



U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
ADMINISTRATION FOR  
**CHILDREN & FAMILIES**  
Office of Family Assistance

**OFA National Experts Roundtable:  
Strengthening Collaboration  
between TANF and WIOA**

**OFA National Experts Roundtable:  
Strengthening Collaboration between TANF and WIOA  
Monday, June 22, 2015 | Washington, DC**

# **Summary and Recommendations Report**

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United States Department of Health and Human Services,  
Administration for Children and Families,  
Office of Family Assistance  
and managed by ICF International

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ADMINISTRATION FOR  
**CHILDREN & FAMILIES**

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## **Introduction**

On June 22, 2015, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Administration for Children and Families (ACF), Office of Family Assistance (OFA) convened the *Strengthening Collaboration between TANF and WIOA* National Experts Roundtable in Washington, DC. The roundtable brought together a select group of practice, policy, and research experts (see Appendix B: Participant List) to discuss the opportunities and challenges that the new Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) system offers to Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) participants, programs, and systems. Under the WIOA legislation, although governors may opt-out, TANF is a required partner with the American Job Centers (or one-stop system). This potential partnership could improve employment and training services for TANF participants through American Job Centers. Throughout the roundtable, participants were challenged to consider strategies for ensuring that TANF participants (and other low-income individuals with employment barriers) are well-served through the workforce system and to work towards creating a shared vision for the workforce system that addresses these individuals' needs. Roundtable participants identified critical knowledge gaps, shared lessons learned and solutions to common challenges, reflected upon research findings and needs, and outlined promising, innovative strategies that are relevant for TANF-WIOA collaboration. The discussion aimed to support OFA's future TANF-WIOA collaboration efforts and ongoing technical assistance work.

This report shares key highlights and recommendations from the *Strengthening Collaboration between TANF and WIOA* National Experts Roundtable.

## **Challenges to Roundtable Participants**

OFA Director Nisha Patel convened the roundtable by challenging participants to address the following issues:

- How do we ensure that TANF participants (and other low-income individuals with employment barriers) are well-served at one-stop centers and have access to comprehensive employment and training and supportive services that will support their progress toward family economic security?
- How do we create a shared vision for a workforce system that addresses the needs of the diversity of participants that it serves, including employers?

OFA Deputy Director Susan Golonka further challenged participants to define successful collaboration of TANF into the one-stop system from the perspective of a TANF participant,

TANF agency, workforce system partner(s), and employers. Under this charge, roundtable participants identified the below broad elements of success from each of these perspectives.

***Summary of Successful Integration from the Perspective of...***

<b>TANF Participant</b>	<b>TANF Agency</b>	<b>Workforce System Partner(s)</b>	<b>Employers</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employment</li> <li>• Income and increased income</li> <li>• Progress towards personal goals</li> <li>• Self-awareness</li> <li>• Start and completion of education and occupational training</li> <li>• Meeting personal and family needs, goals, and objectives</li> <li>• Success tailored to each participant</li> <li>• Connection between where an individual starts and where they want and need to go</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employment for work ready participants</li> <li>• Income leading to family self-sufficiency</li> <li>• Meeting Work Participation Rate (WPR)</li> <li>• For those work ready, co-enrollment and benefit from workforce services</li> <li>• Alignment of goals with workforce system partners</li> <li>• TANF participants receive timely, responsive, and comprehensive services</li> <li>• Proper service mix and training so people don't hear "no"</li> <li>• American Job Centers build on and complement TANF</li> <li>• Participants access a path of services as seamlessly as possible</li> <li>• TANF agencies receive value and benefit for investments in American Job Centers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual employment, wages, wage gains, job retention, and advancement</li> <li>• Common goals, objectives, and outcomes</li> <li>• Improved outcomes for the hardest to employ</li> <li>• Understanding what all the partners bring to the table and how participants benefit from these collective, leveraged resources</li> <li>• Complementary case management</li> <li>• Comprehensive services that include an array of other human services (i.e. mental health).</li> <li>• Staff training benefits from all of the partners</li> <li>• Create a seamless workforce system</li> <li>• Systemic changes so client does not realize moving from one grant source to another</li> <li>• Common intake and shared assessment information</li> <li>• Shift to strengths-based system that can serve different client groups (start at different points)</li> <li>• Participants are confident that goals will be met</li> <li>• Additional employer engagement, attraction, expansion, and retention of employer base</li> <li>• Leveraging expertise of TANF</li> <li>• Market-based approaches to training (do it better together)</li> <li>• Solving community problems by meeting employer needs and improving local economies</li> <li>• Improved reputation of the workforce system</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hire workers with the occupational skills, soft skills, and technical skills needed</li> <li>• Hire workers who will be retained, reducing job turnover</li> <li>• Develop robust pipeline for future hires</li> <li>• Increase employers' revenue, reduce employment related costs, and increase profit</li> <li>• Retain and enhance employers' reputation</li> <li>• Provide a trusted entry point for employees</li> <li>• Coordinated approach to employment – not eight job developers knocking on door</li> <li>• May be interested in developing curriculum and work-based learning opportunities</li> </ul>

