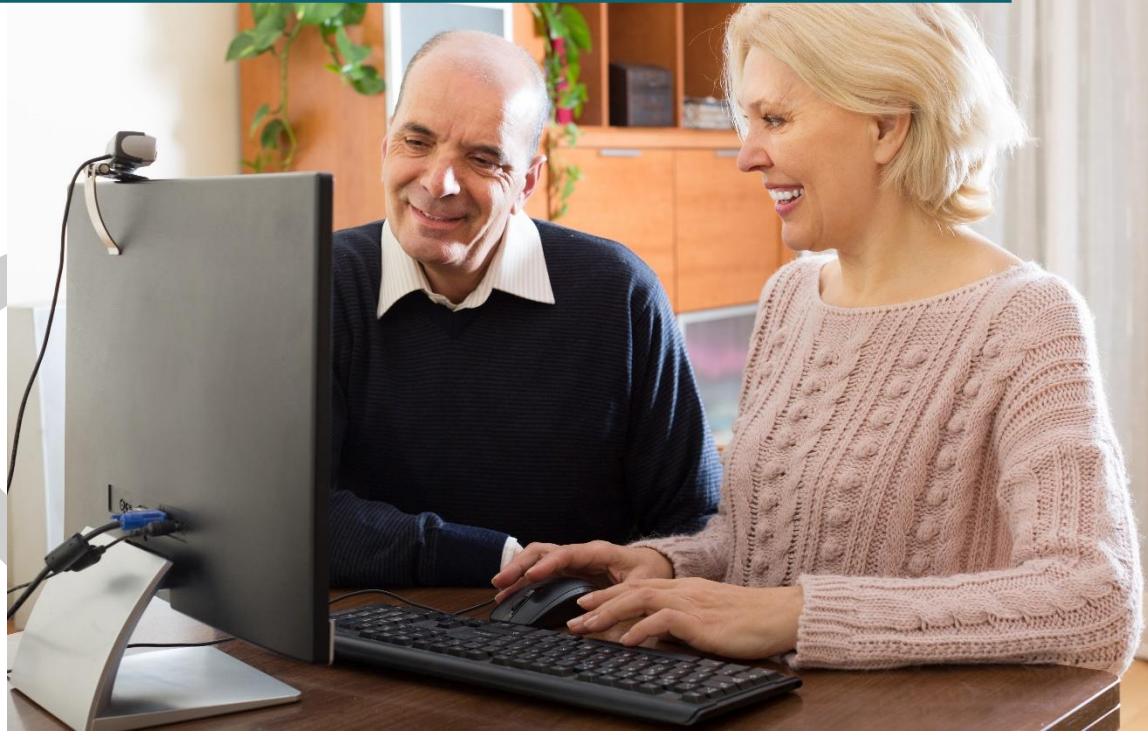


Program Years  
2024–2027

# Wisconsin Senior Community Services Employment Program State Plan



Wisconsin Department of Health Services  
Division of Public Health  
P-00409 (06/2024)



# Tony Evers

Office of the Governor | State of Wisconsin

January 16, 2024

Julie Su  
Acting Secretary of Labor  
Department of Labor  
Room C4510  
200 Constitution Avenue NW  
Washington DC 20210

To Whom It May Concern:

The Wisconsin Department of Health Services administers the Senior Community Services Employment Program (SCSEP)/Title V of the Older Americans Act (OAA). DHS is responsible for complying with all requirements of this grant. A Four-Year State Plan is one of those requirements.

I am delegating authority to sign agreements and assurances to Department Secretary Kirsten Johnson. At Secretary Johnson's direction, Debra Standridge, Deputy Secretary, Office of the Secretary may also sign the documents. All correspondence should be sent to:

Debra Standridge  
Deputy Secretary  
Department of Health Services  
1 West Wilson Street  
PO Box 7850  
Madison, WI 53707-7850.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tony Evers".

Tony Evers  
Governor

## Program Administration Designee and Plan Signature

**Name of Title V of the Older Americans Act Grant Recipient/Lead Agency:**

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**Name and Title of State Senior Community Service Employment Program**

**Administrator (Signatory Official):**

Debra Standridge, Deputy Secretary

Address: 1 W. Wilson St., Rm. 650

Madison, WI 53703

Telephone Number: 608-266-8399

E-mail Address: dhsgrantreview@dhs.wisconsin.gov

I certify that for the State of Wisconsin, the agency and official designated above have been duly designated by Governor Tony Evers to represent the State in the capacities indicated for the Senior Community Service Employment program. Later changes in the designation of officials will be provided to the U.S. Department of Labor as such changes occur.

I further certify that we will operate our Senior Community Service Employment programs in accordance with this Plan and the assurances herein.

DocuSigned by:  
*Debra Standridge*  
B176181CD0B8490...

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

6/20/2024

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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## State Plan Purpose

The Wisconsin Senior Community Services Employment Program (SCSEP) is committed to improving the employment of older adults through valuable community service and work experience training with local nonprofit and government agencies.

The Older Americans Act (OAA), as amended in 2016, provides for the delivery of services to older adults that support their desire to live independently and be self-sufficient. For those seeking employment, the choice is the Senior Community Services Employment Program (SCSEP). The program promotes useful part-time opportunities in community service activities for unemployed, low-income adults who are age 55 or older, have a total family income of less than 125% of the federal poverty level, and have poor employment prospects. The SCSEP objective is to increase the number of people who can benefit from unsubsidized employment in the public and private sectors.

Older, experienced workers are valuable assets to Wisconsin's workforce. The purpose of the Wisconsin Senior Community Services Employment Program State Plan (hereafter referred to as the SCSEP State Plan) is to serve as a blueprint for SCSEP grantees and subrecipients who meet regularly to discuss ideas, listen to concerns, and share the same vision of providing support and training for older people.

The SCSEP State Plan is a stand-alone document. The U.S. Department of Labor issued a Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL 9-23) on February 13, 2024, for Program Year (PY) 2024–2027 Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA) Unified or Combined State Plan Instructions. SCSEP is a required partner through WIOA.

This plan provides useful information on demographics; labor market projections; community service; employer outreach; and coordination with the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, Older Americans Act programs, and other partner agencies. The information contained within this plan provides a shared understanding of the workforce issues encountered by older adults, so that grantees and subrecipients can plan coordinated activities that are effective, efficient, and positive. The SCSEP grantees are committed to assisting older workers and employers in achieving their workforce potential and sharing an interest in producing a vibrant future economy.

## Involvement of Organizations and Individuals

The Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS), Bureau of Aging and Disability Resources (BADR) administers the SCSEP as the state grantee and is responsible for the development of the SCSEP State Plan.

A meeting with Wisconsin SCSEP partners was held virtually on Thursday, December 14, 2023. The following stakeholders were invited to participate in the meeting and/or submit information for the SCSEP State Plan:

- State grantee: Wisconsin Department of Health Services, Division of Public Health, Bureau of Aging and Disability Resources, Office on Aging
- National grantees:
  - Center for Workforce Inclusion (CWI)
  - National Indian Council on Aging, Inc. (set-aside grantee) (NICOA)
  - SER-Jobs for Progress, Inc. (SER)

Additional meetings were held with Wisconsin subrecipients to discuss the state plan during quarterly meetings on Wednesday, December 13, 2023, and Monday, March 11, 2024. Wisconsin subrecipients are:

- Employ Milwaukee
- Fox Valley Workforce Development Board
- Great Wisconsin Area Agency Resources (GWAAR)
- Southwest Workforce Development Board
- Workforce Connections

Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development proposed 2024–2027 WIOA Combined State Plan can be found in draft form at: <https://wioa.wisconsin.gov/>.

## Solicitation and Collection of Public Comments

BADR distributed plan recommendations via email to partners and stakeholders for feedback. National SCSEP providers were invited to and participated in a state plan meeting on Thursday, December 14, 2023. Surveys were distributed and returned by national grantees and state subrecipients with information included in this plan.

The meetings were held with state subrecipients and national grantees to review and address issues about the equitable distribution report, job center collaborations, marketing and recruitment techniques, and services for rural and minority populations.

A copy of the SCSEP State Plan was also distributed for comment through the listserv known as "BadgerAginglist".

See appendices for comments submitted prior to and after submission of the final plan.

## I. Economic Projections and Impact

SCSEP assists participants in obtaining the skills necessary to become marketable in today's changing workforce. The assessment process works on creating and building employment opportunities for people who may or may not have worked, obtained education at differing levels, or encountered both personal and work barriers. Labor market information through Job Center of Wisconsin, WisConomy, and the U.S. Department of Labor's O\*Net is used to help participants select the best occupation and understand the knowledge and skills needed. An important, required instrument used in developing a plan of action for the participant is the Individual Employability Plan (IEP). The IEP is the essential employment roadmap for participants to achieve unsubsidized employment. It determines the participant's training needs and supportive service needs to learn and enhance new skills and establishes a timeline to meet goals and achieve success.

Researching and understanding labor market information is an integral part of learning key industries that are appropriate for older workers. The strategy is to guide participants toward high growth industries. However, this is often not suitable for the people served through the SCSEP. Many participants find it difficult to obtain employment and are often discouraged by employers when applying for a job. Because participants usually prefer part-time versus full-time employment, employers often shy away from hiring older adults, whose work time may be limited, compared to a younger person at the start of his or her career. Employers sometimes assume that older workers

are “over-qualified,” want higher wages, cannot keep pace, and are unable to learn new techniques. For older workers, these assumptions are real barriers.

SCSEP will continually strategize to ensure that participants are seeking occupations that are suitable and attainable to retain employment. Participants are increasingly in need of computer skills. Computer training is part of most IEPs to increase participant marketability. More and more grantees offer virtual courses and participants are finding it necessary to have basic computer skills before they can enroll in online classes. A workbook has been provided for participants to become familiar with soft skills, computer fundamentals, and initial job seeking information. This section demonstrates current and projected economic conditions.

### Changes in projected employment opportunities and economic conditions

The labor market information (LMI) in this brief has two main sources: the Bureau of Census’ American Community Survey Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS; 2018–22 file) and the U.S. Census/U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics’ (BLS) Current Population Survey (CPS) DEMECON files (2005–2023). These sources are optimal for analysis because they offer data regarding the population ages 55 and older across a wider array of socioeconomic characteristics than other sources. These chosen sources were deemed at the state level specifically to study SCSEP-eligible participants below the national level.

