Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)

At minimum, in the SCSEP stand-alone submission and the SCSEP portion of the Combined State Plan, States should comprehensively cover the following elements.

a. Economic Projections and Impact

States must:

1. Discuss long-term projections for jobs in industries and occupations in the State that may provide employment opportunities for older workers. (20 CFR 641.302(d))(May alternatively be discussed in the economic analysis section of strategic plan.)

In accordance with the Governor's Jobs and Economic Development Goal, Tennessee has taken a position to help seniors continue maintaining a sustainable life. One way the state is doing this is by providing useful community services and employment opportunities through the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) for seniors across the state. SCSEP fosters economic self- sufficiency through training, job placement, and guidance in unsubsidized jobs.

Tennessee's SCSEP plan serves as the roadmap for the implementation of the program among its stakeholders; this ensures compliance with the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) rules and regulation. In addition, the plan will serve as a means of accountability to our participants, community, and funders. The SCSEP Plan will account for PY 2016-2020.

The Older Americans Act (OAA) is the primary funding vehicle for organizing, coordinating, and providing community-based services and opportunities for older Americans and their families in the United States. The OAA set out specific objectives for maintaining the dignity and welfare of older people. Listed below are two parts of Tennessee's infrastructure for administering the OAA and opening avenues to help leverage and maintain the health, lifestyle, and independence of seniors in the state:

Tennessee Commissioner of Aging and Disabilities or TCAD (a TDLWD partner) administers a system of services for those age 60 and over in their respective Planning and Service Areas (PSA). TCAD oversees multi-purpose senior center activities. This comprehensive and coordinated system of services is described in the Area Agencies on Aging and Disability's Plans. These services include Information and Assistance, Senior Centers, Nutrition Program for the Elderly, Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, National Family Caregiver Support Program, Aging, and Disability Resource Center (ADRC), Elder Rights, Long-Term Care Ombudsman.

Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development's Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) is the only federally-sponsored, job creation program targeted to low-income older Americans, which promotes the Governor's initiative to engage and educate employers on the value of hiring older workers. The program subsidizes part-time community service work base training for low-income

individuals age 55 years and older, who have poor employment prospects. The participants are often placed in schools, hospitals, economic development initiatives, weatherization activities, law offices, conservation programs, and other sites. These sites translate into positions such as nurse's aides, and teacher's aides, library clerks, clerical workers, adult and child daycare assistants, campground recreational coordinators, maintenance workers, and many more occupations.

The U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) funds and monitors SCSEP through the Older American's Act Title V Program. Currently, there are three (3) administrators or grantees—Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development (TDLWD), National Council of Aging (NCOA), and Senior Service of America, Inc. (SSAI), in Tennessee. TDLWD currently has six (6) sub-grantees that implement the SCSEP program. They are located in part of West, and East Tennessee. NCOA and SSAI are assigned several counties and co-manage the program with the state in several counties. Tennessee SCSEP grantees are represented on state and local business-led boards (Workforce Boards) that provide strategic planning and oversight of workforce development activities.

According to the 2010-2014 (American Community Survey Census) employment status of the civilian non-institutional population for Tennessee, the labor force participation rate of the 55+ population has increased from a low of 34.1% in 2009 to 39% in 2011. During the same period, the overall labor force participation rate increased less than one (1) percentage point. Data also shows that this population will continue to grow as the baby-boom generation reaches age 55.

In 2010-2014, Census estimated that 17.8% (over 1,000,000 individuals) of Tennessee's population had income levels below poverty. There were 60 of the 95 counties in the state that recorded higher poverty levels than the state average. Forty-five counties have poverty levels at 20% or higher. Thirteen of these are rural counties. Lake County has the highest poverty level at 41.9%. The 5 highest poverty level counties are as follows:

0. Lake 41.9%

1. Hancock 29.5%

2. Bledsoe,28.5%

3. Fentress 28.1%

4. Cocke 27.8%

Statewide, the age 55+ group had 10.9% (169,400 individuals) below poverty in 2010. There were 67 counties with higher poverty rates than the state average for this group. Six counties had poverty rates of 20% or higher and Hancock County had the highest poverty rate for age 55+ at 28%.

As the baby-boom generation ages, as the economy continues on the verge of improvement and as older workers postpone retirement, the demand for employment and training services, as well as income support for low-income older people, will increase.

Tennessee continues to increase employer engagement and will also increase exploration of on-the-job-experience (OJE) as a method of expanding employer engagement. While OJE has not been widely utilized by our sub-grantees in the past, Tennessee will actively promote OJE as a tool for sub-grantees to use in future program years to gain more unsubsidized jobs for participant job seekers.

LOCALITIES AND POPULATIONS WHERE SERVICES ARE MOST NEEDED

SCSEP services are helpful to all Tennesseans who are eligible for the program, especially individuals who are forced to retire or who continue to face age discrimination. SCSEP participants bring the following to the program when they start: dependability, loyalty, a strong work ethic, transferable skills, childcare skills, customer-service skills, a desire to learn and contribute, and maturity. In exchange, SCSEP provides these participants with updated job-skills training and work experience as well as much-needed income from part-time work-base training at community service assignments with local government or 501(c) (3) nonprofit agencies. SCSEP also helps participants, with low literacy skills and low organizational skills, through referrals and through work experience, respectively. SCSEP tries to provide participants with skills needed to obtain an unsubsidized job helping them maintain self-sufficiency and engagement in their community.

