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David A. Paterson  
Governor

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

David A. Hansell  
Commissioner

March 28, 2008

Mr. Vincent W. Colonno  
Commissioner  
Albany County Department of Social Services  
162 Washington Avenue  
Albany, New York 12210

Dear Commissioner Colonno:

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,

Russell Sykes  
Deputy Commissioner  
Center for Employment and Economic Supports

Enclosure

cc: Barbara Guinn  
Judy Cocca  
Wendy DeMarco

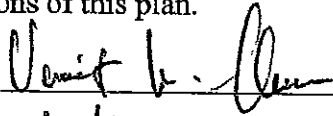
bcc: S. Antos  
D. Bloodstein

*"providing temporary assistance for permanent change"*

**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 Albany 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 Albany 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 2/27/2008

**Section 2 Administration**

**Section 2.1 Administrative Structure**

This agency's organizational chart is attached (see Attachment A). It identifies the units and staff within the agency that are involved in the operation of the district's employment program. An organizational chart for the administration of the Employment Team is also attached (see Attachment B).

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 is the office within the Albany County Department of Social Services that is responsible for the operation of the Welfare To Work program. This unit will design programs to identify and meet the needs of the TANF, Safety Net and Food Stamp Programs' clientele. The Employment Unit is responsible for the development of Requests for Proposals (RFPs) pursuant to Albany County's procurement policies for many of the employment services offered in Albany County. Such RFPs may be completed on a yearly basis or less frequently, as need arises. The RFP is intended to recommend the purchase of services that are not already provided by the New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (JOBS, Bridge and other competitive grants), or by the Workforce Investment Board or are otherwise available without cost. The RFP will be drafted by an Employment Unit administrative staff member and reviewed by the Commissioner of the Department and the Director of Purchasing. Staff from both the Employment Unit and Temporary Assistance Administration will make award recommendations to the Purchasing Department.

**RECEIVED**  
**WELFARE-TO-WORK DIVISION**

**MAR 10 2008**

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

**Section 1 Assurances/Signature**

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\_\_\_\_\_, Social Services Commissioner

Date

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Employment Unit administrative staff works with the WIA to recommend programming for eligible TANF recipients (and others at risk) under the WTW funding; when possible, that collaboration will include participating in the WIA's RFP process.

Employment Unit staff monitors and reports on all WTW programs through local databases, which are maintained by this office. State requirements for reporting and tracking through updates to the Caseload Management System are accomplished by the Employment Unit staff. The Caseload Management System, which is maintained by New York State, calculates local district's federal and state participation rates. The performance based employment services contracts awarded through Albany County's Comprehensive Employment Services RFP are monitored by the Employment Unit. Provider payments based upon achievement of benchmarks are paid directly through the Comptroller's office once the claim is approved by the Contract Manager.

Employment Unit staff will directly provide or participate in the delivery of services such as Orientation classes, plus job fairs, and outreach to employers and job placement. Team staff will provide call-in services to meet recruitment requirements when it is deemed necessary, as well as provide liaison services between case management staff and service providers when necessary. Department of Social Services staff will be co-located at the Department of Labor at 175 Central Avenue to assist the underemployed Temporary Assistance population.

The district staff contacts the temporary assistance recipient to complete an employment assessment. Assessments must be completed for all individuals 18 and over (or 16-17 year olds without a high school diploma not attending secondary school) in households with dependent children, regardless if the individual is exempt or non-exempt. Assessments are required at least once a year and employment plans (used to establish employment backgrounds, short and long term goals, analysis of child care, transportation, and other challenges that may limit employment) need to reflect the recipient's present day status. Following the assessment and employment plan development, district staff can determine the recipient's employability level, then refer to either the appropriate program, monitor employment, request medical verification for those indicating a personal barrier to employment, or a combination of these. Medical verification can come from the recipient's physician or the recipient may be referred to Industrial Medical Associates (IMA) for further review. Employment codes can be changed to reflect present status, making the recipient either exempt from employment requirements, or requiring participation. District staff works with all recipients to assist them in becoming and remaining employable.

Albany County is now in preparation for the establishment of a TOP (Transitional Opportunity Program) unit to further assist the employed and underemployed Temporary Assistance recipients. The full proposal has been submitted previously to New York State and will be referenced at appropriate times in this document. TOP staff will reside at 175 Central Avenue

The total number of employees of the local Department of Social Services is 337.

## 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
America Works of Albany, Inc	\$466,266	FFFS/EMP	100% TANF	Assignment to Countable Activities, Job Placement and Retention Services
Albany Housing Authority/ CTI	\$98,360	Intensive Case Services for Non compliant families	TANF/SN-MOE	Assignment to Countable Activities, Job Placement and Retention Services for those in sanction status and those in danger or sanction status. Performance based contract.
Altamont Program	\$128,000	FSET	SN Individuals	Job Skills/ Job Readiness Training, Job Referral and Placement
America Works of Albany, Inc.	\$46,998	Enhanced Engagement Initiative	TANF/SN-MOE	ESL Program; Performance based
Careerlinks, Creating Opportunities that Last, Inc.	\$40,000	Enhanced Engagement Initiative	TANF/SN-MOE	Assignment to Countable Activities, Job Placement and Retention Services at local hospital for medical related Employment placement
Albany Community Action Partnership – Dress for Success	\$20,000	TANF/TANF 200%	TANF/SN-MOE	Clothing for Applicants/Recipients for job related interviews and employment.
Rehabilitation Support Services (RSS)	\$200,000	FFFS/EMP	TANF/Disabled and Work Limited	Job Skills/ Job Readiness Training, Job Referral and Placement. Performance based.
Mediation Matters	\$37,785	Intensive Case Services for Non compliant families	TANF/SN-MOE	Assignment to Countable Activities, Job Placement and Retention Services for those in sanction status and those in danger or sanction status

Albany County Mental Health/ Health Department	\$162,093	FFFS	TANF/ SN-MOE	Health/MH Assessments and Developments of an Employability Plan for Treatment/Wellness and case management services
The Worker Center – Building Bridges	\$72,900	LAF	Under 200%	Job Skills training program focused on employment in the construction industry. Pre-apprenticeship training program.
Altamont Homelessness Prevention Program	\$123,000	FFFS	TANF/SN-MOE	Job Readiness, Job skills training, job placement and retention program focused on the homeless or “at risk of homelessness population.”