Table 1: Wisconsin Labor Force Status, Ages 55 and Older

	Employed	Unemployed	Not in labor force	Total	Unemployment rate	Labor force participation rate
Total 55 and older	736,708	16,137	1,114,332	1,867,177	2.1%	40.3%
Total 55 and older, income less than or equal to 125% of the federal poverty level	27,374	3,841	170,326	201,541	12.3%	15.5%

Source: U.S. Census, 2018–2022 American Community Survey, PUMS File Analysis

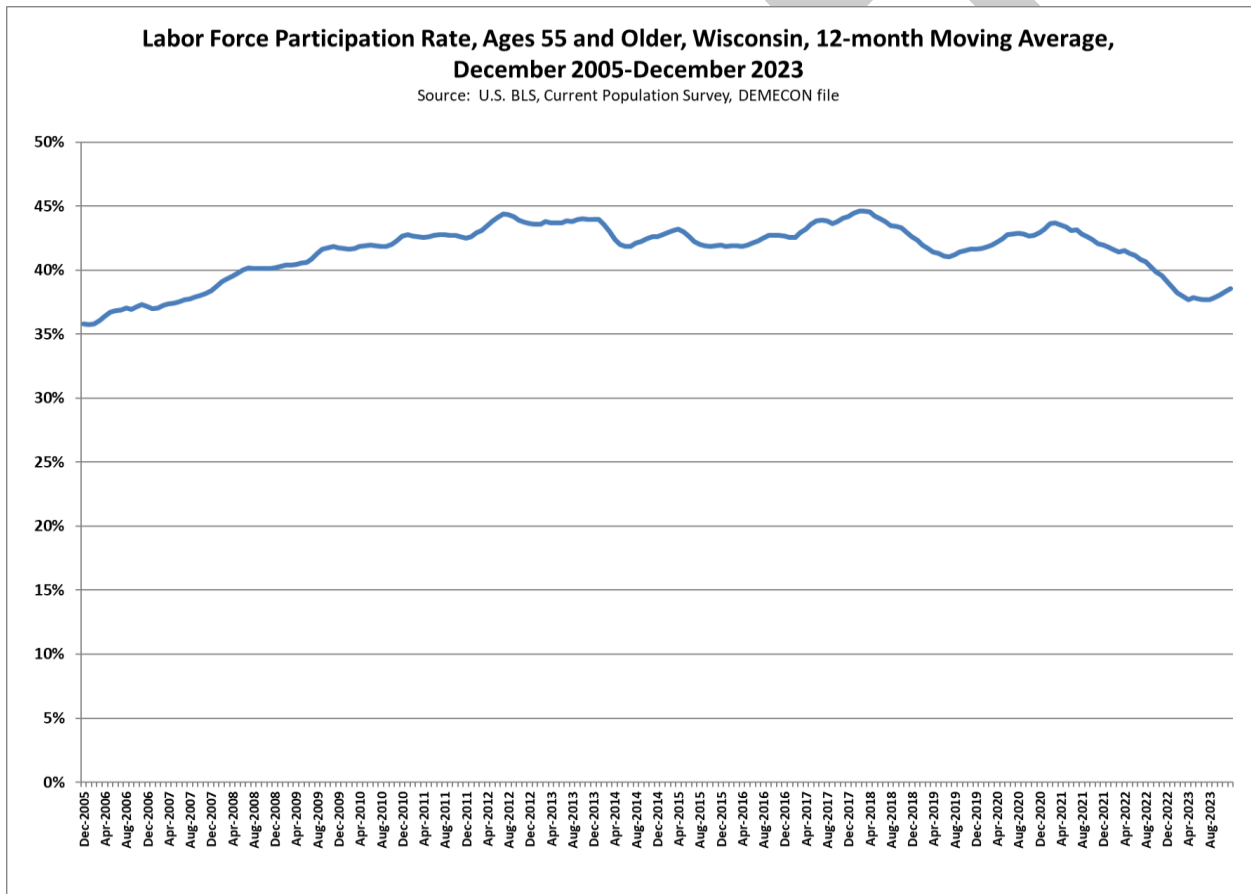
Forty percent of Wisconsin’s population who are ages 55 and older (1.87 million) participate in the labor force, equaling about 744,000 participants (the sum of the employed and unemployed). Their



unemployment rate stood at 2.1%, which is extremely low, but not surprising given these workers are quite experienced and highly valued in the labor market. A majority of those 55 and older do not participate in the labor force, as they have retired from the workforce.

There are approximately 202,000 people ages 55 and older living in households with income at or below 125% of the federal poverty level. Sixteen percent of them are participating in the workforce, either working or actively seeking work, which is quite low compared to all 55 and older. Their unemployment rate is higher, and their labor force participation rate is lower than the overall 55 and older population.

Figure 2: Labor Force Participation Rate, Ages 55 and Older, Wisconsin, 12-Month Moving Average, December 2005–December 2023



Source: U.S. BLS, Current Population Survey, DEMECON File

The graph above shows a 12-month moving average of the 55 and older labor force participation rate from 2005 to the end of 2023. The longer-term growth in this rate since 2005 has two major explanations, and its recent decline likely revolves around a single issue.

The first growth explanation is demographic. The 55 and older population is growing faster than those younger. The Baby Boomer cohort are just aging into this large and generationally disparate group and are at ages that are still highly engaged in the labor market, thus raising the entire group's labor force participation rate (LFPR). In other words, Wisconsin's older workforce is likely becoming statistically younger as the later-born Baby Boomers assume positions in the older workforce.

The other growth explanation is economic. More white-collar employment, as well as increased female participation relative to predecessors has played a role in this growing older worker engagement. Economic necessity also plays a role. Since 2001, there have been three recessions. The 2008 Great Recession and its slow jobs recovery likely delayed retirement plans of many 55 and older and may have also prompted their reentry into the job market to make up for recession-created asset losses or to supplement lost income from other working household members who lost jobs during the worst economy since the Great Depression.

The recent decline in 55 and older LFPR may be attributed to retrenchment from work due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Figure 2 shows a steady decline in LFPR since early 2020. It has begun to rebound as of 2023, though it is still below levels of the last 15 years.

#### A. Employment Opportunities for Older Workers

Discuss "long-term projections for jobs in industries and occupations in the State that may provide employment opportunities for older workers" (20 C.F.R. § 641.302(d)).

Wisconsin is experiencing more workers retiring, and as a result will see a relative decline in the size of its workforce. The challenge will be to ensure that individuals are able to obtain the necessary training for the skills needed to fill open positions.

Twenty-four percent of workers in Wisconsin are 55 years old or older; only 6% of the workforce is 65 years old or older. As this group of workers exits the labor force through retirement, employers will need to address the loss of institutional knowledge and experienced workers.

Given this huge decline in workforce participation after age 55, it is important to understand how the age composition varies by industry and occupation.

## B. Unsubsidized Job Training and Skills

Describe how the long-term job projections discussed in the economic analysis section of the strategic plan “relate to the types of unsubsidized jobs for which SCSEP participants will be trained and the types of skill training to be provided” (20 C.F.R. § 641.302(d)).

Table 3: Top 10 Occupations of Those Ages 55 and Older

Occupation	Number of employed ages 55 and older in occupation	Occupational share of total 55 and older employed
Driver/sales workers and truck drivers	31,375	4.3%
Other manager	21,738	3.0%
Secretaries and administrative assistants, except legal, medical, and executive	17,329	2.4%
Janitors and building cleaners	17,131	2.3%
Registered Nurses	16,411	2.2%
Retail salespersons	13,765	1.9%
Customer service representative	13,192	1.8%
Miscellaneous production workers, including equipment operators and tenders	12,707	1.7%
First-Line supervisors of retail sales	12,616	1.7%
Farmers, ranchers, and other agricultural managers	12,102	1.6%
All other occupations	568,292	77.1%

Occupation	Number of employed ages 55 and older in occupation	Occupational share of total 55 and older employed
<b>Total Wisconsin employed ages 55 and older</b>	<b>736,658</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: U.S. Census, 2018–2022 American Community Survey, PUMS File Analysis

The table above shows the most frequent occupational choices of those 55 and older in Wisconsin. The top 10 jobs account for 23% of all 55-and-older employed. The roughly 500 other occupations account for the remaining 77% of the employed. This top 10 job mix is somewhat diverse across the educational and training requirement spectrums. The industries in which many of those jobs are predominant are also a good cross section of the labor market. Theoretically, any occupation can be found in any industry, but the current 55 and older workforce represent well in the state's larger employing or growing sectors, namely manufacturing, healthcare, wholesale trade, and educational services.

**Table 4: Top 10 Occupations of Employed Ages 55 and Older Living in Households with a Combined Income Less Than or Equal to 125% of the Federal Poverty Level**

Occupation	Number of employed ages 55 and older in occupation	Occupational share of total
Janitors and building cleaners	1,454	5.3%
Farmers, ranchers, and other agricultural managers	1,085	4.0%
Cashiers	1,044	3.8%
Cooks	996	3.6%
Personal care aides	876	3.2%
Driver/sales workers and truck drivers	867	3.2%

Occupation	Number of employed ages 55 and older in occupation	Occupational share of total
Miscellaneous production workers, including equipment operators and tenders	769	2.8%
Other assemblers and fabricators	762	2.8%
Maids and housekeeping cleaners	738	2.7%
All other occupations	17,968	65.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>27,374</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: U.S. Census, 2018–2022 American Community Survey, PUMS File Analysis

It is important to understand the work experience of this SCSEP-eligible group. The table above shows the occupational patterns of those ages 55 and older living in households at below 125% of the federal poverty level. With some exceptions, these top 10 occupations are on the lower end of the wage spectrum and require little to no formal training or other post-secondary certification or education.

These top 10 occupations comprise 34% of the 55-and-older workforce who have lower income. However, only 3.6% of the total number of 55-and-older employed work in these occupations. A person's ratio of income to the poverty level (ROIPL), in this case 125% of the federal poverty level, is not solely based on one's employment earnings, unless they live alone and have no other source of income. One's ROIPL is determined by the combination of all types of income of those living in a household (for example, employment earnings; Social Security income; dividends, interest, and rental property income; retirement income, public assistance income, and other sources). The number of people living in the household is the denominator of this equation. All people living in the household are deemed to be living at the same ROIPL based upon this formula. Employment earnings are generally a significant portion of a household's total income, so occupational choice and its wages are significant in determining a household's income level.

### C. Projected Employment Opportunities

Discuss “current and projected employment opportunities in the State (such as by providing information available under § 15 of the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. § 491-2) by occupation), and the types of skills possessed by eligible individuals” (20 C.F.R. § 641.325(c)).

Table 5: Projected Aggregate Job Openings by Education Typically Required, 2020–2030

Type of education	Number of job openings	Percent of total job openings
High school diploma or equivalent	147,725	41.3%
No formal education credential	109,080	30.5%
Bachelor’s degree	52,583	14.7%
Postsecondary non-degree award	22,484	6.3%
Some college, no degree	8,023	2.2%
Associate’s degree	6,374	1.8%
Master’s degree	4,204	1.2%
Doctoral or professional degree	3,865	1.1%
Associate’s or bachelor’s degree	3,666	1.0%
Total	358,004	100.0%

Source: Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, Office of Economic Advisors, Employment Projections Program, 2020–2030

Specific occupations with the most job openings are listed in Table 6. For each occupation, the typical education level required for entry and annual median wage are also shown.