## **Success**

From the above list, roundtable participants identified common themes of success, which include:

- Employer-driven employment.
- Alignment of (human service and workforce systems) infrastructure so collective impact is seamless and effective.
- Clear communication so all stakeholders know what to expect, how to expect it, and when to expect it.
- Development, use and enhancement of career and educational pathways.

The above common themes of success may create the foundation for a shared vision of a workforce system, which addresses the needs of the diversity of participants that it serves.

## **Recommendations**

During the afternoon, roundtable participants were divided into two teams to independently develop recommendations to ensure TANF participants (and other low-income individuals with employment barriers) are well-served at one-stop centers and have access to comprehensive employment, training, and supportive services that will move them towards family economic security.

Group One, led by Susan Golonka, developed the below recommendations. The recommendations are listed in order from highest to lowest, based on the number of votes each received from group members.

- 1) Establish an innovation lab to recognize, foster, and nurture TANF-WIOA collaboration and cooperation; provide small financial incentives (eight votes).
- 2) Develop joint data management and case management systems (four votes).
- 3) Internally align performance between TANF and WIOA metrics (three votes).
- 4) Change TANF mindset regarding education and training (two votes).
- 5) Develop Career Pathways framework (two votes).
- 6) Recognize examples of successful TANF-WIOA collaboration (two votes).
- 7) Document promising practices (one vote).
- 8) Change policies to reduce stigma of TANF participants (one vote).
- 9) Develop explicit pathways to work (one vote).
- 10) Adopt shared numeric targets for new career pathways, earn and learn, pre-apprenticeships, and apprenticeships (one vote).

Group Two, led by Nisha Patel, developed the below recommendations, which are also listed from highest to lowest, based on the number of votes received.

- 1) Encourage governors to “opt-in” and include TANF as a full partner in WIOA unified state plans; co-create one service systems; engage TANF in developing state strategic plans (nine votes).
- 2) Encourage states to pilot innovative TANF-WIOA models in a few areas; provide coaching, document best practices (four votes).
- 3) ACF and the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration (ETA) should create and deliver shared business case messages to governors, mayors, and chief local elected officials that TANF-WIOA collaboration will result in greater efficiencies and bottom line impacts, in part by using upcoming Federal Register notices, regulation guidance, and one-stop certification processes (four votes).
- 4) Create research and evaluation opportunities by creating the foundation to recognize what works, for whom, and under what circumstances (three votes).
- 5) Frame TANF-WIOA collaboration around youth (i.e. disconnected youth) (three votes).
- 6) Develop concrete evidence that TANF-WIOA collaboration is successful, in party, by collecting evidence, citing how it solves needs of businesses, and addressing gaps with actions (three votes).
- 7) Utilize the changes in WIOA’s performance measurement system as an opportunity (WIOA encourages use of regression analysis), negotiated performance measures, and standards (two votes).
- 8) Encourage governors and chief local elected officials to promote dual enrollment of TANF-WIOA participants because evidence demonstrates better retention rates (one vote).
- 9) Streamline education and training resources (one vote).
- 10) Develop female cohort models for TANF-WIOA collaboration (one vote).
- 11) The TANF system should learn more about Labor Market Information (LMI) (one vote).
- 12) Highlight how TANF brings innovation and successful case management systems to workforce systems (one vote).