**TABLE 2 – Other Service Providers**

<b>Provider</b>	<b>Funding Source(s) (if known)</b>	<b>Categories of Clients Served</b>	<b>Programs, Services or Activities Provided</b>
Catholic Charities of Albany/Rensselaer and Schenectady Counties	Wheels for Work NYSDOL	TANF/ TANF 200%	Transportation for three counties
Equal Opportunity Center and Bridge Program	Bridge NYSDOL/UCAWD	TANF/ TANF 200%	Job Skills Training and Job Retention and Placement. Programs include Certified Nursing Assistant, Welding, Cosmetology, Culinary Arts and Building Trades
NYS Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (JOBS)	Non- financial	FA, SN and FS as of 10/1/05	Job Referral and Job Placement. Staff located on site at DSS office
VESID	LIVES NYSDOL	TANF	Vocational/ Job Readiness Training and Job Placement including Performance based countable activities
Touchstone	Workforce Investment Act	TANF/Disabled	Job Skills/ Job Readiness Training, Job Referral and Placement for TANF with Disabilities.
WIA One Stop Center of Albany County (Career Central)	Workforce Investment Act NYSDOL UCAWA	TANF, SN and FS	Job Skills/ Job Readiness Training, Job Referral and Placement.
Capital District Transportation Authority (CDTA)	Community Solutions Grant	TANF/TANF 200%	Transportation for three counties
Bryant and Stratton	Non financial agreement with DSS	TANF	Vocational Education, Job Skills and Job Placement
Cornell Cooperative Extension	FFFS/EMP	TANF	Job Skills/ Job Readiness Training, Job Referral and Placement
Job Corps	Non -financial	TANF	Vocational, Job Skills and Job Placement
Mildred Elley College	Non -financial	TANF	Vocational, Job Skills and Job Placement. One year certificate program.

Albany Boys and Girls Clubs	Non -financial	FA, SN, and FS	Work Site Sponsor
Albany Center for Economic Success	Non -financial	FA, SN, and FS	Work Site Sponsor
Albany City School District	Non -financial	FA, SN, and FS	Work Site Sponsor
Albany County Nursing Home	Non -financial	FA, SN, and FS	Work Site Sponsor
Albany County Opportunities, Inc/ACAP	Non -financial	FA, SN, and FS	Work Site Sponsor
Albany Housing Coalition	Non -financial	FA, SN, and FS	Work Site Sponsor
Albany Jewish Community Center	Non -financial	FA, SN, and FS	Work Site Sponsor
Albany Medical Center	Non -financial	FA, SN, and FS	Work Site Sponsor
Albany Memorial Hospital	Non -financial	FA, SN, and FS	Work Site Sponsor
Albany Public Library	Non -financial	FA, SN, and FS	Work Site Sponsor
Albany Public Library - Main Branch	Non -financial	FA, SN, and FS	Work Site Sponsor
Albany Rural Cemetery and Mausoleum	Non -financial	FA, SN, and FS	Work Site Sponsor
Altamont Program	Non -financial	FA, SN, and FS	Work Site Sponsor
Albany V.A. Medical Center	Non -financial	FA, SN, and FS	Work Site Sponsor
American Red Cross-Northeastern NY	Non -financial	FA, SN, and FS	Work Site Sponsor
Arbor Hill Community Center	Non -financial	FA, SN, and FS	Work Site Sponsor
Boys and Girls Club of Albany	Non -financial	FA, SN, and FS	Work Site Sponsor
Capital District Center for Independence	Non -financial	FA, SN, and FS	Work Site Sponsor

Capital District Childcare Coordinating Council	Non -financial	FA, SN, and FS	Work Site Sponsor
Capital District Food Pantry	Non -financial	FA, SN, and FS	Work Site Sponsor
Capital District Humane Association	Non -financial	FA, SN, and FS	Work Site Sponsor
Capital District YMCA -Albany	Non -financial	FA, SN, and FS	Work Site Sponsor
Capital District Habitat for Humanity	Non -financial	FA, SN, and FS	Work Site Sponsor
Capital District Habitat for Humanity	Non -financial	FA, SN, and FS	Work Site Sponsor
Catholic Charities	Non -financial	FA, SN, and FS	Work Site Sponsor
Catholic Charities AIDS Services	Non -financial	FA, SN, and FS	Work Site Sponsor
Catholic Charities Housing Office	Non -financial	FA, SN, and FS	Work Site Sponsor
Center for Disability Services	Non -financial	FA, SN, and FS	Work Site Sponsor
Centro Civico Hispanico- Americano	Non -financial	FA, SN, and FS	Work Site Sponsor
Clearview Center	Non -financial	FA, SN, and FS	Work Site Sponsor
College of the Saint Rose	Non -financial	FA, SN, and FS	Work Site Sponsor
Colonie Senior Service Centers, Inc.	Non -financial	FA, SN, and FS	Work Site Sponsor
Community Maternity Services	Non -financial	FA, SN, and FS	Work Site Sponsor
Cornell Cooperative Extension	Non -financial	FA, SN, and FS	Work Site Sponsor
Eddy Rehabilitation Center	Non -financial	FA, SN, and FS	Work Site Sponsor
Equinox Inc.	Non -financial	FA, SN, and FS	Work Site Sponsor