Table 6: Occupations with the Most Job Openings, Including Required Educational Level and Median Hourly Wage

Occupation	Annual total openings	Typical education needed for entry	Annual median wage
Fast food and counter workers	14,854	No formal educational credential	\$20,840

Occupation	Annual total openings	Typical education needed for entry	Annual median wage
Home health and personal care aids	11,712	High school diploma or equivalent	\$25,630
Cashiers	11,540	No formal educational credential	\$23,430
Retail salespersons	10,473	No formal educational credential	\$25,950
Laborers and freight, stock and material movers	8,743	No formal educational credential	\$35,120
Customer service representatives	8,168	High school diploma or equivalent	\$37,950

Source: Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, Office of Economic Advisors Employment Projections Program, 2020–2030

Short-, moderate-, and some long-term training is suitable for older workers. Short-term on-the-job training is when job duties can be learned in the workplace in one month or less. Moderate to long-term trainings last one to 12 months and usually involve on-the-job experience and some sort of additional training. This type of training works well with SCSEP's on-the-job employment (OJE) training with a local employer and should be arranged whenever possible. Each grantee and/or subrecipient must consult with their organization headquarters to be sure they have been pre-approved by the U.S. Department of Labor before moving forward with OJE arrangements.

The SCSEP develops relationships with government or nonprofit, nonpartisan organizations (501(c)(3)) that provide supervision and training for program participants. Community Service Assignments (CSA) are referred to as host agencies. People who apply for SCSEP and are determined eligible, are provided with an assessment (KeyTrain, WorkKeys, WisCareers, Career Cruising, and My Skills My Future), labor market information obtained from Wisconomy, and an IEP developed based on occupational preference. The host agency is an essential training component for the participant to learn the skills needed for their desired occupation. For that reason, subrecipients select host agencies that are closely aligned to the participant's occupational preference. Host agency assignments are often rotated within the same worksite so the participant can learn a different set of skills. Besides job skills learned at the host site, many basic essential skills or soft skills are needed to gain and retain unsubsidized employment. Examples of soft skills include getting to work on time, dressing appropriately, conducting oneself in a professional manner, and learning to work with co-workers. Depending on the participant's previous work environment, this can be a difficult transition. It is essential that follow-up with both the participant

and host agency supervisor are in place to routinely monitor the progress being made and ensure that the IEP is being kept up to date with case management notes in the participant case files.

## II. Service Delivery and Coordination

In program year 2023–2024, Wisconsin’s SCSEP was approved for additional training and supporting services (ATSS). These services include healthcare, transportation, housing, and utility-related services. We have expanded our trainings to include more virtual trainings, due to the limited number of in-person trainings that are offered post-Covid. This new stream of allocations is proving to be advantageous to participants who have had several opportunities presented to them without solutions, including health expenses for dental and eye care, car repairs, security deposits for new housing options, and technology options. These are all intended to remove some of the barriers to employment for participants to train without these additional stressors. We have found this successful and will apply for ATSS for program year 2024–2025 and subsequent years. Program participants and sub-recipients will benefit by the extension of ATSS to a four-year Special Options Request. It will allow the seamless continuation of supportive services and training options.

### A. Actions Taken to Coordinate SCSEP with Other Programs

1. [Actions to coordinate activities of SCSEP grantees with WIOA Title I programs, including plans for using the WIOA one-stop delivery system and its partners to serve individuals aged 55 and older \(20 C.F.R. §§ 641.302\(g\), 641.325\(e\)\)](#)

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA) empowers individuals to actively manage their employment journey by providing access to tailored services. WIOA facilitates older adults’ engagement with essential services through local job centers and the Job Center of Wisconsin website by ensuring timely and personalized support.

SCSEP grantees and subrecipients currently encourage co-enrollment for services via local job centers. This will continue for the next four years. Some SCSEP offices are located adjacent to their local job centers. Co-enrollment facilitates participants’ access to various core services available at job centers, including initial assessments for multiple programs and follow-up assistance for employment retention. Additionally, participants can access intensive services like diagnostic testing and evaluation, career counseling, out-of-area job search assistance, and basic skills training, such as general equivalency diploma (GED), language proficiency, mathematics, and computer literacy.



Co-enrollments in both WIOA and SCSEP can present challenges. WIOA's performance measure, which participants must meet, may conflict with the SCSEP goals. For example, while WIOA prioritizes long-term job placement, SCSEP focuses on providing training for subsidized job placement.

The job center component, Title III of WIOA, is the most utilized by SCSEP. This offers career advising, resume writing, and job search assistance. Program grantees and subrecipients collaborate with local job center partners and employers to enhance cooperation and resource sharing wherever feasible.

The SCSEP grantees and subrecipients will collaborate with local Department of Workforce Development partners using the following strategies:

- Presentations at job center team meetings, which have declined post-Covid
- Co-location of agency or participants in the job center, which has already proven an increase in co-enrollments
- Membership on the Workforce Development Board, and participation in Business Service Team meetings
- Collaborative training events
- Participation in job center functions such as job fairs, expos, and specialized training sessions

The placement of a program coordinator within the local job center acknowledges the growing demand from older adults seeking employment. It reflects an understanding of the unique needs of older workers and responds to the increasing labor market demands. These program coordinators offer expertise and extensive knowledge to assist older individuals with accessing various community services tailored to their needs. Program coordinators will work with job centers to establish office hours and accessibility in these locations.

State subrecipients maintain ongoing collaboration with WIOA contacts and workforce development boards. The program coordinators recognize and value the expertise and insights of WIOA contacts the advantages of dually enrolling participants. This collaboration between WIOA and SCSEP will enable older workers to utilize the services and resources available to them from both entities. With time, these relationships are expected to strengthen further.

Wisconsin is working with and will continue to work with subrecipients to re-emphasize the importance of WIOA partnerships. Four of the six subrecipients operate from shared physical spaces with the one-stops and job centers. During enrollment, program coordinators may physically accompany participants to these agencies, introduce them to their WIOA counterparts, and explain the benefits of co-enrollment and collaboration across multiple

agencies. For programs without shared spaces, participants are informed about these programs and strongly encouraged, sometimes required, to enroll with the job centers for job search and resource purposes. Supportive services, such as transportation gift cards, will be offered to assist participants with executing this task.

The relationships and referrals between the SCSEP program coordinators and the Business Service Team with the workforce development boards is invaluable. These partnerships enhance job search training, assist with resume development, refine interview skills through mock interviews, and provide support with reference and background checks.

Program coordinators will engage with these organizations and their participants through events like lunch and learns, where local businesses or organizations (such as SCSEP) share their histories, work cultures, and career opportunities. Other organization partnerships within the one-stops can include Veterans Services, Department of Corrections, county human services, FoodShare Employment Training (FSET), and Department of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR). Fortunately, most of these relationships were established before the pandemic, have been maintained during it, and are expected to continue.

## 2. [Actions to coordinate activities of SCSEP grantees with the activities to be carried out in the state under the other titles of the Older Americans Act \(OAA\) \(20 C.F.R. § 641.302\(h\)\)](#)

The OAA authorizes a broad range of service programs tailored for individuals aged 60 and older, delivered through the aging network. This network includes state units on aging, area agencies on aging, aging and disability resource centers (ADRCs), Tribal organizations, and other service providers. The OAA service programs include home-delivered meals, nutrition services, transportation, adult day care, health promotion, support for family caregivers, and employment (through the U.S. Department of Labor).

The focus of the OAA is to enable older adults to maintain their independence and continue to live in their homes and communities for as long as possible. Financial stability plays a crucial role in achieving this independence. SCSEP participants aged 60 years or older can access several OAA services. These services include legal assistance through the benefit specialist program, nutrition at a congregate site, and caregiver support or adult day care for family members while they work. Older adults may contact their county aging unit or ADRC to obtain information about other available services.

Wisconsin ADRCs have adopted a “no wrong door” philosophy to provide accurate and unbiased information to the public on all aspects of life related to aging or living with a disability. They are considered the single-entry point for long term care services and benefits.

People accessing an ADRC can receive information and assistance on public benefits, resources, and services available in the community, including employment and volunteerism.

The OAA designates that state units on aging develop and administer a multi-year state plan with Administration for Community Living (ACL). It provides goals and objectives relating to assisting older residents, their families, and caregivers. Wisconsin's state plan addresses increasing collaborations between SCSEP and OAA partners.

These OAA partners are:

- Legal and elder benefits.
- Volunteer coordination.
- Nutrition services.
- Health promotion.
- Caregiver support.
- Elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation prevention programs.
- Dementia services.

The pandemic reinforced our relationships with OAA programs, providing additional resources for our participants. We will continue collaborating with our partners to disseminate information about SCSEP to organizations that implement OAA programs. This outreach will involve presentations, marketing efforts, event coordination, conferences, and community engagement. Participants will also receive education about OAA programs and be referred to our partners as appropriate.

3. [Actions to coordinate SCSEP with other private and public entities and programs that provide services to older Americans, such as community and faith-based organizations, transportation programs, and programs for those with special needs or disabilities \(20 C.F.R. § 641.302\(i\)\)](#)

Grantees and subrecipients remain connected to the counties, communities, organizations, and agencies that provide services and resources to help older adults overcome barriers to employment. Some of the organizations or programs are community-based transportation programs, vocational rehabilitation services, programs for people with disabilities, and various educational institutions that assist in moving participants towards job readiness and serve as host agencies.

The importance of partnerships with these organizations is positive for all involved. As we know, host agencies provide training for participants and in some instances, unsubsidized employment; however, these relationships may also be referral sources to SCSEP as well.

The dual focus of the SCSEP is the provision of community service through local nonprofit organizations and the support of participants who learn new skills by the training received at a host agency. The host agency is a public agency, or a private nonprofit organization exempt from taxation under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Below are host agencies commonly used by grantees and subrecipients:

- Adult education centers
- Area agencies on aging
- Community action agencies
- Community neighborhood centers
- County aging units and aging resource centers
- Day care centers (adult and child)
- Disability organizations
- Domestic abuse shelters
- Environmental protection agencies
- Ethnic and cultural centers
- Faith-based organizations
- Food pantries
- Goodwill Industries
- Government offices (town, city, county, state, federal)
- Head Start
- Health departments, centers, associations (heart, diabetes, Alzheimer's)
- Home health care agencies
- Hospices (public and nonprofit)
- Hospitals (public and nonprofit, including veterans' hospitals)
- Housing authorities
- Libraries
- Literacy councils
- Medical clinics (public and nonprofit)
- Mental health agencies
- Museums (public and nonprofit)
- Nutrition programs
- Ombudsman (outreach, information, and assistance)
- Parks
- Public schools
- Red Cross
- Rehabilitation centers
- Salvation Army
- Senior centers
- Sheltered workshops
- Shelters for homeless
- Social and human service departments
- United Way agencies
- Vocational rehabilitation
- Volunteer organizations
- YMCA and YWCA
- Youth centers

These host agencies serve as worksites for older adults, providing valuable training consistent with their occupational preferences as identified in the IEP. Leveraging their community connections, many host agencies often offer services that many older adults find beneficial, for example, a faith-based organization providing a community food pantry that an older adult is eligible to participate in, or a literacy council providing services to a person who has limited English proficiency. As SCSEP partners, these host agencies are crucial in empowering older adults, especially those with disabilities. It is often common for host agencies to hire SCSEP participants, further solidifying their role in supporting older workers' success.

Continuing and establishing new partnerships with private and public organizations is crucial to cultivating relationships and facilitating participant referrals. One notable successful collaboration is with Women's Professional Image Program, which collaborates with the YWCA in the Milwaukee area. This program offers valuable guidance on image presentation, professional attire, conducts interview preparation, shares insights into workplace expectations, and fosters a supportive environment. These resources empower women with the necessary tools for success.

