

Maine's Unified State Plan 2020-2023

Public Comments

Summary

Public comment period for the Unified State Plan was held from February 19 through March 4, 2020. A press release was issued, displayed on Maine Department of Labor websites and distributed to the Maine Department of Labor mailing list, State Board members, workforce partners, Local Board Directors, and State Board committee members and the State Workforce Board's interested parties list.

The public was invited to submit comments through e-mail, on-line comment form on the State Board website, and by US Postal service mail.

A total of five comments were submitted

Due to differing statutory requirements¹, a concurrent comment period was held for the Agricultural Outreach Plan from February 10 through March 11, 2020 and are included in the Unified State Plan.

List of Comments (order received)

2/19/20 Larry Latham (e-mail submission)

2/24/20 Anonymous (website submission)

3/3/20 Joanna Russell (e-mail submission)

3/4/20 Antoinette Mancusi (e-mail submission)

3/4/20 Stephen Faulcon (website submission)

¹ 20CFR §653.107 https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=18d4e9b9eeb62f9342aab1045afe2da7&mc=true&node=se20.3.653_1107&rgn=div8

Comments

2/19/20 Larry Latham <llegga_2000@yahoo.com>

"Reimburse employers for ""on th job" training."

2/24/20 Anonymous <e-mail not provided>

"How does the Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired hope to provide services to the unserved or underserved populations in rural areas in a timely manner?"

How does the Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired hope to provide services in a timely manner in areas where there is limited staff?"

3/3/20 Joanna Russell <jrussell@northeasternwdb.org>



To: The State Workforce Board, Plan Manager

From: Joanna Russell, The Northeastern Workforce Development Board's Executive Director

Date: March 3, 2020

Re: Maine's 2020-2023 Unified State Plan Draft Public Comment

The Northeastern Workforce Development Board (NWDB) supports the State Workforce Board's (SWB) 2020-2023 Unified Strategic Plan. The NWDB Executive Director participated in the MDOL Steering Committee meetings and attended multiple focus groups hosted by the SWB. Several NWDB members also participated in varied focus groups and provided input into the strategic planning process. Unlike our last experience the SWB involved many of our regional partners from the northeastern area.

Below are a few minor edits and two suggestions.

Areas of Concern

1. To make reading easier for the new partners and possible program participants please provide a page of acronyms with simple one sentence or one-word explanation. This would be time saver for many readers.
2. Please provide a list of the University of Maine and Community College system and private college sites. Residents in the State of Maine as well as individuals from out of state utilize our many college sites. A simple listing would be appreciated. The NWDB believes the information is relevant and supports our educational system.
3. On page 9 under **Recent Trends and Current Conditions**, the NWDB suggests making a statement about the need to look at succession planning. See the following article: <https://www.pressherald.com/2020/02/27/commentary-make-it-easier-for-maine-businesses-to-stay-in-mainers-hands/>. According to this article, National surveys state, "79 percent of business owners want to retire within 10 years, 57 percent in less than five years and 33 percent in less than three years, yet only 17 percent have a plan to successfully make that happen."
4. On page 43, under formal steps on page 42, the plan omits Washington altogether and Hancock is listed twice. (The Northeastern workforce development board (NWDB) has oversight of Aroostook, Hancock, Penobscot, Piscataquis and Hancock counties.) **Correction: (The Northeastern Workforce Development Board (NWDB) has oversight of Aroostook, Washington, Hancock, Penobscot, and Piscataquis counties.)**

5. See the section “Coordinating with Economic Development Strategies”, page 104, 3rd and 4th paragraphs: **This is an inaccurate statement-** **In the northeastern region, the Aroostook Training and Education Coalition (ATEC), led by the Northern Maine Development Commission, meets regularly to tackle regional development issues and to identify and braid services to address business workforce needs.** -ATEC has been meeting for over ten years and NMDC has not participated in the group. ATEC is a collection of WIOA partners, higher education, legislator representatives, employers, and other relevant agencies like New Ventures. The leadership is a collaborative effort to “tackle” regional workforce and education issues and to identify and braid services to address business workforce needs.

In the tri-county area, title IB services are provided by Eastern Maine Development Corporation (DECD) (should read EMDC) which is also the lead regional economic development agency; in these complementary roles staff from each part of the agency are able to integrate a wide range of services to businesses and community partners, including work to assist the regions recovery from the demise of traditional manufacturing industries (paper, textiles, shoes, etc.) and the associated dislocation of workers and community infrastructure. DECD (should read EMDC) was instrumental in leading the charge to revision economic assets in the region leading to identification of new uses for abandoned mill sites, including site clean-up, to pave the way for new business development and launch retraining efforts to reposition the regions workers for new job opportunities resulting from those investments.

Joanna Russell, Executive Director

Northeastern Workforce Development Board

26 Franklin Street, P.O. Box 737

Bangor, ME 04402-0737

207-992-0770 Office

207-951-2549 Cell



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3/4/20 Antoinette Mancusi <amancusi@coastalcounties.org>



March 3, 2020

State Workforce Board
Attn: WIOA Unified Plan
54 SHS 45 Commerce Drive,

Augusta, ME 04333

VIA E-MAIL: SWB.DOL@maine.gov

RE: Comments to State Plan 2020-2023 Unified State Plan

Dear Mr. Quint:

Coastal Counties Workforce Inc. (CCWI) commends Governor Mill's administration for requiring the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program to become "a full partner of the one-stop system." This is a partner that has been needed by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) system i.e., core and required partners. We look forward to working with Maine Department of Health and Human Services and its TANF service provider to further improve system integration in Maine.

We also appreciate the local board guidance on "Partnering with Maine's Public Library System." CCWI began the work of formalizing agreements with regional libraries almost 8 years ago when we were derailed by the previous administration. However, we have continued to provide services at local libraries including meeting with clients for "intake" especially in rural areas where there are no other options. Libraries and their staff are a tremendous resource which should certainly be recognized and utilized by our system.

Regarding stated "Weaknesses" of our Workforce Development Activities (page 64), we agree that "[p]ublic and employers continue to lack knowledge of workforce system, the opportunities available to them and how to access those services." For that reason, it is imperative that the State leads an effort to "Brand" or "Re-Brand" our system. Although the plan references "re-branding" on page 85 and 94, the plan provides no details. We are hopeful that efforts to "brand" our system are indeed planned by the State. Moreover, in order to keep things as simple as possible for the users of our system, we hope these efforts dovetail with the already existing USDOL required branding requirements.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "A. Mancusi". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "A" and a long, sweeping underline.

Antoinette Mancusi Executive Director

Fort Andross, Suite 203A • 14 Maine Street, Box 2 • Brunswick, ME 04011
Tel/Fax: 207-725-5472 • www.coastalcounties.org • info@coastalcounties.org

3/4/20 Stephen Faulcon <metalroof@yahoo.com>

“For my roofing business, it is so hard to find skilled workers or willing to learn workers, also to retain workers. Laborers can not find decent affordable housing in this area so they resort to commuting from more rural areas which is costly to them. Even if I pay them an above-average wage, it does not help offset this. It would be great if there were incentives for employers to apprentice some workers to train them for the business. It would be a win/win. Workers comp costs are out of control; that is another problem.”