

Schenectady County

Temporary Assistance (TA) and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Employment Plan

January 01, 2024 - December 31, 2025

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1. Administration

1.1 Administrative Structure

- a. This agency's organizational chart is attached. It identifies the units and staff within the agency that are involved in the operation of the district's employment program.
(Attachments must be uploaded to the system through the "Documents" screen prior to submitting the plan. Use the textbox below to provide any additional information.)

See attached.

- b. Below is a description of the office(s) in and/or outside of the Department of Social Services that are involved in the operation of the district's employment program and include the responsibilities of each office.

The Schenectady County Department of Social Services contracts with the Schenectady County Job Training Agency (SJTA) to maintain a TA/SNAP Employment Program that meets the employment services needs of all TA/SNAP recipients who are residents of the county. Schenectady Job Training Agency is a separate county department that provides those services and oversees the employment support needs of the local community. The Director of Workforce Development is responsible for the supervision of all the employment programs in Schenectady County. The Welfare-to-Work program has a program director that answers directly to the Director of Workforce Development.

1.2 TA and SNAP Employment & Training (SNAP E&T) Provider Agencies

- a. Table 1 lists the local contracts or agreements with agencies to provide employment services to TA and SNAP clients. These activities and services may include, but are not limited to: employability determinations; development of assessment and employment plans; conciliation and grievance activities; provision of work activities such as job readiness training; education and job skills training; monitoring and support for compliance with treatment plans for exempt individuals with the potential for restoration to self-sufficiency; job development; job placement and retention services; and other employment related activities.

Each contract listed in Table 1 contains an assurance that the activities are not otherwise available from that provider on a non-reimbursable basis, and, if not a performance-based contract, a statement regarding use of a cost allocation methodology that satisfies Generally Accepted Accounting Principles, as well as the requirements of U.S. Office of Management and Budget Circulars A-122 for nonprofit organizations, A-21 for educational institutions, or A-87 for State and local governments. Districts must maintain proper monitoring and oversight to ensure that contractors perform in accordance with the terms, conditions, and specifications of their contracts.

Funding sources include, FFFS, SNAP E&T, Local or "other". Categories of clients served include Family Assistance (FA), Safety Net Assistance for households with dependent children (SNA Fam), Safety Net Assistance for households without dependent children (SNA

Ind), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) 200%.

Contracts or Agreements with Agencies Who Provide TA and SNAP Employment Services

Provider	Total Contract Cost per Year	Funding Source(s)	Categories of Clients Served	Programs, Services or Activities Provided
Schenectady Job Training Agency	\$1,362,181	FFFS SNAP E & T Local	FA SNA Family SNA Individual SNAP TANF 200%	Employment, Assessment, Employability Plans, Career Development, Funding for Training, Referrals, Job Search, JRT, CWEP Placement, SNAP Employment & Training, ABAWD services, Conciliation

- b. Table 2 includes agencies/providers that offer services to participants and to which the district expects to refer participants, but which have no direct financial agreement with the district.

Categories of clients served include Family Assistance (FA), Safety Net Assistance for households with dependent children (SNA Fam), Safety Net Assistance for households without dependent children (SNA Ind), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and TANF 200%.

Agencies and Providers to whom the District Refers for Employment Services

Provider	Funding Source(s)	Categories of Clients Served	Programs, Services or Activities Provided
Healthy Families	Others: No funding source	FA SNA Family	Working with households with children up to 3 months old
Early Head Start	Others: no funding source	FA SNA Family	Working with households with children up to 5 years old
Washington Irving Educational Center	Others: no funding source	FA SNA Family SNA Individual SNAP TANF 200%	Adult Basic Education, High School Equivalency (HSE) diploma preparation, and English Language Instruction
SUNY Schenectady	Others: no funding source	FA SNA Family SNA Individual SNAP TANF 200%	Post secondary education

c. Monitoring and Oversight of TANF and SNAP E&T Funded Contracts/Agreements

Described below is the process used to monitor district held contracts/agreements with providers that use TANF and SNAP E&T funds for employment services:

Monthly meetings and reviews between the district and Schenectady Job Training Agency (SJTA) are conducted to discuss participation, engagement, coding, and completion of employability plans.

1.3 OTDA Jobs Staff Agreement

a. OTDA Jobs Program Services - Target Groups (reply yes or no to the options as they apply):

Services Provided by Jobs Staff

Yes or No:	Services Provided:
N/A	Assessment/Employment Plan
N/A	Supervised job search
N/A	Job readiness training
N/A	Job club
N/A	Job placement services
N/A	Grant diversion
N/A	Job development (employer outreach)
N/A	WOTC pre-certification

Jobs Staff Target Groups

Yes or No:	Target Groups:
N/A	Applicants
N/A	FA & SNA with children
N/A	SNA without children
N/A	SNAP
N/A	TANF 200%

b. Described below are the additional services/duties Jobs Staff will be requested to perform (e.g., Welfare to Work Case Management System (WTWCMS) data entry, case conferencing, job fairs).

N/A

1.4 Access to Services at New York State Career Centers

- a. Described below is how the district provides access to its programs and services with Career Center partners (reply yes or no to the options as they apply):

Programs and Services Provided at Career Centers

Yes or No:	Programs and Services Provided:
No	The district has employee(s) physically present at a Career Center
Yes	The district has contract staff physically present at a Career Center
Yes	The district makes available direct access to its program staff via phone or technology at a Career Center
Yes	The district makes available copies of the LDSS-2921 (Common Application) at a Career Center
No	Other (described here):

- b. Described below is how the district coordinates with Career Center partners to provide services to the district's clients, including referral and information sharing mechanisms, or other collaboration such as participation on the local WIOA Business Services Team, etc.

The Schenectady County Career Center, operated by the Schenectady County Job Training Agency, is the contracted agency providing all employment and training services to the TA applicants and recipients. All TA customers are enrolled in OSOS (the WIOA case management system used by career centers). By enrolling in OSOS, TA customers receive job postings and resources disseminated through the WIOA system which represents a consortium of local staff, DOL staff and partner agencies. TA customers also benefit from comprehensive career center services including hiring events, skill building workshops and platforms, access to training and supportive service dollars.

2. Orientation, Assessment and Employment Plan

2.1 Orientation (Reference 18 NYCRR 385.5)

- a. How does the district provide orientation (reply yes or no to the options as they apply)?

District Orientation Procedures

Yes or No:	District Orientation:
Yes	The district provides orientation in accordance with 18 NYCRR 385.5 and no additional information is provided at orientation.
No	In addition to the requirements outlined in 18 NYCRR 385.5 of the regulations, the district's orientation provides the following:

- b. Described below is how the district completes the required orientation for all applicants and recipients of TA at application and recertification. Orientation can be held in-person, either in a group setting, individually, or a combination of both. It can also be held virtually, over the phone, or by sending orientation material to the client by mail. Please include the orientation procedure for exempt individuals and non-exempt individuals, if different:

Orientation is provided by the TA Examiners individually, at case opening, recertification, and at client entry to work eligible employment status or at time deemed exempt. The orientation procedure is the same for exempt and non-exempt individuals.