Food Pantries for the Capital District	Non -financial	FA, SN, and FS	Work Site Sponsor
Hispanic Outreach Center	Non -financial	FA, SN, and FS	Work Site Sponsor
Homeless and Travelers Aid Society	Non -financial	FA, SN, and FS	Work Site Sponsor
Hope House, Inc.	Non -financial	FA, SN, and FS	Work Site Sponsor
Interfaith Partnership for the Homeless	Non -financial	FA, SN, and FS	Work Site Sponsor
Job Placement Consortium	Non -financial	FA, SN, and FS	Work Site Sponsor
Julie Blair Nursing Home	Non -financial	FA, SN, and FS	Work Site Sponsor
Marillac Family Shelter	Non -financial	FA, SN, and FS	Work Site Sponsor
New Visions/ARC	Non -financial	FA, SN, and FS	Work Site Sponsor
Northeastern Association for the Blind	Non -financial	FA, SN, and FS	Work Site Sponsor
Parsons Child & Family Center	Non -financial	FA, SN, and FS	Work Site Sponsor
Regional Food Bank	Non -financial	FA, SN, and FS	Work Site Sponsor
Rehabilitation Support Services, Inc.	Non -financial	FA, SN, and FS	Work Site Sponsor
Salvation Army	Non -financial	FA, SN, and FS	Work Site Sponsor
Schuyler Inn	Non -financial	FA, SN, and FS	Work Site Sponsor
Senior Services of Albany	Non -financial	FA, SN, and FS	Work Site Sponsor
Sheridan Hollow Drop In Center-Interfaith	Non -financial	FA, SN, and FS	Work Site Sponsor
St. Catherine's Center for Children	Non -financial	FA, SN, and FS	Work Site Sponsor

St. Joseph's House	Non -financial	FA, SN, and FS	Work Site Sponsor
St. Peter's Healthcare Services/Rehab. Center	Non -financial	FA, SN, and FS	Work Site Sponsor
Teresian House	Non -financial	FA, SN, and FS	Work Site Sponsor
Trinity Institute	Non -financial	FA, SN, and FS	Work Site Sponsor
WERC	Non -financial	FA, SN, and FS	Work Site Sponsor
WorkFirst Foundation	Non -financial	FA, SN, and FS	Work Site Sponsor
Youth Advocate Programs, Inc.	Non -financial	FA, SN, and FS	Work Site Sponsor

**Section 2.3 – Jobs Agreement**

**Jobs Program Services – Target Groups**

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

<b>Services</b>		<b>Target Groups</b>	
Assessment/Employability Plan	<u>      </u>	Applicants	<u>  X  </u>
Supervised Job Search	<u>  X  </u>	TANF (inc. SN fam.)	<u>  X  </u>
Job Readiness Training	<u>      </u>	Safety Net Singles	<u>  X  </u>
Job Club	<u>      </u>	Food Stamps	<u>  X  </u>
Job Placement Services	<u>  X  </u>	200% of Poverty	<u>      </u>
Grant Diversion	<u>      </u>		
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., WTCMS data entry, case conferencing, job fairs etc.):

- Specific projects such as call-ins and Group Recertifications
- Front Door Diversion
- Job Fairs
- Case Conferencing
- Collaboration with Job Development
- TOP Program
- Serve undercare Recipients as identified by the Local district such as under employed

**Jobs Program Staffing and Location (Address)**

**Number of Jobs staff**

**Locations**

1. 162 Washington Avenue, Albany

2. 550 Broadway, Menands

**Jobs Program LDSS Staff Contact (Name & Phone Number)**

Judy Cocca

518-447-7272

### 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:

Those individuals who are actively participating in the following activities in an effort to become self-sufficient and therefore reduce or eliminate their need for public assistance:

- A. Individuals with disabilities pending SSI determination
- B. Enrollment in an approved substance abuse rehabilitation program
- C. Enrollment in an approved Title 5/502-E program for senior recipients over the age of 55
- D. TANF, Safety Net and Food Stamp individuals who are employable and actively participating in one or a combination of following activities:
  - a. unsubsidized employment
  - b. subsidized private sector employment
  - c. subsidized public sector employment
  - d. self-employment/micro-enterprise development
  - e. work experience in the public and non-profit sectors
  - f. on-the-job training
  - g. job search and job readiness assistance
  - h. community service
  - i. vocational educational training
  - j. job skills training directly related to employment
  - k. education directly related to employment, in the case of a recipient who has not completed secondary school or high school equivalency
  - l. satisfactory attendance at secondary school or course of study leading to HSE
  - m. provision of child care for an individual who is participating in community service
  - n. job search and job readiness assistance beyond the level allowed to count toward participation rate

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.

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.

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

After orientation, non-exempt TANF and SN Family applicants are referred to OTDA Jobs Program staff for supervised job activities.

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.

Following the required alcohol and substance abuse screening, all applicants are scheduled to attend a group orientation given by Employment Unit Case Managers and Case Workers in accordance with Dept. Reg. 385.5. These sessions, held at 162 Washington Avenue, review rights and responsibilities for both the agency and the applicant. The applicants are then referred to either OTDA JOBS Program staff or DSS Employment staff for other activities, including Job Search. Clients are required to complete an initial assessment form to demonstrate job history, education, and written communication.

Individual orientation is provided again at recertification, again by Temporary Assistance and Employment Unit staff.

