

**New York State
Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG)
Fiscal Years (FY) 2015 – 2019
State Plan
(FY 2020)**

Table of Contents

	<u>Page</u>
Projected Employment Outlook for Veterans	3
Targeting Services to Veterans with Significant Barriers to Employment (SBE)	6
Planned Deployment of Grant Funded Staff	15
DVOP Specialists	18
LVER Staff	19
Program Integration and Leveraging Resources	21
Priority of Service	24
Performance Incentive Awards	27
Narrative Budget Information	29

A. Projected Employment Outlook for Veterans

New York State Department of Labor (NYS DOL) is actively engaged in promoting training and employment opportunities for veterans at our Career Centers, at our military installations and transition sites, at our Warriors in Transition Unit (WTU), at National Guard Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Events, at Hiring Our Heroes Events, and at other veteran focused Career Fairs. Veterans receive priority of service in all US Department of Labor Employment and Training programs and will be afforded first access to employment opportunities that arise as our economy evolves and strengthens. In addition, many veterans have earned substantial educational benefits as a result of their military service. These benefits will provide our State's veterans with the ability to pursue the educational and training credentials that will allow them to successfully compete for both current and emerging employment opportunities. Our Career Center Business Service Teams and LVER staff members will advocate on behalf of veterans with businesses and industries and market such programs as the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) and the Hire-A-Veteran Credit that provide tax credits to businesses who hire eligible veterans, including many of our targeted populations. The newly available Hire-A-Veteran Credit is just one of the ways that New York State intends to promote the hiring and retention of veterans. Some of the projected employment opportunities for our State's veterans include:

Federal Employment

Veterans interested in federal employment opportunities receive preference based on the conditions of their military service and the presence of a service-connected disability. In addition, many veterans may be eligible for Special Appointing Authorities. DVOP Specialists, as well as other Career Center staff, will work with veterans to provide them with information on the federal application process and how to locate and apply for federal job opportunities. Many federal positions are classified as "permanent" and offer veterans promotional opportunities that contribute to career advancement, positive entered employment, and employment retention rates.

New York State Civil Service/Local Civil Service Employment

We expect employment opportunities to be available within New York State government over the next five years, including opportunities for veterans who qualify under the Governor's Program to Hire Disabled Veterans (55b/c). In early 2008, NYS DOL began a partnership with other NYS State agencies to promote disabled wartime veterans into entry level competitive class positions in State agencies. NYS DOL matches 55c eligible veterans to appropriate positions and promotes the 55c Program to potentially eligible veterans and transitioning service members at Career Centers, military installations (including WTU), career fairs, and at other veteran related events. The matching process and outreach efforts promote disabled veterans into positions with NYS government, many of which offer promotional opportunities that provide for positive retention.

Local government agencies also provide opportunities for employment. Many localities participate in the 55a program which enables individuals with disabilities, including disabled veterans, to by-pass the civil service examination process for entry-level competitive class positions in local government. NYS DOL Staff work with partner agencies to facilitate 55a eligibility determination for disabled veterans.

The Veterans Temporary Hiring Program was established in accordance with the Veterans Employment Act. Through this Act, it is the policy of the State to prioritize post 9/11 honorably discharged veterans for temporary appointments in state agencies. When a State agency has a temporary-hourly position that needs to be filled, it is required to search and appropriately canvass qualified jobseekers from the Veterans Temporary Hiring Program Portal as part of their recruitment effort. The New York State Department of Civil Service maintains the Veterans Temporary Hiring Program Portal. This online service provides a centralized location for post 9/11 qualifying veterans to submit up-to-date employment and contact information to be considered by New York State agencies for temporary positions. All

Career Center staff members serving post 9/11 veterans are expected to provide an overview of the Portal. At a minimum, staff are required to provide the veteran with the Veterans Temporary Hiring Program Customer Handout.

Opportunities with Federal Contractors

The Jobs for Veterans Act requires federal contractors with contracts valued at \$100,000 or more, to take affirmative action in employing and promoting qualified veterans. In addition, each federal contractor is required to list employment opportunities with the appropriate employment service delivery system which, in turn, is required to give qualified covered veterans priority in referral to such employment openings.

Federal contractor job opportunities that are listed on the NYS Job Bank are downloaded into the One Stop Operating System (OSOS), the data base system used by NYS DOL.

Career Center staff, including DVOP Specialists and LVER staff members, are able to monitor and access these jobs and provide priority referral information to veteran customers, thereby promoting the hiring of veterans. Career Center Business Services Teams and LVER staff members also target federal contractors for job development and business outreach contacts. The new Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP) regulations implementing Vietnam Era Veterans' Readjustment Assistance Act (VEVRAA) strengthen the affirmative action provisions to aid federal contractors and subcontractors in their efforts to recruit and hire protected veterans and improve job opportunities for protected veterans. NYS DOL is maintaining a database of federal contractors, to improve the communication and coordination between the Business Services Teams and veteran program staff to ensure job postings for federal contractors and veteran friendly businesses receive priority referrals.

Targeted Demand Sectors

New York State has designated three demand sectors which will provide many job openings and are believed to be important to economic growth in the future. We will provide priority referral for veterans into these employment opportunities and will promote training and

educational programs targeted to these sectors so that our veterans will be well qualified for these demand occupations. These efforts will lead to positive hiring and retention of veterans.