2.2 Temporary Assistance (TA) Employment Assessment

- a. How does the district conduct assessments as required by 18 NYCRR 385.6(a) and 385.7(a) (reply yes or no to the options as they apply)?

District Assessment Procedures

Yes or No:	How the district conducts assessments
Yes	The district enters assessments directly into WTCMS.
No	The district uses the LDSS 4980 (New York State Assessment) and later enters information into WTCMS.
No	The district conducts assessments using a local equivalent tool, and later enters information into WTCMS. If applicable, the local equivalent contains additional elements beyond what is required:

- b. Described below is the district procedure for the completion of an employment assessment, including when initial assessments are conducted and whether an assessment is conducted in-person, virtually by phone, or a combination of both:

The client is given a specific appointment time to report for an individual assessment appointment with an Employment & Training Counselor at SJTA. At that one-on-one assessment appointment, the client's information is entered into WTCMS in the Assessment Summary and the Employability Plan is completed. The client is engaged in core and non-core activities following the individualized assessment appointment. No employment self-assessment is done by the clients. SJTA shall conduct an assessment of employability for applicants and recipients in households without dependent children within a year of application. SJTA shall conduct an assessment of employability for applicants and recipients with dependent children within 90 days of the date such recipient is determined to be eligible for public assistance. If a client with dependent children is determined to be exempt from employment activities, the TA Examiner would refer the client to SJTA for an assessment within 90 days of recert or would have the responsibility of completing the assessment.

- c. Which district administrative unit or contractor is responsible for conducting assessments?

The Schenectady County Job Training Agency has responsibility for conducting assessments.

- d. Described below are the minimum qualifications of the employees conducting the assessment (refer to requirements listed in 18 NYCRR 385.6(c) and 385.7(c)):

Employment assessments are completed by Employment and Training Counselors and Social Welfare Examiners. Employment and Training Counselors are employees of SJTA who are college graduates with four-year degrees who have graduated from regionally accredited colleges/universities with experience in Human Service/Employment and Training Programs.

Social Welfare Examiners are employees of the Department of Social Services who have graduated from regionally accredited college or university with an Associates' degree or high school diploma or equivalency and two years of experience in examining, investigating or evaluating claims of assistance, or a combination of the above. Social Welfare Examiners must demonstrate knowledge of State and Federal laws governing eligibility for social service benefit programs.

- e. Are applicants in households with dependent children required to participate in completion of an employment assessment?

Yes.

- f. Are applicants in households without dependent children required to participate in completion of an employment assessment?

Yes.

- g. Are exempt adults in households without dependent children required to participate in completion of an employment assessment?

No.

- h. How often and under what circumstances is the employment assessment updated?

An assessment is updated annually or as deemed necessary by the Employment Counselor. An employment counselor will update the assessment anytime there is a significant change in the need for supportive services such as childcare or transportation or if there is new medical information presented that would change the limitation in work activity or our engagement with the customer in a work activity.

2.3 TA Employment Planning (Reference 18 NYCRR 385.6 and 385.7)

- a. How does the district develop individual employment plans as required by 18 NYCRR 385.6(a) and 385.7(a) (reply yes or no to the options as they apply)?

District Employment Plan Procedures

Yes or No:	How the district develops employment plans
Yes	The district enters employment plans directly into WTWCMS.

Yes or No:	How the district develops employment plans
No	The district uses the LDSS-4987 (New York State Employment Plan) and later enters information into WTWCMS.
No	The district develops individual employment plans using a local equivalent tool. If applicable, the local equivalent contains the following additional elements beyond what is required:

- b. Who develops the employment plan (reply yes or no to the options as the apply)?

District Employment Plan Development

Yes or No:	Who develops the districts employment plans
Yes	The same administrative unit or contractor that conducts employment assessments also develops employment plans.
No	A different administrative unit or contractor develops employment plans and the contractor’s qualifications include:

- c. Described below is the district procedure for the completion of an individual's employment plan:

An individual employment plan is completed by an Employment and Training Counselor at the same time the Initial Assessment is completed. This document is created by the counselor in partnership with the customer to elicit buy-in and compliance. The employment plan is subject to change and is amended as necessary. Whenever an employment plan is created or updated, the client is provided a copy.

- d. How often and under what circumstances is the employment plan updated?

The employment plan will be updated as necessary to be reflective of the customers growth in their skills and abilities, their indication of a new barrier or the removal of a barrier and their need or eliminated need of supportive services. The employment plan must be up to date in order to inform the work of the employment counselor on how best to help the customer meet their short- and long-term goals.

3. Engagement

3.1 Federal “Engaged in Work” Requirement (Reference 18 NYCRR 385.2 (f))

- a. Federal requirements state that parents or caretakers must be engaged in work as soon as the district determines they are ready, but no later than within 24 months of receiving federally funded assistance. The district’s definition of “Engaged in Work” is:

Compliance with assessment, employment planning, all activities included in the individual’s Employment/Self-Sufficiency plan, including any need to attend treatment/rehabilitation programs, or any of the work activities listed in Section 4.1. Also included is pursuit of other forms of income such as SSI and SSDI.

- b. Described below is additional information regarding the district’s “Engaged in Work” requirements:

N/A

3.2 Strategies/Procedures for Accommodating Individuals with Limited English Proficiency

- a. Described below is how the district accommodates non-English speaking participants' access to employment activities and services:

Schenectady County employs Spanish speaking staff who assist with translation. If a staff member is unavailable to translate, Language Line Solutions is utilized to provide phone-in translation services to the customer.

3.3 Strategies/Procedures for Increasing Program Attendance

- a. Described below are the district policies and/or procedures used to reduce the number of times participants fail to participate in work activities. This includes absences with good cause:

The district employs procedures to reduce recipient absenteeism from work activity. Staff explain to recipients how a sanction will reduce their TA grant and SNAP benefits (if applicable) and they stress the requirements for participation in a work activity. Staff will offer activities that can be completed virtually or by phone. Staff provide job readiness training and employment support counseling to recipients with a history of noncompliance.

3.4 Strategies/Procedures for Engaging Sanctioned TA Participants

- a. The following are strategies used to engage sanctioned participants. If a district uses one of the options, a description will be provided (reply yes or no to the options as they apply and provide a description for “yes” responses):

Strategies and Procedures for Engaging Sanctioned TA Participants

Yes or No:	Strategies and Procedures for Engaging Sanctioned TA Participants
No	Described here are the strategies the district uses to attempt to engage sanctioned participants as soon as they are sanctioned:
No	Described below are the strategies the district uses to attempt to engage sanctioned participants when the durational period of the sanction is completed:
Yes	Described below are the strategies the district uses to attempt to engage sanctioned participants during different times in the sanction period: As time and staff permits, clients are sent letters informing them how they can restore their benefits and/or eligibility reviews are conducted for those who remain sanctioned beyond the durational period.

