



NEW YORK STATE
OFFICE OF TEMPORARY AND DISABILITY ASSISTANCE
40 NORTH PEARL STREET
ALBANY, NEW YORK 12243-0001

David A. Paterson
Governor

David A. Hansell
Commissioner

May 6, 2008

Mr. William J. Weiss
Commissioner
Schuyler County Department of Social Services
Human Services Complex
323 Owego Street, Unit 3
Montour Falls, NY 14865

Dear Commissioner Weiss:

I am pleased to inform you that your Temporary Assistance and Food Stamp Employment Plan for the period January 1, 2008 through December 31, 2009 is approved by the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA). A copy of your final plan is enclosed.

The plan will be made available to our Office of Administrative Hearings for use by administrative law judges when conducting employment-related fair hearings. Any amendments necessary to reflect changes to your district's policies or procedures that are covered by the plan must be submitted to your OTDA Employment Technical Advisor for approval.

We look forward to continuing our work over the next few years as we work to continually enhance employment services provided to low-income individuals so they are prepared to retain employment and access the array of work supports available in New York. As always, feel free to contact me or Barbara Guinn at (518) 486-6106 for any assistance to support your efforts.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'RSY', written over a horizontal line.

Russell Sykes
Deputy Commissioner
Center for Employment and Economic Supports

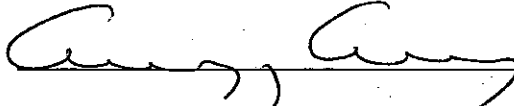
Enclosure

cc: Barbara Guinn
Susan Brill
Krista Etters

**Temporary Assistance and Food Stamps Employment Plan
January 1, 2008 – December 31, 2009**

Section 1 Assurances/Signature

As a condition of the receipt of federal and State funds the Schuyler County Department of Social Services submits this Temporary Assistance and Food Stamp Employment Plan (Plan) to the New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance. The Plan outlines the administration of the employment services for Temporary Assistance (TA) and Food Stamp (FS) applicants and recipients program for the period January 1, 2008 through December 31, 2009. As Commissioner of Schuyler County Department of Social Services, I hereby affirm that employment services programs will be administered in accordance with all applicable federal and State policies, laws, regulations and provisions of this plan.

 _____, Social Services Commissioner

Date Click here and type the date signed Monday, April 7th, 2008

Section 2 Administration

Section 2.1 Administrative Structure

This agency's organizational chart is attached. It identifies the units and staff within the agency that are involved in the operation of the district's employment program.

Following is a description of the office(s) in and/or outside of the Department of Social Services that are involved in the operation of the district's employment program. The responsibilities of each office are described below.

The Employment Unit of the Schuyler County Department of Social Services is responsible for the operation of the district's employment program. The E.U. does the assessments, referrals and enrollments of all individuals into the appropriate employment and training activities and does the WTCMS data entry for those activities.

Section 2.2 TA and FSET Provider Agencies

Table 1 lists the local contracts or agreements with agencies to provide employment services to TA and FS clients. These activities and services may include, but are not necessarily limited to, employability determinations, development of assessments and employment plans, conciliation and grievance activities, provision of work activities, monitoring and support for compliance with treatment plans for exempt individuals with the potential for restoration to self-sufficiency, job development, job placement and retention services, and other employment related activities.

Each contract listed in Table 1 contains an assurance that the activities are not otherwise available from that provider on a non-reimbursable basis and, if not a performance-based contract, a statement regarding use of a cost allocation methodology that satisfies Generally Accepted Accounting Principles, as well as the requirements of U.S. Office of Management and Budget Circulars A-122 for nonprofit organizations, A-21 for educational institutions, or A-87 for State and local governments.

Agencies/providers that offer services to participants but which have no direct financial agreement with the district are included in Table 2 (e.g., Bridge, EDGE, OTDA Wage Subsidy, etc.).

TABLE 1 - Contracts Associated with Employment Programs and Services

Provider	Total Contract Cost (per yr.)	Funding Source(s)	Categories of Clients Served	Programs, Services or Activities Provided
				We do not contract out any employment programs. However we do use FFFS to fund a job developer employed by the Department to work with TA individuals
	\$			
	\$			
	\$			
	\$			
	\$			
	\$			
	\$			
Total	\$			

TABLE 2 – Other Service Providers

Provider	Funding Source(s) (if known)	Categories of Clients Served	Programs, Services or Activities Provided
Corning Community College	Bridge	TANF	Case management, job development, training referral
CSS Workforce NY	WIA	TA, SN,FS	Self service use of computers for resume prep, fax machine, copier for sending resumes from the Career Center.
OTDA	State/Federal	TA,SN, FS	1 part-time JOBS program employee to assist clients with job search activities.

