



SOUTH FLORIDA WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD

WORKFORCE SYSTEMS IMPROVEMENT (WSI) COMMITTEE

**Thursday, February 26, 2009
8:00 A.M.**

Doubletree Miami Mart/Airport Hotel and Exhibition Center
711 NW 72nd Avenue
Salon E
Miami, Florida 33126

AGENDA

1. Call to Order and Introductions
2. Approval of Workforce Systems Improvement Meeting Minutes
 - A. December 2, 2008
3. SFWIB Strategic Planning Discussion
4. Recommendation as to Approval of WIA Waiver Requests
5. State Monitoring (Audit) Review
6. Quality Assurance – Development of Single Process



2.

SFWIB – Workforce Systems Improvement Committee

February 26, 2009

Minutes of SFWIB Workforce Systems Improvement Committee Meeting December 2, 2008

South Florida Workforce Investment Board
 Workforce Systems Improvement Committee Meeting
 December 2, 2008, at 9:30 A.M.
 South Florida Workforce Investment Board Headquarters
 7300 Corporate Center Drive, 5th Floor - Conference Room 3

COMMITTEE MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE	OTHER SFWIB MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE	OTHER ATTENDEES
1. Daniel Fils-Aime, Sr. 2. Jose Acosta 3. Victoria DuBois 4. Cynthia Gaber 5. Jackie Harder 6. Obdulio Piedra 7. Alvin Roberts 8. Ivonne Socorro	Margolis, Edward SFW STAFF Rick Beasley Anne Glancy Juan Hernandez Ken Kistner Linda Pierre	Alexis, Carl - <i>Youth Co-op, Inc.</i> Battle, Jorge - <i>Arbor E&T, Inc.</i> Cordoba, manny - <i>SER Jobs for Progress, Inc.</i> Cushon, Norm – <i>Arbor E&T, Inc.</i> Flores, Oscar - <i>Arbor E&T, Inc.</i> Gardner, Maurice A. - <i>Youth Co-op, Inc.</i> Gonzalez, Oscar – <i>Switchboard of Miami, Inc.</i> Krasovic, Trudy - <i>Switchboard of Miami, Inc.</i> Mapp, Janet - <i>Switchboard of Miami, Inc.</i> Morales, Maria - <i>Arbor E&T, Inc.</i> Rodriguez, Maria - <i>Youth Co-op, Inc.</i> Sanabria, Frank P. - <i>Switchboard of Miami, Inc.</i> Santé, Alicia - <i>Youth Co-op, Inc.</i> Zeno, Miriam – <i>SER Jobs for Progress, Inc.</i>
COMMITTEE MEMBERS NOT IN ATTENDANCE		
9. Anne Manning 10. Al Huston, Jr.		

Agenda items are displayed in the order they were discussed.

Call to Order and Introductions

Mr. Daniel Fils-Aime, Sr., WSI Committee Chairperson called the meeting to order at 9:36 A.M. and noted that a quorum had been achieved.

2. Approval of Workforce Systems Improvement Meeting Minutes for September 15, 2008

Mr. Alvin Roberts moved to approve the minutes of September 15, 2008. The motion was seconded by Mr. Jose Acosta and the motion carried.

3. Balanced Scorecard - Discussion

Mr. Beasley presented for the Committee's review the Region's Balanced Scorecard for the period July 1, 2008–September 30, 2008, and reported that it provides performance goals for the Career Centers as well as the overall Regional performance.

4. Recommendation to Approve Support Services Matrix

Mr. Beasley reported that SFWIB provides both mandatory and transitional support service benefits to program participants. Mandatory support services assist the Career Advancement Program (CAP) participant with the elimination or reduction of barriers that may hinder compliance with work activity requirements and employment opportunities. The transitional support services ensure that CAP participants leaving the program receive benefits to assist their families in their move towards self-sufficiency.

Support Services are offered through the following incentives: clothing, books and school supplies, drug test, physical exam, gas cards, transit vouchers and etc.

[Ms. Jackie Harder arrived.]

Ms. Jackie Harder moved to approve the Support Services Matrix, as described in the item. The motion was seconded by Ms. Cynthia Gaber and the motion carried.

Additional Item - Switchboard of Miami, Inc. Presentation

Mr. Frank Sanabria and Mr. Oscar Gonzalez presented a brief overview of the services offered by Switchboard of Miami, Inc.

They noted that their services are totally funded at no cost to clients, theirs is the only helpline staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and staff is available who speak English, Spanish and Creole.

[Mr. Obdulio Piedra arrived.]

8. Career Advancement Program (CAP) Work Registration -Presentation

The Chair introduced Mr. Maurice Gardner, Welfare Transition Supervisor at the Northside Career Center who presented on the impact of the Work Registration Services.