3.5 Strategies for Reducing the Need for TA

- a. Described below are the district’s strategies for reducing the need for TA:

One effective strategy has been enrolling our population into the Schenectady County Career Center. This process allows customers to access funding for training in marketable industries such as healthcare, construction, welding, and truck driving. Customers enrolled with the Career Center also have access to supportive services, resume assistance, and workshops provided by staff, and partner organizations such as Broadview. Additionally, the Career Center offers businesses services. The Business Services Representative on staff works with businesses to create spotlight videos highlighting local companies and recruits a wide range of businesses to participate in hiring events that are offered regularly. The Business Service Rep also connects with businesses on issues impacting customers such as the benefits cliff. All SJTA staff are trained and retrained in Bridges out of Poverty constructs, which is a comprehensive, collaborative effort designed to help individuals, families and a community’s transition from poverty to sustainability.

4. Work Activities

4.1 Allowable Work Activities

- a. Below is a list of activities available to individuals receiving Family Assistance (FA), Safety Net Assistance for households with dependent children (SNA Fam), Safety Net Assistance for households without dependent children (SNA Ind), and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits. In the chart below, the case type is listed next to each activity available to it in the district.

Allowable Work Activities by Case Type

Activity and Definition	Case Type
Unsubsidized Employment – Full time or part time employment in the public or private sector that is not subsidized by TANF or any other public program (excluding employer tax credits). Unsubsidized employment includes self-employment and/or paid internships.	FA SNAFAM SNA SNAP
Work Experience – Unpaid work performed at a public or not-for-profit organization to enable a participant who has not obtained unsubsidized employment to improve his or her employability. Work experience provides participants with an opportunity to acquire training, knowledge, work habits, and work references necessary to obtain and retain employment. Participation in work experience includes training required for the participant to complete the work experience assignment. For example, an individual who is expected to provide clerical support in a government agency may be provided training to develop or refine filing and data entry skills as needed to perform the tasks required as part of the work activity assignment.	FA SNAFAM SNA SNAP
Job Search – The act of seeking or obtaining employment or preparing to seek or obtain employment and will include: looking for suitable job openings in a group or individual setting; making contact with potential employers; learning appropriate workplace expectations and behaviors in preparation for submitting job applications and interviewing; preparing and applying for, and/or interviewing for jobs and related activities.	FA SNAFAM SNA SNAP

Activity and Definition	Case Type
<p>Vocational Education – Vocational education is defined as an organized educational program that directly relates to the preparation of individuals for current or emerging occupations that require training up to a four-year degree. Vocational education does not generally include basic or remedial education or English as a Second Language (ESL) but may include work focused general education and language instruction that is a regular or integral part of a vocational education program. Social services districts are responsible for ensuring that any such remedial education or ESL is a regular part of the program for participants with similar skill sets as the TANF/SNA MOE client, is determined necessary by the program provider, and is limited in hours to less than one half of program participation. Vocational education programs include the completion of activities that provide individuals the knowledge and skills to perform a specific trade, occupation or vocation. Vocational education must be provided by an education or training organization.</p>	<p>FA SNAFAM SNA SNAP</p>
<p>Secondary School – Regular attendance in accordance with the requirements of the secondary school or a course of study at a secondary school or other State accredited institution leading to a high school equivalency (HSE) diploma, in the case of a recipient who has not completed secondary school or received a certificate of general equivalency. Secondary school participation may include general adult basic education or ESL if it is linked to attending secondary school or leading to a HSE diploma as determined necessary by the educational institution. Secondary School or HSE programs that routinely include ESL, career training, alternative school, tutoring, dropout prevention, teen pregnancy or parenting programs as a requirement of program participation as determined by the educational institution will also be permitted.</p>	<p>FA SNAFAM SNA SNAP</p>
<p>Job Skills Training – Training or education in job skills to improve a participant's employability, to ensure clients have the basic skills competencies required by employers to support job entry and/or to advance or adapt to the changing demands of the workplace. Where identified as needed, such training may include the development of basic workplace skills including professional workplace behaviors and decision-making skills. Job skills training may include customized or technical training designed to provide participants with additional workplace skills, post-secondary education courses leading to a bachelor's or other advanced degree, or other training included under the definition of vocational education training. Job skills training may include literacy instruction, English language instruction, or other basic education for an individual who has already obtained a high school diploma or equivalency when determined from a client's assessment that such instruction is needed to improve the participant's employability.</p>	<p>FA SNAFAM SNA SNAP</p>
<p>Education Training – Education directly related to employment for a recipient who has not received a high school diploma or equivalency must be related to a specific occupation, job or job offer or otherwise determined based on a client assessment as necessary to improve the participant's employability to support job entry, retention or advancement. Education directly related to employment may include courses designed to provide the knowledge and skills for general or specific occupations or work settings to ensure clients have the basic skills competencies required by employers and may also include Adult Basic Education (ABE), ESL instruction and education leading to a high school equivalency diploma as determined as necessary to improve the participant's job opportunities in potential occupations. Where identified as needed such training may include the development of basic workplace skills including professional workplace behaviors and decision-making skills.</p>	<p>FA SNAFAM SNA SNAP</p>

Activity and Definition	Case Type
<p>Job Readiness Training (JRT) Activities – Participation in programs that include seeking and preparing for work. JRT includes two types of activities: (1) traditional activities of resume preparation, training in interviewing skills, and instruction in workplace expectations, training in effective job seeking, including life skills training; and (2) activities that improve an individual’s employability, such as substance abuse treatment, mental health treatment, or rehabilitation activities in which a qualified medical or mental health professional has certified that such treatment is necessary.</p>	<p>FA SNAFAM SNA SNAP</p>
<p>Subsidized Private Sector Employment – Employment in the private sector for which the employer receives a subsidy from TANF or other public funds (excluding tax credits) to offset some or all of the wages and costs of employing and training a recipient in accordance with New York State Social Services Law 336-f. Subsidized private sector employment will include positions subsidized through grant diversion/Transitional Employment Advancement Program (TEAP), supported employment programs, and paid college work study programs at private institutions. Individuals participating in subsidized private sector employment are paid wages and receive the same benefits as unsubsidized employees who perform similar work. An employment situation will be subsidized for up to the full amount of wages/benefits provided to the program participant and will be subsidized for the length of time as determined appropriate by the State or social services district.</p>	<p>FA SNAFAM SNA SNAP</p>
<p>Subsidized Public Sector Employment – Employment in the public sector for which the employer receives a subsidy from TANF or other public funds (excluding tax credits) to offset some or all of the wages and costs of employing and training a recipient in accordance with New York State Social Services Law 336-e. Subsidized public sector employment will include positions subsidized through grant diversion/TEAP, supported employment programs, and paid college work study programs at public institutions. Individuals participating in subsidized public sector employment, and work study unless otherwise permitted under a federal work study program, are paid wages and receive the same benefits as unsubsidized employees who perform similar work. An employment situation will be subsidized for up to the full amount of wages/benefits provided to the program participant and will be subsidized for the length of time as determined appropriate by the State or social services district.</p>	<p>FA SNAFAM SNA SNAP</p>
<p>Community Service – A structured program in which participants perform work for the direct benefit of the community under the auspices of public or nonprofit organizations. Community service placements must be projects that serve a useful community purpose in fields such as health, social services, environmental protection, education, urban and rural redevelopment, welfare, public recreation, public facilities, public safety, and childcare. Community service programs are designed to improve the employability of participants not otherwise able to obtain unsubsidized employment. Participation in community service may include training that is directly required for the participant to complete the community service assignment. For example, an individual who is expected to provide clerical support to a food pantry may be provided training to develop or refine filing and data entry skills.</p>	<p>FA SNAFAM SNA SNAP</p>
<p>Provision of Childcare for Individual Participating in Community Service – Providing unpaid childcare to enable another TA (TANF/SNA MOE funded) recipient to participate in a community service program.</p>	<p>FA SNAFAM SNA</p>