Section 2.3 – Jobs Agreement

Jobs Program Services – Target Groups

("X" signifies those that apply in this district)

Services	Target Groups
Assessment/Employability Plan _____	Applicants _____ <u>X</u>
Supervised Job Search _____ <u>X</u>	TANF (inc. SN fam.) _____ <u>X</u>
Job Readiness Training _____ <u>X</u>	Safety Net Singles _____ <u>X</u>
Job Club _____	Food Stamps _____ <u>X</u>
Job Placement Services _____ <u>X</u>	200% of Poverty _____ <u>X</u>
Grant Diversion _____	
Job Development (employer field visits) _____ <u>X</u>	

Other Services Requested

Described below are additional services/duties which will be requested of Jobs staff (i.e., WTWCMS data entry, case conferencing, job fairs etc.)

Jobs staff will be involved in any job fairs that the agency participates in and will be expected to data enter information into CMS on individuals that they have placed in an employment activity or job. Case conferencing is generally done on an informal basis but the Jobs staff would certainly be involved in this as well. The Jobs staffperson will be expected to do some minimal data entry into CMS, assist with resume preparation – especially just prior to our yearly job fair and be available when necessary for case conferencing with LDSS staff and our local Bridge provider.

Jobs Program Staffing and Location (Address)

Number of Jobs staff .6

Locations

1. DSS Employment Unit 1/3	323 Owego Street, Montour Falls, NY 14865
2. Career Center 2/3	323 Owego Street Montour Falls, NY 14865
3.	

Jobs Program LDSS Staff Contact (Name & Phone Number)

____ Sue Brill (607) 535-8328

Section 3 Engagement and Work Preparation

Section 3.1 Federal "Engaged in Work" Requirement (Reference 18 NYCRR 385.2 (f))

For purposes of satisfying the federal requirement which states that parents or caretakers must be engaged in work as soon the district determines they are ready, but no later than within 24 months of receiving federally funded assistance, the district's definition of "Engaged in Work" is:

Compliance with assessment, employment planning, any activity included in the individual's Employment/Self-Sufficiency plan, or any of the work activities listed in Section 3.4. Also included is pursuit of other forms of income such as SSI and SSD.

Nothing additional

Section 3.2 Orientation (Reference 18 NYCRR 385.5)

Check one of the following:

The district provides orientation in accordance with Dept. Reg. 385.5 and no additional information is provided at orientation. The district does group recertifications and no additional information is provided.

In addition to the requirements outlined in Section 385.5 of the regulations, the district's orientation provides the following.

[Click here and type the additional items included]

Described below is the manner in which the district completes the required orientation, e.g. done in a group setting or individually or a combination of both.

Initial orientations are done on an individual basis, at recert by group.

Section 3.3 Assessment and Employability Planning

Temporary Assistance Assessment (Reference 18 NYCRR 385.6 and 385.7)

a. Check one of the following:

The district conducts assessments in accordance with 18 NYCRR 385.6(a) and 385.7(a) with no additional requirements.

In addition to the requirements outlined in 18 NYCRR 385.6(a) and 385.7(a), the district's assessment also includes the following elements:

Click here and type the elements

- b. A copy of the assessment tool used by the district is attached. Additional assessment tool(s) used by the district is (are):

Click here and type the selected assessment tools

- c. The qualifications of the employees administering the assessment tool(s) are at minimum: (Refer to requirements listed in 18 NYCRR 385.6(c) and 385.7(c)

Senior Caseworker qualifications as outlined in County Civil Service requirements.

- d. The district administrative unit or contractor responsible for conducting assessments is:

LDSS Employment Unit

- e. Applicants in households with dependent children are required to participate:

Yes No

Applicants in households without dependent children are required to participate:

Yes No

Food Stamps Assessment

A district may require a food stamp work registrant to participate in an assessment.

- a. The district does does not require work registrants to participate in a formal employment assessment.

- b. If assessment is required, the assessment includes the following elements:

Click here and type the elements

Temporary Assistance Employability Plans (Reference 18 NYCRR 385.6(b) and 385.7(b))

- a. A copy of the district's employability plan is attached and:

The district completes employment plans in accordance with 18 NYCRR 385.6(b) and 385.7(b) and no additional information is contained in the plan.

In addition to the requirements outlined in 18 NYCRR 385.6(b) and 385.7(b), the employability plan includes:

Click here and type additional information

- b. The district administrative unit or contractor that develops employability plans is (list only if different from those performing assessments):

[Click here and type **ONLY if different** from those performing assessments]

c. The qualifications of the employees developing employability plans are (list only if different from the requirements for those performing assessments):

[Click here and type **ONLY if different** from those performing assessments]

Section 3.4 –Participation Rates and Work Activities (Reference 18 NYCRR 385.8 and 385.9)

a. Described below is how the district plans to meet federal and State Temporary Assistance participation rate requirements. Included is the typical time period it takes for nonexempt individuals to be engaged in activities for both newly opened cases and individuals whose status changes from exempt to nonexempt. Information regarding engaging exempt individuals is entered in Section 3.6

Non-exempt individuals are typically engaged in countable activities within 14 days of case opening. Individuals changing from exempt to non-exempt status are typically engaged in countable activities within 14 days of notification from the PA unit to Employment of such change. The weekly standard participation is a minimum of 30 hours per week for each household and case type – more if the PA/FS budget permits. The district uses Cognos work participation management reports to monitor participation and enhance performance whenever possible.

b. The allowable work activities that are available in the social services district are listed and defined as follows. An “X” in the appropriate column indicates the activity is available for individuals receiving FA, SNF (indicating SN households with children or Safety Net Families), SNA, (SN households without children), and/or FS (indicating NTA Food Stamp).