Tabulating the recommendations between the two groups with the highest number of votes, there were nine recommendations (40 percent of the 22 items proposed) that received three or more votes, accounting for 69 percent of the total number of votes generated. In order of highest to lowest votes, these nine key recommendations from roundtable participants are below:

- 1) Encourage governors to “opt-in” and include TANF as a full partner in WIOA unified state plans; co-create one service systems; engage TANF in developing state strategic plans (nine votes).
- 2) Establish an innovation lab to recognize, foster, and nurture TANF-WIOA collaboration and cooperation; provide small financial incentives (eight votes).

- 3) ACF and ETA should create and deliver shared business case messages to governors, mayors, and chief local elected officials that TANF-WIOA collaboration will result in greater efficiencies and bottom line impacts, in part by using upcoming Federal Register notices, regulation guidance, and one-stop certification processes (four votes).
- 4) Develop joint data management and case management systems (four votes).
- 5) Encourage states to pilot innovative TANF-WIOA models in a few areas, provide coaching, document best practices (four votes).
- 6) Internally align performance metrics between TANF and WIOA (three votes).
- 7) Create research and evaluation opportunities by creating the foundation to recognize what works, for whom, and under what circumstances (three votes).
- 8) Frame TANF-WIOA collaboration around youth (i.e. disconnected youth) (three votes).
- 9) Develop concrete evidence that TANF-WIOA collaboration is successful, in party, by collecting evidence, citing how it solves needs of businesses, and addressing gaps with actions (three votes).

The nine recommendations above can be categorized into specific levels of government action. Note, in most cases there is overlap creating both a top-down and bottom-up series of suggestions.

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Federal</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>Local</b>
1. Encourage governors to “opt-in” and include TANF as a full partner in WIOA unified state plans; co-create one service systems; engage TANF in developing state strategic plans (nine votes).	✓	✓	✓
2. Establish an innovation lab to recognize, foster, and nurture TANF-WIOA collaboration and cooperation; provide small financial incentives (eight votes).	✓	✓	
3. ACF and ETA should create and deliver shared business case messages to governors, mayors, and chief local elected officials that TANF-WIOA collaboration will result in greater efficiencies and bottom line impacts, in part by using upcoming Federal Register notices, regulation guidance, and one-stop certification processes (four votes).	✓		
4. Develop joint data management and case management systems (four votes).	✓	✓	✓
5. Encourage states to pilot innovative TANF-WIOA models in a few areas, provide coaching, document best practices (four votes).	✓	✓	✓
6. Internally align performance metrics between TANF and WIOA (three votes).	✓	✓	✓



<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Federal</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>Local</b>
7. Create research and evaluation opportunities by creating the foundation to recognize what works, for whom, and under what circumstances (three votes).	✓	✓	✓
8. Frame TANF-WIOA collaboration around youth (i.e. disconnected youth) (three votes).	✓	✓	✓
9. Develop concrete evidence that TANF-WIOA collaboration is successful, in part, by collecting evidence, citing how it solves needs of businesses, and addressing gaps with actions (three votes).	✓	✓	✓

### **Closing and Next Steps**

The *Strengthening Collaboration between TANF and WIOA* National Experts Roundtable closed with final remarks from Nisha Patel and Susan Golonka who both stated that the ideas developed through the day’s discussions focused on shared values, visions, and overall messaging. Participants agreed that having a common message from federal agencies is key; the challenge will be supporting it with tools and guidance states and local agencies can use to make that vision a reality. Participants were also asked to provide a final thought on their experience participating in the roundtable; selected remarks are outlined below:

#### Messaging and Communication:

- Educating stakeholders about the nuances of other programs will be critical to collaboration.
- It is important to keep the big picture in mind – an emphasis on jobs may be a good way to frame the conversation.
- We should start with federal leadership to get the message out.
- Much of the first level of work is about marketing. The value of this collaboration is not that transparent; marketing will be important so people get excited about the opportunity.
- Communication (up, down, and across) will be critical to collaboration, so that stakeholders are not reinventing the wheel.