As noted in the Economic and Workforce Analysis (Appendix 2), the industries and occupations in the state that may provide employment opportunities in Tennessee through 2022 are:

5. Administrative and Support Services

6. Health Care services

7. Educational Services

8. Professional and Technical Services

9. Food Services

10. Professional and business services and construction, and Administrative and Support Services sectors are projected to gain the most jobs

Education, and Professional and Business Services are the two industries in which older workers are expected to gain employment. Several occupations are prominent in Tennessee; however, the occupations that are the most prevalent among seniors in Tennessee are office and administrative support, education, training, and library support, community and social service occupations. During 2014, the state received calls from several governmental agencies requesting information about being a Host Agency for SCSEP. In addition, due to the high demands of older workers requesting employment, unmatched education levels, and interest to venture into a new trade, the state is determined to work closely with the Workforce System to make sure that adequate resources are available for seniors.

2. Discuss how the long-term job projections discussed in the economic analysis section of strategic plan relate to the types of unsubsidized jobs for

which SCSEP participants will be trained and the types of skill training to be provided. (20 CFR 641.302(d))

I-A According to the TDLWD's Occupational Data Unit, the industries, and occupations in the state that may provide employment opportunities in Tennessee through 2022 are: 1) Administrative and Support Services, 2) Health Care services, 3) Educational Services, 4) Professional and Technical Services, 5) Food Services, 6) professional and business services and construction, and Administrative and Support Services sectors are projected to gain the most jobs. (Source: TDLWD Labor Market Information Section.) Education, and Professional and Business Services are the two industries in which older workers are expected to gain employment. Several occupations are prominent in Tennessee; however, the occupations that are the most prevalent among seniors in Tennessee are office and administrative support, education, training, and library support, community and social Service occupations. During 2014, the state received calls from several governmental agencies requesting information about being a Host Agency for SCSEP. In addition, due to the high demands of older workers requesting employment, unmatched education levels, and interest to venture into a new trade, the state is determined to work closely with the workforce system to make sure that adequate resources are available for seniors.

I-B As stated, healthcare and the business services sectors are projected to have the fastest job growth between 2014 and 2022. This could translate into career opportunities for SCSEP participants. Tennessee understands the importance of creating an atmosphere where participants have multiple, career-sector opportunities and training opportunities needed to enter into attractive sectors, along with supporting the workforce system's employment goals for low-income older workers by building sustainable business relationships with industries across the state (Governor's Jobs and Economic Development Goal: Objective III, Increase employer engagement with the workforce development system; Objective V, Increase work-integrated learning.)

Any participant of SCSEP is required to develop an Individual Employment Plan (IEP) at the time of enrollment. The IEP serves as a personal road-map to success and is designed to specifically assist the participant in meeting both personal and program goals. Each participant receives specialized training that fits under his or her IEP and is assigned to a host agency to develop or improve skills. The plan also determines if the Host Agency has met the participant's requirements. In addition, the Host Agency provides services to low-income older persons, to the economically disadvantaged, and to organizations offering services which provide positive contributions to the welfare of the general community. Opportunities to serve other groups will also be provided through placement in schools, day-care programs, health and hospital programs, and agencies serving individuals with physical and developmental disabilities.

I-C According to labor market information that was developed by the Tennessee Department of Labor, 553,000 older workers were reflected in the 2008 Labor Force population compared to 661,000 (or a 16% increase) in 2011.With the projection of continued growth of the population 55+ entering the workforce, the labor force will place added strain on workforce investment resources and on the Workforce system. The current job opportunities or occupational trends in Tennessee have shifted to the service industry in recent years according to the Non-Agricultural Employment Report provided

by TDLWD. This includes healthcare, social assistance, leisure and hospitality jobs. In 2016, the projected occupation for individuals who are 55 and older will be in the professional and service occupations.

SCSEP is designed for those who are not job-ready but are low-skilled and have a family income that falls under 125% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines. Individuals enrolling in the SCSEP program have a need for further education and/or training to perform work that is available in the local Tennessee labor market. Example of the skill level of eligible individuals upon enrollment includes limited or no computer skills, outdated clerical and bookkeeping skills, basic custodial and homemaker skills, heavy-equipment operators, no advanced manufacturing skills, or no job skills. Often, the participant can no longer physically do the same type of job that he or she has done in the past. Health and medical issues eliminate jobs that require tasks such as standing and/or sitting too long, lifting, bending, and walking. TDLWD, National Council on Aging, and Senior Services of America, Inc. collaborate with their respective host agencies (or work sites) to ensure that participants' and employers' needs and access to services are met. In addition, the One-Stop Center system, under the WIOA, is a single point of contact for job seekers and employers seeking information about local workforce development activities. This integration will not only support SCSEP's innovative approaches but will help the workforce system prepare for a greater number of older workers it will serve outside of SCSEP. SCSEP participants are mandated to develop an Individual Employment Plan or IEP with the guidance of their Project Director. This plan serves as

11. a personal road-map to success

12. assistance to the participant in assessing barriers and skill gaps to generate detailed IEPs with tasks and timelines

13. an aid to meet program and personal goals

IEPs are referred to often throughout participation to ensure goals are being met. In addition, any IEP identifies the need for vocational, high school equivalency (HSE), or computer training. All of these require attendance in a "classroom" environment where the participant may have workbooks, exercises, and reading assignments. Tennessee believes that it is vital to strengthen initial assessments of participant skills, knowledge, interests, aptitudes, and qualities to assist participants with defining career objectives that are relevant and which meet employer needs.

3. Discuss current and projected employment opportunities in the State (such as by providing information available under §15 of the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 491-2) by occupation), and the types of skills possessed by eligible individuals. (20 CFR 641.325(c))

Due to the projected growth of the 55+ population entering the workforce, the labor force will place added strain on workforce investment resources and on the Workforce System. The current job opportunities or occupational trends in Tennessee have shifted to the service industry in recent years according to the Non-Agricultural Employment Report provided by TDLWD. This includes healthcare, social assistance, leisure and hospitality

jobs. In 2016, the projected occupation for individuals who are 55 and older will be in the professional and service occupations.