Activity and Definition	Case Type
SNAP E&T Supervised Job Search – The act of seeking or obtaining employment through a job search that is directly supervised and may include: case management services, career exploration, interview preparation, job application assistance, learning appropriate workplace expectations and behaviors in preparation for submitting job applications and interviewing, job leads, and direct job referrals.	N/A
On-the-Job-Training (OJT) – Training in a public or private sector employment setting during which the participant receives work-essential paid training while he or she is engaged in productive work that provides the knowledge and skills essential to attain full and adequate performance of the job.	FA SNAFAM SNA SNAP
Other – Any work activity that does not meet the criteria of any of the above countable activities constitutes participation that is not countable toward federal and State participation rates.	N/A

4.2 Job Development

- a. Does the district conduct or access job development services to expand job opportunities for TA and SNAP participants?

Yes.

How does the district participate in job development activities (reply yes or no to the options as they apply)?

How the District Participates in Job Development Activities

Yes or No:	How the district participates in job development activities
Yes	District staff contacts employers to solicit jobs for TA and/or SNAP participants. Describe how this is done, including number of staff, frequency of contact, etc.: N/A, see below.
Yes	District contacts or has an agreement with another agency to contact employers and solicit jobs for TA and/or SNAP participants. Described here is how this is done, including number of staff, frequency of contacts, etc.: Schenectady County Job Training Agency works with the Business Services Representative from the Capital Region Workforce Development Board. These activities include recruitment assistance for hiring needs of local businesses and hiring events. TA and/or SNAP recipients are sometimes mandated and always encouraged to attend all scheduled hiring events. Additionally, Counselors conduct one on one outreach to employers through the Employer Resource Network to identify openings recipients can apply for and support a customer's retention in a position should they get hired.

4.3 Training Approval and Activity Enrollment Policies (Reference 18 NYCRR 385.9)

- a. Described below is how the district identifies appropriate education program providers for services of Adult Basic Education (ABE), High School Equivalency (HSE) diploma preparation, and English Language Instruction that are available to clients whose assessment indicates such services would be an appropriate work activity assignment. Please ensure to include providers the district partners with for the provision of ABE, HSE, and English language instruction in Table 1 or Table 2 under section 1.2 of this Plan.

The district has a long-standing relationship with the Washington Irving Educational Center (WIEC) in providing the services listed above. They have a proven track record working with our population to provide these services around core activities as needed. They consistently exceed the state benchmark numbers on the National Reporting System. The programs at WIEC are provided to our participants at no cost to the county or the participant. Several other area programs are utilized as needed to fit the structure and needs of an individual's employability plan.

- b. Described below is how the district identifies appropriate program providers of Vocational Education and Job Skills Training programs that are available to clients whose assessment indicates such services would be an appropriate work activity assignment. Please ensure to include the current providers the district partners with for the provision of Vocational Education and Job Skills Training in Table 1 or Table 2 under section 1.2 of this Plan.

There are several locations available that provide vocational education and High School Equivalency Diploma programs. The Counselors refer to the NYS Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) to find appropriate training programs that fit the client's needs and career pathway.

- c. Described below are the district's process and guidelines workers follow to ensure that individuals who have not attained a basic literacy level and/or have not attained a high school diploma are offered the opportunity to participate in an educational activity. This includes individuals who are 18 and older and individuals aged 16 or 17 who are not attending secondary school or its equivalent.

During the employment assessment, everyone who meets the above criteria will be afforded the option to engage in Adult Basic Education or High School Equivalency as part of their employment plan.

- d. Described below are the district's process and policy, including the guidelines workers follow, when determining whether participation in educational activities is approved for individuals who have not attained a high school diploma who are interested in participating in an educational activity. Include in this section instances when the district would deny participation in educational activities.

Everyone is offered and encouraged to complete Adult Basic Education or High School Equivalency at the initial employment assessment. SJTA hosts an afternoon High School Equivalency class on site to help those individuals that wish to pursue their High School Equivalency Diploma. Individuals that have a track record of not completing educational activities in the past would be reevaluated to see if this activity is appropriate or any

individual that doesn't need Adult Basic Education or High School Equivalency to be employed in their particular field may not be approved for these activities.

- e. Described below is the district's process and policy for determining whether a participant is approved/assigned to participate in job skills or vocational education activities.

The recipients' need for education and/or training will be identified during the employment assessment and employability planning process. The recipient's willingness to engage in education/training will be considered. Trainings or degrees already obtained by an individual, as well as Labor Market Information (LMI) for the desired credential, will be factored into the decision to allow additional educational activities to take place. If an individual already possesses a skill that is marketable, then educational activities may not be supported. The ability to meet participation and still engage in these activities would be considered. Individuals that have a track record of not completing educational activities in the past would be evaluated to see if the activity is appropriate.

- f. Described below are the standards by which education and training providers are evaluated.

1. Flexible hours of operation
2. Availability of public transportation or agency transportation
3. Labor Market Information (LMI)
4. Documentation of attendance

- g. Described below is the district's procedure for advising participants of approved training.

Employment counselors will advise recipients of training programs in the area that could fit their needs. Recipients will be given written instructions for accessing the program by their employment counselor. Additionally, the Career Center has connections with many local providers through the NYS Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL).

- h. Described below is the district's procedure for notifying participants they are approved for training or enrollment in a work activity.

Written communication is provided to the recipient and the training program/work site documenting the approved start date, time and a contact person at the assigned work activity. This document is generated by the employment counselor in WTWCMS and maintained in the recipient's file.

- i. Described below is how the district will monitor the high school attendance for 16-18 year-olds in order for them to retain their TA exempt status.

The district will verify high school attendance of 16-18 year old individuals at time of application and at the time of recertification.

- j. Described below is the district's procedure for ensuring that an individual's health related limitations are accommodated when assigning the individual to a work activity.

Reasonable accommodation will be made to ensure recipient safety while engaged in work activity. Work activity will be assigned based on client ability to access the activity site safely given his/her documented physical/mental limitations. Offering will include virtual and phone activities when possible. Written communication is provided to the recipient and the training program/worksites documenting the approved start date, time, contact person at the assigned work activity, and any accommodation needed. This document is generated by the employment counselor and maintained in the recipient's file.

4.4 Post-Secondary Education Approval and Enrollment Policies

- a. Described below is the highest level of post-secondary level education that the district will approve as a work activity, up to a four-year college program (please ensure to include the current providers the districts partners with for the provision of post-secondary education programs in Table 1 or Table 2 under Section 1.2 of this plan):

The recipients need for education and/or training will be identified during the employment assessment and employability planning process. Recipients engaged in a two-year Associates program or those that have less than two years remaining on a four-year degree program will be permitted to continue as long as their program is being completed in the standard timeframe, their GPA remains in good standing, and their degree will lead them to sustained employment.

