

# Illinois Self-Assessment and Service Integration

## Highlights

- The Department of Human Services' Division of Rehabilitation Services brought in technical assistance to work with Core Programs and the State's Workforce Board to address service alignment in the American Job Centers.
- The State of Illinois Workforce Innovation Board has implemented the process with all 22 of the Local Workforce Boards.
- The Illinois Workforce Innovation Board has created a policy (WIOA Policy 18-WIOA-1.13) which includes a self-assessment process based on the WINTAC process to help Local Workforce Areas establish a baseline and measure progress along a continuum of integration.
- A web-based presence was created to provides links to help Local Workforce Innovation Boards (LWIBs), One-Stop Operators and various Core and Required partners identified in the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act understand service integration requirements, investigate effective practices and exchange ideas and information.

## Description

In February of 2018, WINTAC conducted two Self-Assessment and Strategic Planning sessions featuring the WINTAC-created Integration Continuum for assessing current and desired levels of alignment among Title IV and the Core, Required and Other Partners in the American Job Centers. The day-long, facilitated sessions took place in Champaign and Springfield, Illinois, and included a cross-section of staff from the Core Partners, several Required Partners and other stakeholders.

### Statewide Approach

State-level leaders were invited to observe the process, and VR, Title I, Title II, Title III, State Workforce Board staff and TANF leadership were in attendance at the Champaign and Springfield events. Over time, the Illinois Workforce Board became determined to replicate the process state-wide, adapting it to Illinois' specific needs.

All Local Workforce Investment Boards (LWIB) were provided processes, tools, and



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materials based on those created by WINTAC. Each completed the steps in the process, including individual partner assessments and facilitated group assessments, although partner participation varied significantly. The number of individual partner self-assessments ranged from 3 to 17. Self-assessments showed that local partners view their current levels of integration on most goals to be either Communication or Coordination. Desired levels of integration rise to either Coordination or Collaboration for the vast majority of goals on local self-assessments.<sup>1</sup>

## Web-Based Resources

Illinois WorkNet Center: <https://www.illinoisworknet.com/si>



Figure 1 Screenshot of Illinois Web-based resources

Integrating local workforce services for job-seeker and employer customers was a priority for the Illinois Workforce Innovation Board (IWIB). Because Illinois has many departments and programs involved in service delivery, integrating these many resources was considered essential for customers to have a positive experience. The web-based resources included:

- Guidance and Forms:
  - Access to the service integration policy and the self-assessment process to help Local Workforce Areas establish a baseline and measure progress along the Integration Continuum;
  - An overview and facilitators' manual for implementing service integration;
  - Links to the fillable forms that must be submitted annually by each Local

<sup>1</sup> From the preliminary report - **Service Integration Self-Assessment Result Summary Prepared for the Service Integration Policy Work Group.**

Workforce Innovation Board;

- Training, Technical Assistance and other resources related to Service Integration and Self-Assessment:
  - Service integration resources for LWIBs, One-Stop Operators and WIOA partners;
  - Recorded webinars and PowerPoint presentations;
  - Upcoming events and other useful information;
- A Forum and FAQs:
  - A Forum page is being developed to support exchanging information and solving problems online and to build implementation networks on specific goal areas;
  - Frequently Asked Questions and Answers about Service Integration Self-Assessment are presented;
- Service Integration and Self-Assessment: Practices are shared, including information from:
  - U.S. Department of Labor;
  - The LEAD Center; and
  - Workforce GPS – ETA Webinars.

## Impact

Vocational Rehabilitation Agency (**John Marchioro**<sup>2</sup>)

- WINTAC's development of a self-assessment document has helped local workforce agencies define and assess current levels of integration, as well as develop short- and long-term strategies needed to accomplish Illinois' service integration goals.
- This has been very helpful to the Illinois VR program in that it helped other partners understand the role that VR can play in helping to support workforce customers with disabilities.
- Other workforce partners now have a better understanding of the services that

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<sup>2</sup> John Marchioro, Statewide Trainer, Department of Human Services, Illinois Division of Rehabilitation Services



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VR can provide, and that has led to an increase in co-enrollment and direct referral.

- There are several locations throughout the state where VR offices are looking to find which partner can assist with challenging requests or barriers from employers. VR offices and their workforce partners are beginning to share:
  - Integrated resources for transportation barriers for late-shift opportunities;
  - On-the-job reimbursements to offset training costs;
  - Training partners who can train job seekers;
  - Talent to source to businesses; and
  - Assistance in potential funding or partners to provide reverse job fairs and joint partnerships that have taken place with workforce agencies and partners across state lines.

#### Illinois State Workforce Board (**Diana Robinson**<sup>3</sup>)

- The most significant system change has been that Service Integration has become an important element of the State's workforce planning efforts.
- The good work that has been informed by WINTAC is being closely followed by the Illinois Workforce Innovation Board (IWIB), the State entity overseeing the administration of federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act funding.
- As a result, Service Integration is referenced in the Unified State Plan being developed by the IWIB, as well as in Governor Pritzker's Executive Order 3 Report that focuses on workforce development.
- This spotlight on Service Integration will continue as the Illinois Workforce Board's (IWIB) Continuous Improvement Committee has asked for an evaluation of Service Integration activities and will be closely monitoring progress and results.

#### For More Information:

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