If a column is blank it indicates that the activity is not available for that household/case type.

FA	SNF	SNA	FS	Activity	Definition
x	x	x	x	Unsubsidized Employment	Full time or part time employment in the public or private sector that is not subsidized by TANF or any other public program (excluding employer tax credits). Unsubsidized employment includes self employment and/or paid internships.

				<p>Subsidized Private Sector Employment</p>	<p>Employment in the private sector for which the employer receives a subsidy from TANF or other public funds (excluding tax credits) to offset some or all of the wages and costs of employing and training a recipient in accordance with New York State Social Services Law 336-e. Subsidized private sector employment will include positions subsidized through grant diversion, supported employment programs, and paid college work study programs at private institutions. Individuals participating in subsidized private sector employment are paid wages and receive the same benefits as unsubsidized employees who perform similar work. An employment situation will be subsidized for up to the full amount of wages/benefits provided to the program participant and will be subsidized for the length of time as determined appropriate by the State or social services district.</p>
				<p>Subsidized Public Sector Employment</p>	<p>Employment in the public sector for which the employer receives a subsidy from TANF or other public funds (excluding tax credits) to offset some or all of the wages and costs of employing and training a recipient. Subsidized public sector employment will include positions subsidized through grant diversion, supported employment programs, and paid college work study programs at public institutions. Individuals participating in subsidized public sector employment, and work study unless otherwise permitted under a federal work study program, are paid wages and receive the same benefits as unsubsidized employees who perform similar work. An employment situation will be subsidized for up to the full amount of wages/benefits provided to the program participant and will be subsidized for the length of time as determined appropriate by the State or social services district.</p>

<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 15%; height: 100%; border: 1px solid black;"></div> <div style="width: 15%; height: 100%; border: 1px solid black;"></div> <div style="width: 15%; height: 100%; border: 1px solid black;"></div> <div style="width: 15%; height: 100%; border: 1px solid black;"></div> </div>	<p>Work Experience</p>	<p>Unpaid work performed at a public or not for profit organization to enable participants who cannot find unsubsidized employment to improve his or her employability. Work experience provides participants with an opportunity to acquire the general skills, training, knowledge and work habits necessary to obtain and retain employment. Participation in work experience includes training required for the participant to complete the work experience assignment. For example, an individual who is expected to provide clerical support in a government agency may be provided training to develop or refine filing and data entry skills as needed to perform the tasks required as part of the work activity assignment.</p> <p>In addition to those components noted above, work experience will include unpaid internships that are part of any non-graduate student's education curriculum. (Note: Paid internships will be reported as employment.)</p>
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 15%; height: 100%; border: 1px solid black;"></div> <div style="width: 15%; height: 100%; border: 1px solid black;"></div> <div style="width: 15%; height: 100%; border: 1px solid black;"></div> <div style="width: 15%; height: 100%; border: 1px solid black;"></div> </div>	<p>On-the-Job Training (OJT)</p>	<p>Training in a public or private sector employment setting during which the participant receives work-essential paid training while he or she is engaged in productive work that provides the knowledge and skills essential to attain full and adequate performance of the job.</p> <p>OJT will be unsubsidized (for which the employer does not receive a subsidy) or subsidized using TANF funds or other funds to offset the cost of the training provided to the participant. A subsidized OJT will be subsidized for up to the full cost of providing such training and wages/benefits provided to the program participant. Positions will be subsidized for the length of time determined appropriate by the State or social services district. OJT is distinct from subsidized employment due to the fact that the individual must participate in workplace training to attain full and adequate job performance and the subsidy provided is intended to offset the cost of such training.</p>

			<p>Community Service</p>	<p>A structured program in which participants perform work for the direct benefit of the community under the auspices of public or nonprofit organizations. Community service placements must be projects that serve a useful community purpose in fields such as health, social services, environmental protection, education, urban and rural redevelopment, welfare, public recreation, public facilities, public safety, and childcare. Community Service programs are designed to improve the employability of participants not otherwise able to obtain unsubsidized employment. Participation in community service may include training that is directly required for the participant to complete the community service assignment. For example, an individual who is expected to provide clerical support to a food pantry may be provided training to develop or refine filing and data entry skills.</p> <p>Community service assignments will primarily be voluntary in nature including participation in VISTA, Americorps, and unpaid volunteer activities at a school, Head Start programs, religious or faith-based institutions, community organizations or a nonprofit or public agency but will also include such mandated participation when court ordered. Participation in activities to support these organizations is deemed to provide a service to the community. In those instances where the participation could meet the federal definition of work experience or community service and the district or program provider would like to have another recipient provide childcare for the community service individual, such hours of work may be reported as participation in community service.</p>
			<p>Job Search</p>	<p>The act of seeking or obtaining employment or preparing to seek or obtain employment and will include looking for suitable job openings in a group or individual setting, making contact with potential employers, learning appropriate workplace expectations and behaviors in preparation for submitting job applications and interviewing, preparing to or applying for and/or interviewing for jobs and related activities.</p>