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b. Service Delivery and Coordination

States must:

1. Provide a description of actions to coordinate SCSEP with other programs

This may alternatively be discussed in the State strategies section of the strategic plan, but regardless of placement in document, must include:

A. Actions to coordinate activities of SCSEP grantees with WIOA title I programs, including plans for using the WIOA one-stop delivery system and its partners to serve individuals aged 55 and older. (20 CFR 641.302(g), 641.325(e))

WIOA requires SCSEP grantees to be partners in each local Workforce system and to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding, describing how services will be provided with the Local Workforce Investment Board. In Tennessee, the U.S. Department of Labor allocates funds (to operate SCSEP through TDLWD and two national organizations. The national organizations are NCOA and SSAI. Tennessee is divided into 13 Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDAs). SCSEP participants are referred to one of the fifteen one-stop Career Centers, across the state, providing comprehensive, workforce development-related activities, including updating interviewing skills, resume preparation, and job placement services.

In rural areas, SCSEP participants and other individuals 55 and older may also access services from one of TDLWD's Mobile Centers with services similar to those found in the American Job Centers. These vehicles provide a mobile computer lab with Internet access, and they create a venue for workshops including résumé assistance and interviewing skills; the vehicle also serves as a recruitment center for employers. SCSEP Project Directors represent the Title V Program on each of the LWDAs. The cooperation of grantees on local boards has resulted in improved coordination between workforce agencies and has reduced "turfism." One of Tennessee's grantees has developed a presentation on how to navigate a job fair that can be used at a participant meeting. Topics may vary and can include interviewing techniques, resume writing tips,

approaching the hidden job market, using social media in a job search and completing online job applications.

B. Actions to coordinate activities of SCSEP grantees with the activities to be carried out in the State under the other titles of the OAA. (20 CFR 641.302(h))

SCSEP grantees reach out to organizations that administer programs, under other titles of the Older Americans Act, to offer them the opportunity to become host agencies. SCSEP participants and other older workers will be directed to one of the local information and referral hotlines (administered by the Tennessee Areas Agencies on Aging and Disabilities offices) when these workers are seeking services or information. In addition, referrals will be made to congregate nutrition programs, transportation services, health and wellness programs, etc.

C. Actions to coordinate SCSEP with other private and public entities and programs that provide services to older Americans, such as community and faith-based organizations, transportation programs, and programs for those with special needs or disabilities. (20 CFR 641.302(i))

Tennessee prides itself on being engaged in actionable partnerships to leverage resources across agencies and enhance customer performance outcomes. Governor's Jobs and Economic Development Goal: Objective II, to establish cost-effective co-investment models, across government funding streams and other funding streams. These partnerships include:

- o Coordinating with American Job Centers, Vocational Rehabilitation Services and other members of the local disability community regarding activities, resources, and services for seniors with disabilities

- o Participating in meetings, as appropriate, with senior service providers, both public and private

- o Coordinating with local service providers and community stakeholders to assess needs and develop solutions for local transportation services

- o Using 2-1-1 and other directories of service and supporting organizations to identify entities and programs in the community that provides referrals and support services to seniors. These directories are especially helpful for transition services when a participant's durational limit is approaching and project staff is working with him/her to develop a Transition Assessment & IEP.

- o Networking with area faith-based organizations to conduct outreach to SCSEP-eligible individuals

Outreach and education of AJC and partner staff will be increased with training on basic competencies when servicing those with disabilities. If assistance is needed for training and employment services with the deaf and hard of hearing, interpreters and other communication-access services will be scheduled. Other partnerships include organizations providing assistance with subsidized housing, healthcare and medical services, transportation, the law, food, personal and financial counseling, interviewing, clothes, etc.

D. Actions to coordinate SCSEP with other labor market and job training initiatives. (20 CFR 641.302(j))

SCSEP sub-grantees actively seek job training opportunities leading to jobs available and offered by Community Colleges, Applied Colleges of Technology, non-profit organizations, such as Goodwill Industries, Adult Education programs, and other training institutions. SCSEP will be an active member of the local business service teams.

E. Actions the State will take to ensure that SCSEP is an active partner in the one-stop delivery system and the steps the State will take to encourage and improve coordination with the one-stop delivery system. (20 CFR 641.335)

The partnership with SCSEP and the American Job Center system is essential to the success of SCSEP in Tennessee. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is developed to coordinate activities between SCSEP and the Workforce delivery system. The state will encourage One-Stop American Job Centers to hold regular partner meetings that include all SCSEP grantees operating in each local area to improve coordination with the Workforce delivery system. Sub-grantee strategies include:

- o Listing all participant and staff openings with the American Job Centers

- o Encouraging co-enrollment in WIOA, where possible, for participants seeking full-time employment

- o Where feasible, requesting that the AJC in a given service areas serves as host agencies for SCSEP participants so that participants can provide administrative support to these offices while learning valuable job skills

- o Requesting guidance from the American Job Centers on relevant skills required by local employers

- o Participating in American Job Center offices' partner meetings

- o Collaborating appropriately with AJC offices on employer outreach on behalf of senior Tennesseans and collaborating on continuous improvement of senior-service strategies

- o Providing brief updates to Board staff and American Job Center offices' staff on SCSEP activities in the local workforce development area

- o Where applicable, attending local board meetings regularly.

- o Using local labor market information and staff information to identify occupations and industries with the most promise for older job seekers, employers that are hiring or will soon be hiring, and employers moving to the local area

- o Referring participants who are ineligible for SCSEP to the closest American Job Center for job search assistance

F. Efforts the State will make to work with local economic development offices in rural locations.

Grantees or local projects will collaborate with local the local workforce system and economic development councils in both urban and rural areas in order to provide education on the exceptional qualities that older adults bring to the workplace, to learn about potential employment growth opportunities, to discuss where older workers could add value to growth areas, and to increase job opportunities. SCSEP priority of service requires outreach to rural communities. Local project staff uses their connections with AJC's Veteran Representatives and Vocational Rehabilitation, to promote SCSEP and learn about individuals who may meet the priority of service and eligibility requirements. Grantees will continue to engage organizations that serve hard to reach populations, such as those who are geographically or socially isolated and those whose primary language is not English.