Mr. Gardner noted that the Department of Children and Families (DCF) is no longer doing the data entry, and that the number of persons requesting these services has risen from eight to ten a day to 40 per day. System-wide the number of applicants has risen from 67,000 to 97,000.

Mr. Beasley noted that this region has one third of the cases statewide, but receive only 22% funding. He added that not all Career Centers have the necessary space to register all customers. He added that another issue is the time it takes to register each customer for job search.

5. Recommendation to Allocate Reed Act Allocations

Mr. Alvin Roberts moved to approve the allocation of Reed Act funds. The motion was seconded by Ms. Anne Manning and the motion carried.

6. Recommendation to Allocate Food Stamp Employment and Training funding

Ms. Jackie Harder moved to approve the allocation of funds. The motion was seconded by Ms. Victoria DuBois and the motion carried.

7. Recommendation to Allocate Veterans Incentives

There was discussion regarding the goals to be met by those receiving the incentive funds. Mr. Beasley noted that the veteran's staff are employed by the State of Florida and work at the Career Centers here

in Region 23. Questions were raised as to the effectiveness of the placements, and do the placements exceed goals. A recommendation was made that there should be an increase of placements each quarter.

Mr. Jose Acosta moved approval to allocate Veterans incentives. The motion was seconded by Ms. Victoria DuBois and the motion carried.

The agenda was completed and Mr. Fils-Aime asked for comments.

Discussion followed regarding the new meetings schedule for 2009, and the need to adhere to the schedule, as well as concerns concerning the number of staff necessary.

Mr. Beasley commented that the National Emergency Grant (NEG) would not be decided by a Request for Approval (RFP), but the funds would be allocated to the Career Centers for additional staff.

Mr. Piedra requested a report of the effectiveness of the first year of the mobile units.

Mr. Fils-Aime thanked the Committee and staff, and the meeting was adjourned at 11:10 A.M.



3.

SFWIB – Workforce Systems Improvement (WSI) Committee

February 26, 2009

SFWIB Strategic Planning Discussion

Discussion Item

BACKGROUND

SFWIB held its annual Retreat on November 7-8, 2008. The retreat gave members the opportunity to discuss the boards' past accomplishments, priorities, existing strategic work plan and future goals.

At the December 18, 2008, Board meeting, John Metcalf, SFWIB Retreat facilitator provided a presentation on the results of the Board Retreat and highlighted changes made to the SFWIB Strategic Plan.

At its January 6, 2009, meeting, the Executive Committee reviewed and discussed the SFWIB revised Strategic Plan.

The Board Chair would like each Committee to review and take action on the following items and to report back to the Executive Committee:

- To define SFWIB success,
- Develop recommendations on what areas to target and recommendations for the first three actions to be taken, and
- Including non-SFWIB members to work with their committee.



4.

SFWIB – Workforce Systems Improvement (WSI) Committee

February 26, 2009

Recommendation as to the Approval WIA Waiver Requests

RECOMMENDATION

SFWIB staff recommends that the Workforce Systems Improvement Committee recommends to the Board the approval of the WIA Waiver requests as set forth below and in the attachment.

BACKGROUND

In response to the Federal Stimulus package, SFWIB staff has researched and developed the attached waiver recommendations to the current Workforce Investment Act (WIA) that are intended to provide flexibility in SFWIB’s response to the region’s current workforce and economic development issues. The waiver recommendations are intended to promote initiatives that include, but are not limited to:

- An expansion of on-the-job- training assistance,
- Provide for limited financial assistance to small business enterprises,
- Allow for public service employment, and
- Expand availability of services for the region’s youth.

If approved, these waiver recommendations may have the stimulative economic effects of providing employers with the tools necessary to sustain their operations and a foundation for increasing employment opportunities, thereby spurring economic growth.

SFWIB staff recommends that the Workforce Systems Improvement Committee recommends to the Board the approval of the WIA Waiver requests as set forth in the attachment.

Attached for the Committee’s review are the WIA waiver recommendations.

Attachment

SUMMARY OF WAIVER REQUESTS

Part 661 – Statewide and Local Governance of the Workforce Investment System Under Title 1 of the Workforce Investment Act.

Section	Current Language	Proposed Waiver
<p>WIA Sec. 136 / 20 CFR 667.300:</p> <p>What are the reporting requirements for Workforce Investment Act programs?</p>	<p>Performance Accountability System</p> <p>All States and other direct grant recipients must report financial, participant and performance data in accordance with instructions issue by DOL. Required reports must be submitted no more frequently than quarterly within a time period specified in the reporting institutions.</p>	<p>Waiver to allow entrepreneurial training to be provided through state-level grants and local formula dollars with the performance tracked and aggregated at the state level, but not included in local performance calculations.</p>

SUMMARY OF WAIVER REQUESTS

Part 663 – Adult & Dislocated Worker Activities under Title 1 of the Workforce Investment Act.