			Job Readiness Training (JRT)	<p>Participation in programs that include seeking and preparing for work. Traditional JRT activities will include: resume preparation, training in interview skills, instruction in workplace expectations, training in effective job seeking, life skills essential to workplace success, time management, goal setting, budgeting, basic math and literacy skills, household management, interpersonal skills, decision making skills, anger management, parenting skills when it has been determined that such training could help reduce unplanned work leave or apprehension toward entering employment.</p>
			Vocational Education	<p>Vocational education is defined as an organized educational program that directly relates to the preparation of individuals for current or emerging occupations that require training other than a baccalaureate or advanced degree. Vocational education does not generally include basic or remedial education or ESL but may include work focused general education and language instruction that is a regular or integral part of a vocational education program. Social services districts are responsible for ensuring that any such remedial education or ESL is a regular part of the program for participants with similar skill sets as the TANF/SN MOE client, is determined necessary by the program provider, and is limited in hours to less than one-half of program participation. Vocational education programs include the completion of activities that provide individuals the knowledge and skills to perform a specific trade, occupation or vocation. Vocational education must be provided by an education or training organization.</p>

				<p>Job Skills Training</p>	<p>Training or education in job skills to improve a participant's employability, to ensure clients have the basic skills competencies required by employers to support job entry and/or to advance or adapt to the changing demands of the workplace. Where identified as needed such training may include the development of basic workplace skills including professional workplace behaviors and decision making skills. Job skills training may include customized or technical training designed to provide participants with additional workplace skills, post secondary education courses leading to a bachelor's or other advanced degree or other training included under the definition of vocational education training. Job skills training may include literacy instruction, English language instruction or other basic education for an individual who has already obtained a high school diploma or equivalency when determined from a client's assessment that such instruction is needed to improve the participant's employability.</p>
				<p>Education Training</p>	<p>Education directly related to employment for a recipient who has not received a high school diploma or equivalency must be related to a specific occupation, job or job offer or otherwise determined based on a client assessment as necessary to improve the participant's employability to support job entry, retention or advancement. Education directly related to employment may include courses designed to provide the knowledge and skills for general or specific occupations or work settings to ensure clients have the basic skills competencies required by employers and may also include adult basic education, English language instruction and education leading to a GED or HS equivalency diploma as determined as necessary to improve the participant's job opportunities in potential occupations. Where identified as needed such training may include the development of basic workplace skills including professional workplace behaviors and decision making skills.</p>

				Secondary School	Regular attendance in accordance with the requirements of the secondary school or a course of study at a secondary school leading to a general equivalence diploma (GED), in the case of a recipient who has not completed secondary school or received a certificate of general equivalence. Secondary school participation may include general adult basic education or ESL if it is linked to attending secondary school or leading to a GED as determined necessary by the educational institution. Secondary School or GED programs that routinely include ESL, career training, alternative school, tutoring, dropout prevention, teen pregnancy or parenting programs as a requirement of program participation as determined by the educational institution will also be permitted.
				Provision of Childcare for Individual Participating in Community Service	Providing unpaid child care to enable another Temporary Assistance (TANF/MOE funded) recipient to participate in a community service program.
				Treatment Plan for Substance Abuse	Substance Abuse treatment will include medical, behavioral and other treatment necessary for individuals suffering from substance abuse (current and former users) with such required treatment ranging from detoxification services to after care/abstinence maintenance. For FA families with dependant children this activity will be deemed to be Job Readiness Training within participation rate reporting. For SN households without children this activity will be deemed to be community service.
				Treatment Plan Other than Substance Abuse	Physical health treatment and rehabilitation services including attending necessary physical therapy, mental health treatment, or rehabilitation activities in which a qualified medical or mental health professional has certified that such treatment is necessary. For FA families with dependant children this activity will be deemed to be Job Readiness Training within participation rate reporting. For SN households without children this activity will be deemed to be community service.
				Other	Any work activity that does not meet the criteria of any of the above countable activities constitutes participation that is not countable toward federal and state participation rates.

Local District Job Search Procedures:

The district assigns Temporary Assistance applicants to Job Search. Yes No

If yes, please describe the local district procedure for TA Applicant Job Search, including the generally required number of job search contacts and hours per week assigned. Also include a description of how often applicants are generally required to report job search outcomes and if activities other than job search are routinely expected of TA applicants during the application period.

TA applicants are referred for job search enrollment at the conclusion of the pre-screening interview and enrolled on the following Tuesday. Each applicant is required to complete 10 in person job contacts every 2 weeks and is scheduled for bi-weekly follow up appointments. Once the district is able to fill the Jobs staff item that has been vacant for the last 7 months we plan to move to a weekly reporting schedule.

The district assigns TA recipients to Job Search Yes No

If yes, please describe the local district procedures for TA Job Search, including the required number of job search contacts and hours per week assigned. Also include a description of how often recipients are generally required to report job search outcomes.

TA recipient job search is ongoing and does not differ from TA applicant job search in number of contacts or reporting frequency. Recipients are assigned to a minimum of 5 hours per week for job search.