Section 3.3 Assessment and Employability Planning

Temporary Assistance Assessment (Reference 18 NYCRR 385.6 and 385.7)

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:

Once a Temporary Assistance case is opened, a screening tool for Mental Health disabilities, voluntarily completed by the recipient with the worker, is included in ACDSS Assessment packet (Attachment C)

. A copy of the assessment tool used by the district is attached.

. 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))

The qualification required to be employed as an Eligibility Examiner I in Albany County DSS or other equivalent positions within the employer provider agencies or local government. Providers include staff qualifications to the County in their responses to requests for proposals for contracted employment services. The County ensures that the individuals who the providers indicate as assessment staff meet the minimum requirement.

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

- Albany County DSS Employment Unit Staff
- Rehabilitation Support Services, Inc (contracted provider)
- Albany County Department of Mental Health
- Albany County Department of Health
- OTDA JOBS Program staff
- Contracted Employment Services Providers, when contracted to provide assessment

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:

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 (Attachment D) 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:

Applicants/recipients with limited English comprehension, verbal and/or written, will be assisted by ACDSS staff in order to assure full understanding of all parties' responsibilities. Any changes will be discussed with the individual and documented in writing prior to their implementation.

b. The district administrative unit or contractor that develops employability plans is (list 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):

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

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

Within 90 days of all Family Assistance case openings and within one year for Safety Net case openings, an employment assessment and employment plan will be completed for recipients. Assessments will be completed for each adult and required minor recipient within 90 days of the eligibility determination for FA or SNA (for those applicants with dependents). Assessments will be conducted within one year of application for SNA for those households without dependents. Within one week after completion of the assessment/employment plan the recipient will be referred to a contracted provider for employment placement or employment activities, or will be referred to a worksite sponsor for placement in work experience.

The participation standard for households with no children under six as well as those with children under six years of age is up to 40 hours a week.

Participation in countable hours of activity is monitored by Employment Unit staff through weekly and monthly reports provided by employment services providers and work experience site sponsors. Each time sheet is signed by the provider responsible for the activity. Service providers make the reports available to ACDSS staff that then enters countable hours in to the CMS, however pursuant to Employment Services RFP and consequent contracts, service providers may elect to enter the material directly into CMS with backup documentation provided to the Employment Unit Case Managers for case records.

The Employment Coordinator examines Cognos Upfront reports to monitor countable and non-countable activities and the number of participating recipients. Non-participating recipients who are non-exempt are targeted for engagement in countable activities. Cognos Upfront reports are provided to supervisory level Examiner Staff for distribution to Case Managers. Recipients can be contacted quickly and referred to proper countable activities.

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 Stamps).

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

TANF	SNF	SNA	RS	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.
■	■	■		Subsidized Private Sector Employment	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.
				Subsidized Public Sector Employment	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.

Work Experience

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.

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.)

On-the-Job Training (OJT)

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.

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.

Community Service

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.

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.

Job Search

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.

Job Readiness Training (JRT)

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.

Vocational Education

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.

Job Skills Training

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.

Education Training

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.

	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.



Section 3.5 Job Development

Yes  No The district conducts or receives job development activities to expand job opportunities for TA and S 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:

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.

Employment Services contracts with America Works of Albany, Inc, CareerLinks Inc., Altamont Program, and Rehabilitation Support Services, Inc. (RSS) to solicit job placements. Each provider agency has a network of employment sources and continually develops additional sources as needed. America Works employs seven (7) staff. Four of these staff members are actively engaged in networking with current and potential employers. Careerlinks employs three (3) staff and its Director actively seeks out employment opportunities for TA recipients. Altamont Program has one staff person assigned to Job Development who has established relationships with over 20 major Capital District employers. RSS employs a large and diversified staff, and is active in 16 counties in New York State. Two employment specialists solicit potential employers from the community and in-house programs that will accommodate disabled workers.

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

Jobs staff will attend job fairs, assist in the creation of employer panels, collaborate with job development providers and contact employers for job leads.

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:

District identifies educational and instructional needs through assessment and plan, referring to proper programs, such as the ESL program at America Works. Adult basic education is determined through

consultation with contracted employment and training providers, and referred and tracked accordingly by the providers for submission to the Department for entry in CMS.

- 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:

District identifies Vocational Education and Job Skills needs through assessment and plan, referring to proper programs, such as the Office Skills program at Bryant and Stratton (please note this is not a contracted provider of Vocational Education, but remains a well used community resource). Job Skills programs are available in the community, through contracted providers or programs such as the WIA.

- 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.

This Department's goal is 22 additional participants engaged in training activities, per OTDA e-mail date Wednesday, November 14, 2007. Assessments will be made of the participant's interest in and ability to participate in vocational education programs such as the Certified Nurse's Aide program, and the participant will be referred to existing vocational education sites in the Capital Region area. Job skills programs are available in the Albany area, and greater engagement with these job skill providers and recipients, even to the extent of call-ins and Case Managers' presentation sessions will result in the increase required. Contract with employment and training provider America Works is being amended to reflect new definitions to require an increase focused on Job Skills training. This will not only improve recipients' skill set, but assist in participation rate improvement.

The proposed TOP program noted on page 2 (see Attachment F for draft proposal) will continue and enhance this process with intense case management and referral.

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

Training providers are limited to accredited educational programs and those listed on the NYS DOL website as training offers.

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

A list of the Albany County Department of Social Services' approved training providers is available as part of the orientation process and a review of those providers and the programs they offer are addressed during the assessment process prior to program enrollment. Client previous work history and personal interests are taken into consideration as the employment plan is developed. Applicants/recipients with limited English

comprehension, verbal and/or written, will be assisted by ACDSS staff in order to assure full understanding of all parties' responsibilities.