2. Describe the long-term strategy for engaging employers to develop and promote opportunities for the placement of SCSEP participants in unsubsidized employment. (20 CFR 641.302(e)) (Alternately, the State may discuss this in the State strategies section of strategic plan if submitting a Combined Plan.)

High performance is a priority for the state on every level—grantee, sub-grantees, host agencies, and employers. Several efforts are necessary for achieving these goals:

- o Grantees will provide well-established partnerships with local Chambers of Commerce and employer organizations.

- o Encouraging Tennessee grantees to establish relationships with their local, county and state economic development councils and accessing their press releases of future or growing business announcements.

- o Provision of tools on each grantee's website for sub-grantees and older worker jobseekers. Tools may include resources and supportive services targeted for older Americans, resume help (tips, templates), information on starting a business, interviewing aids, job-search strategies for older workers (highlighting employers who hire older workers), etc.

- o Continuous training of sub-grantees, with topics including performance measures, data validation, budget management, Most-In-Need barriers, job search strategies, etc.

- o Encouragement of AJCs to hold job fairs targeted for older workers during Hire Older Worker Week in September

- o Encouragement of SCSEP sub-grantees to reach out to employers to educate them on the value of hiring older workers

- o Encouraging the use of sector strategies to assist lower-skilled workers with skill attainment and job placement

- o Encouraging further education, such as HSE, higher education, and technical training

- o Encouraging SCSEP sub-grantees to form local employer advisory boards

- o Promoting OJE as a tool for sub-grantees to use in future program years to gain more unsubsidized jobs for participant job seekers

3. Describe the long-term strategy for serving minorities under SCSEP. (20 CFR 641.302 (c))

According to the PY 2013 SCSEP Minority Report that was released by the Charter Oak Group, LLC., in 2015, Tennessee overall exceeded the Census minimum expectation for the African American serving 41.5% with the census percent being 21.8% and American Indian serving 0.7% with the census percent being 0.3%; however, there is room for growth in serving the Hispanic and Asian populations; several strategies will be put in place to increase the awareness of SCSEP for these two populations. These include:

39. Monitoring of minority participation to assure performance negotiated goals are met.

40. Reaching out to the community and faith-based organizations that serve minority populations to recruit eligible individuals.

41. Seeking eligible minorities by outreach efforts with Workforce System partners such as Vocational Rehabilitation and Social Service agencies.

42. Using multi-lingual brochures and fliers to reach non-English speaking minority groups.

43. For the Hispanic and Asian population,

- o Determining the cause(s) for the minority group's lower enrollment.

- o Setting specific targets for the number of minority enrollees expected.

- o Identifying the steps that will be taken to increase the enrollment of each minority group.

- o Beginning monitoring minority enrollments on a quarterly basis.

- o Prioritizing bilingual service delivery whenever possible to encourage full participation.

4. List needed community services and the exact places where these services are most needed. Specifically, the plan must address the needs and location(s) of those individuals most in need of community services and the groups working to meet their needs. (20 CFR 641.330)

SCSEP participants across Tennessee need a wide range of community services to meet their needs. Because they are economically insecure, they struggle with issues such as having enough food to eat, paying for medicine and out-of-pocket health expenses, housing, transportation, legal issues, and daily living expenses. Participants in need of assistance are referred to organizations such as food stamp offices, the Salvation Army, the Legal Aid Society, senior centers, and food banks. There are limited organizations with funding to provide these resources in rural areas. Therefore, SCSEP staff research

and provide community service information available in both rural and urban areas for SCSEP participants.

In addition, TDLWD engages in partnerships with Tennessee Human Resource Agencies. These agencies produce community-needs assessments as well as use other assessments produced by groups such as the local United Way office or Community Action Agencies. These assessments are used to identify priority community needs.

5. Describe the long-term strategy to improve SCSEP services, including planned long-term changes to the design of the program within the State, and planned changes in the use of SCSEP grantees and program operators to better achieve the goals of the program. This may include recommendations to the Department as appropriate. (20 CFR 641.302(k))

Tennessee seeks to be the top-performing state in the nation, and it understands that there are necessary steps that need to be taken to achieve this goal. These steps include:

1. Work with new and existing host agencies in an effort to improve and increase in-demand training opportunities.

2. Increase partnerships with community colleges in the development of programs to meet the needs of participants.

3. Increase opportunities to meet participant's needs through supportive services.

4. Increase awareness of the SCSEP to unsubsidized employers in an effort to promote employment opportunities for participants.

5. Expand economic opportunities through utilizing On the Job Experience (OJE) for participants.

6. Describe a strategy for continuous improvement in the level of performance for SCSEP participants' entry into unsubsidized employment, and to achieve, at a minimum, the levels specified in OAA Section 513(a)(2)(E)(ii). (20 CFR 641.302(f))

High performance is a priority for the state on every level—grantee, sub-grantees, host agencies, and employers. Several efforts are necessary for achieving these goals:

- o Grantees will provide well-established partnerships with local Chambers of Commerce and employer organizations.

- o Encouraging Tennessee grantees to establish relationships with their local, county and state economic development councils and accessing their press releases of future or growing business announcements.

- o Provision of tools on each grantee's website for sub-grantees and older worker jobseekers.

- o Tools may include resources and supportive services targeted for older Americans, resume help (tips, templates), information on starting a business,

interviewing aids, job-search strategies for older workers (highlighting employers who hire older workers), etc.