Additionally, transportation organizations are vital partners for us. While a primary transportation provider serves most areas, we work closely with them to provide vouchers and gift cards for transportation to training sites, interviews, community resources, and other appointments as necessary. These transportation options include public transportation, Uber, and Lyft. Moreover, we have partnerships with nonprofit transportation organizations, like Workin' Wheels, located in a rural area, which provides zero-interest loans and reduced monthly payments for those needing transportation for their job (eligibility requirements include valid Driver's License and income guidelines).

Other community organizations include, but are not limited to, Salvation Army, food pantries, housing and rental agencies, Goodwill, Hunger Task Forces, charity re-stores, libraries, and Dry Hooch (Veteran's Center).

In addition, faith-based organizations such as Catholic Charities, Lutheran Social Services, Jewish Community Centers, Hmong Cultural Centers, Senior Centers – both operated by local governments, foundation based, or privately run will be targeted organizations for both recruitment and possible host agencies. Additionally, county aging units, ADRCs, and area agencies on aging (AAA) are invaluable for their expertise in community resources.

Meal sites at senior centers are changing. A trend we are seeing throughout Wisconsin is the move from congregate senior center-based meal sites to those that include grab-and-go meals and restaurant models. Outreach to participants will include connections with senior center staff, case managers and volunteers to build awareness of SCSEP.

#### 4. Actions to coordinate SCSEP with other labor market and job training initiatives (20 C.F.R. § 641.302(j))

WIOA helps older adults access desired services through the Job Center of Wisconsin website. Training and other information can be found at the local one-stop job centers.

SCSEP grantees and subrecipients actively encourage co-enrollment for services through the local job centers, enabling participants to access vital services. These services include initial assessments of needs and abilities, job search assistance, labor market information, assistance in eligibility determination for multiple programs, and follow-up services to help obtain or retain employment. Other services offered through local job centers include diagnostic testing and evaluation, career counseling, out-of-area job search assistance, and basic skills training, such as general equivalency diploma (GED), language, math, and computer skills. Workshops are offered in resume writing, interviewing techniques, soft skills, and a variety of other topics to help participants with their job search and professional success.

Grantees and subrecipients are responsible for keeping current on potential job openings. This can be through direct contact with potential companies or postings available at Job Center of Wisconsin or online through Wisconomy.com and jobcenterofwisconsin.com.

Additionally, older adults engage with career counselors and other workforce professionals during group training sessions provided by the local one-stop centers. These sessions provide tailored region-specific information about employers who hire mature workers. This includes learning about current job opportunities and the skills needed to apply.

The WIOA has redefined and streamlined services for all workers, aiming for better coordination and collaboration among core partners to address the needs of older individuals. However, for the workforce system to thrive, it must align with the requirements of employers, which are informed by local labor market data reflecting regional economies. Emphasizing education, training, and skill development using resources available through WIOA and the SCSEP ensures that older adults have the knowledge and skills to apply for employment.

However, training efforts should not solely focus on short-term solutions to place older adults in unsubsidized employment. Instead, host agencies should provide training to bolster participants' job qualifications and demonstrate their potential to employers. This approach ensures that older workers are well-prepared for sustainable employment opportunities.

It is worth mentioning that many participants ages 55 to 62 possess solid computer skills. Most are comfortable using computers and are exploring social media and online applications. However, some may benefit from additional training to better navigate and utilize digital tools.

5. Actions the state will take to ensure that SCSEP is an active partner in the one-stop delivery system and the steps the state will take to encourage and improve coordination with the one-stop delivery system (20 C.F.R. § 641.335).

WIOA provides for the delivery of employment services by allowing people to take control of their lives by making their own decisions.

SCSEP grantees and subrecipients work together with local job center partners and employers to find ways of improving collaboration. New subrecipients will create the opportunity to initiate new contacts with one-stop job centers and begin to establish new collaborative relationships.

Grantees and subrecipients must continue to contact and coordinate with the regional workforce development boards and local one-stops to identify major companies with projected job openings. Grantees and subrecipients will develop an economic vision of the companies in their region based on prior commitment to supporting the hiring and retention of older workers. An effective strategy within the IEP should involve identifying companies as potential sources of employment opportunities, including the type(s) of positions that would be suitable for mature workers. Highlighting entry-level positions and outlining the requisite knowledge and skills for these roles is essential. These career-ladder or entry-level positions can offer valuable opportunities for a participant to advance and increase their earning potential.

Wisconsin has continued several flexible service delivery strategies after the pandemic. The state program coordinator, in conjunction with the subrecipients, work together to locate resources throughout the state. These resources include, but are not limited to, local job center virtual trainings, GCFLearnfree.org, Goodwill Academy online, GetSetUp.com classes, technical college offerings, and private learning organizations. The web-based platforms are best when working with personal computers, although some may be accessible with cellular devices. Wisconsin also offered a physical paper workbook that could be delivered to participants. This was developed as a 10-week training program as an alternative or supplement to virtual training opportunities. Topics included employment goals, skill assessment and skills, basic computer training (keyboarding), resume writing exercises, interview tips, job search navigation, and soft skill development. Ultimately, it is up to each program coordinator to offer and utilize the programs that best fit their participants.

Each option provides us with access to potential participants who may not be ready for placement at a host agency but could benefit from additional training before beginning. By implementing these options, we enhance the marketability of the SCSEP program and expand our pool of recruitment candidates. As a result, with a larger pool of recruits, we anticipate increased enrollments and exits for unsubsidized employment.



In Wisconsin, this emphasis is particularly important for our plan. After on-site monitoring in September 2023, we learned this partnership with WIOA providers, American Job Centers, and one-stops can be improved. To address this, we have proposed and initiated meetings with these partners, with the aim of fostering learning and mutual education and improving our referral and success rates for all our participants.

## B. Long-Term Strategy for Engaging Employers

Describe the long-term strategy for engaging employers to develop and promote opportunities for the placement of SCSEP participants in unsubsidized employment (20 C.F.R. § 641.302(e)).

Grantees and subrecipients of the SCSEP recognize the significance of collaborating with local workforce partners and area employers. It is essential to educate them about the aging workforce and the benefits of recruiting, hiring, and retaining experienced older workers. SCSEP subrecipients coordinate various activities within Wisconsin's one-stops, which are administered by the regional workforce investment board through a memorandum of understanding.

Utilizing community service assignments broadens outreach to older workers and local employers for obtaining unsubsidized employment. Having a participant cross-trained on multiple tasks at a host agency will increase their job skills. Working with potential employers to create innovative employment through the SCSEP's on-the-job training program, when applicable, provides employment opportunities for SCSEP participants. Whenever possible, grantees and subrecipients are encouraged to place workers in host agencies based on their occupational preferences. They are responsible for keeping current on potential job openings with companies through either direct contact or postings listed at Job Center of Wisconsin. During assessment, participants will undergo evaluation to determine if they meet the qualifications for occupations routinely recruited by these companies. The IEP will outline the requisite training needed for participants to apply for future positions that will make a successful transition to unsubsidized employment.

The IEP is critical for advancing older workers in today's competitive job market from low wages to higher earnings and stronger, self-sustaining jobs. Working with host sites to transition to unsubsidized employment is a key to success. In conversations with participants at host sites, their personal job goals include continuing to work at the host site but moving to a position with full time and/or unsubsidized status.

Increased awareness of SCSEP is necessary. Finding employers through our partnerships is imperative; however, creating new partnerships through career and job fairs and with local organizations such as chambers of commerce, service organizations, and faith-based services are also necessary.



### C. Long-Term Strategy for Serving Minority Older Individuals

Describe the long-term strategy for serving minority older individuals under SCSEP (20 C.F.R. § 641.302(c)).

SCSEP recruitment practices include identifying and coordinating partnerships with local entities that specifically serve certain minority groups. The intake process for eligibility is the same for other applicants using the list of priority characteristics in the selection process. If they meet any priorities, they will be served first. If the applicant has no priorities, they will be placed on the wait list in the order in which they applied and be notified when a slot becomes available.

More recent recruitment strategies include translating program marketing materials (for example, flyers and brochures) into Spanish and providing Spanish interpreting services when requested by program coordinators. SCSEP is promoted where people congregate, such as nutrition sites, senior centers, libraries, low-income housing projects, social service offices, faith-based organizations, grocery stores, restaurants, and cultural organizations. People are often referred to the SCSEP through local job centers, Veteran’s Affairs offices, vocational rehabilitation, or other partner agencies.

Table 7: Locations for Recruitment of Groups with Priority Characteristics

Priority characteristics	Recruitment locations		
Age 65 and over	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Indeed.com</li> <li>• Senior centers and churches (bulletin boards)</li> <li>• Aging and disability resource centers</li> <li>• School districts and libraries—mutual targeted programs (RSVP, FGP)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VFW posts</li> <li>• Lions, Kiwanis, and Optimist clubs</li> <li>• Service organizations</li> <li>• Senior housing</li> <li>• Job Center of Wisconsin</li> <li>• LGBTQ+ organizations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Radio public service announcements</li> <li>• Restaurants and coffee shops</li> <li>• Grab-n-go meal sites</li> <li>• Community education</li> <li>• Social media</li> <li>• Word of mouth</li> </ul>
Disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ticket-to-Work program</li> <li>• Vocational rehabilitation</li> <li>• United Way</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promise or other grants</li> <li>• Aging and disability resource centers</li> <li>• Social media</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social Security Disability and disabled veterans organizations</li> </ul>

Priority characteristics	Recruitment locations		
Limited English proficiency (LEP) or low literacy skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WIOA or workforce development boards</li> <li>• funding for LEP</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Literacy council</li> <li>• Technical colleges</li> </ul>	
Rural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Posters, brochures, local shopper newspaper</li> <li>• Agency referrals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Church bulletin</li> <li>• City or town hall</li> <li>• Aging and disability resource centers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Food pantries</li> <li>• Nutrition sites</li> <li>• Senior centers</li> </ul>
Veterans and/or spouses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shelters for homeless veterans</li> <li>• Veteran resource group quarterly meetings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Veteran’s Day events</li> <li>• VA hospitals</li> <li>• Disabled Veterans</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dry Hootch</li> <li>• Vet centers</li> <li>• Veteran’s service officer (federal, state, county)</li> </ul>
Low employment prospects	Use all recruitment techniques and locations listed.		
Failed to find employment after using WIOA services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Referrals from job center partners</li> <li>• Job service (adult)</li> </ul>		
Homeless or at risk of homelessness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Churches</li> <li>• Food pantries</li> <li>• Shelters (better to locate in the winter)</li> <li>• Free clinics</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Homeless Intervention Taskforce referrals (Rock County)</li> <li>• Salvation Army or St. Vincent de Paul</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shelter for homeless veterans</li> <li>• Case managers and staff</li> <li>• Nonprofit agencies</li> </ul>
Previously incarcerated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Probation and parole officers</li> <li>• Job centers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jails</li> <li>• Department of Corrections</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shelter</li> <li>• Reentry organizations</li> </ul>

Brochures and other printed material are created and updated for all state subrecipients. Generic materials were produced and distributed to each region, allowing the subrecipients the opportunity to personalize and customize the materials to their specific region and demography.