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

Satisfactory compliance/participation in previous work activities; compliance with alcohol/drug treatment; assurance that recipient has no other license, training, marketable skills or expertise in another occupation and TABE (Test for Adult Basic Education) testing when required or necessary to ensure educational prerequisites are met.

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

The Employment Unit Case Manager assigned to the case either hand delivers or mails an appointment (scheduled through the Caseload Management System [CMS]) to the participant. Appearance at the provider at the indicated date and time indicates compliance with the provider program. The employment provider either enters compliance or non-compliance directly into CMS or faxes the notice of compliance or non-compliance to the Employment Unit Case Manager

For those who are already involved or enrolled in activities at the time of application, the agency utilizes a specific letter format that has been created for the purpose of notifying recipients of their approval for enrollment into an allowable work activity that meets the requirement of participation policy.

- 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:

- 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:

Temporary Assistance staff verify school enrollment at application and at each recertification. The County will follow the policy of the appropriate school district where the individual teen attends regarding school attendance.

- 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:

When an individual indicates on his or her application for temporary assistance that he/she has a physical limitation, the individual is required to produce medical documentation in regard to the limitation or barrier. If additional information is required to assess the client's limitations, the client is referred to IMA for evaluation. Information as to the recipient's limitation will accompany the referral to the employment services provider or the work experience site, assuring HIPAA compliance. Work limited TANF recipients are assigned programs such as Rehabilitations Support Services or VESID/LIVES, and the referred agency is also notified in writing of the recipient's work limitations.

### 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 WTCMS, 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):

Albany County will perform a random sample of 20 cases per quarter for paid work activities. Since both the temporary assistance and employment case files (imaged) will reside in the TOP unit, access for review will be eased. Hours of employment will be verified through receipt of pay stubs, employer verification forms and direct phone contact with the employer documented in case notes. The review will ensure the hours of employment on the ABEL budget are consistent with the hours reported on WTCMS and documentation is in the file to support hours reported on WTCMS and that the scheduled hours on WTCMS is consistent with the documentation.

Albany County will perform a random sample of 20 cases per quarter for participation in unpaid work activities. The 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 times. The review will ensure the actual hours of attendance reported on the monthly attendance sheets has been correctly reported on WTCMS, excused absences and holiday time are documented in the case file and correctly reported on WTCMS in accordance with federal limitations, and that documentation of actual hours of attendance is accurate and matches the hours of participation reported on WTCMS by district staff.

Albany County will perform a random sample of 10 cases per quarter in which a case member is reported as an employability code 38-needed in the home fulltime to care for a disabled household member. The temporary assistance case file will be reviewed to ensure there is presence of medical documentation to support the exemption and that the documentation has a time frame for the exemption and that the individual is the appropriate caretaker.

Albany County will perform a random sample of 10 cases per quarter in which a case member is reported as an employability code 31 – caretaker of a child under the age of 12 months. The temporary assistance case file will be reviewed to ensure there is a birth certificate present to verify the child under the age of one.

Albany County will perform a random sample of 10 cases per quarter in which a case member is reported to be incapacitated to determine if s/he remains incapacitated or is now a work eligible person. The temporary assistance case file will be reviewed to ensure there is the presence of medical documentation to support the exemption and that the documentation has a timeframe for the exemption.

In each of the above samples, the district will assess and verify that participation in the reported work activities meets the State approved definition for the activity.

Summary reports will be submitted along with a Corrective Action Plan when necessary. We will ensure that a summary report will be prepared following each review period and forwarded to 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):

Albany County reviews monthly provider statements and submitted documentation for accuracy. District staff solely makes WTWCMS entry, using provider submitted attendance sheets for verification. There is continuous communication between the providers and Employment staff so submission of information re: compliance and non compliance is steady.

Each contracted Provider and Employment case managers meet monthly to case conference on the assigned cases. The purpose of the meetings is to discuss concerns, progress and documentation. In addition, the Employment Unit Contract Manager reviews a sample of Provider files on a semi-annual schedule. The sample size is 10% of the cases in which the department has made a performance based benchmark payment.

### 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.):

At the employment assessment and upon recertification, individuals who indicate a mental health issue or concern will be assessed for the presence of impediments to employment. TANF recipients are referred to the Doorways TANF Mental Health Assessor/Case Manager for a determination of employability and for case management services designed to restore the individual to self sufficiency. TANF recipients demonstrating physical disabilities will be referred for an assessment by a registered nurse, who will assess the individual and design a wellness plan. The Doorways RN will monitor the recipient's participation in the wellness plan. For Safety Net, recipients may be referred to I.M.A. for documentation on their medical limitations.

Industrial Medicine Associates (I.M.A.), located in Albany, is an independent medical association whose professional medical associates will make employability determinations for individuals referred to their facility. I.M.A. will also determine whether or not the individual would be an appropriate candidate for the receipt of SSI/SSD and facilitate the application when appropriate. I.M.A. will provide a treatment plan designed to restore the individual to self sufficiency if self sufficiency is a possible outcome.

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

The Doorways Assessors and Case Managers, through collaborative contracts with the Albany County Mental Health and the Albany County Health Department, develop a treatment/employability plan and provide follow-up services to ensure linkage with appropriate treatment.

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.:

Doorways Case Managers provide case management and provide monthly reports to the Employment Unit Case Manager regarding the recipient's participation in treatment or other activities designed to restore the individual to self-sufficiency. The district will also collect monthly attendance documentation for individuals not engaged with case management services. If a report is not forthcoming from a treatment provider, the recipient is required to obtain a compliance or updated report and provide it to his or her Employment Unit Case Manager.

### 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.

Recipients are scheduled for 40 hours of activity per week. This allows for flexibility in hours missed, letting recipients handle those situations that can limit participation, and result in excused and unexcused absences.