Section 3.5 Job Development

Yes No The district conducts or receives job development activities to expand job opportunities for TA and FS clients, either directly or by contract or agreement.

If yes, the district participates in job development activities in the following manner:

- District staff contact employers to solicit jobs for Temporary Assistance participants. Below is the description of how this is done, including number of staff, frequency of contacts, etc:

The district employs a full-time job developer to solicit jobs for TA participants. Our job developer meets with TA applicants to enroll them in job search and begins to contact suitable employers immediately. He follows up with each TA individual at least every 2 weeks, oftener if a suitable job comes up. He also attends the local Chamber of Commerce functions and contacts employers individually on a regular basis.

- District contracts or has an agreement with another agency to contact employers and solicit jobs for Temporary Assistance participants. Below is the description of how this is done, including number of staff, frequency of contacts, etc.

~~Check here and type the description~~

- Jobs Program staff are charged with job development as indicated in Section 2.3. Additional information, if any, is described below:

Section 3.6 Training Approval & Activity Enrollment Policy (Reference 18 NYCRR 385.9)

- a. Describe how the district identifies/provides appropriate education (Adult Basic Education, GED preparation), and English language instruction, program services that are available to clients whose assessment indicates such services would be an appropriate work activity assignment:

Clients whose assessment indicates that such services would be appropriate are referred to the Career Center to be scheduled for an appointment with the GST BOCES representative assigned to the Career Center for assessment and enrollment into the most suitable activity.

- b. Describe how the district identifies/provides appropriate Vocational Education and Job Skills programs that are available to clients whose assessment indicates such services would be an appropriate work activity assignment:

Through referral to the Career Center which has staff assigned from our local training providers – GST BOCES, Corning Community College, VESID, etc.

- c. OTDA is requesting each district to increase the number of vocational training or job skills enrollments by at least 20 percent by January 2009 (generally as compared to September 2007) as one method to increase the skill development of recipients to support improved job entries.

Describe what steps the district will take to increase the number of participants engaged in vocational education and job skills training programs. Such steps may include increased use of contracted services through local training providers, including WIA funded services, or use of OTDA funded Bridge or EDGE training programs. Districts should consider additional blending of activities such as work experience or employment with job skills training in fields that would improve participants' ability to obtain employment or increase wages or hours of employment.

As of November 30th the LDSS and the Career Center are under one roof in the new Schuyler County Human Services Complex with our offices right across the hall from each other. The Career Center has staff assigned from GST BOCES which is the EDGE program provider and Corning Community College which is the Bridge program provider. Both BOCES and CCC are quite anxious to increase their training enrollments and the LDSS is anxious to enroll individuals in appropriate activities that will improve participants' ability to obtain employment or increase wages or hours of employment. CCC has recently developed an 18 week Manufacturing Technology course which has been well received by local employers. We expect to make a number of referrals to this course as graduates are finding jobs in the \$10-\$15 dollar an hour range.

[Click here and type the description](#)

- d. Education and training providers are evaluated by the following standards:

WIA standards as applied by CSS Workforce NY

- e. The district procedure for advising participants of the approved training providers is:

Referral to CSS Workforce NY through the Career Center

- f. Participants must meet the following requirements in order to be assigned to education/training activities:

A minimum of 3 months of employment either paid or unpaid –(work experience) with satisfactory attendance and participation, demonstration of ability to benefit from the training sought, (TABE test results showing adequate reading and math levels and/or HS diploma/GED and confirmation from DOL/Workforce NY that the training is in a demand occupation and will increase the participant's ability to obtain employment or increase earning capacity.

- g. The district procedure for notifying participants of approval for training or enrollment in a work activity is:

Inclusion in the participant's employment plan.

- h. In accordance with 18 NYCRR 385.9 (b), regardless of whether the college program is approved for the participant as an employment work activity, the district will approve as a work activity a work-study, internship, externship or other work placement that is part of a non-graduate student's curriculum unless one or more of the following conditions applies as check below:

It has been determined that the student voluntarily quit a job or reduced earnings to qualify for initial or increased Public Assistance.

A job or on-the-job training position that is comparable to the work-study, internship, externship or other work placement cannot reasonably be expected to exist in the private, public or not-for-profit sector

The student is not maintaining a cumulative C average (or the equivalent). The district may disregard this provision if the student documents an undue hardship.

Failure of the institution or student to monitor and report information regarding the student's attendance and performance as required.

Failure of the student to progress toward the completion of a course of study without good cause, as determined by the district.

The student has previously enrolled in a work-study, internship, or other work placement and failed to complete the work placement without good cause as determined by the district.

Additional reasons as stated below:

[Click here and type the procedure](#)

- i. In order to verify continued exempt status, the local district will monitor the high school attendance of 16-18 year old students in the following manner:

Verification by the Transitional Assistance unit at each recertification.

- j. The district's procedure for ensuring that an individual's health-related limitations are accommodated when assigning the individual to a work activity is:

Individuals are only assigned to work activities which fall within any limitations specified on their medical forms. The district informs work-site supervisors in writing of an individual's limitations without disclosing a specific diagnosis or disability.