- Health Care (including the Life Sciences and BioTech/BioScience Industries): There is a substantial amount of labor market information that identifies health care as a rapidly growing sector, in part due to the aging population. There are a number of entry-level jobs in this industry with the potential for career advancement such as nursing, pharmacy, and hospice.
- Advanced Manufacturing: Manufacturing jobs that use high-tech processes, in industries such as Nanotechnology, Bioinformatics, and Medical Device manufacturing, are high growth and vital to the US economy. This sector includes both high-tech jobs and lower-skill jobs that provide career ladders.
- Green and Renewable Resources: This sector is comprised of a wide variety of industries and occupations such as Building Services, Construction Trades and Component Manufacturing. New York is primarily focused on Solar Power, Wind Power, and Weatherization.

B. Targeting Services to Veterans with Significant Barriers to Employment (SBE)

The Secretary of Labor, through the Assistant Secretary for Veterans' Employment and Training, has identified certain categories of veterans most in need of individualized career services to mitigate their barriers to employment. Veterans with significant barriers to employment (SBE), Vietnam-era veterans and veterans between 18-24 years of age remain the highest priority. Within these categories, certain populations of veterans must be targeted for service:

- Special disabled or disabled veterans
- Homeless
- A recently-separated service member who at any point in the previous 12 months has been unemployed for 27 or more weeks

- A veteran-offender who is currently incarcerated or who has been released from incarceration
- Lacking a high school diploma or high school equivalent certificate
- Low-income

NYS DOL will provide immediate services to veterans who attest to belonging to one of the six criteria listed above, Vietnam-era veterans and/or those veterans who are 18-24 years of age. Career Centers will have a self-attestation checklist for veteran customers to complete, identifying highest priority veteran populations. Veterans who are recognized as having SBE, Vietnam-era, and/or those veterans who are 18-24 years of age will be referred to Disabled Veteran Outreach Program (DVOP) Specialists (when available) or another Career Center staff member for individual case management services, including an initial assessment, comprehensive assessment and individual employment plan.

Workforce Development System Technical Advisory *Effective Use of Initial Assessment in the Career Center System* requires that all Career Center customers, including veterans with an SBE, be provided with an Initial Assessment. The Initial Assessment process first identifies any individual barriers to employment. If barriers exist, the customer is determined to be in need of Career Development Services. If no barriers exist, the customer's employment goal is evaluated. If the knowledge, skills, and abilities are deficient to meet the customer's employment goal or if the employment goal doesn't suit the local labor market, the customer is identified as being in need of Career Development Services.

The comprehensive assessment can include an in-depth, formal, structured interview with the veteran. Tools such as Job Zone's Interest Inventory, Ability Profiler or Skills Profiler may also be used to help the veteran determine employment goals. Once the local labor market has been reviewed and an employment goal is determined, an individual employment plan will be developed. The plan will include a long-term goal, a short-term goal (if appropriate) and

steps to meet the goals. Referral to supportive services (including needs related payments) may be necessary to assist the veteran in overcoming barriers or to utilize veteran benefits to further their education/careers. If a DVOP Specialist is not available, other Career Center staff members will provide priority of service to these veterans.

Veterans Participating in the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) Program

Veterans participating in the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) Program are amongst NYS DOL's highest priority customers. In accordance with the Veteran's Program Letter *The Department of Labor Veterans' Employment & Training Service and the Department of Veterans Affairs Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Joint Partnership Modernization Project* and the accompanying Technical Assistance Guide (TAG), NYS DOL has a local (state level) Memorandum of Agreement with the USDOL/Veterans Employment and Training Service (US DOL/VETS) and the VA/VR&E Program that delineates roles and responsibilities for staff in the partner agencies. NYS DOL's primary roles are to provide labor market information to veterans who are entering a VR&E Program and to provide priority job search assistance via a case management model for those veterans who are completing their VR&E Program. All partner agencies are involved in a quarterly review of VR&E customers and their progress in reaching their suitable career goals. Any issues involving services, referrals, and processes are also discussed as they occur.

NYS DOL also developed a new *VR&E Career Center Service Guide* to provide staff members with a standard procedure for best serving our VR&E veterans. These procedures explain the different VR&E referral types, outline case management services, and reinforce the importance of collaborating with the VA for successful outcomes. NYS DOL has identified a VR&E Intensive Services Coordinator (ISC) who is a liaison between the VA and Career Center managers and who monitors services as well as outcomes to veterans participating in the VR&E

program. The ISC also functions as a resource for all NYS DOL staff when providing services to these veterans. All staff members provide the ISC with monthly progress reports for each VR&E referred veteran that they are working with in order to ensure quality service. DVOP Specialists and staff members are expected to provide case management services for VR&E customers, which includes labor market information, a comprehensive assessment, and an individual employment plan based upon the employment needs of the veteran and the plan provided by the VA. In addition, DVOP Specialists and staff members will provide regular job search services and job referrals. LVER staff members will focus on providing suitable employment opportunities for this priority group of veterans through job matching and by conducting business outreach and marketing the veterans' skills, education, experience and other positive attributes.