- b. In accordance with 18 NYCRR 385.9(b), regardless of whether the college program is approved for the participant as an employment work activity, the district will approve as a work activity a work-study, internship, externship, or other work placement that is part of a non-graduate student's curriculum unless one or more of the following conditions applies as described below (reply yes or no to options as they apply):

Conditions For Disapproval of Work Activities For Individuals Enrolled in College

Yes or No:	Conditions for disapproval of work activity
Yes	It has been determined that the student voluntarily quit their job or reduced earnings to qualify for initial or increased TA.
Yes	A job or on-the-job training position that is comparable to the work-study, internship, externship or other work placement cannot reasonably be expected to exist in the private, public or not-for-profit sector.
Yes	The student is not maintaining a cumulative C average (or the equivalent). The district may disregard this provision if the student documents an undue hardship.
Yes	The institution or student fails to monitor and report information regarding the student's attendance and performance as required.
Yes	The student fails to progress toward the completion of a course of study without good cause, as determined by the district.
Yes	The student has previously enrolled in work-study, internship, or other work placement and failed to complete the work placement without good cause as determined by the district.

Yes or No:	Conditions for disapproval of work activity
No	Additional reasons as stated here:

5. Work Requirements

5.1 Meeting TA Work Requirements

- a. Described below is how the district plans to meet federal and State TA participation rate requirements. Included in this description is the weekly hours standard participation requirements for individuals in the different case and household types, along with the typical time period it takes for nonexempt individuals to be engaged in activities for both newly opened cases and individuals whose status changed from exempt to nonexempt. (Information regarding engaging exempt individuals is entered in Section 9).

All nonexempt individuals that receive Temporary Assistance will be engaged in a combination of core and non-core work activities, not to exceed 40 hours of total combined hours of activity per week, within two weeks of case opening or change in employment status. This two-week period allows for establishment of reliable childcare and resolution of any transportation concerns. Assigned work hours may vary depending on circumstances.

- b. Estimate the number of individuals expected to receive employment services for:

Number of Individuals Who Receive Employment Services

Household Type	Number Served
Households with Dependent Children Average Monthly	150
Households without Dependent Children Average Monthly	125

- c. Described below is how the district uses work participation management reports available through COGNOS or other reports and activities to monitor district progress toward meeting work participation requirements and ensuring full engagement by adults in work or work preparation activities:

The TA Director and SJTA senior staff consistently review numerous Cognos reports regarding participation on a monthly basis. Information is shared with line staff to ensure that all employable clients are engaged to their full potential and that every client is coded properly and engaged in employable activities as required. The TA unit monitors cases claiming exemption and updates their assessments accordingly.

- d. Does the district assign TA applicants to Job Search? If yes, describe the district procedure for Job Search, including the required number of job search contacts and hours per week assigned. Use the “Additional Information” column in the chart below to describe how often individuals are generally required to report job search outcomes and if activities other than job search are routinely expected:

Yes.

Applicant Job Search

Applicant Job Search	Min. Contacts	Min. Hours	Additional Information
TANF and SNA MOE	10	20	Employment & Training Counselors will use the customer engagement model to guide customers from orientation of SJTA services to assessment to skills development to employment referrals to secured employment. Each phase is accompanied with activities designed to help them obtain employment and self-sufficiency. Hours and contacts may fluctuate depending on case circumstances. Case management services will be provided bi-weekly or as needed. Job search and case management services will be documented in the Welfare-to-Work Case Management System (WTWCMS).
SNA Individuals	10	20	Employment & Training Counselors will use the customer engagement model to guide customers from orientation of SJTA services to assessment to skills development to employment referrals to secured employment. Each phase is accompanied with activities designed to help them obtain employment and self-sufficiency. Hours and contacts may fluctuate depending on case circumstances. Case management services will be provided bi-weekly or as needed. Job search and case management services will be documented in the Welfare-to-Work Case Management System (WTWCMS).

- e. Does the district assign TA recipients to Job Search? If yes, describe the district procedure for Job Search, including the required number of job search contacts and hours per week assigned. Include a description of how often individuals are generally required to report job search outcomes and if activities other than job search are routinely expected using the “Additional Information” column.

Yes.

TA Recipient Job Search

Recipient Job Search	Min. Contacts	Min. Hours	Additional Information
TANF and SNA MOE	10	20	Employment & Training Counselors will use the customer engagement model to guide customers from orientation of SJTA services to assessment to skills development to employment referrals to secured employment. Each phase is accompanied with activities designed to help them obtain employment and self-sufficiency. Hours and contacts may fluctuate depending on case circumstances. Customers may be enrolled in job search for up to 12 weeks. Case management services will be provided bi-weekly or as needed. Job search and case management services will

Recipient Job Search	Min. Contacts	Min. Hours	Additional Information
			be documented in the Welfare-to-Work Case Management System (WTWCMS).
SNA Individuals	10	20	Employment & Training Counselors will use the customer engagement model to guide customers from orientation of SJTA services to assessment to skills development to employment referrals to secured employment. Each phase is accompanied with activities designed to help them obtain employment and self-sufficiency. Hours and contacts may fluctuate depending on case circumstances. Customers may be enrolled in job search for up to 12 weeks. Case management services will be provided bi-weekly or as needed. Job search and case management services will be documented in the Welfare-to-Work Case Management System (WTWCMS).

- f. Described below is the district's process and policy used for determining whether participation in self-employment is approved as part of an individual's required work activities, including the guidelines workers follow. If the district always approves self-employment as part of an individual's required work activities, please note this policy below:

Participation in self-employment may be approved as part of an individual's work activities if the individual submits documentation of this self-employment including hours employed, wages earned, and dates of employment. This employment may not be approved if it does not meet minimum wage, or the customer cannot show progress toward self-sufficiency. The number of hours of work for a self-employed individual will be determined by dividing the gross income (less documented business expenses) by the federal minimum wage. The individual may have to participate in additional activities to maintain hourly participation requirements.

5.2 Informing SNAP Applicants and Recipients of Work Requirements

The district informs SNAP households where at least one member is subject to a work requirement of the applicable work rules at certification, recertification, and when a previously exempt household member or new household member becomes subject to work requirements. Notification is provided verbally and in writing.

- a. Described below is how SNAP applicants and recipients are informed in writing of SNAP work requirements (reply yes or no to options as they apply).

Written Information Provided to SNAP Applicants and Recipients

Yes or No:	How written information is provided to SNAP applicants and recipients
No	Eligibility staff use the LDSS-5193 <i>Important Information about SNAP Work Rules (General, Mandatory E&T, and ABAWD)</i> and the LDSS-5193A <i>Important Information about SNAP Work Rules (General and Mandatory E&T)</i> as appropriate.

Yes or No:	How written information is provided to SNAP applicants and recipients
Yes	Eligibility staff use a local equivalent consolidated work requirements notice to inform SNAP applicant and recipient households of their work requirements. Please attach a copy of the district's OTDA approved local equivalent.