Section	Current Language	Proposed Waiver
<p>WIA Sec. 101(31) (B) / 20 CFR 663.710(b):</p> <p>What conditions govern OJT payments to employers?</p>	<p>On-The-Job Training – provides reimbursement to the employer of up to 50 percent of the wage rate of the participant, for extraordinary cost of providing the training and additional supervision related to the training;</p> <p>Employer may be reimbursed up to 50 percent of the wage rate of an OJT participant for the extraordinary costs of providing the training and additional supervision related to the OJT. (WIA sec. 101(31) (B)).</p>	<p>Waiver of WIA section 101(31) (B) to increase the employer reimbursement for on-the-job training for small-and medium-sized businesses. Under the waiver, states will have the flexibility to permit local areas to reimburse the employer for up to 100 percent of the wage rate of participants.</p>
<p>WIA Sec. 101(8)(C) / 20 CFR 663.715(c):</p> <p>What is Customized Training?</p>	<p>Customized Training – for which the employer pays for not less than 50 percent of the training.</p> <p>[Training] for which the employer pays for not less than 50 percent of the cost of the training. (WIA sec. 101(8).)</p>	<p>Waiver of the required 50 percent employer match for customized training at WIA section 101(8) (C). Under the waiver, states will have the flexibility to permit local areas to reimburse the employer for up to 100 percent of the wage rate of participants.</p>

SUMMARY OF WAIVER REQUESTS

Part 664 – Youth Activities under Title 1 of the Workforce Investment Act.

Section	Current Language	Proposed Waiver
<p>WIA Section 129(c)(5) / 20 CFR 664.220:</p> <p>Is there an exception to permit youth who are not low-income individuals to receive youth services?</p>	<p>Exceptions – Not more than 5 percent of participants assisted under this section in each local area may be individuals who do not meet the minimum income criteria to be considered eligible youth, if such individuals are within one or more of the following categories:</p> <p>Yes, up to five percent of youth participants served by youth programs in a local area may be individuals who do not meet the income criterion for eligible youth, provided that they are within one or more of the following categories: (WIA sec 129(c) (5)).</p>	<p>Waiver to increase the exception of youth who may not meet the low income criteria.</p>

SUMMARY OF WAIVER REQUESTS

Part 664 – Youth Activities under Title 1 of the Workforce Investment Act.

Continued

Section	Current Language	Proposed Waiver
<p>WIA Section 101(25)(A) / 20 CFR 664.240</p> <p>May local program use eligibility for free lunches under the National School Lunch Program as a substitute for the income eligibility criteria under Title 1 of WIA?</p>	<p>Receives, or is a member of a family that receives, cash payments under a Federal, State, or local income-based public assistance program.</p> <p>No, the criteria for income eligibility under the National School Lunch Program are not the same as the Act’s income eligibility criteria. Therefore, the school lunch list may not be used as a substitute for income eligibility to determine who is eligible for services under the Act.</p>	<p>Waiver to include youth receiving free school lunches under the National School Lunch Program as a substitute for the WIA Title 1 income eligibility criteria.</p>

SUMMARY OF WAIVER REQUESTS

Part 664 – Youth Activities under Title 1 of the Workforce Investment Act.

Continued

Section	Current Language	Proposed Waiver
<p>WIA Section 129(c)(2) / 20 CFR 664.410</p> <p>Must local programs include each of the ten program elements listed in WIA section 129(c) (2) as options available to youth participants?</p>	<p>Program elements – The programs described in paragraph (1) shall provide elements consisting of –</p> <p>Yes, local programs must make the following services available to youth participants:</p>	<p>Waiver of the requirement that local programs provide each of the ten youth program elements at WIA Section 129(c) (2) as options available to youth participants.</p>
<p>WIA Section 129(c)(2)(I) / 20 CFR 664.600(d)</p> <p>Are Local Boards required to offer summer employment opportunities in the local youth program?</p>	<p>Program Elements – The programs described in paragraph (1) shall provide elements consisting of – (I) follow-up services for not less than 12 months after the completion of participation, as appropriate;</p> <p>The summer youth employment opportunities element is not intended to be a stand-alone program. Local programs should integrate a youth’s participation in that element into a comprehensive strategy for addressing the youth’s employment and training needs. Youths who participate in summer employment opportunities must be provided with a minimum of twelve months of follow-up services as required in 664.550 [WIA sec. 129(c)(2)(C).</p>	<p>Waiver of the requirements of summer youth employment element as a stand-alone program and 12 month follow-up services element.</p>

SUMMARY OF WAIVER REQUESTS

Part 667 – Administrative Provisions under Title I of the Workforce Investment Act.