DVOP Specialists provide outreach at a variety of venues to provide services to veterans that might also benefit from VR&E services, including a Warrior in Transition Unit and Homeless Veteran Reintegration Program (HVRP) grantee locations. These veterans will be referred to the VA so that they are able to access any VR&E services for which they may be eligible.

Returning Wounded or Injured Service Members

New York State is honored to provide specialized DVOP services to the soldiers assigned to the Warriors in Transition Unit (WTU) at Fort Drum and will continue to do so if authorization is extended past FY2014. These soldiers have incurred disabilities as a result of their military service and normally spend between six and twelve months assigned to the WTU while they receive medical evaluations and care. Although some of the soldiers may eventually be retained in the military, most will be discharged with a service-connected disability and will need to transition to new careers. As of March 2014, there are 245 soldiers assigned to the WTU at Fort Drum.

Fort Drum

The FY 2009 Jobs for Veterans Act State Grant to New York State supported a Special Initiative DVOP Specialist at Fort Drum. We established an invaluable partnership with Fort Drum and intend to have a DVOP Specialist stationed there through the period covered in this State Plan, if authorization is extended past FY2014. Fort Drum is the largest military base in the northeast, which is home to 18,000 soldiers. The DVOP Specialist will coordinate with US DOL/VETS, the Warriors in Transition military leadership, the Soldier and Family Assistance Center (SFAC), the Army Career Alumni Program (ACAP), and other partner agencies to ensure that these transitioning service members receive all the help and support needed to successfully transition to the civilian sector. DVOP Specialist individualized career services include initial and comprehensive assessments and individual employment plans based upon the service member's interests, skills, aptitudes, abilities, and medical profiles. Other services will include assistance with resume preparation, federal employment applications, and interviewing skills.

The LVER staff member assigned to provide services in Jefferson County will continue to organize and conduct dedicated career fairs for the soldiers assigned to Fort Drum. These career fairs provide a venue for the soldiers to explore career options and enable them to make more informed decisions as they transition to the civilian sector. The career fairs include a mix of businesses, educational institutions and service providers and are organized solely for the benefit of the Warriors in Transition. We will continue to promote the Governor's Program to Hire Disabled Wartime Veterans (55c) at the career fairs and WTU Town Hall meetings.

Other Targeted Veteran Populations

NYS DOL has identified the following veteran populations for special emphasis and in need of case management services. These special populations are consistent with the federally mandated roles and responsibilities of DVOP Specialists and LVER staff members and the

targeted groups selected for Jobs for Veterans State Grant negotiated performance outcome goals. They are also consistent with the needs of New York State's veterans.

Special Disabled and Disabled Veterans

Many veterans have incurred service-connected disabilities that may impact their ability to obtain or retain employment. Vietnam Era veterans are getting older and their disabilities may be worsening. Recently Separated Veterans may have incurred disabilities that necessitate a change in careers or impact their ability to retain employment. Disabled veterans may have both visible and non-visible disabilities and may face many employment challenges.

The Governor and the State Legislature recently agreed to establish a statewide goal of six percent for participation on state contracts by small businesses owned by veterans with service-connected disabilities. By comparison, the federal government's goal for awarding contracts to veteran-owned businesses is only three percent and no other state in the nation offers as robust a program which includes set-aside contracts to these small businesses. This legislation expands the economic opportunity for NYS disabled veterans.

NYS DOL prioritizes services for disabled veterans. DVOP Specialists and Career Center staff members will provide case management services to disabled veterans with barriers to employment or needing Career Development Services. LVER staff members will conduct outreach to businesses to promote these veterans into career opportunities. DVOP Specialists and Career Center staff members will provide disabled veterans with information about the local labor market, owning a small business, and guide the customer through the process of opening a small business if this suits the veteran's employment goal. DVOP Specialists and staff members also ensure that they are provided assistance in applying for federal employment opportunities where they are accorded preference. Additionally, DVOP Specialists will promote the Governor's Program to Hire Veterans with Disabilities and assist disabled veterans with the application process. This is consistent with the roles and responsibilities prescribed for JVSG

staff and with the negotiated performance outcomes for DVOPs, LVERs and the Career Center delivery system.

Homeless Veterans

NYS has assigned a central support staff member to coordinate and monitor NYS DOL services to homeless veterans served by Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program (HVRP) grantees. DVOP Specialists will be assigned to work with the HVRP grantees up to one day per week. Services are tailored to the needs of the veterans and may include both on-site and off-site case management services, job search workshops, access to training opportunities or other services available through our Career Centers. NYS DOL also participates in Employment Information Nights at some HVRP grantee locations and in Stand Down events.

Recently Separated Veterans

Recently separated veterans may have many challenges as they adjust to the civilian workforce. Some may need assistance in choosing a new career and in navigating the many educational and training resources for which they might qualify including the benefits available through the Post 9/11 GI Bill, the Montgomery GI Bill, the NYS Veterans Tuition Award or the Workforce Investment Act. Others may find that they need supportive services (including need related payments) or assistance with job seeking skills.

Individualized career services will be provided by DVOP specialists and Career Center staff to Recently Separated Veterans who have been unemployed for 27 or more weeks at any point in the previous 12 months. NYS DOL will encourage LVER staff members to assist this population, by providing outreach to businesses to promote their transferrable skills and military experience.