Section 3.7 Work Verification

Consistent with Work Verification Plan (WVP) requirements established by the United States Department of Health and Human Services, districts must develop a quality assurance plan for addressing the work participation rate it reports. The plan must include the district's procedure for monitoring attendance in paid employment and work activities and the controls in place to ensure that federal exclusions from work participation rate requirements are accurately made, work eligible individuals are correctly identified, hours of attendance reported by providers is accurate and documented, data entry is accurate and that the district and its providers adhere to approved district and State policy for work activity definitions and the determination of excused absences and holiday reporting. Districts must describe how it will determine that system entries agree with documentation in case files. The district must also explain how it will sample cases, the sample size, and how frequently cases will be reviewed.

After the reviews are completed, the district should provide a summary of findings for management and State review, including errors identified. In addition, the district must include the corrective action it will take when monitoring reveals substantial problems.

The Quality Assurance plan must explain how staff will:

- Assure that documentation of wages and actual hours of employment are verified and accurately projected/reported and present in the case file;
- Assure that the documentation for actual hours, supervision/attendance, excused absences and holidays in other activities is present in the case file;
- Assess whether participation in the work activities reported for work eligible individuals meet the federal definition for the activity;
- Assess that the data entered into either WTWCMS, NYCWAY or other automated system used for reporting work activities is accurate, including actual hours, excused absences and holidays; and is based on documentation in the case record; and,
- Make sure that documentation necessary to exempt an individual due to being the caretaker of a disabled household member (Employability Code 38) is present in the case file and that individuals meet the exempt status based on the required documentation.

Please describe the process the district will use to review district worker collected documentation and data entry of the above listed elements (include a description of how a case sample for review will be selected, sample size and frequency of reviews):

The district will assess and verify that participation in work activities reported meets the State approved definition for the activity as part of the review of sampled cases.

LDSS will perform a random sample of 5 cases per quarter or 25% of the total whichever is fewer for paid work activities. Cases for review will be selected. Both the temporary assistance and employment case files will be reviewed. Hours of employment will be verified through the receipt of paystubs, employer verification forms, and direct phone contact with the employer documented in case notes. The review will ensure that the hours of employment on the ABEL budget are consistent with the hours reported on CMS and that documentation is in the file to support hours reported on CMS and that the scheduled hours on CMS are consistent with the documentation.

LDSS will perform a random sample of 10 cases or 25% of total cases with an individual enrolled in unpaid work activities each quarter. Employment case files will be reviewed. Actual hours of attendance will be documented by attendance sheets showing actual hours of attendance, any excused absences during the month, any unexcused absences during the month, and holiday time. The review will ensure the actual hours of attendance reported on the monthly attendance sheets has been correctly reported on CMS, excused absences and holiday time are documented in the case file and correctly reported on CMS in accordance with federal limitations, and that documentation of actual hours of attendance is accurate and matches the hours of participation reported on CMS by the district.

LDSS will review 1 case in which a case member is reported as an employability code 38 quarterly as part of the overall Quality Assurance Review. The temporary assistance case file will be reviewed to ensure that there is medical documentation present to support the exemption and that the documentation has a timeframe for the exemption and that the individual is the appropriate caretaker.

LDSS will review 1 case with employability code 31 to ensure that codes are accurate based on having a child under the age of 12 months in the household per the birth certificate.

A summary report will be prepared following each review period and a copy of the report will be forwarded to Kathy Nagy at Kathleen.Nagy@otda.state.ny.us.

Please describe the process the district will use to review provider collected documentation and data entry of the above listed elements (include a description of how a case sample for review will be selected, sample size and frequency of reviews):

LDSS does not have any provider collected documentation or data entry.

Section 3.8 Requirements for Exempt Temporary Assistance Participants (Reference 18 NYCRR 385.2 (e))

An exempt individual who has the potential to be restored to self-sufficiency through rehabilitation may be required to accept medical care to assist the individual in recovering from a mental or physical impairment, accept referral to and enrollment in a program of vocational rehabilitation, training, and/or other essential rehabilitation, and provide requested evidence that he/she is participating in the assigned program.

- a. Following is the district's procedure for determining if a disabled individual has the potential to be restored to self-sufficiency. This determination is different from the determination of the individual's disability exemption as covered in Section 6 of this plan. Included here is who (e.g. physician, employment worker, Temporary Assistance worker, local review team, etc.) makes or assists in this determination that an individual can restore or improve employability through treatment or other rehabilitative activities. Also included is the source and type of information used to make the determination (e.g. information from individual's physician, district contracted provider, specialist evaluation obtained as result of district referral, etc.):

The Temporary Assistance worker reviews information provided by the individual's physician and refers the individual to the Employment Unit if, according to the medical statement, the disability is treatable or referral to a rehabilitation agency is recommended.

The Employment Unit may then refer appropriate individuals to VESID.

- b. Following is the district's procedure for developing a treatment plan and for referring the participant to appropriate treatment, etc.:

District staff lack the expertise to develop a treatment plan. LDSS will be contracting with IMA in 2008 for these services.