Section	Current Language	Proposed Waiver
<p>WIA section 181(e) / 20 CFR 667.262(a):</p> <p>Are employment generating activities, or similar activities, allowable under WIA Title I?</p>	<p>Limitation on use of funds – No funds available under this title shall be used for employment generating activities, economic development activities, investment in revolving loan funds, capitalization of business, investment in contract bidding resource centers, and similar activities that are not directly related to training for eligible individuals under this title. No funds available under subtitle B shall be used for foreign travel.</p> <p>Under WIA section 181(e), WIA Title I funds may not be spent on employment generating activities, economic development, and other similar activities, unless they are related to training for eligible individuals.</p>	<p>Waiver of the limitation on use of funds for capitalization of businesses at WIA Section 181(e) to permit WIA funds to be used to capitalize a small business up to \$5,000.</p>

SUMMARY OF WAIVER REQUESTS

Part 667 – Administrative Provisions under Title I of the Workforce Investment Act.

Continued

Section	Current Language	Proposed Waiver
<p>WIA Section 129(c)(2) / 20 CFR 664.410</p> <p>Must local programs include each of the ten program elements listed in WIA section 129(c) (2) as options available to youth participants?</p>	<p>No funds available under this title may be used for public service employment except as specifically authorized under this title.</p> <p>Public service employment, except to provide disaster relief employment, as specifically authorized in section 173 (d) of WIA, ((WIA sec.195 (10)).</p>	<p>Waiver of the prohibition on the use of funds for public service employment at WIA Section 195(10).</p>
<p>WIA Section 133(b)(4) / 20 CFR 667.140</p> <p>Does a Local Board have the authority to transfer between programs?</p>	<p>Transfer Authority – A local board may transfer, if such a transfer is approved by the Governor, not more than 20 percent of the funds allocated to the local area under paragraph (2)(A) or (3), and 20 percent of the funds allocated to the local area under paragraph (2)(B), for a fiscal year between—</p> <p>A local board may transfer up to 20 percent of a program year allocation for adult employment and training activities, and up to 20 percent of a program year allocation for dislocated worker employment and training activities between the two programs.</p>	<p>Waiver to allow local workforce boards to transfer up to 100 percent of a program year allocation for Adult funds and up to 100 percent of a program year allocation for Dislocated Worker funds between the two funding streams.</p>

SUMMARY OF WAIVER REQUESTS

Part 664 – Youth Activities under Title 1 of the Workforce Investment Act.		
Section	Current Language	Proposed Waiver
WIA Sections 134(a)(1)(B) and 129(b)	Use of funds for statewide employment and training activities as described in WIA sections 128(a) and 133(a) (1).	Waiver of language that limits the authority to provide the activities identified in WIA Section 134 to the State. Waiver will permit local areas to request the use of up to 100 percent of local area formula allocation funds to provide statewide employment and training activities.



5.

SFWIB – Workforce Systems Improvement (WSI) Committee

February 26, 2009

State Monitoring (Audit) Review

Informational Item

BACKGROUND

The Workforce Investment Act requires a statewide monitoring system and requires regular oversight and monitoring by each recipient of WIA activities and those of its contractors. The State of Florida’s monitoring system provide for annual on-site monitoring reviews of local regions to ensure compliance with the uniform administrative requirements required by WIA and to ensure that established policies to achieve program quality and outcomes meet the objectives of the Act and regulations.

The Agency for Workforce Innovations (AWI) conducted an on-site monitoring review of the South Florida Workforce Investment Board programs and services, including one-stop operations during the week of January 12-16, 2009. by the Agency for Workforce Innovation auditors. The workforce programs reviewed included: Workforce Investment Act (WIA), Welfare Transition, Wagner Peyser, Reemployment and Eligibility Assessment, Food Stamp Employment and Training, Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA), Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker, and special projects. Additionally, staff conducted the annual data validation review during this same time period for the WIA and TAA programs.

The report detailed findings in the following programs: Welfare Transition, 3 findings; FSET’ 3 findings; Wagner Peyser, 2 findings; Priority Re-employment Planning , 1 finding; REA, 1 finding and One-Stop Credentialing, 1 finding.

The Preliminary Exit Summary report was shared at the Service Partners meeting to start the SFWIB staff and the service partners’ collaboration in preparing the corrective action plan for the State. Through the Performance Improvement Teams (PIT) made up of service partners’ program supervisors/leads and SFWIB programs staff we have began to come up with ideas for the corrective action plan.

For example, Wagner Peyser has assigned a smaller workgroup to review the internal processes for job development and placement activities; such as centralizing the input of this information into the Employ Florida (EF) system.

The attached Preliminary Exit Summary details the findings for the quality assurance monitoring process. The report for the file validation process will be sent at a later date.

Attachment

**Preliminary Exit Summary
South Florida Workforce Board – RWB 23
January 16, 2009**

Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Adult and Dislocated Worker Program

A total of 24 adults and dislocated workers participant case files were reviewed.

Finding

There were no findings noted during the review.