#### Strategies for Creating Change:

- It is important to be sensitive to the layers of detail that are required to make this work; stakeholders should focus on opportunities for change.
- Learning from program participants will be critical.
- WIOA presents a great and exciting opportunity to be innovative and creative.

Timeline - A Balance of Urgency and Thoughtfulness:

- It will take time and space to collaborate on this; however, states do not have time. So, what can we do to support them?
- This is an opportunity – it is important to be smart and go slow.
- Urgency is important, but stakeholders also must see this as a longer term process and build on lessons learned.

## Appendix A: Agenda - Monday, June 22, 2015

Time	Break-out Sessions
8:00 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.	<b>Registration</b>
8:30 a.m. – 8:45 a.m.	<p><b>Welcome</b></p> <p><b>Nisha Patel</b>, Director, Office of Family Assistance</p> <p>Director Patel will convene the <i>Strengthening Collaboration between TANF and WIOA National Experts Roundtable</i> and challenge the group to address the following themes:</p> <p>How do we ensure that TANF participants (and other low-income individuals with employment barriers) are well-served at one-stop centers and have access to comprehensive employment and training and supportive services that will support their progress toward family economic security?</p> <p>How do we create a shared vision for a workforce system that addresses the needs of the diversity of participants that it serves, including employers?</p>
8:45 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.	<p><b>Vision for the System</b></p> <p><b>Susan Golonka</b>, Deputy Director, Office of Family Assistance</p> <p>What would the successful integration of TANF into the one-stop centers look like from the <u>perspective of TANF participants</u>?</p> <p>What would the successful integration of TANF into the one-stop centers and the state and local workforce system mean from the <u>perspective of the TANF agency</u>?</p> <p>What would success look like from the <u>perspective of workforce system partners</u>, including youth services, adult education, and vocational rehabilitation?</p> <p>What would success look like from the <u>perspective of employers</u>?</p>
9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.	<p><b>Developing the Vision</b></p> <p>During this facilitated session, the group will develop the framework for a shared vision.</p> <p><b>Facilitators:</b></p> <p><b>Lisa Washington-Thomas</b>, Technical Assistance Branch Chief, Office of Family Assistance</p> <p><b>Ed Trumbull</b>, Principal, ICF International</p>
10:30 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.	<b>Break</b>



<b>Time</b>	<b>Break-out Sessions</b>
<b>10:45 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.</b>	<b>Identifying the Challenges</b>  During this facilitated session, the group will identify challenges and barriers that could impede or block the achievement of success identified above.  <b>Facilitators:</b>  <b>Lisa Washington-Thomas</b> , Technical Assistance Branch Chief, Office of Family Assistance  <b>Ed Trumbull</b> , Principal, ICF International
<b>12:00 p.m. – 1:15 p.m.</b>	<b>Lunch on Your Own</b>
<b>1:15 p.m. – 2:45 p.m.</b>	<b>Identifying Strategies and Opportunities</b>  During this session, panelists will be broken into smaller working groups focused on developing strategies to address identified challenges and/or capitalize upon innovative opportunities. Questions to be addressed include:  What are the particular strengths that each system could bring to the collaboration?  What strategies can be employed to address the main barriers or challenges?  What opportunities exist to help create the vision imagined above?  <b>Facilitators:</b>  <b>James Butler</b> , Family Assistance Program Specialist, Office of Family Assistance  <b>Ed Trumbull</b> , Principal, ICF International
<b>2:45 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.</b>	<b>Break</b>
<b>3:00 p.m. – 4:15 p.m.</b>	<b>Prioritizing Strategies and Opportunities</b>  During this session, the entire group will narrow down the identified strategies and opportunities to those that are <b>specific</b> , <b>measurable</b> , <b>achievable</b> , <b>realistic</b> , and <b>time-bound</b> (SMART). The group will prioritize the narrowed down SMART strategies and opportunities, and articulate how federal, state, local and community-based partners can adopt and implement them.  <b>Facilitators:</b>  <b>Damon Waters</b> , Family Assistance Program Specialist, Office of Family Assistance  <b>Ed Trumbull</b> , Principal, ICF International
<b>4:15 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.</b>	<b>Closing Remarks</b>  <b>Nisha Patel</b> , Director, Office of Family Assistance