- o Continuous training of sub-grantees, with topics including performance measures, data validation, budget management, Most-In-Need barriers, job search strategies, etc.

- o Encouragement of AJCs to hold job fairs targeted for older workers during Hire Older Worker Week in September.

- o Encouragement of SCSEP sub-grantees to reach out to employers to educate them on the value of hiring older workers.

- o Encouraging the use of sector strategies to assist lower-skilled workers with skill attainment and job placement.

- o Encouraging further education, such as HSE, higher education, and technical training.

- o Encouraging SCSEP sub-grantees to form local employer advisory boards.

- o Promoting OJE as a tool for sub-grantees to use in future program years to gain more unsubsidized jobs for participant job seekers

c. Location and Population Served, including Equitable Distribution

States must:

1. Describe the localities and populations for which projects of the type authorized by title V are most needed. (20 CFR 641.325 (d))

- o Coordination with the nine regional Tennessee Area Agencies on Aging organizations that provide curb-to-curb transportation for older Americans (60 and older) is vital in the rural areas to provide access to individuals to participate in SCSEP.
- o Partnerships with various community and faith-based organizations that provide food to older Americans to ensure SCSEP participants have access to proper nutrition such as Second Harvest Foodbanks, Senior Centers for congregate meals and local Help Centers is ongoing.

- o Coordination with the community and faith-based organizations that serve older Americans such as Senior Centers, Meals-on-Wheels nutrition sites, and senior transportation, serve as host agencies across the state.

- o Coordination with programs that serve individuals with special needs or disabilities such as Vocational Rehabilitation and employers such as Goodwill Industries to ensure a successful outcome with SCSEP.

- o Use Tennessee's 2-1-1 and other directories of service and support organizations to identify entities and programs in the community that provide referrals and support services to seniors.

- Negotiate community service assignments for participants at AJC offices where feasible.

- Participants' training positions include greeters and resource assistants, administrative assistants, file/records clerks, custodians, office assistants, job developers, case managers and computer assistants.

- Negotiate for participant staff to be co-located at AJC offices where feasible. If participant assistants are trained as job developers or job developer assistants, they will be able to assist American Job Centers' older job seeker customers to find employment and enable Workforce System staff to address other customers or service delivery needs. Participate in meetings, as appropriate, with senior service providers, both public and private.

- Provide information and referrals to the services of AJC Offices and SCSEP, respectively.

- Continue to utilize a computer, adult basic education (ABE), HSE, continuing education, and other targeted training courses at community colleges, taking advantage of course discounts for individuals 55 to 64 years of age and free classes for individuals 65 years of age and older at community colleges. Libraries and community-based organizations also offer ABE, HSE, and ESL classes.

- Work with local boards to encourage community colleges to create short-term education and training programs that are relevant for local targeted industries and high-priority occupations.

- List participant openings and staff openings on Hyperlink to Jobs4TN

- Assist job-ready participants to register on Hyperlink to Jobs4TN

- Include AJC job seeker workshops and Job Clubs, when feasible, in Individual Employment Plans for participants who live near or have their host agency assignment near an AJC office.

- Attend local board meetings when feasible.

- Provide updates to local boards on SCSEP activities and successes in the LWDA.

2. List the cities and counties where the SCSEP project will take place. Include the number of SCSEP authorized positions and indicate if and where the positions changed from the prior year.

Title V of the Older Americans Act promotes geographical distribution of SCSEP positions so that all eligible persons have reasonable access to SCSEP. For Program Year (PY) 2014-2015, the U.S. Department of Labor allocates 20% of SCSEP funding to the TDLWD's 182 positions with the remaining 80% going to two national organizations—National Council on Aging (163 positions) and Senior Service America, Inc. (548 positions).

To measure the collective progress made by these state grantees toward an equitable distribution of program positions, an annual Equitable Distribution (ED) Report is

developed in collaboration with all state grantees and subgrantees. Each grantee operating in the state was contacted and asked to help develop the report. Telephone conversations provided a venue for the group to affirm a return to the regular practice of annual, Equitable Distribution meetings to achieve equality as indicated in the OAA Amendments. In addition, state operators meet on the national level to alleviate the disproportion noted.

Movement of positions from over-served to underserved locations within Tennessee

MOVEMENT OF POSITIONS FROM OVER-SERVED TO UNDERSERVED LOCATIONS WITHIN TENNESSEE

County	State	NCOA	SSAI	Totals
Anderson	--	--	10	10
Bedford	--	--	6	6
Benton	--	--	4	4
Bledsoe	--	--	3	3
Blount	--	--	16	16
Bradley	--	--	14	14
Campbell	10	--	--	10
Cannon	--	2	--	2
Carroll	--	--	6	6
Carter	5	--	6	11
Cheatham	4	--	--	4
Chester	4	--	--	4
Claiborne	7	--	--	7
Clay	--	--	3	3
Cocke	--	--	9	9
Coffee	--	--	8	8
Crockett	--	--	3	3
Cumberland	5	--	6	11
Davidson	--	58	--	58
Decatur	--	--	3	3
DeKalb	--	4	--	4
Dickson	--	6	--	6

Dyer	3	--	3	**6**
Fayette	--	--	5	**5**
Fentress	5	--	--	**5**
Franklin	--	--	6	**6**
Gibson	--	--	7	**7**
Giles	--	--	5	**5**
Grainger	--	--	5	**5**
Greene	--	--	14	**14**
Grundy	--	--	4	**4**
Hamblen	--	--	10	**10**
Hamilton	--	--	38	**38**
Hancock	--	--	2	**2**
Hardeman	5	--	--	**5**
Hardin	6	--	--	**6**
Hawkins	--	--	10	**10**
Haywood	--	--	4	**4**
Henderson	--	--	5	**5**
Henry	4	--	1	**5**
Hickman	--	5	--	**5**
Houston	2	--	--	**2**
Humphreys	2	--	--	**2**
Jackson	3	--	--	**3**
Jefferson	--	--	7	**7**
Johnson	3	--	2	**5**
Knox	--	--	43	**43**
Lake	--	--	1	**1**
Lauderdale	--	--	5	**5**
Lawrence	--	--	8	**8**
Lewis	--	--	3	**3**
Lincoln	--	--	5	**5**
Loudon	--	--	5	**5**
Macon	2	3	--	**5**
Madison	--	--	12	**12**
Marion	--	--	5	**5**

