry Training and Support – Assist Career Center staff in the appropriate entry of job seeker data into the One-Stop Operating System (OSOS) (see [Section C.1.](#)).

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- f. Promotion of Career Pathways – Promote the active participation of individuals with disabilities in existing career pathways, systems, and programs, instead of one-time employment.
- g. Promotion of Career Center and Partner Services – Actively promote inclusive and accessible Career Center services and programs, focusing on Benefits Advisement, the TTW Program, and Career Pathways.
- h. TTW Program – Conduct outreach to Social Security Administration (SSA) Disability Beneficiaries, expanding participation in the TTW Program. Coordinate the assignment of Tickets to the New York Employment Services System (NYESS) Administrative Employment Network (AEN) LWDB Provider Affiliate or a local Employment Network (EN).
- i. Resource Leveraging – Leverage resources from multiple systems and partners effectively for the full participation of individuals with disabilities in existing career pathways and related programs.
- j. Sustainability Planning – Support sustainability planning strategies to ensure the long-term success of NY SCION policies, practices, activities, and services.

3. Direct Services

Although NY SCION prioritizes system change and the service coordination role of the DRC, there are times when direct service provision is permitted:

- a. Direct Service Prioritization – DRCs may serve any job seeker with a disability directly, either remotely or in-person, but must prioritize direct services to SSA disability beneficiaries in their pursuit of Competitive Integrated Employment (CIE). Regarding services to job seekers who are not SSA disability beneficiaries, DRCs should prioritize serving in a service coordination or capacity building role (see Sections [A.1.](#) and [A.2.](#) above) whenever possible, rather than serving these job seekers directly. In either case, DRCs and LWDB leadership must collaborate to identify the most appropriate balance of direct services, service coordination, and efforts to continuously improve services to individuals with disabilities within the local workforce development system.

Starting with Year Three (3) of NY SCION, DRCs are no longer required to limit direct service delivery activities to no more than half of their work time. However, LWDBs and DRCs are reminded to carefully manage the DRC’s direct service delivery workload, leveraging the services of other appropriate Career Center staff, because the DRC has many other required functions to fulfill beyond direct service delivery.

- b. Benefits Advisement/Work Incentive Counseling Credentialing Requirement – Through its partnership with NYS OMH, NYSDOL helps to operationalize the NYESS AEN under the SSA’s TTW Program. Participating LWDB provider affiliates, and the DRCs under their employ, are key partners under the NYESS AEN. Under this partnership,

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NYSDOL is committed to making sure that every Career Center has the capacity to assist recipients of SSA Disability Benefits (i.e., Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), Medicare, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), or Medicaid) in achieving CIE and transitioning off of SSA Disability benefits. As such, every DRC must become credentialed in Work Incentive Counseling and Benefits Advisement from either the Cornell Yang-Tan Institute on Employment and Disability (YTI) or Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU). Once certified, DRCs must maintain their certification as required by the credentialing entity.

- c. TTW Program Direct Services to SSA Disability Beneficiaries – As mentioned above, DRCs must assist and support SSA disability beneficiaries in their pursuit of CEI. This includes all necessary steps to help TTW-eligible individuals to assign their Ticket to their local NYESS AEN LWDB Provider Affiliate or another EN/AEN and track that individual's Ticket as they achieve employment milestones and outcomes. As above, it also includes providing benefits advisement and work incentive counseling to Ticket holders. Finally, DRCs must keep accurate case management and OSOS records of job seekers who have assigned their tickets to the LWDB Provider Affiliate for reporting purposes.

Note that in local areas with high volumes of customers who are SSA disability beneficiaries, making it impractical for the DRC to effectively serve all such customers, the DRC must work with teams of other appropriate staff to split the SSA disability beneficiary's caseload.

Once DRCs are fully credentialed (see [Section A.3.b.](#) above), they must join the NYESS AEN Work Incentive Network (WIN), add their contact information to the WIN locator map, and emphasize the enhanced partnership between the LWDB and NYESS to participants, partners, and the community.

B. Implementation – To ensure that NYS workforce systems are responsive to the needs of individuals with disabilities, LWDB's must assist DRCs in the following ways:

1. Implementation Plan – On an annual basis, LWDBs must provide NYSDOL with a revised implementation plan. A template for the implementation plan is included in this Workforce Development System Technical Advisory (WDS TA) as **Attachment B: New York Systems Change and Inclusive Opportunities Network (NY SCION) Implementation Plan**. Revised plans must be submitted annually by August 1 to SpecialPopulations@labor.ny.gov. If there are no changes to a LWDB's implementation plan, the LWDB must acknowledge that it was reviewed by the DRC and local-level leadership and that no changes were necessary.
2. Community Asset Map – On an annual basis, LWDBs must provide NYSDOL with a completed or revised local community asset map. Revised maps must be submitted annually by August 1 to SpecialPopulations@labor.ny.gov. Asset

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mapping is a systematic process of cataloging key services, benefits, and resources within the community, such as organizational resources, physical space, institutions, associations, and elements of the local economy.