Veterans between 18-24 years of age

In recent years, veterans ages 18-24 have experienced a higher rate of unemployment than other veterans as well as nonveterans of the same age. In June 2014, 15% of veterans between 18-24 years of age were unemployed nationally, while 13.3% of their nonveteran

counterparts were unemployed. There is an anticipated increase in the number of veterans 18-24 transitioning from active military service with the Armed Forces reductions that are occurring nationwide. This group of veterans may also possess limited civilian work history, which can make transitioning to the civilian labor force more difficult.

DVOP specialists and Career Center staff will provide priority service to these veterans, intensively assisting them with identifying a suitable career, informing them of relevant resources, and developing an employment plan. LVER staff members will provide services to this population through business outreach, promoting their transferrable skills and military experience.

Vietnam-era Veterans

The Bureau of Labor Statistics and the Department of Veteran Affairs (VA) data indicate that there are still a sizeable number of Vietnam-era veterans in the workforce, and many face difficulties in finding and maintaining employment. In 2017, there were 1,689,000 Vietnam-era veterans in the workforce with 64,000 unemployed and actively seeking employment.

DVOP specialists and Career Center staff will provide priority service to these veterans, intensively assisting them with identifying a suitable career, informing them of relevant resources, and developing an employment plan. LVER staff members will provide services to this population through business outreach, promoting their transferrable skills and experience.

Ex-offenders

Getting a job after being released is known to be a key success factor while on parole or probation. Statistics have shown that most ex-offenders who violated parole or probation were not employed at the time of the conviction. Finding employment is an extremely important step for all ex-offenders, but there can be additional obstacles in the paths of our veterans.

DVOP Specialists and Career Center staff members will provide case management services to ex-offender veterans who are currently incarcerated or who have been released from incarceration. NYS DOL will encourage LVER staff members to conduct business

outreach to promote the hiring of this population through the benefits of the Work for Success Program, the WOTC tax credit, and the Federal Bonding Program.

Veterans Lacking a High School Diploma or Equivalent Certificate

In June 2014, individuals with less than a high school diploma had an unemployment rate of 9.1% nationally. This is much higher than the 5.8% unemployment rate for those with a high school diploma and the 4.2% rate for individuals with some college and higher.

Employment opportunities are limited for individuals without a high school diploma or equivalent certificate and their earnings are approximately 27% lower than if they had a diploma.

Certain Veterans who left high school without graduating are eligible to earn New York State high school diplomas. Operation Recognition, created by Section 305 of New York's Education Law, recognizes the devotion and sacrifice of World War II, Korean War, and Vietnam Era Veterans who left school early by presenting them with a high school diploma.

Individualized career services will be provided by DVOP specialists and Career Center staff to veterans who are lacking a high school diploma or equivalent certificate. Some may need assistance in identifying training centers, potential funding sources, and obtaining their credentials. Others may find that they need assistance with choosing a new career, developing a resume, and job seeking skills.

Low-income Veterans

Low-income veterans are one of the highest priority populations as defined by WIOL legislation. DVOP Specialists and Career Center staff members will provide case management services to low income veterans. These veterans will be provided with a comprehensive assessment to identify individual employment and training needs to assist them in obtaining gainful employment. NYS DOL will encourage LVER staff members to conduct business outreach to promote the hiring of this population through the benefits of the WOTC tax credit and the Federal Bonding Program.

Demobilizing National Guard Members

NYS DOL has developed a partnership with US DOL/VETS and the NYS National Guard to provide a variety of services to National Guard members at their Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Events held in various locations throughout the State. At the thirty/sixty day events, we provide information on NYS DOL services including job search assistance, Unemployment Insurance benefits, the Governor's Program to Hire Veterans with Disabilities, and current veteran initiatives. DVOP Specialists and staff members provide follow-up to those veterans needing individual assistance. In addition, NYS DOL provides a variety of Job Search Workshops at these events. We plan to support all upcoming Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Events scheduled by the NYS National Guard over the timeframe covered in this plan.

Native American Veterans with Significant Barriers, living on tribal lands

Specific strategies to outreach and provide services to Native American veterans with significant barriers, living on tribal lands, have not been implemented by NYS DOL. However, all Native American veterans will be served under priority of service in their local Career Center. DVOP Specialists and Career Center staff members will provide case management services, including a comprehensive assessment to identify individual employment and training needs to assist the Native American veteran in obtaining gainful employment. LVER staff members will provide services to this population through business outreach, promoting their transferrable skills and military experience.

The results of our efforts will be monitored and assessed in numerous ways including analysis of information reported on the ETA 9173 reports, management reports, desk audits, self-assessments, on-site validation visits and discussions/feedback from partner agencies.

C. Planned Deployment of Grant Funded Staff

NYSDOL will assign one Veteran's Program Administrator, one Veterans' Program Coordinator, and one Veterans' Program Secretary to the Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG). We will assign DVOP Specialists and LVER staff members to locations where they can

best serve our veteran customers, particularly the veteran populations that have been identified as entitled to receive individualized career services from DVOP staff. Therefore, it will be important to continually analyze the NYS veteran population and service delivery requirements to ensure the most effective use of limited resources. As attrition occurs, DVOP Specialists will be hired in those areas most in need of the individualized career services they provide; staffing decisions will be made in conjunction with the DVET for New York State. During FY 2019, 60 percent of the JVSG grant supported DVOP Specialists with the other 40 percent supporting LVER staff members for a total of 67 JVSG staff supported with base funding.