- b. Described below is the process eligibility staff follow to provide a comprehensive oral explanation to SNAP households of work requirements, including General SNAP Work Rules, Mandatory SNAP E&T, and ABAWD Rules which pertain to non-exempt individuals in the household.

The eligibility staff provide a comprehensive oral explanation at time of interview, recertification, and when a previously exempt household member or new household member becomes subject to work requirements.

- c. Described below is how the district documents in the case record how the written information about SNAP work requirements was provided to the household (reply yes or no to options as they apply).

How the District Documents the Written Requirement in the Case Record

Yes or No:	How written information is provided to SNAP applicants and recipients
No	The district retains copies of all LDSS-5193/LDSS-5193A in the case record.
Yes	The district retains copies of local equivalent notices provided to the household in the case record.

- d. Described below is the district's process for documenting in the case record how the oral explanation of SNAP work requirements was provided to the household (reply yes or no to options as they apply).

How the District Documents the Oral Requirement in the Case Record

Yes or No:	How oral information is provided to SNAP applicants and recipients
No	Eligibility staff complete the LDSS-4826C and retain a copy in the case record.
Yes	Eligibility staff use a locally developed oral explanation tool and retain a copy in the case record.
No	Eligibility staff document the case record through case notes/comments.

5.3 Meeting SNAP Work Requirements

- a. Described below is the extent to which the district requires NTA SNAP recipients to participate in SNAP E&T work activities. (Please note: Case management services must be provided to all participants enrolled in SNAP E&T activity):

Schenectady County does not mandate Non-Temporary Assistance SNAP applicants and recipients to participate in SNAP E&T work activities but does offer individuals assistance with job search activities at each contact. SJTA will make a qualifying ABAWD activity available. Qualifying activities will include employment, participation in an educational or training program or job search and job readiness activities through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

- b. If the district is offering Supervised Job Search as an E&T activity component, describe below how the job search activity will be supervised and tracked, including the frequency of monitoring the participant’s job search efforts.

N/A

- c. If the district is not mandating SNAP E&T work activity assignments, please describe below how NTA SNAP work registrants are informed of the services available, upon request, for assistance with job search activities. (Please note: At a minimum, districts are required to offer job search assistance to NTA SNAP applicants and recipients):

The district will offer job search assistance to NTA SNAP applicants and recipients. SJTA regularly distributes the Schenectady County Workforce Development flyer to all individuals including the NTA population. The flyer includes a variety of free Workforce Development resources brought to you by a host of Schenectady County partner organizations. SJTA also distributes a monthly workshop calendar that includes information about free virtual offerings such as virtual job fairs, online resume development, and interview preparation. Additionally, SJTA develops a quarterly newsletter. All of these resources are updated and made available on the district’s website.

5.4 Advising Households of Employment and Training Services

At the time of recertification, non-exempt SNAP recipients who are members of certain TA/SNAP and NTA/SNAP households must be advised of the availability of employment and training services within the district and/or region. This requirement applies non-exempt recipients in households containing at least one adult, with no elderly or disabled individuals, and with no earned income at their last certification or required report.

- a. Described below is who the district provides information about employment and training services to (reply yes or no to the options as they apply):

Who the District Provides Employment and Training Services Information to

Yes or No:	Who the district provides employment and training services information to:
Yes	Required population only
No	Other groups described here:

- b. Described below is the method the district uses to advise SNAP recipients of available employment and training services at recertification (reply yes or no to the options as they apply):

How the District Provides Employment and Training Services Information

Yes or No:	How the district provides employment and training services information
Yes	Materials and information provided in print form
No	Materials and information provided on a website. Described here is how individuals are made aware the information is available on the website:
No	Material and information provided via email.

5.5 Provider Determinations

- a. Not every activity assignment/referral to training might be the right fit for every participant. As such, districts are required per federal regulations at 7 CFR 273.7(c)(18) to have procedures in place for when a provider/contractor determines an individual is not a good fit for a particular activity or program they are referred or assigned to. This is called the provider determination process. Described below is the district’s process for provider determination, including the process for screening individuals prior to referral to a provider, how to communicate information related to provider determinations with the district, how workers communicate information related to provider determinations with the client, and documenting provider determinations.

Participants will have an initial assessment, and the information gathered during the assessment will be used to determine if a referral to a provider is appropriate. Providers will be notified to contact the district within 10 days if there are any concerns. The district notifies SNAP E&T participants of a provider determination within 10 calendar days of receiving the notification from the provider. If a provider determines an individual to not be a good fit, the participant will be notified verbally by the district they will not be sanctioned as a result. The district will reassess the participant’s goals and barriers and assign to a new work activity. All assessment information and new assignments for providers will be documented in the participant case record through WTCMS.

- b. Described below is the district process for informing providers of their authority and responsibility to determine if an individual is not a good fit for a particular activity or program.

The District will verbally notify providers of their responsibility to determine if an assigned participant is not a good fit for their assigned work activity.

- c. Described below is the district process for provider oversight to ensure that provider determinations are not unfair or used to discriminate against protected classes.

Provider determinations will be evaluated based on information shared by the provider. This information and communication with the providers will be documented in WTWCMS under the participants case record. The district conducts monthly meetings with Schenectady Job Training Agency. During these monthly meetings participant activities and concerns are discussed to ensure that are assigned to activities fairly.

6. Quality Assurance/Work Verification

6.1 Quality Assurance Process - Random Case Sampling

Consistent with New York State's approved Work Verification Plan (WVP), and in accordance with the requirements established by the United States Department of Health and Human Services, districts must develop a quality assurance plan to ensure that the data reported, from which their work participation rates are derived, are accurate. The plan must include the district's procedure for monitoring reported scheduled and actual attendance in paid employment and unpaid work activities and the controls in place to ensure that reported exemption statuses resulting in federal exclusions from the work participation rate calculation are accurately made, work eligible individuals are correctly identified, hours of attendance reported are accurate and documented, data entry is accurate and that the district and its providers adhere to the approved work activity definitions and the determination of countable excused absences and holiday reporting within federal limits. Each district must maintain the documentation to verify what is being reported to NYS OTDA.

Each district must describe how it will conduct periodic self audits to determine that system entries are consistent with documentation in case files. The district must also explain how it will choose the sample size, select sample cases and establish the review period (no less frequently than semi-annually). The plan must indicate the district will maintain documentation on all pertinent findings produced through its self audit process and that case records for all reviewed cases will be available for State and other auditors in their review of the local work verification system for the standard 6 year period associated with such reviews.

The district will sample cases from each month within the (6 month) semi-annual period. The October to March review will be due by May 20th. The April to September review will be due by November 20th. The results of these audits will enable the district to identify policies, processes or cases that may need corrective action.

After each self audit is completed, the district must submit a summary of findings to OTDA A&QI at AQI.WV.SelfAudits@otda.ny.gov for State review including specific information on each of the errors identified. In addition, when monitoring reveals substantial problems, the district must describe the corrective action it will take.