Systemic Issue

1. *Issue:* Credential Attainment date was not accurately recorded into the State MIS for several participant case files.

Suggestion: Case managers should ensure that the credential attainment date affixed on the certificate, diploma etc. be recorded into the State MIS.

Observations

- A couple participant case files revealed that the case manager entered a training activity prior verifying the start date.
- Case managers should clearly document in the participant's case file if low income is a factor and should be reviewed for the Adult Program when the priority of service rule is in effect for the region.
- Case managers ensured that proper documentation was placed in the participant's case file when the individual was not selective service registered.

Welfare Transition (WT) Program

A total of 48 participant case files were reviewed, including two Non-Custodial Parent cases.

Findings

1. *Issue:* Initial Assessment and Individual Responsibility Plan
Applicable reference – 45CFR 261.11, 261.12, 261.13, 261.14 and the State Plan

Some case files did not contain the required initial assessment within 30 days of the open, reopen, or end applicant alert. Additionally, some participant files did not contain a signed IRP.

Recommendation: We recommend that program staff is reminded of these requirements. It is important to ensure that all participants complete an initial assessment within 30 days of becoming mandatory in the WT program. Furthermore, all participants that have met with a Career Counselor and assigned to activities must have a signed IRP in his or her case file.

2. *Issue:* Job Participation Rates and Documentation
Applicable reference – F.S. 445.010, 45CFR 260.61-62, 45CFR 262, and Florida's Work Verification Plan

Some participant files did not contain documentation to support hours reported to the United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). These hours come from data entered on the Job Participation Rate (JPR) screen in OSST. The Department of Children and Families takes a snapshot of those hours between 40-45 days at the end of each quarter. The hours are subsequently reported to HHS. It appears that staff is not sure how to interpret pay stubs and are not recording hours in the correct weeks.

Recommendation: We recommend that program staff be trained on how to interpret pay stubs and how to record the hours during the appropriate period.

3. *Issue:* Pre-penalties and Sanctions

Applicable reference – 45CFR 261.14, F.S. 414.065, and Guidance

Evidence of an oral attempt could not be found in some instances when a pre-penalty was initiated for participants who failed to fully engage in the program. Furthermore, when there was more than one failure within a 30 day period, some participants were not mailed the Notice of Failure to Demonstrate Satisfactory Compliance (form 2292).

Recommendation: Staff should be reminded to make and notate an oral attempt whenever a pre-penalty is initiated. Furthermore, staff should also be reminded of what constitutes more than one failure in a 30 day period.

Systemic Issues

1. *Issue:* IRP Elements

Applicable reference – 45CFR 261.11, 261.12, 261.13, 261.14 and the State Plan

The IRP should be used to help steer participants in the right direction when trying to achieve their goals. Some IRPs were lacking critical components to help participants understand and make them aware of what was expected. In some cases, the steps to self sufficiency were not updated appropriately.

Suggestion: The IRP can be instrumental in helping participants understand what is required and expected. It can be used as a tool to show accomplishment and as an accountability measure. The WT tool lists the elements that the State considers to be important in developing IRPs. We suggest that the SFWB concentrate on training staff on how to appropriately update the steps to self-sufficiency on the IRP Furthermore, the steps to self sufficiency should be updated:

- Once steps have been achieved
- When an activity has been completed
- When a new activity is assigned
- When goals change

2. *Issue:* Non-Custodial Parent Employment Program (NCPEP) Enrollment and Eligibility

Applicable reference: NCPEP Reporting Instructions

Some cases were reviewed for the Non-Custodial Parent program. The cases were reviewed to determine if eligibility was determined appropriately, enrollment in the program was based on eligibility determination and recorded in the system. The cases were also reviewed to determine is more than four months of assistance was provided. Some program participants were enrolled in the NCPEP program before eligibility was determined.

Suggestion: Program staff should be reminded that participants must be determined eligible prior to enrollment into the NCPEP.

Observations

- SFW uses a computerized initial assessment that is system dated. Staff members can go in and see when it was completed. The computerized initial assessment is administered during the work registration process and contains all required federal elements.

- It appears that program staff is not paying close attention to information being entered in the system. Sometimes data entered does not match documentation in the file. Often times, information is off by one digit.

Suggestion: Program staff should pay close attention to the verification and double check before selecting to save data that have been entered on the system.

FOOD STAMP EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING PROGRAM

The sample size equaled 47 participant case files

The FSET review focused on compliance with federal, State, and local FSET guidelines and requirements. Monitoring consisted of reviewing the methods of assignment, participation in and completion of program activities, issuance of food stamp reimbursements (FSRs), and timely completion of sanction requests. When performing these procedures, the team verified data entered in the OSST system with documentation in the hard copy participant case files. The review further examined FSET activities, services and processes; as well as program administration and management practices in accordance with the program's local FSET operating procedures.