For more information, please see the following three (3) resources:

- [University of California, Los Angeles Center for Health Policy Research Section 1: Asset Mapping](#);
- [National Center for Farmworker Health, Inc. Community Asset Mapping Guide](#); and
- [Rural Health Information Hub – Rural Community Health Toolkit – Asset Identification](#).

If there are no changes to a LWDB's Community Asset Map, the LWDB must acknowledge that it was reviewed by the DRC and local-level leadership and that no changes were necessary.

3. Training – LWDBs must support DRCs to deliver training. This must include, but is not to be limited to:
 - a. Identification of Gaps – Identify, examine, and address gaps in training, services, and policies.
 - b. Disability Awareness and Accessibility Strategies – Develop and execute a strategy that incorporates training on programmatic access, communication, and digital accessibility.
 - c. WIOA Section 188 Compliance Training – Implement at least two (2) annual trainings on WIOA Section 188 compliance for Career Center staff and local partners. LWDBs should refer to the WIOA Section 188 Disability Reference Guide (see [Section A.2.c.](#) above).
 - d. Priority Training Topics – Prioritize training on the ADA, Reasonable Accommodations, Work Incentives and Benefits Advisement, and Disability and Provider resources.
4. Sustainability of Effective Practices – DRCs must engage in sustainability planning with partners, including their LWDB. Such planning must include identification of effective practices under NY SCION and how these practices can be formalized. These activities must be included in the LWDB's implementation plan (see [Section B.1.](#) above) and the DRC's Quarterly Narrative report (see [Section C.3.](#) below).
5. TTW Participation – NYSDOL is committed to ensuring that every Career Center has the capacity to serve recipients of SSA Disability benefits to the greatest extent possible. To help facilitate effective services to SSA disability beneficiaries, each LWDB must be registered with the NYESS AEN, be a separate AEN themselves, or be registered as an EN through the SSA.

C. Data Fidelity – NY SCION is a program whose ongoing mission is to continuously improve the capacity of workforce development systems and programs to serve job

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seekers with disabilities. To measure the effectiveness of this mission, the following performance measures will be tracked:

WIOA Performance Measures –

- a. The six (6) WIOA primary indicators of performance as detailed in WDS TA #18-06.3;
- b. Total participants entering and completing career pathways training;
- c. Total participants entering and completing a work experience;
- d. Total participants receiving an industry-recognized/post-secondary certificate or credential;
- e. Total participants entering unsubsidized employment; and
- f. Number of entries on the [NY SCION OSOS Custom Tab](#).

TTW Performance Measures –

- a. Tickets assigned to the LWDB;
- b. Milestones achieved;
- c. Outcomes achieved; and
- d. TTW revenue generated.

To ensure the accuracy and fidelity of the performance measures above, LWDBs must ensure timely case management data entry for individuals with disabilities and individuals receiving SSA disability benefits. In addition to timely case management data entry, LWDBs must also track services and activities as follows:

1. NY SCION OSOS Custom Tab – As of November 2023, all staff with OSOS access, including DRCs, now automatically have access to the NY SCION OSOS Custom Tab to facilitate data entry by anyone directly serving customers.

Local areas participating in SCION must complete or update the NY SCION tab for services provided to, and outcomes attained by, every customer with a disability seen by Career Center Staff. The tab can be updated by any staff with access to the tab that serves a customer with a disability. All staff in the participating local area must, at minimum, complete the “Disability Categories” section of the tab for every customer that discloses a disability and for whom they enter an activity, comment, or service into OSOS. This triggers an enrollment of a participant in NY SCION. In the course of their Data Review (See Section C.2. below), DRCs are encouraged to work with and provide guidance and/or training to staff that should be using the NY SCION OSOS Custom Tab.

2. Data Review – On at least a quarterly basis, DRCs must review case management system data on active customers with disabilities in their catchment area to ensure data fidelity. This includes information entered on the NY SCION OSOS Custom Tab.

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Note: The [NY SCION OSOS Guide](#) was created not only to assist DRCs and staff in the completion of the NY SCION OSOS Custom Tab, but also to provide guidance on when and how staff should complete or update the tab.