Marshall	--	--	4	4
Maury	--	--	11	11
McMinn	--	--	8	8
McNairy	5	--	--	5
Meigs	--	--	2	2
Monroe	--	--	8	8
Montgomery	4	7	--	11
Moore	--	--	1	1
Morgan	4	--	--	4
Obion	2	--	4	6
Overton	--	--	5	5
Perry	--	--	2	2
Pickett	--	--	1	1
Polk	--	--	4	4
Putnam	5	--	6	11
Rhea	--	--	5	5
Roane	--	--	8	8
Robertson	--	5	--	5
Rutherford	--	16	--	16
Scott	5	--	--	5
Sequatchie	--	--	3	3
Sevier	--	--	13	13
Shelby	45	--	58	103
Smith	--	3	--	3
Stewart	3	--	--	3
Sullivan	7	--	19	26
Sumner	--	13	--	13
Tipton	--	--	5	5
Trousdale	--	2	--	2
Unicoi	--	--	4	4
Union	4	--	--	4
Van Buren	--	--	--	--
Warren	--	7	--	7
Washington	8	--	8	16

Wayne	--	--	4	4
Weakley	4	--	2	6
White	--	--	5	5
Williamson	--	8	--	8
Wilson	--	10	--	10
TOTALS:	166	149	502	817

3. Describe any current slot imbalances and proposed steps to correct inequities to achieve equitable distribution.

Equitable Distribution for PY 2015 Q 2 reflects the following:

	Approved Slots	Enrolled	Variance	Counties
Tennessee	182	175	-7	29
National Grantees	711	690	-21	80
Total ED Grantees	893	865	-28	95

Tennessee had 19 out of 95 counties with more than two vacancies. To address these variances under and over-enrollment Tennessee will implement the following strategies:

76. Review EDR monthly and address variances with subgrantee during conference calls and scheduled meetings.

77. Review EDR semi-annually with national grantee partners and develop strategies needed to achieve equitable distribution

4. Explain the State's long-term strategy for achieving an equitable distribution of SCSEP positions within the State that:

A. moves positions from over-served to underserved locations within the State in compliance with 20 CFR 641.365.

Tennessee has 95 counties. According to the 2013-2015 USDOL's SCSEP Persistent Unemployment Report, 55 out of the 95 counties were reported as poor employment attainment counties. The majority of these counties are located in rural areas; therefore, the population tends to have low-literacy and low-skilled workers. Tennessee is working toward:

• Identifying the inequities in resources to equitably serve SCSEP participants in both rural and urban counties across the state.

• Identifying those inequities, specific to rural areas, that can be changed or addressed, and those that promote the development of new training sites and employment

opportunities for participants. Identifying tools and resources to rally communities in helping with the needs of the eligible population.

Rural areas that have inadequate resources will have access to the WIOA services. Rural-area employers with SCSEP training include custodial, food service, lawn care, department store greeters, librarian assistants, and childcare providers. In order to develop the types of jobs listed above, sub-grantees will make connections with businesses, local employers, schools, childcare facilities, nursing homes, and healthcare facilities. After rapport has been established with these entities, host agencies will be determined. Sub-grantees will maintain a relationship in an effort to supply host agencies with SCSEP participants as needed.

Like the rural population, Tennessee's urban population has its shares of challenges, which includes low skills, background, health, access, transportation and other barriers to employment. For example, Shelby County's challenges are similar to other urban counties in the state. Many of the state's older workers lack a sufficient work history and/or experience in industries relevant to today's labor market. This can be attributed to the tradition of retiring from one company, which means a participant would only be employable for that particular position that they held for 15 to 20 years. The realization is that the individual may no longer be physically fit or because of technological advancements possess the knowledge or skills to use advanced machinery and/or equipment. For this reason, many of SCSEP participants' lack relevant skill set(s) for other industries including high growth industries for which they have not worked or have received training. Another consequence that stems from the age-old tradition of maintaining loyalty to one company or job is the lack of education required for that job. The majority of Shelby County SCSEP participants' only have a high school diploma or less. All of these issues, including others that will be mentioned, comprise the older population in Shelby County that is eligible for SCSEP.

Second, criminal background and/or credit check significantly impacts the number of participants that program staff is able to move into employment. There are applicants living in the large urban— Davidson and Shelby— areas are ex-offenders. This results in limited host agencies and employers that will agree to work with ex-offenders thus limiting the ability to offer services to these individuals. At best, these are the participants that are most likely to be promoted and encouraged by Host Agencies to hire.

In addition, although many of the SCSEP participants need or want to work they may be long-term consumers of government assistance programs for income or other supports. The finding is recipients of these government assistance programs such as Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Disability Insurance or Housing and Urban Development (HUD) never leaves, especially for employment, once on these programs. Even when there is an opportunity for the individual to move off government assistance into economic self-sufficiency, there is fear that if government assistance is needed again the process is so long and tedious it will not be available. SCSEP then becomes just a program to supplement the income of those participants receiving benefits from these programs.

Thirdly, another issue that is prevalent in both rural and urban areas is persons with health and mental illness, some undiagnosed. There have been a number of participants enrolled in Shelby County suffering from serious health or mental illness. While the two

are grouped in this narrative they are very different, one more recognizable than the other. Both consequently, prove to be a trial for job retention.