1. *Issue:* Conciliation Appropriate but Not Started (Orientation / Notification to Participate)
Applicable reference: 7 CFR 273.7 (f)

As soon as program staff receives a referral from the Department of Children and Families (DCF) via the FLORIDA system alerting the region of a mandatory participant, an appointment letter should be sent notifying the participant of orientation or a scheduled appointment. If the participant fails to report for the appointment, federal requirements indicate that a determination must be made as to whether "good cause" exists. If "good cause" does not exist and compliance is not established, the participant must be sent a Notice of Failure to Comply letter and placed in conciliation for ten days or until compliance is established, whichever comes first.

Recommendation: Program staff should ensure that a Notice of Failure to Comply letter be sent and that participants be placed in conciliation when they fail to attend orientation or a scheduled appointment or fail to meet other program requirements.

2. *Issue:* Conciliation Appropriate but Not Started (Monitoring of Participation)
Applicable reference: 7 CFR 273.7 (f), State Plan

When participants are engaged in program activities, they are required to turn in documentation of completed hours on a regular basis. When a participant fails to turn in the required documentation or turns in an insufficient amount of required hours, they should also be sent a Notice of Failure to Comply letter and placed in conciliation.

Recommendation: Program staff should ensure that participants who fail to attend orientation, a scheduled appointment, or complete the required number of activity hours be sent a Notice of Failure to Comply letter and placed in conciliation.

3. *Issue:* Sanction Warranted but Not Requested (Conciliation/Sanctions)
Applicable reference: 7 CFR 273.7 (f)

Federal requirements indicate that as soon as program staff members learn of a participant's noncompliance with program requirements, a determination must be made as to whether "good cause" exists. If "good cause" does not exist and compliance is not established, the participant's noncompliance should be reported to the Department of Children and Families (DCF) by way of a sanction request.

Recommendation: Program staff should ensure that sanctions are requested for participants who are noncompliant with program requirements. If a participant fails to respond to the Notice of Failure to Comply letter and if "good cause" has not been established, staff should report the noncompliance to DCF by entering a sanction request in the OSST system.

SYSTEMIC ISSUES

1. Issue: Opportunities and Obligation Form

Applicable reference: State Plan

When participants attended Orientation, the reviewer checked to see if an Opportunities and Obligations form was in the file that had been signed by the participant.

Suggestion: Program staff should ensure that all files of participants who attend orientation contain an Opportunities and Obligations form that has been signed by the participant. The participant should also be given a copy of the signed form.

2. Issue: Program Activities – Upfront Job Search (UJS)/Work Experience (WE) – Self Initiated Work Experience (SIWE)

Applicable reference: 7 CFR 273.7 (f)

Participants may only be assigned to this activity during the first 30 days after a referral is received from DCF and prior to placing a participant in WE or SIWE. By the 31st day after the most recent referral from DCF, the participant should have started one of the WE, SIWE, or Education/Training activities. In some of the cases where participants were engaged in Upfront Job Search/WE-SIWE, the activity did not end on or before the 30th day after the referral was posted.

Suggestion: Program staff should ensure that when participants are assigned to this activity that it ends on or before the 30th day after the referral was posted and that the participant is assigned to one of the other countable activities by the 31st day after the most recent referral from DCF. Staff should ensure that participants' assignment to this activity occurs within the first 30 days after the referral from DCF. If 30 days have passed since the last referral, participants must not be assigned to this activity.

3. Issue: Assignment to Countable Activities

Applicable reference: State Plan

According to the FSET State Plan, participants should be assigned to WE, SIWE, or Education and Training activities by the 31st day after the most recent referral from the DCF. For those participants who attended orientation or the scheduled appointment, the reviewer checked to see if the participant started any of the WE, SIWE, or Education and Training activities by the 31st day after the most recent referral from the DCF.

Suggestion: Since this is a time-limited program, program staff should ensure that they act on alerts timely so that participants are engaged in WE, SIWE, or Education and Training activities by the 31st day after the most recent referral from the DCF. If program staff is unable to act on alerts timely, the “good cause” reason should be documented in the case notes. In addition, program staff should review the current procedures used to refer participants to program activities and identify ways to increase the rate at which participants comply with program requirements.

4. Issue: Worksite Agreements/Job Descriptions

Applicable reference: State Plan

Worksite agreements and job descriptions are required to be developed and maintained for those participants engaged in work experience and assigned to work experience job sites.

Suggestion: A worksite agreement and job description should be included in the participant case files or a central file when individuals are placed at a work experience job site. Having a copy of the worksite agreement and job description in the participant case files will eliminate any confusion on the part of the program staff, board staff, the employer and participant related to contractual requirements and duties and responsibilities.