However, recipients that continually fail to meet the required hours of participation will be referred to an Employment Unit caseworker. This caseworker will contact the recipient and look into the case to see the reason(s) for the lack of attendance. Intervention may assist in uncovering underlying issues such as mental health barriers, or even basic day care or transportation issues. Referrals for other services may be needed. The recipients response will monitored for improvement.

### 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:

Upon non-compliance, the case is referred to the Employment Unit Caseworker (who is responsible for the conciliation resolution), though the Caseworker may be involved in the case for other reasons (homelessness, e.g.) and will be fully familiar with the problems so that, working with the Temporary Assistance worker and the Employment Unit Case Manager, a more satisfactory resolution than sanction can be achieved. This may include home visits to further elaborate on and document the reasons for the non compliance with the employment related issue(s). The focus remains on engagement, not punishment, but it must be realized that the Temporary Assistance cases presently open have levels of challenge from illiteracy to mental health issues, and all play a part in sanction resolution.

It is our hope that this process will reduce the number of cases that actually need to be sanctioned, thereby reducing or eliminating actions required by both the Employment Case Managers or Temporary Assistance Workers.

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

See below

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

Albany County has contracted with Mediation Matters and Computer Training Institute (CTI) through Albany Housing Authority to contact and engage sanctioned families throughout the County. CTI is responsible for the city of Albany, while Mediation Matters contacts sanctioned families in the rest of county. Both organizations are given lists of sanctioned households to contact. Families are offered case management services to help determine why the family is sanctioned and how the situation can be remedied. Referrals to mental health counseling and other areas as deemed necessary are recommended. Should the client comply, and is not or is no longer on a durational sanction, the sanctioned individual may be added back on to the Temporary Assistance case, assuming all other areas of eligibility are met. Also, through CTI, employment may be reported by or found for the sanctioned individual, using the Computer Training course provided by CTI. Information is reported directly to the Employment Case Manager, or direct entry into Caseload Management System for engagement purposes.

Mediation Matters is a non-traditional approach to engage sanctioned TA recipients using models that emphasize respect, empathy, empowerment and collaborative decision-making. The Family Conferencing model has proved effective in securing the family's investment in a plan or course of action and in improving the coordination of the various services being offered. The model emphasizes respect, empathy, empowerment and collaborative decision-making. The sanctioned families are in the best position to identify the issues facing them as well as the solutions that will work best. By creating a supportive, non-threatening environment, mediation facilitators can give the family the best chance to reach positive outcomes. The Family Team Conferencing model utilizes social services professionals as resources for moving forward rather than as judgmental enforcers of punitive measures. Parties who resolve matters through mediation are overwhelmingly satisfied with the results and Albany County expects that the issues of sanctioned recipients and participation can be resolved in a positive manner.

### Section 3.11 Diversion Strategies

District has no specific diversion strategies.

District's diversion strategies are described below:

At Orientation Employment Unit staff meets with applicants to describe the availability of Child Care subsidies to TANF and Safety Net Family applicants and also describe the supervised job search. TANF and SN-MOE applicants are registered with Jobs and must conduct a supervised job search and accept job leads. Jobs staff will assess for needs diversion, refer the applicant to a case worker for non-recurring needs, and help to sustain employment. Emergency Assistance to Families (EAF) funds may be issued to provide a single issuance payment in lieu of ongoing Temporary Assistance when such payment will allow the client to maintain self sufficiency. Examples of these

payments include a payment to halt an eviction, or emergency automobile repairs when transportation problems cause disruption in employment.

**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:
- CDTA Swiper bus passes and tokens
  - Transportation allowances, at the public transportation rate or the district's mileage rate (current federal IRS mileage rate)
  - Interview clothing allowance
  - Items, such as boots, uniforms, etc. require for work experience participation
  - Employment related tools and/or safety equipment
  - Car repairs/insurance will be provided when needed for individuals who have obtained employment and/or when necessary to maintain employment
  - Licenses and other work related fees.
  - Reimbursement for cost effective third party health insurance premiums
  - Tuition, academic fees, books and/or supplies if essential and not available from other sources, except as required by federal law.
- 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): The mileage rate is the current rate paid by New York State to reimburse mileage for state employees, based upon mileage documentation provided by participant.

TANF, Safety Net and Food Stamp recipients will be provided with a bus pass or the financial support to cover the cost of public transportation and or mileage reimbursement to and from assigned employment training. Through a Federal and State Transportation Grant awarded to the Capital District Transportation Authority (CDTA), Albany County will provide (7) day unrestricted swiper passes to be used for TANF only participants who are working or are participating in an approved work activity. The district will use work sites which are in close proximity to the homes of individuals who lack transportation, either public or private and Trip-planning and ride-along services are provided through CDTA staff to help those who are unfamiliar with public transportation.

For those TANF individuals who can not get to work or to a work activity via public or private transportation, Albany County, through the Access Transit Service, will be able to customize transportation for these individuals so they can get to a work shift not serviced by public transportation or any required activity which may or may not have bus or taxi service available. This is a brokerage service that is being provided through the Federal TANF Transportation Grant. In areas where public transportation is not reasonably accessible or available the agency will place individuals in programs operating within a reasonable distance of their residence

or place them in a program in which they will be worked with individually to find employment and assist them in overcoming any other barrier that may prevent them from becoming self-sufficient.

The Albany County Cooperative Extension Program has a satellite office located in Ravena, the southern tier of Albany County. This area is a very limited public transportation system. The CHOICES program; assists TANF, Safety Net and Food Stamps recipients with employment related services, access to information concerning employment opportunities and work experience.