Social media is encouraged when appropriate as well. During recruitment, non-English-speaking individuals are provided an interpreter upon request, who can assist in the completion of enrollment forms, and some forms can be translated into Spanish if requested.

Older minority individuals experience a variety of barriers that limit or restrict their ability to work. These barriers may include significant issues such as financial difficulties, residential location in low-income urban or rural clusters, transportation, limited literacy and language abilities, low skill levels, inadequate education, and little or no knowledge of the job market or job search strategies. In addition, participants may encounter employment discrimination. To assist participants, barriers identified during the assessment are included in the IEP with referrals to classes, individual counseling, or training.

We will also work to meeting participants where they are. This includes libraries, senior centers, meal sites, and community centers. Office hours in these locations will increase the visibility of our program and make it easier for participants to make initial contact with program coordinators.

#### Outreach and services to formerly incarcerated individuals

Wisconsin has two tracks for recruitment of formerly incarcerated individuals. The first involves direct outreach by providing presentations in jails to probation and parole officers. Presentations at the jails are utilized to educate both staff and inmates about SCSEP. The second track is through community-based organizations. Relationships with churches, senior centers, community action organizations, food pantries, shelters, job centers, and technical colleges are referral sources.

Services to previously incarcerated individuals may include assistance with regaining identification documents, driver's licenses, garnishment waivers, social security cards, and documents such as military and medical records. A strong line of communication with law enforcement agencies and probation and parole officers has worked to ensure that a training plan (IEP) assists with their success.

All program coordinators have relationships with community organizations or resources that work with previously incarcerated individuals. These organizations include Department of Corrections Reentry Essentials, Project Return and Opening Avenues to Reentry Success (OARS), Community Corrections employment programs, reentry programs through job centers, and Project Proven. Admittedly, some program coordinators have stronger ties than others throughout the state. Therefore, we plan to offer peer-to-peer support between our program coordinators to share their resources, ideas, and techniques to identify organizations and individuals that will be appropriate referrals to SCSEP.

#### D. List of Needed Community Services and Places that Need Them Most

Provide a list of community services needed and the places that need these services most. Specifically, the plan must address the needs and location(s) those individuals in need of community services and the groups working to meet their needs (20 C.F.R. § 641.330).

As previously mentioned, Wisconsin applied for and received ATSS as part of our program year 2023 grant. This additional 5% funding has provided us with the flexibility to offer SCSEP participants a wider array of necessary resources while in training. These services available through direct referral or voucher may include:

- Durable medical equipment.
- Transportation-related costs (gas cards, Uber or Lyft gift cards, vehicle repair and maintenance).
- Housing costs (rent, mortgage assistance).
- Utilities (gas, electric, water).
- Clothing and uniforms.
- Cell phone expenses.
- Tablets, laptops, Wi-Fi, hotspots, and other digital expenses.

We will request ATSS funds for program year 2024, and the long-term renewal for four years will increase the number of successes using this allocation.

The SCSEP has a dual focus of providing community services through local nonprofit and government organizations and offering participants opportunities to acquire new skills through provided training. Community service assignments are referred to as host agencies, which are public and private nonprofit (501(c)(3)) agencies that serve as training worksites and provide needed services to the community. These organizations are located regionally to assist low-income populations. The list of public and nonprofit organizations is large; however, some of the organizations utilized regionally include:

- |  |                     |
|--|---------------------|
| • Goodwill Industries.                               | • Dry Hootch.       |
| • Salvation Army.                                    | • ADRCs.            |
| • St. Vincent de Paul.                               | • Public libraries. |
| • United Way.  | • YMCA and YWCA.    |
| • Community centers (including LGBTQ organizations). | • Food pantries.    |

## E. Long-Term Strategy to Improve SCSEP Services

Describe the long-term strategy to improve SCSEP services, including planned long-term changes to the design of the program within the state, and planned changes in the use of SCSEP grantees and program operators to better achieve the goals of the program. This may include recommendations to the department as appropriate (20 C.F.R. § 641.302(k)).

The Wisconsin SCSEP State Plan creates a shared vision, mission, and future objectives that grantees and subrecipients will follow. Wisconsin will apply for ATSS funding in the 2024–2025 program year grant application. If approved, it is our understanding that ATSS funds will be available for four consecutive years. Having this continued allocation of funding will be advantageous for both our staff and participants. It will ensure the seamless provision and utilization of these services over an extended period.

Wisconsin has also applied for the Grant Performance Management System (GPMS) IT grant for another year. This will also assist staff in offsetting some salary costs associated with the new software system.

Wisconsin received technical assistance from a recent monitoring site visit that resulted in providing valuable insights into collaborating with WIOA programs. We plan to offer more training and assistance to our subrecipients to enhance our utilization of WIOA partners and to optimize collaboration between both programs for successful outcomes for participants.

Wisconsin is currently processing two requests for applications in two regions. This will possibly result in two new subrecipients and bring fresh ideas, strategies, and opportunities to the program. We will work with the state administrator and program coordinators to transition and onboard new subrecipients. It will also provide an opportunity for the new program coordinators to introduce SCSEP to their communities from their fresh perspective.

We will also schedule a minimum of three meetings per year between national grantees and the State of Wisconsin. Increased communication, shared referrals and resources, and information dissemination will benefit our organizations and those associated with SCSEP.

Wisconsin will also address monitoring findings and areas of concern with program coordinators throughout the plan cycle. This will be done at program coordinator quarterly meetings, one-on-one meetings, and on-site monitoring.

We will provide GPMS training to both new and current program coordinators, including individualized training sessions and access to GPMS Virtual Office Hours. Standardized forms from DOL would be beneficial to align with the GPMS software.

There are plans for a new and updated SCSEP manual. This will consist of a chapter-by-chapter review of the current manual to update, edit, revise, and create new content. The aim is to ensure the manual is user-friendly for program coordinators, host agencies, and participants.

## F. Strategy for Continuous Improvement

Describe a strategy for continuous improvement at the level of performance for SCSEP participants' entry into unsubsidized employment, and to achieve, at a minimum, the levels specified in OAA § 513(a)(2)(E)(ii) (20 C.F.R. § 641.302(f)).

Continuous improvement begins with ensuring older adults, nonprofit organizations, and employers are aware of the SCSEP program. State and national grantees and subrecipients must collaborate effectively, using various methods and tools to develop successful recruitment and enrollment strategies to engage older adults. SCSEP will work with state and local partners and employers to discuss the benefits of working together to address the employment needs of older adults.

State SCSEP subrecipients meet quarterly to review current progress reports and performance levels. These meetings involve sharing best practices and problem-solving to ensure targets for recruitment, employment, retention, earnings, numbers served, and most-in-need measures are met. Fiscal meetings with subrecipients and/or fiscal departments have also been implemented and will continue.

As previously mentioned, Wisconsin will have two new subrecipients beginning in program year 2024. We will train new staff using the state program coordinator and subrecipient program coordinators. Peer-to-peer training was proven successful when Employ Milwaukee began implementing the program in 2022, among other noted options.

Partnerships with WIOA, one-stops, American Job Centers, and workforce development boards have been established and will remain a priority. It is crucial to continue learning, educating, and collaborating to achieve best outcomes for all participants involved in our respective programs.

### III. Location and Population Served—Including Equitable Distribution

#### A. Localities and Populations for Which Projects are Most Needed

Describe the localities and populations for which projects of the type authorized by Title V are most needed.

Wisconsin reviews, prepares, and submits the equitable distribution report to the Department of Labor annually. This is the opportunity to confirm SCSEP is serving the residents of our state equitably. The State of Wisconsin serves 19 counties, and the national grantees serve 70 of Wisconsin's 72 counties.

The SCSEP State Plan has been instrumental in bringing together grantees for the coordination and movement of authorized positions, as well as recognizing the population increases and decreases in all areas of the state.

Table 8: Equitable Distribution—Over- and Under-Enrolled

Program year	Over-enrolled counties	Under-enrolled counties
2023 (Q1)	17	61
2022	14	53
2021	15	54

Source: Grants Management Performance System (GPMS) and Equitable Distribution Reports

There are two counties that are overserved by both state and national grantees, possibly because counties that have SCSEP offices in them tend to show stronger connections between the program, its participants, and host sites. This could be attributed to a shorter distance and less travel time for SCSEP to meet with participants and host site administrators, as well as a better knowledge of these communities. Remote locations cost more money and are more difficult to maintain.

Several ideas addressing the 11 counties that are underserved by both the state and national grantees have also been discussed. It was suggested that when the economy is stronger, jobs are easier to obtain, and participants do not seek out the SCSEP program because they are able to obtain positions on their own, and in some cases, at higher wages.

Counties that have good transportation options are also better served. This involves not only having a mass transit system, but also one that is easily accessible with direct routes. Uber, Lyft, and carpooling are also options that make getting to job sites easier. Other transportation suggestions

include programs such as Wheels to Work (Wisconsin Automotive and Truck Education Association) and Work 'n Wheels (Southwestern Wisconsin Community Action Program), which offer grants and/or low interest loans to purchase vehicles.

Five counties were split—meaning that only one of the state or national grantees was over-enrolled or under-enrolled. If grantees continue to see a pattern, better communication between organizations could assist with more equitable distribution.

## B. Cities and Counties Where the SCSEP Project Will Take Place

List the cities and counties where the SCSEP project will take place. Include the number of SCSEP authorized positions and indicate if and where positions changed from the prior year.

Wisconsin recently executed a slot swap with SER National. This was a result of two counties that were not geographically accessible for our regional program coordinator. We were able to swap to SER four slots in St. Croix County for two slots in Trempealeau County and two in Vernon County.

We are also reviewing internal authorized positions between subrecipients, specifically, three slots in Calumet County to Fox Valley Workforce Development Board and 12 slots in Waukesha County to Employ Milwaukee. Similarly, this is due to geographic location of the program coordinators.

Certain factors are taken into consideration before authorized positions are changed. They are:

- The proportion of eligible people in each county compared to the total number of people in the state.
- The proportion of people residing in rural and urban areas.
- People who identify as a minority
- People who have the greatest economic needs and low employment prospects, including those who are afforded priority of service.

## C. Slot Imbalances and Steps to Correct Inequities

Describe any current slot imbalances and proposed steps to correct inequities to achieve equitable distribution.

State and national grantees will continue to meet and review the equitable distribution reports to access and evaluate the need to modify slots throughout the state. At the time of our meeting, it was discussed but no additional action was taken. This discussion will continue to ensure changes are made appropriately.



## D. Long-Term Strategy for Equitable Distribution of SCSEP Positions

Explain the state's long-term strategy for achieving an equitable distribution of SCSEP positions within the state that:

### 1. Equitably serves both rural and urban areas (20 C.F.R. § 641.302(a)(2)).

Historically, some grantees may fill slots above the allocated level. Many times, slots are filled beyond the allocated amount simply because the county is in an urban or metropolitan area, where recruitment is continuous, and employment is plentiful. This results in a county being overserved. Too many overserved slots in one county may mean people, most often in rural, isolated counties, are being denied SCSEP services.