5. Issue: Notice of Failure

Applicable reference: Time Limit Guidance Paper (AWI FG 05045)

Notice of Failure to Comply letters should be mailed to participants no later than two working days of learning of the participant's failure to comply with program requirements.

Suggestion: Program staff should ensure that a Notice of Failure to Comply letter is mailed within the recommended two-day time period after the failure or within a reasonable time period thereafter. If unforeseen circumstances occur, staff should document in the case notes the reason for exceeding the two-day time limit.

OBSERVATIONS

- Participant Engagement/ Follow-up Actions

The OSST system indicated that mandatory participants were not being engaged and/or required to participate in program activities for periods up to six months. There were a number of participant case files where no actions were taken for an extended period of time, without any follow-up by program staff. In most instances, orientation/follow-up letters should have been sent, or the participants should have been placed in a countable activity or sanctioned accordingly, especially during periods the participants were receiving food stamp benefits.

Suggestion: Since this is a time-limited program and participants should be engaged as soon as possible, program staff should ensure that some type of system is in place to determine the dates on which case actions must be taken. Staff should enter a "to do" in the OSST system which should serve as a reminder and/or alert for staff to initiate the required actions. The system should be checked daily to determine case status. The program staff should also be reminded that it is important to stay on top of case actions since the participants are required to participate and fulfill program requirements in order to receive Food Stamp benefits.

- Returned Mail

In several participant case files, the orientation and/or Notice of Failure to Comply letters were returned by the postal service. Case notes did not indicate that the Florida Online Recipient Integrated Data (FLORIDA) system was checked or cross-walked with OSST information, or that other efforts were made to contact the participant for an update of address information.

Suggestion: When orientation and Notice of Failure letters are returned, program staff should check the FLORIDA system and compare the mailing address in the FLORIDA and OSST systems. If the OSST address is different from the FLORIDA address, another appointment should be scheduled using the FLORIDA address. If a telephone number is available, program staff should attempt to call the individual. Staff should clearly document in the case notes all efforts to contact the participant before proceeding to the next step. The participant should be afforded every opportunity to participate and comply with program requirements before sanctions are imposed.

- Several files revealed that confidential medical documentation is being stored in the individual participant case files. This information should be stored in a separate, secure location or placed in a sealed envelope within the participant's case file. This is the recommended practice to ensure confidentiality.

Suggestion: Program staff should ensure that medical records are stored in a manner that ensures confidentiality as referenced in the Guidance Paper on Confidentiality of Records and Public Records Requests and Subpoenas.

- In the event participants complete their monthly requirement hours at a One-Stop Career Center location, they should not do tasks that involves dealing with other program participants' documentation. Program participant files and information are confidential and should not be shared with unauthorized program representatives.

Suggestion: Program staff should assign tasks that do not involve other participants' information. This is the recommended practice to ensure confidentiality.

NOTABLE OBSERVATIONS

- In several of the participant case files, prior to requesting a sanction, program staff attempted to contact the participants by telephone during the conciliation period. Program staff should continue this good practice. It ensures that participants are given several opportunities to comply.

- In most instances, case notes are thorough and frequent. Since files may be managed by different staff members, it is important that case notes be as thorough as possible so that the reviewer can understand the chronology of case actions.
- Program handbooks have been developed for program staff for a reference of program processes and guidance.
- Original copies of Worksite Agreements are centrally located at the regional board office for reference and security.

Wagner Peyser (WP)

A total of 22 job orders and 26 job seekers were reviewed.

Findings

1. *Issue:* A job placement has specific requirements as defined in federal law. There were instances found when reviewing the job seekers and job orders that were identified as having a specific hire date that was prior to the job order entry date and the referral date. Federal law requires that there must first be a job order and that the job seeker has not been specifically designated nor hired prior to the referral.
Applicable reference - 20 CFR 651.10

Recommendation: It is recommended that the staff no longer create job orders to take credit for placements that did not meet the federal placement definition. It is further recommended that staff review the federal placement definition. It is imperative that any staff that are entering job orders and placements be trained in the use of the Wagner-Peyser employment service system. The training recommended is Wagner-Peyser Basics and Job Orders which is available on the AWI website.

2. *Issue:* A job development has specific steps as defined in federal law. There were instances found in both the job seeker records and the job order records where the federal definition was not observed. A job development is created for a job seeker when there is no suitable job order on which to refer. Contact by staff must be made with the company and an agreement to interview the job seeker secured. A job development contact service must be input and noted with the name of the company to which the person was referred. When the job seeker is hired, a job order is written, the job seeker referred and the hire taken at the same time-it normally is a case of one opening, one referral, and one hire.
Applicable reference – 20 CFR 651.10

Recommendation: It is recommended that staff be trained on the job development process. A training presentation on Wagner-Peyser Job Seeker Services in EFM is located on the AWI website.