- c. Following is the district's procedure for tracking the participant's compliance with the treatment plan. Include if monthly attendance at rehabilitation is received, etc.:

Compliance with recommended treatment is reviewed at each recertification. Monthly attendance is generally not received.

Section 3.9 Strategies/Procedures for Increasing Program Attendance

Describe district policies and/or procedures in place to reduce the amount of time participants fail to participate in work activities, including absences that are with good cause.

LDSS reviews the attendance expectations at orientation and links them to the expectations of unsubsidized employment, encouraging participants to make the connection between attendance and transition to self sufficiency. Back up transportation and childcare plans are also emphasized

Section 3.10 Strategies/Procedures for Engaging Sanctioned Temporary Assistance Participants

District has no specific strategies to engage sanctioned participants.

District attempts to engage sanctioned participants as soon as they are sanctioned using the following strategies:

District attempts to engage sanctioned participants when the durational period of the sanction is completed using the following strategies:

LDSS has applied for grant funding to provide outreach to our happily sanctioned population. Individuals would be asked to report to the Career Center rather than the DSS offices to encourage compliance with employment activities.

District attempts to engage sanctioned participants during different times in the sanction period using the following strategies:

[Click here and type the procedure](#)

Section 3.11 Diversion Strategies

District has no specific diversion strategies.

District's diversion strategies are described below:

Applicants are given a list of local charities to contact, are provided with transportation assistance, (gas vouchers, car repairs, etc.) necessary clothing for work, minor tools or work equipment, as well as being assigned to upfront job search and referred to any appropriate job openings.

Section 4 Support Services (Reference 18 NYCRR 385.4)

Section 4.1 For Temporary Assistance Applicants and Recipients in Work Activities

- a. The social services district will provide childcare in accordance with the childcare section of the district's Child and Family County Services Plan. The district will also provide to participants the following expenses which the district deems necessary for the individual to participate in orientation, assessment, employment planning, work activities and activities to restore self-sufficiency: The district may, on a case by case, as needed basis, provide participants with mileage reimbursement, bus tokens, vouchers for work clothing, tools, training expenses, car repairs and help with car insurance, licensing and registration.
- b. The district will use the following approach to assist those participants who need transportation to and from a work activity site (including any applicable mileage reimbursement rate and the method used by the district to arrive at that reimbursement rate): Participants assigned to work-experience are assigned to the Mobile Work Crew which picks them up at their homes and transports them to the work-site of the day. If a participant is assigned to a work activity other than the Mobile Work Crew, the district

reimburses the mileage at the same rate as that negotiated with the County employees through the collective bargaining agreement.

- c. The district will use the following approach for those individuals who reside in an area where public transportation is not available. In those instances where the district would require a participant to walk to a work activity assignment, please identify the maximum distance the client would be expected to walk, along with a rationale for the maximum distance: For those individuals who reside in an area where public transportation is not available an assignment is made to the Mobile Work Crew which picks them up at their homes. If an individual were required to walk the maximum distance would be 2 miles one way based on the old State standard. The district will provide reasonable accommodations on a case by case basis for individuals with limitations
- d. The district will provide the following services to assist individuals at risk of needing public assistance to improve their opportunities for employment or to maintain their employment: Referral to the One-Stop Career Search Center/CSS Workforce NY and assistance for TANF eligibles for emergency car repairs to maintain employment.
- e. Following is a description of how the district accommodates the needs of non-English speaking participants in accessing employment activities and services (or see below):

This is not generally applicable in our area (never or rarely have occasion to serve such individuals).

Section 4.2 Transitional Supportive Services

The district will provide the following supports and strategies to support job retention:

On a case by case, as needed basis, the district will provide assistance with gas vouchers, emergency car repairs, car insurance payment, work-related clothing and equipment.

The district will provide the following supportive services, for up to 90 days after case closing, to individuals whose Temporary Assistance cases have closed due to employment.

Same as above.

Section 4.3 Extended Supportive Services

As long as funding is available (through FFFS, etc.), the district will provide the following supportive services for individuals who are eligible under the TANF Services 200% of poverty eligibility guidelines.

Same as above.

Section 4.4 Supportive Services for Food Stamp Employment & Training (FSET) Participants: (Reference 18 NYCRR 385.4(b))

The district provides necessary childcare in accordance with the childcare section of the Child and Family County Services Plan.

a. Following is the district's policy for providing transportation services for FSET participants:

Gas vouchers for the purposes of job search and, on a case by case basis, as needed to maintain employment. For those unable to find unsubsidized employment - assignment to the Mobile Work Crew .

b. The district will provide the following supportive services in addition to transportation:

None.

Section 5 – Temporary Assistance Conciliation and Dispute Resolution Procedures; Food Stamp “Good Cause” Determination Procedures (Reference 18 NYCRR 385.11 and 385.12)

Section 5.1 Conciliation

The district's conciliation process is in accordance with 18 NYCRR 385.11(a). Conciliations are conducted (check all that apply.):

- in person
- by phone
- by mail, etc.
- other as described below:

The good cause/willfulness determination is made by:

- client's employment worker
- a supervisor
- separate entity (please describe below)
- other (please describe below)

Click here and type the process

Section 5.2 Sanction

The district's procedure for determining compliance for those individuals who wish to end their employment sanction (18NYCRR 385.11(b), 385.12) is:

Ten days of satisfactory participation in the activity to which the individual was originally assigned or another available activity assigned by the district.

