

# Disability Employment Initiative Project Lead's Guide

## Role and Responsibilities

This guide represents an outline of the role and responsibilities associated with the individual(s) at the state-level that has been designated to serve as the Project Lead for coordination of the Disability Employment Initiative (DEI) project (i.e., the individual(s) who will oversee and serve as the primary contact for the DEI cooperative agreement). The information and guidance is based in large part on DEI Funding Opportunity Announcements.

This guide will assist DEI Project Leads in becoming knowledgeable about your role and responsibilities as you implement the DEI project within your state. Several technical assistance resources have been developed and this guide will direct you to these materials.

The guide is broken down into three key areas:

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## **A. ROLE OF THE STATE-LEVEL DEI PROJECT LEAD**

1. Serves as Primary Contact for DEI project representing the administering agency in the grant relationship with the designated ETA Federal Project Officer (FPO), Grant Officer, and the national DEI Program Office representatives.
2. Provides leadership for the implementation of the DEI and the on-going support of local level implementing sites and Disability Resource Coordinator (DRC) positions.
3. Available to work with the national DEI Program Office, National Liaison and designated training and technical assistance support.
4. Participates in administrative grantee meetings (or sends a representative if not available), and other such meetings deemed necessary by the national DEI Program Office.
5. Responds to requests for information from the national DEI Program Office.

## **B. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DEI PROJECT LEAD**

### **1. Public Education and Coordination of the DEI**

- a. Establish and collaborate with the DEI Project Leadership Team of state-level partners to provide project leadership to drive better integration of resources at the local level. This team must include representatives of state-level agencies that are involved in the implementation of career pathways.
  - Establish roles and responsibilities and determine how this team will help carry out grant-related objectives, including the leveraging of funding, and the modification and expansion of programming, in alignment with the WIOA State Plan.
- b. Establish and coordinate partnerships/linkages with other state-level agencies/institutions/partners in activities, often most effectively engaged at the state level, that may be critical to the success of the project in making modifications to existing AJC and career pathways systems and programs to include individuals with disabilities.
  - Create processes that promote understanding among local-level staff on how the state-level partnerships will be utilized at the local level to increase service delivery and outcomes.
- c. Facilitate state and local DEI participation in training and technical assistance activities.
- d. Coordinate implementation of Ticket to Work administrative activities.
  - Facilitate access to Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and Wagner-Peyser individual records.
  - Coordinate with the Social Security Administration or its representatives (e.g., Ticket Program Manager contractor).
- e. Implement efforts to sustain DEI project activities after the grant period ends.
  - Disability Resource Coordinator(s) positions.
  - Successful approaches (i.e., state or organizational policies, partnerships, agreements, or processes) to promote the inclusion of individuals with disabilities (including individuals with significant

<p>disabilities) in career pathways programs and enhance their education and employment outcomes.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Replication or expansion of effective practices in career pathways programs throughout the public workforce system in the state.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reference: <a href="#">DEI Funding Opportunity Announcement</a></li> <li>• Reference: Individual State DEI Statement of Work</li> <li>• Resource: Refer to section 3: State and Local Level Capacity Building</li> </ul>
<p><b>2. Hiring and Supervision</b></p>
<p>a. Determine the method and process for hiring and supervising local-level full-time Disability Resource Coordinator positions to implement the state’s DEI project strategic approach, OR assisting the designated local WDBs/implementing sites in this process.</p>
<p>b. Promote and ensuring that the skill sets for DRCs reflect the vision of the national DEI program office for these positions.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individuals must have disability-related and workforce knowledge skills, experience (including experience with the employment of individuals with disabilities and the public workforce system's challenges in effectively serving them), and abilities that can be applied to implementing the project design at the local level.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding of the state and local workforce systems, stakeholders, crucial partnerships, and agreements that will influence the development of career pathways and DEI objectives.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledgeable about career pathways systems and programs.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• State and local WDBs/implementing sites should be encouraged to hire qualified individuals with disabilities.</li> </ul>
<p>c. Identify and coordinate with the state workforce agency and the identified LWDB(s) to ensure that barriers and challenges are addressed and that common goals are achieved.</p>
<p>d. Establish state – local communication links: identify and operate mechanisms at the state-level to remain in regular communication with DRCs and supervisors at the local level that include designated training and technical assistance support.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listservs (e.g. internal project listserv and external state-level partner listserv).</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consideration for alternative communication methods (i.e. instant messaging, texting, tablet applications) or internal website (Intranet).</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regularly scheduled conference calls with local level DRCs, including designated technical assistance support in the planning and execution of these calls (e.g. monthly or bi-monthly).</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Face-to-face meetings (e.g. orientation, training specific, roundtables).</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local level managers and/or WDB members working with DRCs should be asked to join conference calls and/or face-to-face meetings.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Other (e.g. weekly or bi-weekly reporting requirements for DRCs).</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reference: <a href="#">DEI Funding Opportunity Announcement</a></li> </ul>

- Reference: Individual State DEI Statement of Work
- Resource: Refer to section 3. State and Local Level Capacity Building

### 3. State and Local Level Capacity Building

These “DEI Front Line Resources for State Project Leads” can be found on the [WorkforceGPS Disability and Employment Community](#) under the link to the Disability Employment Initiative page unless otherwise indicated.