Subrecipients will need to follow these long-term strategies:

- Developing ongoing working partnerships among grantees to assist each other with recruitment and referrals for unsubsidized employment through on-the-job training
- Providing educational training to grantees and subrecipients on the equitable distribution report process (to ensure grantees are equitably balancing position levels to avoid under- and overserved counties)
- Discussing between grantees and subrecipients how each one can help balance the slot levels in a shared county that is over- and/or underserved
- Utilizing the services provided within the local one-stops, especially working with other program partners and participants who are eligible to receive WIOA services

### 2. Serves individuals afforded priority for service under 20 C.F.R. § 641.520 (20 C.F.R. §§ 641.302(a), 641.656).

The SCSEP provides priority of service to those people who are considered most-in-need, as defined at 20 C.F.R. § 641.520. These individuals have one or more of the following characteristics:

- Are veterans (or eligible spouses of veterans) for purposes of the Jobs for Veterans Act, 39 U.S.C. § 4215(a)
- Are age 65 or older
- Have a disability
- Have limited English proficiency
- Have low literacy skills
- Reside in a rural area
- Have low employment prospects
- Have failed to find employment after using the services provided through the one-stop delivery system.
- Are homeless or at-risk for homelessness
- Were previously incarcerated

There are people in every county who meet the SCSEP priority of service. These people have a multitude of barriers to employment that are discovered during the enrollment and assessment processes. Grantees have knowledge of the aging process and changing behaviors. Older adults need a variety of resources and referrals to help them manage barriers. When older adults are recruited, many meet the priority of service category for the most-in-need measure. Each grantee is responsible for ensuring appropriate referrals for assistance are provided.

The SCSEP employs outreach and recruitment strategies to give priority of service to eligible older adults, specifically prioritizing racial and ethnic minority groups. Outreach materials such as brochures, posters, and newspaper articles are tailored to each region. Information is disseminated to local county veteran's offices, hospitals and clinics, senior centers, literacy centers, shelters, social security offices, ADRCs, county and tribal aging units, job centers, libraries, churches, pharmacies, restaurants, and retail bulletin boards. Presentations to local social service agencies help staff learn about the benefits of the SCSEP.

#### E. Ratio of Eligible Individuals per Service Area

Provide the ratio of eligible individuals in each service area to the total eligible population in the state (20 C.F.R. § 641.325(a)).

Table 9: Variance in authorized positions per county versus number of enrolled, 2023

County	Grantee	Number of authorized positions	Number enrolled	Variance
Adams	State grantee	—	—	—
	CWI	—	—	—
	NICOA	—	—	—
	SER	6	0	-6
Ashland	State grantee			
	CWI			
	NICOA			
	SER	5	6	1
Barron	State grantee			
	CWI	12	5	-7

County	Grantee	Number of authorized positions	Number enrolled	Variance
	NICOA			
	SER			
<b>Bayfield</b>	State grantee			
	CWI			
	NICOA			
	SER	4	1	-3
<b>Brown</b>	State grantee	13	16	3
	CWI	25	37	12
	NICOA	4	0	-4
	SER			
<b>Buffalo</b>	State grantee			
	CWI			
	NICOA			
	SER	3	1	-2
<b>Burnett</b>	State grantee			
	CWI			
	NICOA			
	SER	4	11	7
<b>Calumet</b>	State grantee	3	0	-3
	CWI	3	0	-3
	NICOA			
	SER	0	1	1
<b>Chippewa</b>	State grantee			
	CWI	13	8	-5
	NICOA			

County	Grantee	Number of authorized positions	Number enrolled	Variance
	SER			
Clark	State grantee			
	CWI	7	2	-5
	NICOA			
	SER			
Columbia	State grantee	3	2	-1
	CWI			
	NICOA			
	SER	6	1	-5
Crawford	State grantee			
	CWI			
	NICOA			
	SER	5	13	8
Dane	State grantee	30	51	21
	CWI			
	NICOA			
	SER	21	4	-17
Dodge	State grantee	0	1	1
	CWI			
	NICOA			
	SER	15	3	-12
Door	State grantee			
	CWI	5	1	-4
	NICOA			
	SER			

County	Grantee	Number of authorized positions	Number enrolled	Variance
<b>Douglas</b>	State grantee			
	CWI			
	NICOA			
	SER	9	4	-5
<b>Dunn</b>	State grantee			
	CWI	7	2	-5
	NICOA			
	SER			
<b>Eau Claire</b>	State grantee			
	CWI	18	11	-7
	NICOA			
	SER			
<b>Florence</b>	State grantee			
	CWI			
	NICOA			
	SER	3	0	-3
<b>Fond du Lac</b>	State grantee	9	3	-6
	CWI			
	NICOA			
	SER	9	1	-8
<b>Forest</b>	State grantee			
	CWI			
	NICOA			
	SER	3	2	-1
<b>Grant</b>	State grantee			

County	Grantee	Number of authorized positions	Number enrolled	Variance
	CWI			
	NICOA			
	SER	10	2	-8
Green	State grantee	2	1	-1
	CWI			
	NICOA			
	SER	4	0	-4
Green Lake	State grantee	4	2	-2
	CWI			
	NICOA			
	SER			
Iowa	State grantee			
	CWI			
	NICOA			
	SER	4	0	-4
Iron	State grantee			
	CWI			
	NICOA			
	SER	3	0	-3
Jackson	State grantee	2	0	-2
	CWI			
	NICOA			
	SER	3	0	-3
Jefferson	State grantee			
	CWI			

County	Grantee	Number of authorized positions	Number enrolled	Variance
	NICOA			
	SER	14	1	-13
Juneau	State grantee			
	CWI			
	NICOA			
	SER	7	11	4
Kenosha	State grantee			
	CWI			
	NICOA			
	SER	25	26	1
Kewaunee	State grantee			
	CWI	4	0	-4
	NICOA			
	SER			
La Crosse	State grantee	8	9	1
	CWI			
	NICOA			
	SER	8	22	14
Lafayette	State grantee	2	2	0
	CWI			
	NICOA			
	SER	2	0	-2
Lincoln	State grantee			
	CWI	6	8	2
	NICOA			

County	Grantee	Number of authorized positions	Number enrolled	Variance
	SER			
<b>Manitowoc</b>	State grantee	4	1	-3
	CWI	15	3	-12
	NICOA			
	SER			
<b>Marathon</b>	State grantee			
	CWI	23	14	-9
	NICOA			
	SER			
<b>Marinette</b>	State grantee			
	CWI			
	NICOA			
	SER	13	2	-11
<b>Marquette</b>	State grantee			
	CWI			
	NICOA			
	SER	4	1	-3
<b>Menominee</b>	State grantee			
	CWI	2	13	11
	NICOA	6	0	-6
	SER			
<b>Milwaukee</b>	State grantee	55	33	-22
	CWI			
	NICOA	5	5	0
	SER	164	192	28



County	Grantee	Number of authorized positions	Number enrolled	Variance
Monroe	State grantee	2	1	-1
	CWI			
	NICOA			
	SER	7	13	6
Oconto	State grantee			
	CWI			
	NICOA			
	SER	9	1	-8
Oneida	State grantee			
	CWI			
	NICOA			
	SER	8	5	-3
Outagamie	State grantee	13	4	-9
	CWI	8	10	2
	NICOA			
	SER			
Ozaukee	State grantee			
	CWI	11	0	-11
	NICOA			
	SER			
Pepin	State grantee			
	CWI			
	NICOA			
	SER	3	4	1
Pierce	State grantee	0	1	1

County	Grantee	Number of authorized positions	Number enrolled	Variance
	CWI			
	NICOA			
	SER	3	7	4
Polk	State grantee			
	CWI			
	NICOA			
	SER	9	0	-9
Portage	State grantee			
	CWI	12	5	-7
	NICOA			
	SER			
Price	State grantee			
	CWI			
	NICOA			
	SER	4	2	-2
Racine	State grantee			
	CWI			
	NICOA			
	SER	34	16	-18
Richland	State grantee			
	CWI			
	NICOA			
	SER	4	1	-3
Rock	State grantee	30	36	6
	CWI			

County	Grantee	Number of authorized positions	Number enrolled	Variance
	NICOA			
	SER			
Rusk	State grantee			
	CWI			
	NICOA			
	SER	5	3	-2
Sauk	State grantee			
	CWI			
	NICOA			
	SER	11	4	-7
Sawyer	State grantee			
	CWI			
	NICOA			
	SER	6	2	-4
Shawano	State grantee			
	CWI	10	5	-5
	NICOA	2	0	-2
	SER			
Sheboygan	State grantee			
	CWI	16	2	-14
	NICOA			
	SER			
St. Croix	State grantee			
	CWI			
	NICOA			

County	Grantee	Number of authorized positions	Number enrolled	Variance
	SER	9	2	-7
Taylor	State grantee			
	CWI	5	3	-2
	NICOA			
	SER			
Trempealeau	State grantee	2	0	-2
	CWI			
	NICOA			
	SER	4	0	-4
Vernon	State grantee	2	0	-2
	CWI			
	NICOA			
	SER	7	0	-7
Vilas	State grantee			
	CWI			
	NICOA			
	SER	5	0	-5
Walworth	State grantee			
	CWI			
	NICOA			
	SER	15	6	-9
Washburn	State grantee			
	CWI			
	NICOA			
	SER	5	1	-4

County	Grantee	Number of authorized positions	Number enrolled	Variance
Washington	State grantee			
	CWI			
	NICOA			
	SER	17	1	-16
Waukesha	State grantee	12	2	-10
	CWI			
	NICOA			
	SER	31	8	-23
Waupaca	State grantee			
	CWI	11	4	-7
	NICOA			
	SER			
Waushara	State grantee			
	CWI			
	NICOA			
	SER	6	0	-6
Winnebago	State grantee	15	3	-12
	CWI	8	4	-4
	NICOA			
	SER			
Wood	State grantee			
	CWI	17	5	-12
	NICOA			
	SER			
	<b>State grantee</b>	<b>211</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>-43</b>

County	Grantee	Number of authorized positions	Number enrolled	Variance
Wisconsin (total)	CWI	238	142	-96
	NICOA	17	5	-12
	SER	561	384	-177

## F. Relative Distribution of Eligible Individuals

### 1. Reside in urban and rural areas within the state (20 C.F.R. § 641.325(b))

The SCSEP subrecipients in Wisconsin understand the problems encountered in balancing the needs of the counties they serve. The SCSEP recognizes the need for grantees to reach across to their counterparts in the same county or region to assist them with their recruitment. This is apparent in Milwaukee County, where one grantee (SER) is over-enrolled, while another (state) is under-enrolled. This is also the location where wage discrepancies continue. Although the over-enrolled grantee may offer participants to enroll with the state, participants may not be interested due to the lower wage offered (\$7.25/hour).

Two state grantee regions will have new subrecipients beginning July 1, 2024. The southcentral region is urban; however, the northeast region is a mix of both urban and rural. The new subrecipient will allow for new and revisiting marketing opportunities. This will include American Job Centers (AJCs), ADRCs, and other previously noted recruitment partners.