For FY 2020 we plan on allotting 60 percent of the JVSG grant to support DVOP Specialists and 40 percent to support LVER staff members which will maintain staffing at 39 DVOP Specialists and 25 LVER staff for a total of 64 JVSG staff members supported with base funding. In order to liquidate all awarded funding, the attached FY 2020 Staffing Directory indicates 47 DVOP Specialists, 30 LVER staff (including 3 Program Management officials) for a total of 77 JVSG funded staff members, which is more than can be supported by the base allocation. We assume the risk for any costs that we may incur for the positions that are in excess of the allocated funding received. We will monitor attrition, hiring, and funding levels carefully, filling those positions that are in priority locations first and charging the JVSG grant only up to the level of our FY 2020 JVSG allocation. Any additional funding will come from other sources.

This staffing strategy will allow NYS DOL to focus on providing individualized career services to eligible veterans and eligible persons with significant barriers to employment, which is the primary role assigned to DVOP Specialists. LVER staff members can advocate on behalf of veterans with business and industry and engage in business outreach activities while covering a larger geographic area than they are currently covering.

JVSG funded staff members will be assigned to Career Centers based upon the number of veterans with “Active Common Measure Veteran Enrollments” and “Active Common Measure

Veteran Enrollments for Targeted Populations.” The latter includes special disabled or disabled veterans, homeless veterans, recently separated veterans who at any point in the previous 12 months has been unemployed for 27 or more weeks, veterans who are currently incarcerated or who have been released from incarceration, veterans lacking a high school diploma or high school equivalent certificate, low-income veterans, Vietnam-era veterans and veterans aged 18-24. DVOP Specialists will also be assigned to facilitate the provision of services at the following locations:

- VA and other Treatment Facilities – DVOP Specialists will be assigned to provide out-station services at a variety of VA and other treatment facilities including VA Medical Facilities, VR&E offices and Vet Centers. Assignments will be made based upon staffing availability and the needs of the veteran customers.
- Warriors in Transition Units – A DVOP Specialist will be assigned to the Warriors in Transition Unit at Fort Drum. A DVOP Specialist from the North Country Region will be assigned to Fort Drum on a part-time basis.
- Homeless Veteran Reintegration Program (HVRP) Grantee Locations - A DVOP Specialist will be assigned to provide services at HVRP locations not to exceed 7.5 hours per week based upon the needs of the grantee and the veteran customers they serve. If there are less than 3 appointments with the HVRP veterans for the week, then services will be provided at the Career Center rather than the grantee location. The program also supports various stand downs across the state throughout the year.

As attrition occurs, staffing decisions will be made based upon the criteria indicated above and changes will be made in conjunction with the DVET. Staffing levels and locations will be continually monitored and assessed. JVSG staff vacancies will be filled based upon funding levels and priority of need. Efforts will be made to expeditiously fill vacancies and all DVOP Specialists and LVER staff members will attend mandated training provided through the

National Veterans Training Institute (NVTI) within the required 18 month timeframe from the date assigned to a DVOP or LVER position. During times of hiring freezes, NYS DOL will actively seek waivers to expeditiously fill JVSG funded positions.

D. DVOP Specialists

DVOP Specialists will focus on providing and facilitating individualized career services to only eligible veterans and eligible spouses who meet the definition of an individual with a SBE, Vietnam-era, and those between 18-24 years of age. Serving a more limited population will allow DVOP Specialists to devote a majority of their time to providing individualized career services to those who are determined to be most in need of those services.

Consistent with VPLs 03-14, Change 1 and 03-19, DVOP Specialists will target their services to eligible veterans and eligible spouses who self attest to belonging to at least one of these criteria:

- A special disabled or disabled veteran
- Homeless
- A recently-separated service member who at any point in the previous 12 months has been unemployed for 27 or more weeks
- A veteran-offender who is currently incarcerated or has been released from incarceration
- Lacking a high school diploma or high school equivalent certificate
- Low-income
- A veteran aged 18-24
- A Vietnam-era veteran

NYS DOL will provide immediate services to individuals who attest to belonging to one of the seven criteria listed above. Career Centers will have a self-attestation checklist for veteran customers to complete, identifying those with a SBE, Vietnam-era, and/or veterans between 18-

24 years of age. Veterans who are recognized as having a SBE, Vietnam-era, and/or who are 18-24 years of age will be referred to DVOP Specialists (when available) or another Career Center staff member for case management services.

DVOP Specialists will utilize the case management approach taught through the National Veterans Training Institute which includes an Initial Assessment, a Comprehensive Assessment, and an Individual Employment Plan. Subsequent services will be provided based upon the individual needs of the veteran customer through a customer service delivery model designed to move 100% of veterans served through the NYS Career Centers into employment. This program increases employment related services, standardizes these services, and ensures the ongoing engagement of veterans served. Veteran customers are required to attend appointments, and if they remain unemployed after the second appointment, a case conference is held to determine next steps. Additionally, DVOP Specialists are required to maintain open communication with veteran customers between appointments with a minimum of two contacts. DVOP Specialists will provide on-going services to these veterans to ensure that they are able to meet their career goals. All case management information will be thoroughly documented in the NYS case management system.