Lastly, Davidson County like Shelby County still faces many issues with public transportation. Although public transportation is available in the large urban areas, there are still challenges to successfully overcome when assisting participants who use this method of transportation. These challenges include rising costs of bus tickets, finding appropriate host agencies for assignment on the bus route, the length of time it takes to get to and from the host agency, the cost and time it takes to job search and finding employers located on the bus route once the participant becomes job ready. One way Davidson County is dealing with this issue is by having staff rides the bus routes to become familiar with non-profits, public entities, and businesses located on the public transportation routes located in the participants' neighborhoods. Once research has been completed, new relationships can be formed to meet the needs of the participants.

B. equitably serves both rural and urban areas.

Information regarding the equitable services in both rural and urban areas is provided in the response to part A of this section.

C. serves individuals afforded priority for service under 20 CFR 641.520. (20 CFR 641.302(a), 641.365, 641.520)

Priority for Service

Several participants are given priority status under the SCSEP program. SCSEP sub-grantees work to continue enrolling older workers using this priority of service: first, individuals who are veterans and their qualified spouses; next, individuals, who are 65 and older, or:

- o Have a disability
- o Have limited English proficiency or low literacy skills
- o Reside in a rural area
- o Have low employment prospects
- o Have failed to find employment after using services under Title I of WIA
- o Are homeless or at risk of homelessness

Outreach to local organizations, serving individuals with barriers (such as veterans and the homeless), will be used to recruit individuals 55 years old or older meeting SCSEP guidelines.

These statutory preferences apply to the following individuals:

84. Those that have incomes below the poverty line;

85. Those who have poor employment prospects and who have the greatest social and/or economic need; and

86. Those who are eligible minorities, Limited-English speakers, or Native Americans

These preferences should be considered within the context of statutory priorities. For example, among eligible veterans and qualified spouses age 60 and over, to the extent practicable, preference should be given to individuals within these three categories.

Also, the Quarterly Progress Report indicators include the number of SCSEP persons served along with the demographics and characteristics of those participants. This U.S. Department of Labor-required report is another vehicle to track the number served, the distribution, the employment situation, and the population where community service projects are located.

5. Provide the ratio of eligible individuals in each service area to the total eligible population in the State. (20 CFR 641.325(a))

Throughout the inception of Tennessee's SCSEP program, the demand has been greater than the supply. See table below that shows the poverty rate of individuals 55+ by its LWDA population.

LWDA 7, commonly known as the Upper Cumberland area had the highest poverty level for the total population at 20.2%. Seven of the thirteen LWDAs have poverty levels for the total population that is higher than the state average.

For the age 55+ group, LWDA 11 has the highest percentage below poverty at 16.2%. LWDA 7 ranked second with 15.6% of age 55+ below poverty.

LWDA 13 has the greatest number of age 55+ individuals below the poverty level. There are 23,181 aged 55+ below poverty in this LWDA and represents 13.7% of the total statewide. LWDA 9 has 10.1% of the statewide total with 17,128 of age 55+ below poverty. These two LWDAs include the two largest cities in Tennessee.

LWDA	Total population	below poverty level	% below poverty	% of State total	Total population Age 55+	55+ below poverty	% 55+ below poverty	% of State total
1	369,740	64,279	17.4%	6.4%	111,393	12,327	11.1%	7.3%
2	440,361	79,924	18.1%	8.0%	127,371	16,327	12.8%	9.6%
3	423,748	55,989	13.2%	5.6%	103,496	7,887	7.6%	4.7%
4	480,105	74,801	15.6%	7.5%	150,514	16,114	10.7%	9.5%
5	592,596	93,707	15.8%	9.3%	162,243	16,850	10.4%	9.9%
6	230,170	42,133	18.3%	4.2%	63,221	7,485	11.8%	4.4%
7	238,707	48,179	20.2%	4.8%	67,270	10,515	15.6%	6.2%

8	685,158	71,802	10.5%	7.2%	147,544	11,977	8.1%	7.1%
9	980,715	142,248	14.5%	14.2%	197,276	17,128	8.7%	10.1%
10	241,111	37,210	15.4%	3.7%	64,192	6,885	10.7%	4.1%
11	251,825	47,168	18.7%	4.7%	67,489	10,935	16.2%	6.5%
12	340,578	62,187	18.3%	6.2%	93,570	11,810	12.6%	7.0%
13	960,154	182,840	19.0%	18.2%	201,079	23,181	11.5%	13.7%

Comparing urban and rural areas shows non-metro counties have almost 38% of the total population age 55+ below the poverty level. The Nashville area has 16.8% of the statewide total.

6. Provide the relative distribution of eligible individuals who:

Provide the relative distribution of eligible individuals who:

A. Reside in urban and rural areas within the State

The greatest economic need is for those at or below 125% of the Department of Health and Human Services Poverty Level. In Tennessee, according to 2010 Census Data, 1,639,177 people account for the age group 55+; TDLWD estimates that 188,505 are eligible for SCSEP services. To be eligible for SCSEP, an individual must be 55 years old or older, have a total family income of less than 125 percent of the Federal poverty level and be unemployed. For Tennessee, 11.5% of the individual's 65+ fall at or below 125% of the poverty level, according to the Census ACS. Likewise, the greatest social need is defined by USDOL as a need caused by noneconomic factors. This includes persons with physical disabilities and mental disabilities, language barriers, and cultural, social, or geographic isolation brought about by racial or ethnic status. In Tennessee, approximately 121 or 13% of the eligible individuals were identified as having a disability at the end of PY 2012. This indicates that Tennessee SCSEP is reaching out and serving eligible older residents with disabilities.