Systemic Issues

1. *Issue:* There were several job orders that had placements taken. Of those, there were no job orders that had documentation of the placement. It is required that staff document a hire with the contact person's name and the date the person actually started working.

Suggestion: It is suggested that staff review the placement verification requirement on the Job Order training presentation on the AWI website.

2. *Issue:* There were job development job orders that had more than one opening listed, more than one referral made, and the job description did not state "job development."

Suggestion: It is suggested that staff review the job development process as listed on the Job Order training presentation on the AWI website.

3. *Issue:* There were instances where job orders were listed from staffing agencies and did not follow the required format. The Wagner-Peyser requirement is that all positions offered by staffing agencies carry the phrase "Position offered by no-fee agency."

Suggestion: It is suggested that staff review the current job listings for staffing agency employers to make sure the phrase is in the description on all listings.

Observations

There were approximately 500 job seekers requesting referrals on the Referrals Pending Review report going back to December 3 (the system only keeps 45 days worth of pending referrals) when reviewed on January 15th. This means that 500 job seekers were expecting the one-stop staff to contact them regarding the referral. This has a potential of 500 dissatisfied customers on the Customer Satisfaction Survey. It is recommended that some system be devised in each one-stop to work the pending referral list.

Priority Re-employment Planning Program

Finding

1. *Issue:* The reviewer attended a PREP orientation session in the Northside office. The PREP program requires that a personal interview be conducted with the PREP participants. Although the staff conducting the orientation invited the participants to come back to the center, the reviewer did not observe any specific personal interviews being conducted. The purpose of the personal interview is to assess whether the person needs to continue with the services or be exempted and to assess what further services are needed. These services are to be scheduled on the PREP work log and entered into the EFM system and OSMIS when completed.

Applicable reference – Florida Administrative Rule - FL Administrative Rule 60BB-3.028 Profiling and Re-employment Services

Recommendation: It is recommended that staff do a short interview based on the assessment form that is collected from each participant during the collection process. That way the job seekers will be sure to get the services they need immediately.

Observations

Although the staff seemed very knowledgeable about the one-stop center, it is recommended that a presentation be developed that could be shown at each one-stop center that will provide information on all the services that are available at the one-stop center. That way, no important information will be omitted and will give the staff a more professional appearance.

REA

Finding

1. *Issue:* In conducting a review of the REA files, it was found that in a few cases that assessment documentation was missing.

Applicable reference: REA Contract, REA training presentation

Recommendation: The Center with the missing documentation was visited and technical assistance was provided by Board staff and the reviewer. The one-stop staff will begin to mail the questionnaire with the REA letter and will keep the questionnaire in the REA file as the assessment documentation.

Observations

- It was observed that staff are collecting I-9 information and partially filling out the I-9 form and leaving this information in the REA file. The provision of Wagner-Peyser services does not require that staff collect an I-9. It was suggested that the I-9s be removed from the REA files.
- It was also an observation that the REA Employability Development Plans seem to lack specificity as far as the steps to overcoming barriers and developing strengths. It is recommended that some additional training on the development of a quality employability plan is provided to all REA staff.

One-Stop Credentialing

Findings

Issue: There were staff in one-stop centers who have not yet completed their Tier I requirement and have been employed for more than six months. These staff need to obtain their Tier I certification as part of their work duties in order to complete the credentialing process.

Applicable reference – One-Stop Credentialing Guidance

Recommendation: Staff must obtain their Tier I certification and will be given additional time to complete.

Observations

- Required posters were missing from the one-stop center resource room or lobby areas but these were immediately downloaded and posted. It is recommended that one-stop managers obtain more professional looking posters than the printed pages that were taped on the walls. There were a few cases where the Federal posters were out of date and they were removed and need to be replaced with updated information.
- The training documentation log is an excellent tool to keep apprised of who is lacking specific training as required for credentialing.
- Although the reviewer provided the Wagner-Peyser complaint form, the WP complaint log, and the log of apparent violations, it was evident that the one-stop centers were not totally knowledgeable of the WP complaint system. It is suggested that the centers receive training on the correct procedures for using these documents.



6.

**SFWIB – Workforce Systems Improvement
(WSI) Committee**

February 26, 2009

**Quality Assurance – Development of Single
Process**

Discussion Item

BACKGROUND

There is overwhelming evidence that the quality of the workforce is critical to a positive regional business climate. Economic development, as well as education and training professionals and their respective agencies continue to be challenged by prospective business expansions and relocations to ensure an adequate supply of highly skilled talent.

The WSI Committee has previously suggested that we standardize the Career Centers workforce services delivery system to improve the quality of the workforce. Staff recommends that we begin the development of a single process by having a consultant review the service delivery systems at the Career Centers. This will assist SFWIB in gaining awareness of the organization's procedures and analyzing them to identify sources of errors, defects, and inefficiencies. It is designed to provide an in-depth understanding that can then be used to develop improvements.