Section 5.3 Dispute Resolution

The district's procedure for individuals who wish to dispute their work activity assignments, including individuals who dispute the district's response to their request for health-related accommodations is conducted in accordance with 18 NYCRR 385.11(b).

The grievance is mediated by:

- an agreement with an independent entity
- supervisory staff who are trained in mediation and who have no direct responsibility for the individual's case
- designated supervisory staff who have no direct responsibility for the individual's case but who are not trained in mediation

Section 5.4 Food Stamps Good Cause Determination

The district's procedure for determining if good cause exists for applicants and recipients who fail to comply with Food Stamp Program employment requirements is in accordance with 18NYCRR 385.12(c) and is conducted:

- conciliation is offered in the same manner as described in Section 5.1 of this plan;
- by the Employment worker using available information, including that provided by the participant if any, to determine if there was a good cause reason.
- Other (described below)

~~Click here and type the procedure~~

Section 6 – Disability Determinations (Reference 18 NYCRR 385.2(d))

The district’s process for determining an individual’s disabilities and/or work limitations is in accordance with 18 NYCRR 385.2(d). Check all that apply:

- District participates in the OTDA managed contract for independent medical evaluations.
- District contracts directly with a physician to provide independent medical evaluations.
- District accepts physician’s statement provided by participant.
- District accepts physician’s statement provided by participant but refers for an independent evaluation when deemed necessary
- Other process, described below.

~~Click here and type the process~~

The local process for reviewing the medical documentation to determine if the individual is exempt, nonexempt, or work-limited is as follows.

- District directs the contracted physician or individual’s physician to determine status.
- District review team reviews and determines status (described below)
- Specialized disability/medical staff or unit reviews and determines status (described below).
- Other, described below:

~~Click here and type the process~~

SCHUYLER COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

EMPLOYMENT ASSESSMENT FORM

Please answer the following questions completely, to the best of your knowledge:

Name _____ Address _____

Directions to your home _____

Home Phone Number _____ Reliable Message _____

Date of Birth _____ Social Security No. _____

Are there any other adults living in the household? _____

If so, please list names and ages _____

Are there any children in the home? _____ If so, please list by name and age _____

Are you receiving Child Support? _____ If not, is there a support order in effect _____

Do you have a child with special needs? _____

What Schools/Programs do your children attend? _____

Do you have a reliable child care provider? _____ Do you have a back-up child care provider? _____

Is anyone in the household (child or adult) receiving SSI? _____

Do you have a car? _____ Access to a car? _____

Do you have a valid drivers license? _____ If not, please explain _____

Have you ever been convicted of a crime? _____

Are you currently on probation? _____ parole? _____

Probation/Parole Officer's name _____

Term of probation/parole From _____ To _____

Do you have any illness or impairment that affects your ability to work? _____

Doctor's name and address _____

Date of last examination _____

Are you involved in any type of counseling – Drug/Alcohol, Mental Health, Family

Services: _____

Do you have regularly scheduled appointments? _____

Do you have a high school diploma? _____ GED _____

If not, what grade were you in when you left school? _____

Name and address of your high school or GED test site? _____

Do you have any problems with reading or writing? _____

Did you attend BOCES or receive any other type of Vocational Training: _____

What course(s) did you take? _____

Date of attendance From _____ To _____

Did you receive a Certificate of Completion? _____

Were you every in the Military? _____ Dates of Service From _____ To _____

What were your duties? _____

Did you receive any other training? _____

**EMPLOYMENT HISTORY – PLEASE START WITH YOUR MOST
RECENT JOB**

Employer/Business name _____

Address _____

Dates of Employment? From _____ To _____
(month/year) (month/year)

Your job title/duties? _____

Reason for leaving? _____

Employer/Business name _____

Address _____

Dates of employment:? From _____ To _____
(month/year) (month/year)

Your job title/duties? _____

Reason for leaving? _____

Employer/Business name _____

Address _____

Dates of employment? From _____ To _____
(month/year) (month/year)

Your job title/duties? _____

Reason for leaving? _____

Have you ever been assigned to Work Relief/Work Fare before? _____

If so, where were you placed? _____

Please list at least 5 skills you have that could be of interest to an employer. You may include skills from volunteer jobs/hobbies as well as paid employment. _____

Where have you applied for work in the last 3 weeks?

Employer	Address
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Please list any problems you believe could affect your ability to find and keep a job.

Lack of transportation, childcare, etc. _____

How have you tried to resolve these problems? _____

What is your long-term employment goal? _____

As an employable applicant/recipient of Public Assistance and/or Food Stamps, you will be required to actively look for work. You will also be assigned to work at the public or private non-profit Community Agency until you find a paying job that will support you.

Do you have any questions about your employment program requirements? _____

Date Completed _____