3. Quarterly Reporting – Required qualitative performance outcomes and success stories must be submitted by the DRC and local-level leadership on a quarterly basis using **Attachment C: NY SCION DRC Quarterly Report Template**. This report must also include documentation of the training and technical assistance provided by the DRC to local staff who see job seekers with disabilities, such as Employment Counselors, LSRs, and Youth Counselors (as described in [Section A.1.b.](#) above).
4. Monitoring – LWDBs and DRCs must comply with NYSDOL’s remote and/or onsite monitoring of the NY SCION program in accordance with the requirements of WDS TA #[21-04](#): Monitoring – New York State Department of Labor (NYSDOL) Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Monitoring/Oversight of and Provision of Technical Assistance to Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) and LWDB Responsibilities Relating to NYSDOL’s Monitoring Process.

Additional information on monitoring and available monitoring guides can be found on the NYSDOL [website](#).

D. Partnership with OMH – Under a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between NYSDOL and NYS OMH, OMH will provide \$1 million per year to support NY SCION. To help facilitate this partnership and shared outcomes, the following is required:

1. Individual Placement and Support (IPS) Overview Training – DRCs must attend and complete IPS Overview Training, covering awareness, rapid engagement, connection to community resources, integration with NYS as an Employment First state, combined IPS Awareness, applicability, and OMH resources overview, including specific Mental Health (Disability Awareness) training. IPS is a model of supported employment for people with serious mental illness (e.g., schizophrenia spectrum disorder, bipolar, depression, etc.).
2. NYESS Annual Training Delivery – DRCs must complete annual NYESS-delivered tracking and mandatory disability awareness training provided to all Career Centers.
3. Support for Mental Illness – DRCs must support individuals with mental illness, ensuring connection to necessary supports.
4. System Capacity Improvement – DRCs must support improvements of system capacity through connections to OMH program models.
5. Tracking Mechanisms – DRCs must complete established tracking and reporting mechanisms.
6. Public Benefits Advisement – As described under [Section A.3.b.](#) above, DRCs must provide benefits advisement and work incentive counseling, join the NYESS

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WIN upon certification, and emphasize the enhanced partnership between DRCs and NYESS.

7. Partnership Development – DRCs must develop and maintain partnerships, provide semi-annual in-person information sessions, and establish a mechanism to track information sessions as outlined in the MOU.

BACKGROUND

USDOL ETA previously awarded NYSDOL four rounds (4) of Disability Employment Initiative (DEI) funding to support DRCs in selected LWDA in NYS. These funds were used to implement activities targeted at improving education, training, and employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities who were unemployed, underemployed, and/or receiving Social Security disability benefits.

The purpose of the DEI was to expand the capacity of Career Centers to provide services to individuals with disabilities and to promote the use of existing career pathways to serve:

- Adults (ages 18 and older) with visible, non-visible, and significant disabilities, including those who have acquired disabilities in adulthood; and
- Youth (ages 14-24) with visible, non-visible, and significant disabilities, including those who have chronic health conditions.

DEI projects focused on improvements needed to make existing career pathways systems fully inclusive of, and accessible to, individuals with disabilities. Examples of success stories from these DEI projects are available on the NYSDOL [website](#).

REFERENCES

USDOL WorkforceGPS [DEI Front Line Resources for Disability Resource Coordinators](#)

[Minnesota DEI Project](#) for best practices, resources, and sample documents to assist in implementation.

Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) No. [03-23](#): Allowable Uses of Funds for Outreach Activities for Federal Formula and Competitive Grant Awards

Training and Employment Notice (TEN) No. [24-18](#): Updated Promising Practices in Achieving Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity: A Section 188 Disability Reference Guide

WDS TA #[18-06.3](#): Primary Indicators of Performance for Titles I and III under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

WDS TA #[21-04](#): Monitoring – New York State Department of Labor (NYSDOL) Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Monitoring/Oversight of and

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Provision of Technical Assistance to Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) and LWDB Responsibilities Relating to NYSDOL's Monitoring Process

INQUIRIES

Please direct all questions regarding this WDS to SpecialPopulations@labor.ny.gov.

ATTACHMENTS

- A. [Disability Resource Coordinator \(DRC\) Job Description and Recommended Minimum Qualifications](#)
- B. [New York Systems Change and Inclusive Opportunities Network \(NY SCION\) Implementation Plan](#)
- C. [New York Systems Change and Inclusive Opportunities Network \(NY SCION\) Disability Resource Coordinator \(DRC\) Quarterly Report](#)

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