- DEI Round VIII Project Lead’s Orientation** -- This DEI Grantee Learning Opportunity provides an introduction and overview of the Disability Employment Initiative for new grantees.
- DEI Quarterly Narrative Reporting Guidance** – These resources provide an overview of the submission procedures for grantee quarterly narrative reporting along with technical assistance and examples on reporting.
- DEI DRC Sample Job Description** – This job description and supporting information is offered as a **sample** to assist the state and the participating local workforce areas in selecting the best candidates for their DEI Disability Resource Coordinator position(s).
- Employment Network (EN) Tools and Resources** – This page provides links to tools and resources for Employment Network operations in the public workforce system. To access EN tools and resources, please [visit](#).
- DEI Allowable Uses of Grant Funds** -- This Toolkit includes examples from the field of how grantees are supporting grant provisions.

### 4. Project Oversight

- Fiscal and programmatic monitoring activities of project to ensure goals and outcomes are met.
- Facilitating implementation of additional data collection and other processes or actions, as the national DEI Program Office/DOL may require.
- Learning about DEI successes and challenges and sharing this information with the national DEI Program Office and designated training and technical assistance support.
- Providing guidance and support for local level DRC positions with assistance from the designated training and technical assistance support.

### 5. National DEI Program Office Administrative and Reporting Requirements

DEI projects must complete both a financial and a narrative progress report on a quarterly basis. Key project staff responsible for this task will receive a PIN and password to enter DOL’s Online Electronic Reporting System. Grantee requirements associated with grant budget and reporting is part of the ETA Grant Officer’s letter to each grantee that accompanies the completed grant package.

- Quarterly Financial Reports** – A Quarterly Financial Status Report (ETA 9130) is required until such time as all funds have been expended or the grant period has expired.
  - Due 45 days after the end of each calendar year quarter.
  - On the final Financial Status Report, you must include any sub-award amounts so final indirect costs can be calculated, if applicable.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grantees must use DOL ETA's Online Electronic Reporting System.</li> </ul>
<p>b. <b>Quarterly Performance Reports</b> – A Quarterly Progress Report must be submitted to the DEI project's designated Federal Project Officer.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Due 45 days after the end of each calendar year quarter.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The report must include quarterly information regarding grant activities, performance goals, and milestones.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The last quarterly progress report will serve as the grant's Final Performance Report.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The quarterly progress report must provide both quarterly and cumulative information on the grant activities. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ It must summarize project activities, employment outcomes and other deliverables, and related results of the project, and must thoroughly document the training or labor market information approaches used by the grantee.</li> <li>○ DOL will provide grantees with formal guidance about the data and other information that is required to be collected and reported on either a regular basis or special request basis.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>c. Grantees must be aware of Federal guidelines on record retention, which require grantees to maintain all records pertaining to grant activities for a period of not less than three (3) years from the date of submission of the final expenditure report.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reference: State-Level DEI Project contact chart to obtain name and contact information of Federal Project Officer.</li> <li>• Reference: <a href="#">DEI Funding Opportunity Announcement</a>, Section VI. Award Administration Information,</li> </ul>
<p><b>c. CLARIFICATION OF THE NATIONAL DEI PROGRAM OFFICE, ETA , ODEP, and REGIONAL FPO ROLES</b></p>
<p><b>National DEI Program Office</b> -- Consists of the Employment and Training Administration (ETA) and Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP):</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develops and implements workforce disability policy and program initiatives to address structural, programmatic, and systemic employment challenges for people with disabilities; provides guidance and technical assistance to the public workforce system; compiles and disseminates resources, tools, and best practices to the public workforce system; develops the regulations and provides guidance and technical assistance on WIOA; develops and issues the Funding Opportunity Announcement, determines funding allocations, issues annual grant planning instructions and grant awards and modifications involving changes in Statement of Work or funding levels; and establishes performance measures associated with the Government Performance and Results Act.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides policy clarification, program technical assistance, and guidance to Grantees, FPOs, and designated training and technical assistance in support of the DEI; works closely with FPOs and designated training and technical assistance support in the development of technical assistance and program requirements; and conducts</li> </ul>

extensive coordination across other ETA and ODEP offices and programs, and Federal agencies. In addition, it closely coordinates with the DEI Evaluation Team.

**Federal Project Officers** -- FPOs are located in the six ETA Regional offices and serve as the Grant Officer's technical representative to the DEI cooperative agreement. Regional FPOs conduct desk and on-site monitoring of the grant and are the primary federal contact with the grantee. Modification requests are submitted to FPOs and forwarded to the national DEI Program Office for Grant Officer approval when changes involve budget realignment or adjustments to the Statement of Work.