### 2. Have the greatest economic need (20 C.F.R. § 641.325(b))

For people in the SCSEP, greatest economic need refers to a person who is at or below the federal poverty level. To be eligible for the SCSEP, a person's income must not exceed 125% of the federal poverty level. What this means in SCSEP eligibility is that in 2020, the maximum income for a family of one is \$18,825 per year and for a married couple or family of two is \$25,550 per year. Applicants who apply for SCSEP may not have an income. Those who are between 55 and 61 years old cannot collect Social Security and may not have a pension or other sources of income, so finding employment is the only viable source.

According to the 2022 American Community Survey, there were 237,000 people in Wisconsin who met this age and poverty threshold. That equates to 13% of the 55+ population. By

comparison, 14% of Wisconsinites across all ages have income at or below 125% of the federal poverty level.

The 55+ population's lower-than-average poverty rate is a testament to the stability that Social Security, Medicare, and private retirement accounts have afforded to an age group that is more likely to have withdrawn from the workforce, but this should not discount the importance of employment to the financial well-being of those in this age group.

### 3. Are minorities

Participants provide racial and ethnic information through self-attestation.

### 4. Are limited English proficient

Limited English proficiency means a participant who does not speak English as his or her primary language and who has a limited ability to read, speak, write, or understand English. Low literacy skills mean a participant who calculates or solves problems, reads, writes, or speaks at or below an eighth-grade level, or who is unable to compute or solve problems, read, write, or speak at a level necessary to function on the job, in the participant's family, or in society.

### 5. Have greatest social need

A participant is considered to have great social need at enrollment by having little or no employment history, no basic skills, and little to no high school education, as well as being English-language deficient, disabled, homeless, or living in a socially or economically isolated area where there are limited employment opportunities.

### 6. Formerly incarcerated individuals

A participant is considered formerly incarcerated if they have been incarcerated and released from prison or jail during the past five years or were under supervision following release from prison or jail.

Below is a list of identified barriers and potential resources to assist participants.

#### Lack of skills

Issues identified related to a general lack of skills include:

- Unidentified or non-transferable skills.
- Unknown learning disabilities.
- Limited English proficiency.
- Low literacy skills.
- No high school diploma or GED.
- Limited knowledge of technology.

Possible solutions for these issues include:

- Collaboration with disability services to improve skills.
- Education and training.
- Complete assessments.
- Job center workshops.
- Assistance from the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR).
- Career Pathways.
- Work Keys.
- WIOA services.

### Lack of host agencies

Possible solutions to address a lack of host agencies in rural areas include:

- Indeed.com.
- Marketing for SCSEP.
- Recruitment at conferences, job fairs, and expos.
- Local United Way.
- Township meetings.
- Senior centers, schools, and churches.
- Local shopper newspapers and flyers.
- Word-of-mouth.
- Social media.

### Transportation

Transportation issues in rural and urban areas include:

- Accessibility.
- Cost.
- Weather conditions.

Possible solutions for these issues are:

- Grants to help purchase cars and car repairs.
- Other funding sources.
- Piggybacking off other services.
- Referrals from ADRCs.
- Senior volunteers.
- Van or ride sharing.
- Bus pass or taxi vouchers.
- Help for participants who need license plates renewed or fines paid.
- Worksites close to residences.
- Budget planning with participants.
- Resources for local car service centers.
- Purchase or donation of bicycles.
- Uber service.

### Employment opportunities

Solutions related to finding relevant employment opportunities for participants include:

- Job Center of Wisconsin website.
- Indeed.com.



- Employer contact.
- Business relations groups.
- Local chambers of commerce.
- Rotary, Optimist, or Lions clubs.
- Job fairs and/or expos.
- Community-based agencies with classes on job development.
- Local technical colleges.
- Relocation.
- On-the-job experience training from SCSEP.
- Collaborations with DVR and the FoodShare Employment and Training program.
- National Career Readiness.
- Business Service Team.

## Education

Barriers that arise related to education in both urban and rural areas include:

- Lack of high school diploma or GED.
- Lack of college degree.
- Difficulty with reading and/or math.

Possible solutions for educational barriers include:

- WIOA co-enrollment.
- Training through SCSEP.
- Technical college education or training.
- Scholarships from Wisconsin Employment and Training Association, Wisconsin Older Worker Network, community clubs, and other nonprofits.
- Grants from the Department of Labor or community foundations.
- Community education (senior centers, libraries, or local high schools).
- National Career Readiness.
- Library workshops.
- Online training courses.

## Cultural Sensitivities

Barriers related to culture create issues in both rural and urban areas. These issues include:

- Language and literacy barriers.
- Discrimination.
- Diversity insensitivities.
- Fear of losing identity.
- Fewer resources.
- Isolation.
- Lack of host agencies.

Possible solutions for cultural sensitivity barriers include:

- Interpreters
- Participants who are bilingual serving as translators or mentors.
- Collaboration with minority organizations.
- Literacy networks.
- Host agency worksites specific to culture.
- Publications translated into Spanish and Hmong.
- Assessment and IEP with goals to overcome barriers.

### Communication skills

Communication skills can be lacking for participants who do not fully grasp English or who do not speak English. Possible solutions are similar to those addressing cultural sensitivities and include:

- Collaboration with community colleges.
- Collection of resources or tools that address social skills.
- Job-readiness assessments and workshops.
- Proper communication at worksites.
- Literacy councils or networks.
- Intergenerational communications.
- Interpreters.
- English classes.
- Understanding of appropriate language in the workplace.
- Host agency worksites with bilingual staff.

### Criminal history

A participant with a criminal history can experience several barriers to employment, including:

- Lack of host agencies.
- Lack of employment opportunities.
- Lack of trust.
- Possibility of repeat offenses.
- Stigma associated with sex offenders.
- Safety.
- Lack of reintegration funding and services.

Possible solutions for this include:

- Background checks (criminal, sex offender registry, and out-of-state).
- Contact with probation officer (terms of probation).
- Reintegration classes.
- Transparency with participants and host agencies.

## Physical and mental health limitations

Issues surrounding physical and mental health limitations include:

- Lack of mobility.
- Denial.
- Addictions and criminal backgrounds.
- Liability (safety).
- Homelessness.
- Dementia.

Possible solutions for these health limitations include:

- Reasonable accommodations (assistive devices).
- Understanding limitations.
- Referrals to ADRCs, DVR, and memory cafes.
- Background checks.
- Motivational interviewing.
- Participant transparency.
- Mental health facilities that provide free clinics or assessments.

## G. Steps Taken to Avoid Service Disruptions

Describe the steps taken to avoid disruptions to service for participants to the greatest extent possible, when positions are redistributed, as provided in 20 C.F.R. § 641.365; when new census or other reliable data becomes available; or when there is over-enrollment for any other reason (20 C.F.R. §§ 641.325(i), 641.302(b)).

SCSEP national grantees and the Bureau of Aging and Disability Resources (BADR) work together to ensure that people who want to work can do so through the services of the program. The Department of Labor provides the distribution factor based on current census data. The distribution factor is the current formula for defining the equitable share of SCSEP positions for each county, based on the proportion of income and age-eligible population by county annually. BADR determines annually which counties are over- or underserved and calculates the movement of positions to distribute them equitably. The calculations are sent to the national grantees for review and comment prior to approval. BADR then sends the equitable distribution report to the Department of Labor. Through their collaboration, BADR and the national grantees have traditionally been successful in ensuring there is either no or minimal disruption of service to participants.

To avoid disruptions to participants, when authorized positions need to be reassigned, grantees will work in partnership for transfers. The Covid-19 pandemic has taught us that delivery of service has many shapes, and we are able to serve participants by working with partners for the best outcome for all parties involved.

If it is deemed necessary to transfer a participant due to equitable distribution, it is optimum to maintain their current host agency, thus only needing to acclimate the participant to a new program director and update paperwork, payroll and GPMS information.

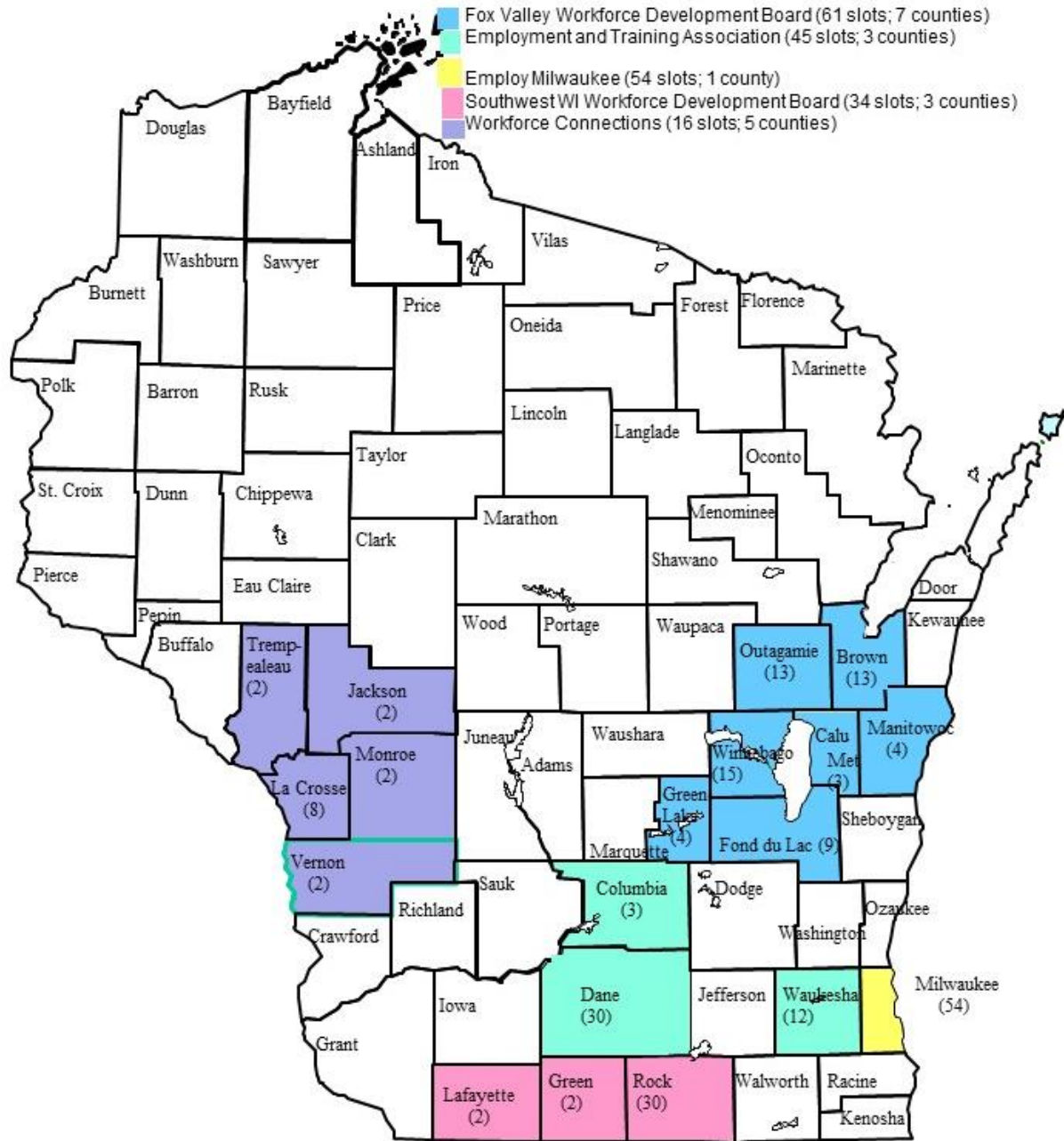
## Appendices

- Appendix A: State and National Authorized Positions
- Appendix B: Workforce Development Boards and Areas
- Appendix C: State Plan Meeting
- Appendix D: National Grantee Comments
- Appendix E: Public Comments