The Quality Assurance (QA) plan must include the following elements:

- Ensure that documentation of wages and actual hours of employment is verified and accurately projected/reported and present in the case file, is actual and is projected correctly;
- Ensure that the documentation for actual hours, supervision/attendance, excused absences, and holidays in other activities is present in the case file;

- Assess whether participation in the work activities reported for work eligible individuals meets the approved federal definition for the activity;
- Assess that the data entered into either WTWCMS, the Self-Sufficiency, Employment, Assessment and Management System (SEAMS) or other automated systems used for reporting work activities is accurate, including actual hours, excused absences and holidays; and is based on documentation in the case record; and
- Ensure that documentation necessary to determine an individual to be exempt due to being the parent caretaker of a disabled household member (TA Employability Code 38 or 48), and/or parent or caretaker relative of a child in the household under 12 months of age, (TA Employability Code 31), is present in the case file and that individuals meet the exempt status based on the required documentation.

- a. Below is the number of random sample cases of participation in paid work activities the district will review semi-annually. Refer to the Instruction Guide for the minimum number of cases per district and guidance regarding review requirements.

12

- b. Below is the number of random sample cases of participation in unpaid work activities the district will review semi-annually. Refer to the Instruction Guide for the minimum number of cases per district and guidance regarding review requirements.

12

- c. Below is the number of random sample cases in which a case member is reported as an TA Employability Code 38 – “Parent needed in the home full time to care for an incapacitated/disabled household member” or TA Employability Code 48 – “Needed in the home to care for an incapacitated child full time – time limit exemption”. Refer to the Instruction Guide for the minimum number of cases per district and guidance regarding review requirements.

6

- d. Below is the number of random sample cases in which a case member is reported as an TA Employability Code 31 – “Parent or caretaker relative of a child under 12 months of age”. Refer to the Instruction Guide for the minimum number of cases per district and guidance regarding review requirements.

6

The district will review district worker or approved provider/vendor collected documentation and data entry of the above listed elements. The district will assess and verify that participation in the reported work activities listed above meet the State approved definition for the activity.

6.2 Use of Outside Providers/Vendors

- a. Does the district utilize outside providers/vendors to collect documentation and enter data directly into WTCMS?

No.

- b. If Yes, does the district's provider/vendor documentation collection, data entry and management of WTCMS follow the same process that would be used by the district worker?

N/A

- c. If No, describe below the process used:

N/A

7. Supportive Services

7.1 TA and Non-TA SNAP Applicants and Recipients in Work Activities Approved by the District

- a. The district must provide childcare in accordance with the childcare section of the district's Child and Family County Services Plan. The district will also provide the following expenses, which the district deems necessary for the individual to participate in orientation, assessment, employment planning, approved work activities and activities to restore self-sufficiency:

Transportation assistance in the form of CDTA swipe cards and/or other transportation solutions will be provided; the county will utilize the most cost-effective means of transportation available. Participants may obtain needed uniform, work clothing, tools, or work supplies allowances.

- b. Indicated below are the services the district will use to assist those participants who need transportation to and from an approved work activity site, including any applicable mileage reimbursement rate, and the method used by the district to arrive at that reimbursement rate. OTDA policy establishes a mileage reimbursement rate of no less than the IRS established rate for medical/moving purposes. In all instances, should the actual cost of transportation needed to participate in an assigned work activity exceed the reimbursement rate determined by the district, the district will reimburse for the actual costs based on reasonable documentation submitted by the work activity participant (reply yes or no to the options as they apply).

Transportation Services Provided to Clients

Yes or No:	Transportation Assistance Provided
Yes	Bus pass/token
Yes	Gas card/voucher

Yes or No:	Transportation Assistance Provided
Yes	Mileage reimbursement at the IRS Business rate (effective 1/1/2023 is 65 cents per mile)
No	Mile reimbursement at the IRS Medical/Moving rate (effective 1/1/2023 is 22 cents per mile)
No	Other mileage rate (the methodology used to establish reimbursement rate is described here):

- c. OTDA policy establishes a distance not to exceed two miles as the maximum distance that the district can require a participant to walk to a work activity assignment or to access public transportation. Describe below the distance an individual may be required to walk, each way, to a work activity or to access public transportation:

Customers may be required to walk up to 1.5 miles each way to get to their work activity or to access public transportation. Employment & Training counselors will take into consideration weather conditions, terrain and safety of the route when determining if they can walk the maximum mileage. Mileage is calculated using the MapQuest application on Centraport and is provided through reimbursement and transportation is provided from home to childcare location to work activity and return. The County will utilize the most cost-effective means of transportation available.

- d. Described below are the services the district will provide to assist individuals at risk of needing TA to improve their opportunities for employment or to maintain their employment:

Schenectady County will provide individuals at risk of needing TA with information on community based employment resources such as Job Readiness Training, High School Equivalency Diploma, One Stop Career Center, and current job listings in an effort to assist these individuals in improving their employment options.

7.2 Post-Employment/Transitional Supportive Services

- a. Described below are the supports and strategies the district will provide to support job retention:

Information will be provided to the clients regarding the use of the One Stop Career Center as well as an open-door policy for individuals to contact their employment counselor, even after their temporary assistance case has been closed. Transportation will be supported in the form of bus swipers for up to one month after a temporary assistance case has been closed. Additionally, Schenectady County has a close partnership with the Employer Resource Network. The employment counselor will reach out to the identified success coach from the ERN to ensure ongoing support is provided to that customer on the job. The transitional benefits that they are eligible for will be provided to them as well and are listed in the next paragraph.

- b. Described below are the support services (for up to 90 days after case closing) the district will provide to individuals whose TA cases have closed due to employment:

Recognizing that even after becoming employed, many families will continue to be low-income households that may need support during the transition - services such as transitional childcare, transitional Medicaid coverage, and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits may be available. Each year a mailing is sent with a letter from the Commissioner to all recipients with reported wages, information on free Income Tax preparation including local Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) sites, and information on Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and Child Tax Credit (CTC). Former recipients are encouraged to check in bi-weekly with their employment counselors via telephone for at least 90 days to ensure that their employment is going well and will continue.

7.3 Extended Support Services

- a. Described below are the support services the district will provide for individuals who are eligible under the TANF Services 200% of poverty eligibility guidelines. These services can be provided as long as funding is available (FFFS, etc.):

Car repairs, car insurance, cost for work tools, uniforms/clothing, work supplies, and documentation and employment onboarding requirements to be supported at the discretion of the district.

8. Conciliation, Sanction and Dispute Resolution Procedures

8.1 Conciliation

- a. The district's conciliation process for TA applicants and recipients must be conducted in accordance with 18 NYCRR 385.11(a). Indicate below how conciliations are conducted (reply yes or no to the options as they apply).

How the District Conducts Conciliation for TA Applicants and Recipients

Yes or No:	How conciliation is conducted
Yes	In person
Yes	By phone
No	By mail

The districts process for conduction TA conciliations is described below:

WTWCMS is used for the conciliation process. Conciliation notices are generated through Welfare-to-Work Caseload Management System (WTWCMS) and the client has 10 days from the date of the conciliation notice to contact the employment counselor to schedule a conciliation appointment.

- b. Who makes the TA good cause/willfulness determination (reply yes or no to the options as they apply)?