The Most-In-Need outreach includes services from WIOA, community outreach, assistance in providing transportation, workforce system referrals, promoting area businesses in an effort to increase host agency assignments. Subgrantees are encouraged to participate in the local board that includes members of the community, business owners, representatives, and those from other state agencies. The subgrantee is assigned to the American Job Center for at least four hours week to recruit participants qualified to participate in the program. The state's objective to improve these resources is an ongoing effort.

Overall, recruitment endeavors in Tennessee have been successful in reaching and serving the SCSEP-targeted special populations. The use of Disability Program Navigators throughout the Career Center system is a great resource. Navigators assist individuals, with special needs, with Career Center staff in the recruitment and selection process. Navigators bridge the gap between the business and human service communities by organizing forums for discussion, etc.

Below is a chart of recruitment strategies:

Most-In-Need Population Group	Subgrantee Recruitment Method
Are age 65 or older	Senior centers, aging agencies, build local community-based partnerships and collaborations
Have a disability	Senior centers, aging agencies, disability service providers, build local community-based partnerships and collaborations
Have limited English proficiency	Have access to Spanish speakers; utilized local community partnerships
Have low literacy skills	Partner with high school equivalency (HSE) and ABE providers; work with seniors who present this barrier
Live in a rural area	Focus on the 48 counties in Tennessee that are classified as rural
Are veterans or their spouses eligible	Partner with agencies that serve veterans
Have low employment prospects	Promote SCSEP with safety net organizations (like food banks) and other types of host agencies to get the word out
Have failed to find jobs after using Title I services	Partner with local American Job Centers
Are homeless or at risk of homelessness	Partner with agencies that serve the homeless
Have income at or below the poverty level	Do not recruit for this specifically other than ensuring that participants are income-eligible for SCSEP
Are minorities	Have access to Spanish speakers and other members of minority community. Build local partnerships to address this.
Are socially isolated-have physical and mental disabilities, language barriers, and cultural, social or geographic isolation including isolation caused by race and ethnicity	Some territory in TN yields pockets of isolation; also subgrantees partner with disability organizations for supportive services and other referrals

B. Have the greatest economic need

Information regarding economic need is addressed in question A in this section.

C. Are minorities

Information regarding minorities is addressed in question A in this section.

D. Are limited English proficient.

Information regarding limited English proficient is addressed in question A in this section.

E. Have the greatest social need. (20 CFR 641.325(b))

Information regarding greatest social need is addressed in question A in this section.

7. Describe the steps taken to avoid disruptions to service for participants to the greatest extent possible, when positions are redistributed, as provided in 20 CFR 641.365; when new Census or other reliable data

becomes available; or when there is over-enrollment for any other reason. (20 CFR 641.325(i), 641.302(b))

When a new census or other reliable data becomes available or when there is over-enrollment for any other reason, every effort is made to ensure that there is no disruption in service by ceasing new enrollments until authorized levels are met. Individual Employment Plans are reviewed and any remaining barriers to employment are addressed; also an aggressive job placement strategy is put in place to achieve authorized levels.

In the case of any transition of positions, whether caused by a shifting in census data and the location of SCSEP positions or sub-grantees moving within the state, the grantee designated point of contact will serve as the team leader whose responsibilities will include: serving as a coordination point of contact for participants, host agencies, other grantees, state SCSEP Offices and USDOL. The Federal Project Officer will be consulted and will subsequently approve any movements of positions. No movement or transfer of positions will be initiated until the State Agency is notified.

After approval, the file transfer process begins. Records include, but are not limited to: most-recent eligibility; contact information; assessments or latest IEP review; current community service work-based training description; host agency contact information; safety record of most-recent monitoring; and the most recent offer of a physical examination.

Sub-grantees ensure that files are kept confidential in several ways: (1) contact will be made with sub-grantees about the confidential treatment of files; (2) participant files will be kept in a secure location accessible only to authorized persons; (3) sub-grantee will monitor onsite file security; (4) neither grantees nor their sub-grantees will use volunteers for any transition activities that require access to records; (5) grantees will transfer only encrypted files to maintain confidentiality of electronic data; and, (6) at the time of enrollment, each participant will sign the Privacy Act Statement based on the Privacy Act of 1974, which allows release of specific confidential information, including Social Security numbers.

In a case where there are new offices, SCSEP grantees and their sub-grantees will use existing offices and staff for immediate startup and they will ensure seamless services during the transition. If grantees are awarded funds to serve counties not included in their current grant, they will identify and train staff of a new sub-grantee, or if necessary, will operate in these counties with their own staff on an interim basis. Through any transition process, grantees will ensure that participants are paid. Grantees will convene meetings with affected participants, the incumbent and new providers, to process participant payroll information. As part of the sub-grantee sponsor agreement, all subgrantees have acknowledged in writing that they "agree to assist grantees in transitioning SCSEP participants and related files to the new SCSEP sponsor with minimum disruption."

To ease the transition, participants will be encouraged to take advantage of other available assistance programs. Onsite help will be available as needed. Since necessary financial information will be transferred, there should be no interruption in payroll. Final

payroll payments will be made according to a payment schedule agreed upon by the two grantee agencies.

SCSEP Assurances

The State Plan must include assurances that where SCSEP is included in the Combined Workforce Plan, the State has established a written policy and procedure to obtain advice and recommendations on the State Plan from:

Representatives of the State and area agencies on aging;   Yes

State and local boards under WIOA;   Yes

Public and private nonprofit agencies and organizations providing employment services, including each grantee operating a SCSEP project within the State, except as provided under section 506(a)(3) of OAA and 20 CFR 641.320(b);   Yes

Social service organizations providing services to older individuals;   Yes

Grantees under Title III of OAA;   Yes

Affected Communities;   Yes

Unemployed older individuals;   Yes

Community-based organizations serving older individuals;   Yes

Business organizations; and   Yes

Labor organizations.   Yes

State Comments on SCSEP Assurances