- 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:

Car repairs/tires/insurance will be provided when needed for individuals who have obtained employment and/or when necessary to maintain employment. The Wheels to Work program will be recommended when a participant is an eligible candidate for the program.

- 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: Will provide grant diversion services as noted in section 4.1a

- 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):

Applicants/recipients with limited English comprehension, verbal and/or written, will be assisted by ACDSS staff and provider staff in order to assure full understanding of all parties' responsibilities: Albany County will assign non-English speaking participants to services provided by organizations that provide bilingual instruction and will assist those participants in obtaining ESL services. ACDSS utilizes Hispanic Outreach Services and in 2008 will be utilizing the NYS contracted Translation Services to provide translation services when needed. Some of the contracted employment providers employ bi-lingual staff.

[ ] 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:

- Transitional Child Care assistance will be provided to income eligible individuals, whose case closed as a result of employment. Continued services in support of job retention, to obtain safe and reliable alternative and/or back-up day care arrangements are available from the Child Care Coordinating Council.

- Transitional Medicaid (TMA) will be provided to income eligible TANF recipients on cases closed as a result of employment for six months. Premium reimbursement for cost effective third party health insurance will continue for the length of Medicaid eligibility. Once the Transitional Medicaid eligibility period has expired, a redetermination for on-going eligibility for Medicaid, Family Health Plus, and/or Child Health Plus will be completed by ACDSS staff for eligibility information.
- Transportation allowances requested will be provided, at the public transportation rate or the district mileage rate, on a case by case as needed basis.
- Transitional Food Stamps will be provided.
- Contracted Providers for Retention Services

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.

Albany County will be a TOP (Transitional Opportunities Program) county beginning in 2008. As a TOP county, a specific unit will exist within ACDSS to engage with and respond to employed Temporary Assistance recipients, helping them retain employment while working with recipients in handling day to day issues of life from day-care to a utility payment. Once a case is closed due to employment, the unit must ensure that the family receives all the assistance they need and are eligible for, e.g., low income day care, Medicaid or Transitional Medical Assistance (TMA), Child Health Plus, Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP), federal and State Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), Non-Public Assistance (NPA) Food Stamps and Child Support Enforcement.

#### 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.

- Domestic Violence. The primary project goal is to assist victims of domestic violence who with advocacy and domestic violence counseling, through advocacy and counseling services. These services supplement the mandated domestic violence core services.
- Family Treatment Court. For TANF families finding themselves involved in the Family Treatment (drug) Court, Family Treatment Court Liaison services are available to assist in transportation and scheduling.
- Domestic Violence Liaison Services. Through a voluntary screening process, individuals who self-identify as domestic violence victims are assessed, provided safety and service plans, and considered for waivers of specific eligibility requirements, if compliance would place them or their children at risk.

#### 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:

An allowance, up to the amount of a CDTA 5-day Swiper Pass will be issued to FSET participants to meet their transportation need while involved in an employment related activity. FSET participants may qualify for the 7-day swiper pass provided through the CST grant if the activity enrollment requires a 7 day pass and if the participant qualifies as 200% of the federal poverty guidelines and meets all other qualifications.

b. The district will provide the following supportive services in addition to transportation:  
Trip-planning and ride-along services are provided through CDTA staff.

**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)

Employment Unit Caseworker will process all conciliations, regardless of the reason for the conciliation. Case Managers will send the notice of conciliation with the Caseworker's name and number. The case manager and case worker will communicate prior to the conciliation appointment to discuss case information that might not be reflected in detail on Caseload Management System (CMS). The Caseworker will be responsible to update CMS with their notes and actions taken during the conciliation process. If the Caseworker refers the recipient to a program, the referral will be completed by the caseworker.

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:

One week (five consecutive business days) of attendance at program or employment. Please see Work Verification section 3.7 for further discussion.

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)

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

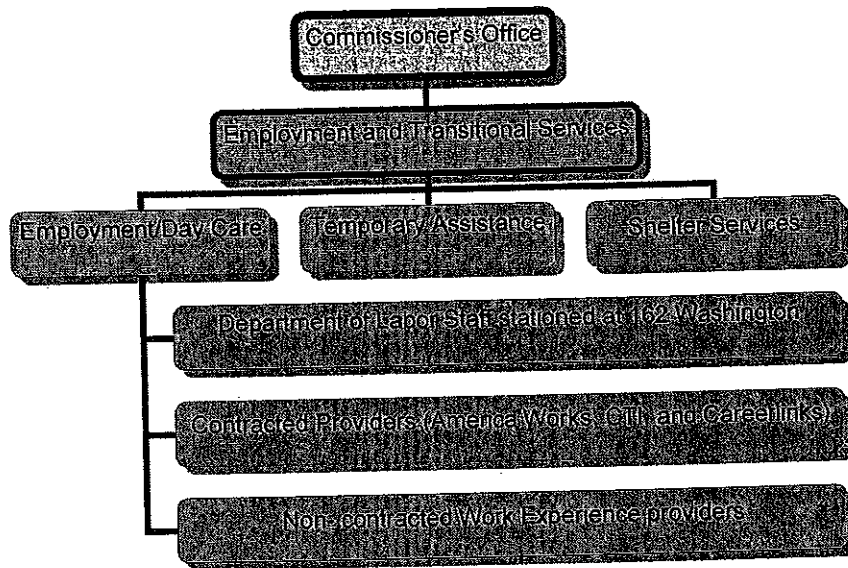
The district's process for determining an individual's disabilities and/or work limitations is in accordance with 18 NYCRR 385.2(d). Check all that apply:

- 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.