E. LVER Staff

LVER staff members will coordinate business outreach with the NYS DOL Business Services Team. The duties assigned to LVER staff members will promote to businesses, business associations, and business groups the advantages of hiring veterans. LVER staff members will advocate for all veterans served by the Career Centers with business, industry, and other community-based organizations. They will also ensure easier access to appropriate employment and training services for job seeking veterans in their local labor market areas.

Consistent with VPL 03-14, LVERs will participate in the following appropriate activities:

- Planning and participating in job and career fairs
- Conducting business outreach

- In conjunction with businesses, conducting job searches and workshops, and establishing job search groups
- Coordinating with unions, apprenticeship programs, and businesses or business organizations to promote and secure employment and training programs for veterans
- Informing federal contractors of the process to recruit qualified veterans
- Promoting credentialing and licensing opportunities for veterans
- Coordinating and participating with other businesses outreach efforts

LVER staff members will establish and maintain regular contact with businesses, including federal contractors. They will assist in maintaining a database of federal contractors, to improve the synchronization between the Business Services Teams and veteran program staff, ensuring job postings for federal contractors and veteran friendly businesses receive priority referrals.

LVER staff members will advocate on behalf of NYS veterans for employment and training opportunities. They will present informational programs promoting veterans as job seekers who have highly marketable skills and experience. They will also provide information on business incentives such as the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) and the newly available Hire-A-Veteran Credit, both of which provide tax credits to businesses who hire eligible veterans.

Through coordination with the local Business Services Teams, they will organize and/or participate in career fairs, hiring events, recruitments, and other business orientated functions such as those targeted to businesses owned by veterans.

Experience Counts Program

In November 2011, the Governor announced a new initiative to help ensure that the valuable and specialized military experience of veterans be recognized when they transition to the civilian workforce. The NYS Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS), the NYS

Department of State (DOS), the NYS Division of Veterans' Services (DVS) and the NYS Department of Labor (DOL) are working together to help veterans obtain security guard certification using their military experience. In March of 2014, the program was expanded to cover military spouses as well as veterans. This new addition to the program allows military spouses to use licenses and training from other states to transition into several professions in NYS. The LVER staff members will promote the Experience Counts program locally and work on expanding the program to include additional licenses.

Regional Economic Development Council (REDC) Veterans' Work Group

The LVER staff member will represent NYS DOL at Regional Economic Development Council (REDC) meetings as a member of the Veterans' Work Group, a Governor's initiative to "Promote Veterans Participation in the Workforce." Members will include representatives from the Region's Veterans Service Agencies and Organizations. The REDC Veterans' Work Group has been created to promote participation by veterans in the Consolidated Funding Application (CFA) and develop strategies to encourage other potential CFA applicants to include workforce goals related to veteran's employment. This committee will also work to promote veteran's programs to local businesses such as Experience Counts, Veterans Tax Credits and the recent establishment of a 6% goal in the awarding of state contracts to service-disabled veteran-owned small businesses.

F. Program Integration and Leveraging Resources

JVSG funded staff are fully integrated into New York State's functionally aligned Career Center service delivery system. All veterans are co-enrolled into the VETS, Wagner-Peyser and Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Programs and transitioning service members who seek DVOP Specialist services at a federal military installation are co-enrolled in the Wagner-Peyser and VETS programs. These transitioning service members are also co-enrolled in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act program if they receive additional service at a Career Center or affiliate site.

Local Workforce Investment Boards are required to develop local functional alignment and customer flow plans that incorporate Career Center staff, including JVSG funded staff. DVOP Specialists and LVER staff members are assigned to service delivery teams in a manner that is consistent with their federally mandated roles and responsibilities while being tailored to meet the needs of the local areas. Veterans and eligible persons will receive priority of service by all Career Center staff, ensuring that veterans have access to the full range of resources available within the Career Center system. Eligible veterans and eligible persons who meet the significant barriers to employment criteria specified in this plan will be referred to a DVOP Specialist or other Career Center staff member, if a DVOP is not available. JVSG funded staff are supervised from the NYSDOL state office location with coordination by Wagner-Peyser funded staff and may be functionally supervised by other Career Center staff based upon the Local Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act plan.

On a state level, the Veterans Program Unit is functionally aligned within the Bureau of Employment & Workforce Opportunities, Division of Employment and Workforce Solutions. This organizational structure eliminates silos and promotes a coordinated operational structure to offer the best possible service for our veteran customers.

JVSG funded staff that serve veterans in locations other than Career Centers work with the staff members of the hosting agency or program to integrate the services available to our joint veteran customers. For services provided in support of the VA/VR&E Program, a formal MOU is in place that delineates partner responsibilities and service delivery processes/ expectations. In other instances, such as at WTU and HVRP grantee locations, verbal agreements are in place. In all cases, frequent communication, coordination of resources and joint issue resolution are paramount to ensuring that NYS DOL provides the best possible service to these priority groups of veterans as conveyed throughout the State Plan.