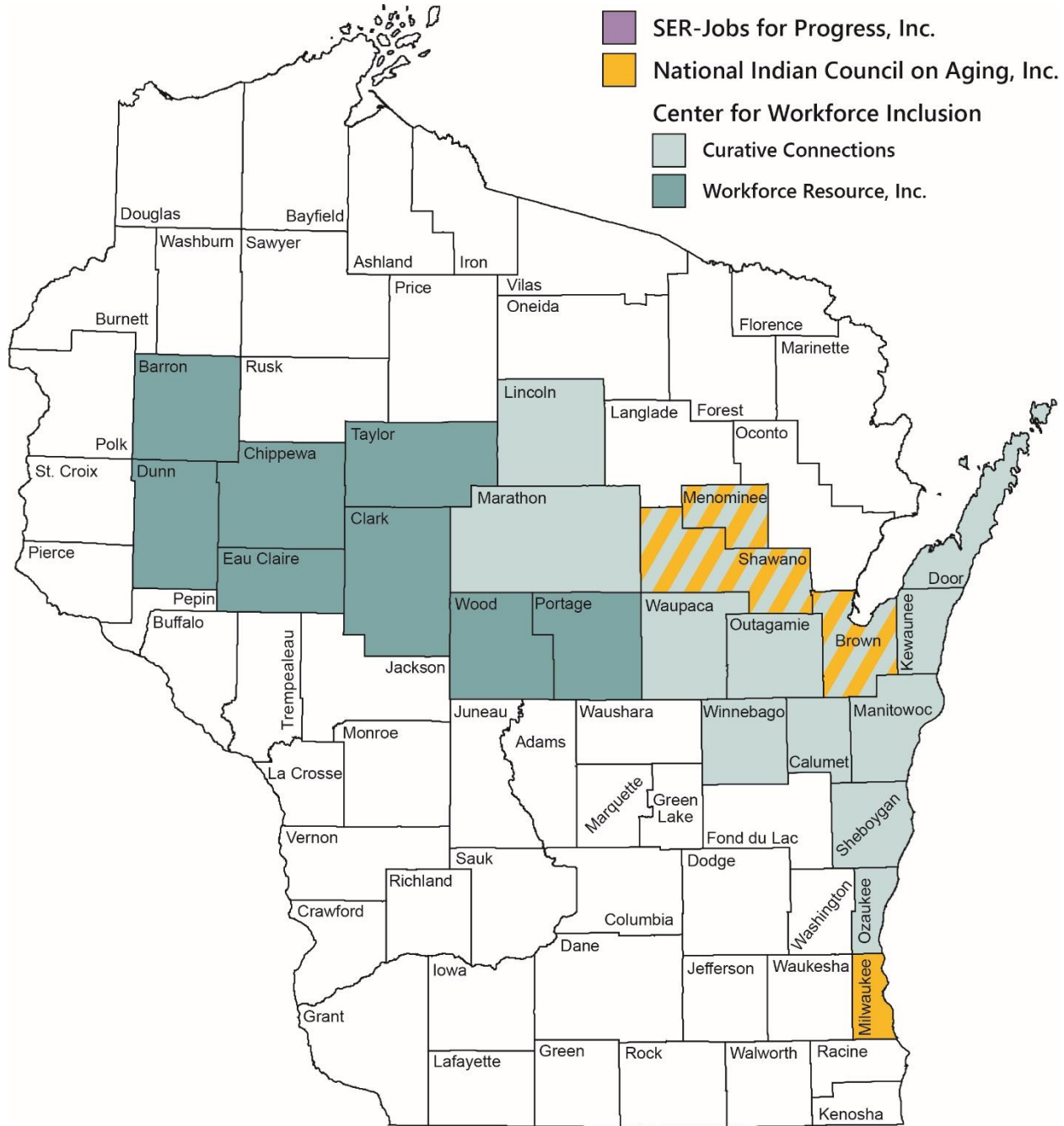
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Appendix A: State and National Authorized Positions

State Authorized Positions, Listed by Subrecipient

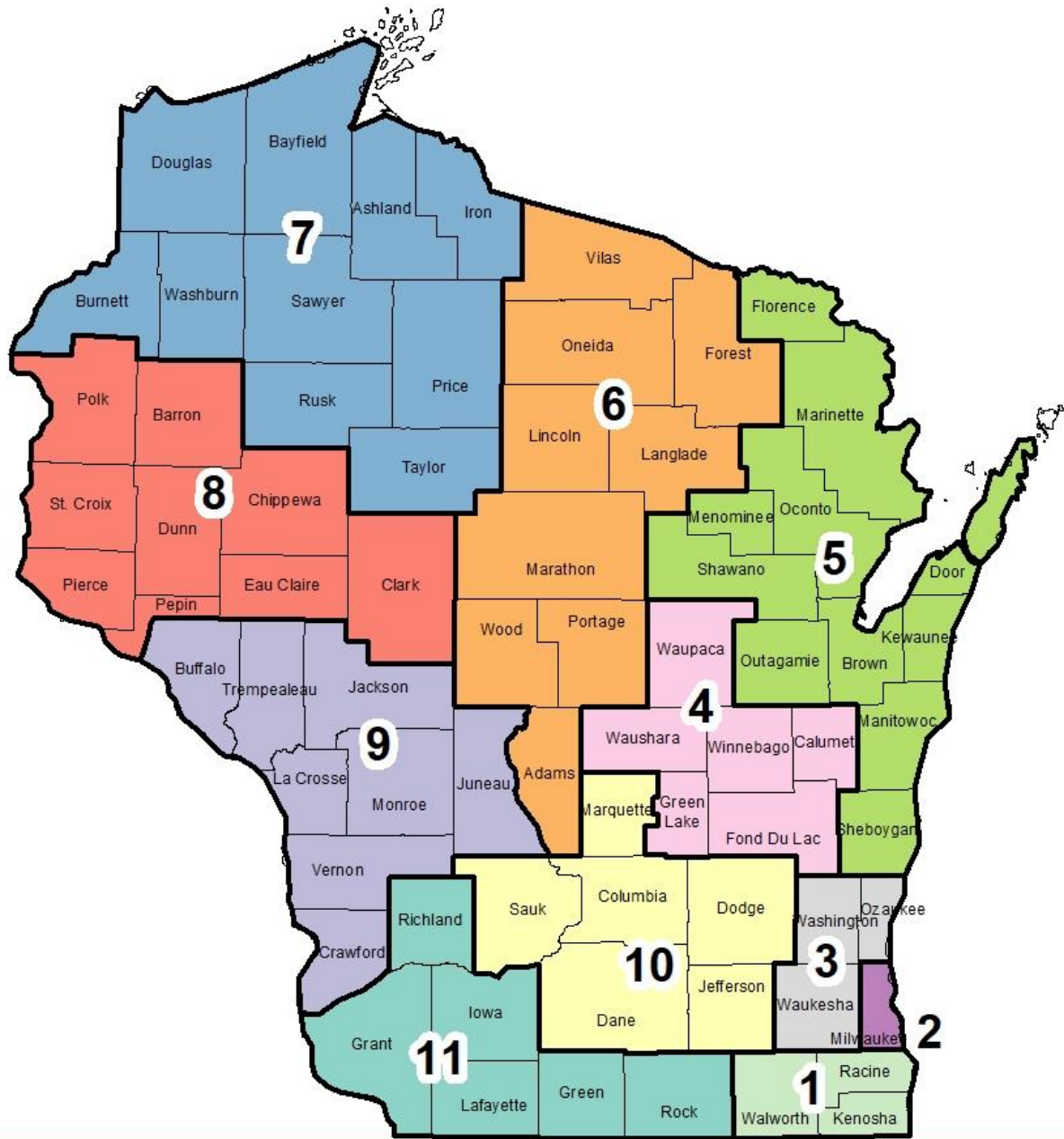


### National Authorized Positions, Listed by Grantee and Subrecipient





Appendix B: Wisconsin Workforce Development Boards and Areas



- County Boundaries 2010
  WDA 5 - Bay Area
  WDA 9 - Western
- WDA 1 - Southeast
  WDA 10 - South Central
- WDA 2 - Milwaukee
  WDA 7 - Northwest
  WDA 11 - Southwest
- WDA 3 - WOW
  WDA 8 - West Central
- WDA 4 - Fox Valley

Source: Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, Bureau of Workforce Information and Technical Support

## Appendix C: Wisconsin State Plan and Equitable Distribution Meeting

The Older Americans Act of 2006, Section 503, mandates a four-year strategy for the statewide provision of community service employment and other authorized activities for eligible individuals in the SCSEP. The four-year plan is intended to foster both short-term and long-term coordination among national and state grantees operating the SCSEP to facilitate the efforts of key stakeholders to work collaboratively to accomplish programs goals. In addition, this plan emphasizes the importance of partnership among grantees and other programs.

The Department of Health Services, Bureau of Aging and Disability Resources is responsible for implementation of the SCSEP State Plan along with input from national grantees. The four-year plan takes a longer-term view of the SCSEP program.

A meeting was held on Thursday, December 21, 2023, via Zoom.

Participants:

- Amber Collegnon, SCSEP Director, Curative Connections
- Thomas Kunz, Employment and Training Specialist, SER-National
- Laura Langer, SCSEP State Program Coordinator
- Leslie Maly, SCSEP Director, National Indian Council on Aging
- Tonnia Winters, Lead Employment and Training Specialist, SER-National

SCSEP national grantees and BADR have begun meeting and have committed to continue to work together in the upcoming years. This initial step was advantageous, as everyone present was open and honest about the challenges within their programs. All grantees are under-enrolled and have had difficulty recruiting participants post pandemic. Some have had staff turnover and the challenge of onboarding and training new program coordinators.



Senior Community Services Employment Program  
State Plan and Equitable Distribution  
Thursday, December 21, 2023  
Agenda

1. Introductions
  - A. Who are you? What is the best way to reach you?
  - B. Where to do serve?
  - C. How long have you been working with SCSEP?
2. Equitable Distribution
  - A. Do you have any significant variances? If so, where?
  - B. Any slot swap interest?
3. State Plan
  - A. Collaborations—how can we work better together?
  - B. Relationships with AJCs and job centers
  - C. Name two challenges we can address at the next meeting
4. Walk on Items

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Appendix D: National Grantee Comments

Center for Workforce Inclusion—Curative Connections

SER-National

National Indian Council on Aging

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Appendix E: Public Comments

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