

On 6/13/2019, Golden Sierra Job Training Agency (GSJTA) received notification from the California Workforce Development Board (CWDB) regarding the conditional approval of the Golden Sierra Workforce Development Board's (GSWDB) Local Plan Modification. According to this notification, the GWSDB local plan modification exceeded minimum requirements in all areas except two relating to services to CalFresh Employment and Training (E&T). These areas are referenced as follows:

- The local plan describes the employment barriers experienced by people receiving CalFresh in your local area/region, including potential barriers faced by people with disabilities and resources that can be utilized to assist overcoming these barriers, including those resources eligible for 50% federal reimbursement from CalFresh E&T.
- The local plan describes the way in which local/regional partners will work together to provide supportive services to this population and facilitate program completion.

In order to ensure that further submissions included information relevant to the reviewer's concerns GSJTA corresponded with staff from the state board who indicated the following:

“v. The local plan describes the employment barriers experienced by people receiving CalFresh in your local area/region, including potential barriers faced by people with disabilities and resources that can be utilized to assist overcoming these barriers, including those resources eligible for 50% federal reimbursement from CalFresh E&T.

For the item above, the comments indicated that while the plan stated that individuals' faced barriers, it did not say what those barriers were. Any additional information you can provide on types of barriers would be helpful.

xii. The local plan describes the way in which local/regional partners will work together to provide supportive services to this population and facilitate program completion.

For the item above, the comments indicated that while the plan addressed that supportive services would be offered, it did not say how partners will work together to provide them. Any additional information you can provide on what partnerships will be utilized or leveraged to collaborate in the delivery of supportive services would be helpful.”

As a response to the referenced concerns we have prepared the following additional information addressing these issues. Once approved, the additional information will be incorporated into the relevant CalFresh sections of the GSWDB local plan 2 year modification:

- The CalFresh population in the Golden Sierra Region experience several significant barriers to employment. These barriers include lack of financial resources and planning, including high debt and poor credit. Many folks lack a quality work history, suffer from unreliable transportation, or lack work opportunities close to home. Additionally, unstable housing and unreliable childcare are factors. Other barriers include disability, criminal history, substance abuse, and mental health issues. Most of the CalFresh population in the Golden Sierra region require some form of education, or training in order to obtain (and retain) gainful employment. This includes English as a Second Language (ESL), General High School Equivalency (GED), basic remediation, or formal workforce development training either on the job or via vocational classroom training.
- One theme referenced throughout the GSWDB local plan modification is that strong partnerships are a critical factor in the success of the people we assist. GSJTA has built long-standing relationships with our region's workforce stakeholders. It is through these value-added relationships that assist in the identification and coordination of resources, such as support services, that are critical to the success of our mutual participants. GSJTA and its partner organizations are committed to improving service alignment, integration, and collaboration. This is evidenced by the completion of Memorandums of Understanding (MOU), and through participation in coordination and training meetings held by our region's One-Stop Operator.

Collaborating with partners is a critical and foundational tool in successful workforce development strategies. It is GSJTA's practice to involve program partners whenever appropriate. The importance of partnerships is detailed GSJTA's documented policies and procedures which, for instance, require collaboration with partners before providing services such as training contracts or support services.

Local and regional partners collaborate to provide CalFresh Participants the appropriate Support Services when these services are necessary to facilitate the success of the participant. Partners collaborate to identify the most effective means of coordinating services which may include referral or co-enrollment. WIOA Title I staff may provide Supportive Services to WIOA participants once the need is established and the staff have identified that other funds do exist to cover the cost of items critical to facilitate program completion. These Support Services include items such as transportation assistance, appropriate work, interview or safety clothing, and childcare assistance. Additionally, Support Services may be provided during participation in training, or upon attainment of employment. Furthermore, Support Services may be provided to assist in the retention of employment when needed.