NYS DOL will conduct activities that promote job training and employment opportunities for veterans, working with partner agencies to leverage resources. These activities include Career Fairs, Hiring Our Heroes Events, Veterans Information & Resource Fairs, Veteran Owned Business Seminars and Interagency Roundtable Events as well as services that are delivered through partner agencies at Career Centers. NYS DOL also works closely with other agencies such as the NYS Division of Veterans Services to ensure that all staff serving veterans are aware of the myriad of resources available to veterans. Strategies include providing partner links on web sites and joint participation in informational programs targeted to veterans and veteran service providers. Career Center signage communicating Priority of Service refers customers to the NYS Division of Veterans Services web site and the NYS DOL website provides links to a variety of employment and training opportunities available to veterans including federal, state and local jobs, apprenticeships, Vet Central, the VA Job Bank, and Feds Hire Vets. The Veterans Program is a primary point of contact for businesses, non-profit agencies, educational and training institutions and other service providers who are interested in recruiting or serving veterans. These contacts are shared with other NYS DOL staff members to promote linkage at the local level.

DVOP Specialists work with the military leadership and transition site managers to serve Warriors in Transition, coordinate with HVRP grantees, and with the VA to serve VR&E customers and other veterans, particularly disabled veterans. The NYS Veterans Program coordinates with US DOL/VETS, transition site managers, NYS DOL managers and JVSG funded staff members to ensure that all services are provided in a quality manner. Programs and workshops at partner locations promote the services available through DVOP Specialists.

NYS DOL staff actively seek out opportunities to partner with other organizations that provide employment services to veterans such as HVRP grantees, transition offices on military installations and other specialized programs targeting the veteran population. NYS DOL staff also promote the development of education and training opportunities for veterans within the

education community through Career Center partnerships with training and educational providers. Particular emphasis is placed on training for in-demand occupations as expressed by local businesses and on educational programs offered at NYS Universities and Community Colleges.

In all cases, services are delivered to meet the individual needs of the veteran customer. Those without barriers to employment or who do not require individualized career services may choose to use a wide variety of web based resources to meet their individual employment needs. Others who will require much more support in making employment and educational/training decisions will have NYS DOL staff members available to assist them. NYS DOL staff will provide services tailored to the veteran's needs including case management services, comprehensive assessments, individual employment plans, labor market information, referral to training opportunities, referral to supportive services (including needs related payments), resume preparation assistance and job referral/job development services.

G. Priority of Service

The New York State Department of Labor has been a strong advocate of veterans' priority of service ever since the US DOL Employment and Training Administration released Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) 10-09, "Implementing Priority of Service for Veterans and Eligible Spouses in all Qualified Job Training Programs Funded in whole or in part by the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL)" on November 10, 2009. NYS DOL increased its focus on veterans' priority of service as a direct result of federal regulations. This increased focus includes the implementation of strategies and policies designed to ensure veterans and eligible spouses of veterans receive the highest level of quality service within the framework of priority of service.

The requirements of veterans' priority of service as promulgated in Federal regulations are communicated via a statewide Technical Advisory (TA). This New York State TA, entitled *Implementation of Veterans' Priority of Service for Covered Persons in Qualified USDOL Job*

Training Programs provides guidance to Local Workforce Investment Boards and Career Centers for successfully implementing priority of service at the local level.

NYS DOL requires that all Career Center staff members and other service providers give priority of service to eligible veterans, eligible persons, VR&E participants, Native American veterans and other such groups targeted for special consideration. DVOP Specialists focus their efforts on assisting veterans most in need of their services including eligible veterans and eligible persons with a SBE, Vietnam-era, and/or veterans between 18-24 years of age. Local areas must ensure that veterans and eligible spouses are served first and that this protocol is addressed in functional alignment plans and customer flow processes. Targeted veteran populations will be referred to DVOP Specialists (when available) or Career Center staff members for the provision of individualized career services and other resources the veterans may require to meet their career goals. The department regularly monitors Priority of Service through scheduled video conferences, calls with managers and supervisors, and when making on-site visits at the Career Centers.

The following priority of service strategies have been communicated to the Local Workforce Investment Boards and Career Centers.

Signage – NYS DOL recognizes that appropriate signage will play a pivotal role if priority of service is to be implemented successfully. As such, NYS DOL has designed, published, and distributed appropriate signage to all Career Centers and affiliate service sites throughout the state. Signage must be placed prominently at or near the entrance, as this may encourage customers to register first so that veteran status can be determined and documented as soon as possible. The placement of additional signage is required; however, the location of this additional signage is at the discretion of the Career Center. It is strongly advised that the additional signage be placed in strategic locations and high traffic areas throughout the center, such as resource rooms and common waiting areas.

Improvement of Self-Service Resources and Electronic Strategies – In an effort to improve access by and information for veterans, all local workforce areas need to ensure that their web-sites include language advising visitors of the veterans' priority of service policy. NYS DOL modified its website to include a veterans' services page with information on priority of service, specific veteran program services offered through the state's Career Center system, a directory for DVOP Specialists and links for other veteran resources. Language alerting users to veterans' priority of service also needs to be included in any self-registration process.