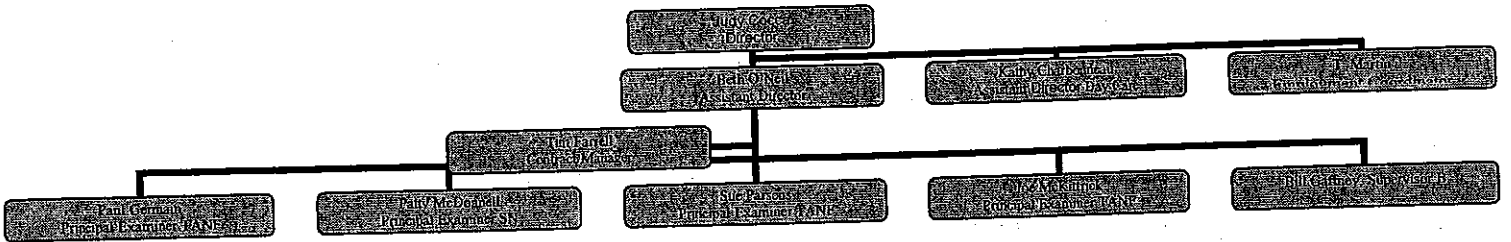
The local process for reviewing the medical documentation to determine if the individual is exempt, nonexempt, or work-limited is as follows.

- 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).

# Albany County WTW



Attachment B Employment Unit Organization Chart



Each Principal Examiner supervises three Eligibility Examiners.  
 Caseworker Supervisor B is in charge of two Caseworkers.

Attachment C -Employability Assessment

Client Name \_\_\_\_\_  
(Last, first)

Case Number \_\_\_\_\_

IS# \_\_\_\_\_

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

**Educational Level** (Including Literacy and English language proficiency):  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Skills and/or prior work experience** (any certificates?)  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Transportation**

Driver's License?  Yes  No Car/or access to transportation?  Yes  No

Military History? (Self or family)  
 Yes  No (If yes please describe/detail)

Criminal History?  Yes  No On  Probation  Parole

Currently in Treatment?  Yes  No

- Drug/Alcohol Where \_\_\_\_\_
- Physical Therapy \_\_\_\_\_
- Mental Health \_\_\_\_\_

**Family Circumstances:** (brief description, including special needs children)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Medical needs/limitations** (description)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Mental Health Screening Instrument**

1. In the last 12 months has your mood, thoughts or behaviors prevented you from working or looking for work?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
2. Do you have a history of psychiatric hospitalizations?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
3. Are you currently receiving any outpatient mental health services?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
4. Are you currently taking prescribed medications for your moods, thoughts or behaviors?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
5. Are you currently experiencing any thoughts of hurting yourself or others? ***	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

**Support Services and Child Care Services**

Day Care Need:

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Transportation:

---

Other: (CPS/WIC etc.)

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**CLIENT GOALS**

Short Term Goals:

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Long Term Goals:

2. **EMPLOYMENT/TRAINING (PREFERENCES)**

Can preferences be accommodated?  Yes  No

(Explanation of why not)

Challenges and/or barriers to clients' attainment of goals:

I certify that I have received a true and exact copy of this plan. As an applicant/recipient of Temporary Assistance/Food Stamps, I understand that I am required to actively work toward a goal of self-sufficiency. If I do not agree with this plan, I understand that I may discuss it with my employment worker. I understand that I must follow through with the requirements to the best of my ability.

Client Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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

**Attachment D Employability Plan**

**CLIENT GOALS AND EMPLOYMENT/TRAINING PREFERENCES**

**SHORT TERM GOALS:**

**LONG TERM GOALS:**

**JOB PREFERENCE(S):**

**EMPLOYMENT/TRAINING PREFERENCE(S):**

Can Client's Preferences Be Accommodated?

Comment On Challenges/Barriers To Client's Attainment of Goals:

Were Client's Goals Attained? Date Goals Attained:

**PLANNED CLIENT ACTIVITY**

Assignment

Planned  
Start Date

Planned  
End Date

THERE ARE NO PLANNED ACTIVITIES FOR THIS CLIENT

**ACTUAL CLIENT ACTIVITY**

Assignment

Activity  
Start Date

THERE ARE NO ACTUAL ACTIVITIES FOR THIS CLIENT

Comments Regarding Actual Activity:

**CHILD CARE SERVICES**

Is Client In Need of Child Care Services?

Is District Providing Child Care Services?

If Client Has Been Unable to Secure Needed Child Care In Order to Participate in Required Activities, Then Has The Client Satisfactorily Tried to Arrange Needed Child Care?

Comments Regarding Child Care Needed By the Client:

Comments Regarding The Status Of Child Care Services Provided By the District:

**WORK/TRAINING RELATED (INCLUDING TRANSPORTATION) SERVICES**

Is Client In Need of Work/Training Related Supportive Services?

Comments Regarding Work/Training Related Supportive Services Needed By The Client:

Comments Regarding Work/Training Related Services Provided By the District:

**WORK/TRAINING RELATED REFERRAL FEEDBACK RESULTS**

Supportive Service/Specific Item	Details
----------------------------------	---------

THERE ARE NO WORK/TRAINING RELATED FEEDBACK RESULTS FOR THIS CLIENT

**OTHER SERVICES NEEDED BY THE CLIENT**

Is Client In Need of Other Supportive Services?

Comments Regarding Other Supportive Services Needed By the Client:

Comments Regarding Other Services Provided By the District:

**DISCLAIMER**

I certify that I have received a true and exact copy of this plan. As an applicant/recipient of Public Assistance/Food Stamps, I understand that I am required to actively work toward a goal of self-sufficiency. If I do not agree with this plan, I understand that I may discuss it with an employment worker. I understand that I must follow through with the requirements to the best of my ability.

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

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

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