## **Appendix B: Participants**

### **Invited Experts:**

#### **James H. Andre**

Coordinator of Adult Coaching and Transitions  
Workforce Development Services  
Virginia Community College System

#### **Kisha Bird**

Director  
Youth Policy  
Center for Law and Social Policy

#### **Mary L. Brogdon**

Assistant Director of Strategic Initiatives  
American Public Human Services Association (APHSA)

#### **Deborah A. Carroll**

Director  
District of Columbia  
Department of Employment Services

#### **Dr. Michelle K. Derr**

Senior Researcher  
Mathematica Policy Research

#### **Maria K. Flynn**

Senior Vice President  
Jobs for the Future

#### **Eileen Friedman**

TANF Program Manager  
Office of Family Assistance, Region III  
Administration for Children and Families  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

#### **Brian M. Holler**

Human Services Program Specialist  
Supervisor  
Department of Human Services  
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

#### **David A. Hunn**

Executive Director  
Northern Virginia Workforce Investment Board

#### **Kermit Kaleba**

Federal Policy Director  
National Skills Coalition

#### **Natalie R. Kaplan**

Policy Analyst, Office of the Director  
District of Columbia Department of Human Services

#### **Cheryl Keenan**

Director  
Division of Adult Education and Literacy  
U.S. Department of Education

#### **Jennifer Kemp**

Unit Chief  
Employment and Training Administration  
U.S. Department of Labor

#### **Vinz Koller**

Director of Training and Technical Assistance  
Social Policy Research Associates



***OFA Peer Exchange Workshop:  
Strengthening Collaboration between TANF and WIOA***

**Janet LaBreck**

Commissioner, Rehabilitation Services  
Administration  
Office of Special Education and  
Rehabilitative Services  
U.S. Department of Education

**Dana Lennon**

Director  
Allied Health Career Pipeline Program  
Hostos Community College

**Sue Liu**

Higher Education and Workforce  
Development Consultant  
Sue Liu Consulting

**Elizabeth Lower-Basch**

Director, Income and Work Supports  
Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)

**Dr. LaDonna A. Pavetti**

Vice President, Family Income Support  
Center on Budget and Policy Priorities

**Scott J. Sheely**

Special Assistant for Workforce  
Development  
Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture

**Betsy Tessler**

Research Associate  
MDRC

**Kathy Tran**

Deputy Administrator  
Office of Workforce Investment  
Employment and Training Administration  
U.S. Department of Labor

**Gina K. Wells**

Policy Analyst  
Employment and Training Administration  
U.S. Department of Labor

**Laura Zeilinger**

Director  
District of Columbia  
Department of Human Services



***OFA Peer Exchange Workshop:  
Strengthening Collaboration between TANF and WIOA***

**Office of Family Assistance:**

**James Butler**

Family Assistance Program Specialist  
Office of Family Assistance  
Administration for Children and Families  
U.S. Department of Health and Human  
Services

**Lisa Washington-Thomas**

TANF Technical Assistance Branch Chief  
Office of Family Assistance  
Administration for Children and Families  
U.S. Department of Health and Human  
Services

**Susan Golonka**

Deputy Director  
Office of Family Assistance  
Administration for Children and Families  
U.S. Department of Health and Human  
Services

**Damon Waters**

Family Assistance Program Specialist  
Office of Family Assistance  
Administration for Children and Families  
U.S. Department of Health and Human  
Services

**Nisha Patel**

Director  
Office of Family Assistance  
Administration for Children and Families  
U.S. Department of Health and Human  
Services

**ICF International:**

**Dr. Jeanette Hercik**

Senior Vice President  
ICF International

**Ed Trumbull**

Principal  
ICF International

**Jackie Rhodes**

Senior Associate  
ICF International