Outreach – NYS DOL suggests that Career Center providers consider the development of outreach efforts in conjunction with other program and services (e.g., publicity, advertising, and brochures) in an effort to spotlight veterans' priority of service to Career Center customers. Such outreach may include: fact sheets targeted to veterans or veterans groups, and the marketing of Career Center services and resources at orientation sessions.

Application of Priority of Service by All Sub-Recipients – Federal regulations specifically state that all program activities (including those obtained through Requests for Proposals, solicitation for grant awards, sub-grants, contracts, sub-contracts, and Memoranda of Understanding) issued or executed by qualified job training program operations, must be administered in compliance with priority of service. As a result of this regulation, NYS DOL has added language to its own contract boilerplate and RFP boilerplate documents to ensure awareness of priority of service requirements with state level grantees. Similarly, all local workforce investment areas must include the priority of service provision in their contract template, RFP and sub-agreement language.

Functional Alignment and Customer Flow – All Career Center staff is required to provide priority of service to veterans and eligible spouses and to serve these customers first. NYS DOL is requiring that local areas ensure this protocol is addressed in functional alignment and customer flow processes.

The above strategies should help guarantee the following:

- a. Veterans and eligible spouses of veterans will be made aware of their entitlement to priority of service and will be identified at the point of entry.
- b. Veterans and eligible spouses of veterans will be given an opportunity to take full advantage of priority of service by discovering the full array of employment, training, and placement services available to them.
- c. Veterans and eligible spouses of veterans will be made aware of any applicable eligibility requirements specific to USDOL funded programs.

NYS DOL continues the strategy of maintaining strong and robust relationships with the various statewide Career Centers in an effort to communicate the importance of priority of service. Annual reviews will be consistent with requirements indicated in the “Priority of Service for Covered Persons; Final Rule” published in the federal register on December 19, 2008.

H. Performance Incentive Awards

NYS DOL plans to participate in the JVSG Performance Incentive Award Program on an annual basis during Program Years 2015-2019. Revised Incentive Award plans will be submitted to US DOL/VETS after the approval of appropriate union and New York State officials. NYS DOL intends to use up to 1% of the annual JVSG allocation for Performance Incentive Awards. NYS DOL is the entity that will administer the funds.

Individual monetary awards would be allocated a minimum of 70% of available funds and a maximum of 30% would be allocated to non-monetary office awards. In the event that the number of offices eligible for a non-monetary award is not sufficient to expend the 30% allocation, the balance will be included in the monetary awards to individual staff.

The office awards will be based upon priority of service implementation. Offices that have demonstrated priority of services to veterans will qualify for an award. In order for the office to qualify for an incentive award the office must have provided an initial assessment, within the requirements of the initial assessment policy, to a higher percentage of veterans than

non-veterans and have a lower percentage of unemployed veterans than non-veterans exiting from services without a successful outcome.

The individual staff awards will be based upon two components; analysis of objective data and a subjective nomination. In order to be considered for an incentive staff must be nominated. JVSG staff may be nominated for an award by themselves, by other Veterans' Program or Career Center staff, and/or by supervisory staff or managers. Nominations for the individual awards will be submitted to the Veterans Program Administrator.

The objective data component for the incentive award plan consists of criteria that JVSG staff members are currently held accountable to. The objective component has the additional benefit of aligning the individual incentive awards with the goals associated in the tasks and standards for JVSG staff. It also adds an impartial component to the awardees scoring process, encouraging program improvement and bolstering the advantage of truly high performers.

The nominations will require narrative and/or data in each of the following three categories; Service to Veterans, Service to Special Populations and Business Outreach. Additional information/requirements may be added in each category as determined by the criteria development committee.

The nominations scoring is structured in a manner similar to a Request for Proposal in that each category and subcategory will have a maximum number of points associated with them, guidance on what qualifies in each category and a scoring guide to assist in assigning points to a nomination. Nominations are blind scored by a committee to develop a score to be associated with the nomination. The objective and nomination scores are added together to obtain a total score for each nominee. There is a minimum score established to determine which nominees will qualify for an award. The minimum score will be established to ensure that the total number of awardees will not exceed 35% of the total number of program staff as of end of the program year. The recipients will be identified prior to the end of the fiscal year. All incentive award funds will be obligated by September 30th and liquidated by December 31st. It

will be during the fourth and fifth quarters that a selection committee will select recipients, make awards and report the use of the Incentive Awards funds.

J. Narrative Budget Information

NYS DOL uses separate project codes to account for the DVOP, LVER, and Special Initiative (when applicable) funding and those activities that are supported with that funding. Incentive Award funding is included in the LVER project code. The majority of the activities charged to the appropriate project codes are direct personal salaries and personal benefits. Non-personal costs are direct charged when appropriate or the charges are allocated to the projects according to an approved cost allocation plan. In addition to direct personal charges, the JVSG supports indirect costs that are allocated to the projects based on NYS DOL's federally approved methodology for indirect overhead costs based on A-87 principles.

NYS DOL's staffing plan does not include any half-time staff at this time. Should half-time staff be assigned, NYS DOL will submit an appropriate request for grant modification to USDOL. Any half-time staff time distribution profiles would be set-up to charge the JSVG for 50% of their costs and another funding source for 50% of their costs.