

WIOA Unified or Combined Plan Task Force

Combined Planning Option: A draft for consideration by the task force.

This draft is for discussion and revision to meet the needs of the task force. It is a rough draft only, to provide an example of how combined planning could be structured in Washington, if desired.

Combined planning is strongly encouraged within the guidance provided to states as they work to collaboratively redesign the existing workforce development system. With recognition of Washington State's collaborative and innovative nature, a combined plan represents the opportunity to better align every aspect of the workforce development system and build a foundation for increasingly effective use of resources and provision of services. This draft, representing some specific elements potentially involved in implementing combined planning in Washington, is for consideration and discussion by the task force. This draft reflects responsiveness around questions or concerns raised by task force members regarding combined planning.

Under this option Washington would include a wide array of partners in a combined plan. **This option explicitly focusses combined planning on increasing job entry, retention, and earnings progression for our customers; reduces the paperwork involved; and explicitly rules out some of the potential downsides of combined planning.** Any new partners that join into the combined plan would do so under the following parameters.

- New partners in combined planning retain full authority over their own funding and program decisions. Combined planning does not cede any authority over funding or program decisions to any other body.
- New partners' role in combined planning is to identify how the partners in the workforce system can help the new partner's customers achieve job entry, retention, and earnings progression; and to indicate how the new partner can help the rest of the systems' customers succeed on these same goals. This includes increasing education and training as key strategies for achieving job entry, retention, and earnings progression.
- The written plan materials for new partners would be limited to the dot point above. New partners do not submit their entire federal program plan as part of the combined plan.
- New partners in combined planning are not required to change their data collection practices or performance indicators.
- New partners are requested to join data sharing agreements, to allow their existing data to be used to produce WIOA outcome reports. However, if legal, IT, or other concerns make this difficult, there is no requirement to do so.
- In the combined planning process, each new partner will be asked to identify specific actions or strategies that other partners could take, which would help the new partner's customers gain jobs, retention, earnings progression, and move steadily up into secure middle-income careers.
- Each new partner will also be asked to identify any exemptions, reductions, or timeframe/due date changes they would like to have in their current federal reporting and planning processes, to reflect their participation in the WIOA combined planning process. The WTECB and all combined planning partners may issue combined requests to the federal level on such matters, to indicate our combined support across multiple partners.
- One early action in this regard—if requested by DSHS—may be a combined approach to increasing the focus on outcomes, not process measures, in WorkFirst, so that Washington can move more WorkFirst clients into jobs, retention, earnings progression, and better lives.

Potential Changes and Additions

These are potential changes and additions the Task Force may consider adding to the combined planning option above, based on our discussion at the last meeting and our assignment from the Steering Committee.

Changes to reflect discussion at the last meeting

1. Change the second dot point to show the education outcomes as equally important end goals. (It currently shows the education goals primarily as ways to lead to the employment goals. Education goals are inherently of top value and need to be shown as such.)
2. Recommend that combined planning include as many partner programs as possible.
3. Indicate the state strategic plan will be updated every two years, and will include reports from the new partners in combined planning regarding whether they have gained value. This may include reporting whether combined planning has helped them increase programmatic outcomes that are important to their individual program and/or increased their ability to help customers move into jobs and upward into higher earnings.

Options to identify who is included in combined planning

4. Recommend that partners who, after considering this proposal, would like to opt out should write the Governor and WTECB to request to be opted out.
5. Recommend that partners who, after considering this proposal, would like to opt in should write the Governor and WTECB to request to be opted in.
6. Other.

Options on what is included in combined planning

7. Recommend that combined planning focus on the items identified in the Task Force's True North document, to ensure that more low-income people and disadvantaged populations receive coordinated services, enter employment, continue receiving retention and earnings progression services, move up to higher earnings, and eventually move all the way out of poverty.
8. Recommend that combined planning focus on programmatic goals if requested by any new partner. For example, DSHS may seek all partners' assistance with TANF work participation rate, and/or with helping TANF and SNAP participants move up through earnings and wage progression.
9. Recommend that the WTECB use Lean management techniques to ensure multi-partner strategies identified in the combined plan get implemented and succeed. Identify who is the sponsor, lead staff, team, charter the project for scope and intended outcomes, and schedule regular progress reports. (This is in response to discussions indicating prior planning discussions covered similar ground but did always result in change that mattered to customers.)
10. Others as identified by Task Force members.