How the District Makes the Good Cause/Willfulness Determination for TA Applicants and Recipients

Yes or No:	Who makes the TA good cause/willfulness determination?
Yes	The client's employment worker
Yes	A supervisor in the district
No	A separate entity (described here):

- c. The district's conciliation process for SNAP applicants and recipients must be conducted in accordance with 18 NYCRR 385.11(d). Indicate below how conciliations are conducted (reply yes or not to the options as they apply).

How the District Conducts Conciliation for SNAP Applicants and Recipients

Yes or No:	How conciliation is conducted
Yes	In person
Yes	By phone
Yes	By mail

The district's process for conducting SNAP conciliations is described below:

Welfare-to-Work Caseload Management System (WTWCMS) is used for the conciliation process. Conciliation notices are generated through WTWCMS and the client has 10 days from the date of the conciliation notice to contact the employment counselor to schedule a conciliation appointment, to complete an assigned work activity to avoid a SNAP sanction, or claim/provide documentation they are exempt from SNAP work requirements.

- d. Who makes the SNAP E&T good cause/willfulness determination (reply yes or no to the options as they apply)?

How the District Makes the Good Cause/Willfulness Determination for SNAP Applicants and Recipients

Yes or No:	Who makes the TA good cause/willfulness determination?
Yes	The client's employment worker
Yes	A supervisor in the district
No	A separate entity (described here):

- e. Described below is the district’s procedure for engaging SNAP recipients in a work activity to demonstrate compliance to avoid a SNAP E&T related sanction:

If a recipient claims to have good cause/exemption, but the district subsequently determines that the recipient did not have or failed to document good cause/exemption, the client is offered the opportunity to demonstrate compliance in the a SNAP work activity to avoid the SNAP sanction. The SNAP conciliation period is 10 days, and a total of nine (9) employment applications must be recorded in the job search record and submitted to the district at the time of the conciliation meeting. Customers may use the One Stop Career Center to conduct their job search.

8.2 Sanction

- a. Described below is the district’s procedure for determining compliance for those TA recipients who wish to end their employment sanction (18 NYCRR 385.12, 385.13), including the time period established for demonstrating compliance to the satisfaction of the district:

They are engaged in a work activity and given an appointment for assessment by an employment counselor. The individual must demonstrate compliance with work rules by engaging in the assigned work activity for 10 days. Temporary Assistance benefits are restored retroactively to the date the individual indicated a willingness to comply (but no earlier than the expiration of the minimum duration period). If the client claims to be work exempt, the client will be given the opportunity to submit medical documentation to verify the exemption from work requirements and will be added back to the case in the same time frame as a non-exempt individual who has complied, (but no earlier than the expiration of the minimum duration period).

- b. Describe below the district's procedure for determining compliance for those SNAP recipients who wish to end their employment sanction (18 NYCRR 385.12, 18 NYCRR 385.13), including the time period established for demonstrating compliance to the satisfaction of the district:

Individuals must request to be added back to the case after the minimum duration has ended and comply with work requirements as assigned by the District. Once the durational period has ended individuals are offered the opportunity to lift their sanction at every recertification. Individuals that document an exemption may have the SNAP sanction lifted before the end of the durational sanction period.

8.3 Dispute Resolution

- a. The district’s procedure for individuals who wish to dispute their work activity assignments, including individuals who dispute the district’s response to their request for health-related accommodations must be conducted in accordance with 18 NYCRR 385.11(c). Indicate below who mediates the grievance (reply yes or no to the options as they apply).

Grievance Mediation

Yes or No:	Who makes the TA good cause/willfulness determination?
No	An independent entity which has an agreement with the district.

Yes or No:	Who makes the TA good cause/willfulness determination?
No	Supervisory staff who are trained in mediation and who have no direct responsibility for the individual's case.
Yes	Designated supervisory staff who have no direct responsibility for the individual's case and who are not trained in mediation.

9. Disability Determinations, Documentation and Requirements of Exempt Individuals

9.1 Disability Determination Process and Tools

- a. The district's process for determining an individual's disabilities and/or work limitations must be in accordance with 18 NYCRR 385.2(d). Indicate below what the district's process is for determining an individual's disabilities and/or work limitations (reply yes or no to the options as they apply).

Process for Determining Disabilities and/or Work Limitations

Yes or No:	How the district determines an individual's disabilities and/or work limitation
Yes	District participates in the OTDA managed contract for independent medical evaluations.
No	District contracts directly with a physician to provide independent medical evaluations.
Yes	District accepts physician's statement provided by participant.
Yes	District accepts physician's statement provided by participant but refers for an independent evaluation when deemed necessary.
Yes	Other process: If an individual is claiming a medical limitation or stating that they are unable to work at all, they are given an agency medical form to be filled out by their physician. The district will accept medical documentation other than the agency medical form as long as such documentation contains a specific diagnosis, prognosis, and a list of the individual's resulting work activity limitations. The individual is not engaged in any work activities until employability status can be determined and the individual is notified of the agency's determination. When the medical is received by the agency, it is reviewed by a TA Examiner and a Senior Examiner. If the agency medical is not clear about the limitation(s), a referral to the agency's contracted physician, Industrial Medical Associates, (IMA) may be requested in order to help determine employability status.

- b. Described below is the district's procedure for notifying an individual of their exempt or non-exempt determination whenever an individual alleges to be unable to participate, or the individual otherwise participates in the employability disability review, including when an individual is notified that their status changes from exempt to non-exempt:

The district mails the LDSS-4005/LDSS-4005(a) to the individual.

- c. Described below is how the district notifies an individual of their exempt or non-exempt determination (reply yes or not to the options as they apply):

Process for Notifying an Individual of Their Exempt or Non-Exempt Status

Yes or No:	District’s process for reviewing medical documentation
Yes	The district sends the LDSS-4005 or LDSS-4005a and retains a copy in the case record.
No	The district sends a local equivalent and retains a copy in the case record.

- d. Indicated below is the process for reviewing the medical documentation to determine if the individual is exempt, nonexempt, or work limited and describe the process by which the determination is made (reply yes or no to the options as they apply).

Process for Reviewing Medical Documentation

Yes or No:	District’s process for reviewing medical documentation
No	District directs the contracted physician or individual’s physician to determine status.
Yes	District review team reviews and determines status (described here):
No	Specialized disability/medical staff or unit reviews and determines status (described here):
Yes	Other process: If an individual is claiming a medical limitation or stating that they are unable to work at all, they are given an agency medical form to be filled out by their physician. The district will accept medical documentation other than the agency medical form as long as such documentation contains a specific diagnosis, prognosis, and a list of the individual's resulting work activity limitations. The individual is not engaged in any work activities until employability status can be determined and the individual is notified of the agency's determination. When the medical is received by the agency, it is reviewed by a TA Examiner and a Senior Examiner. If the agency medical is not clear about the limitation(s), a referral to the agency's contracted physician (IMA) may be requested in order to help determine employability status. When all the information is reviewed and a determination is made, the client is sent a 4005/4005a to inform him/her of the agency's decision on his/her employment status.

9.2 Mental Health Screening and Assessment

- a. In addition to screening for a disability as part of the application or disability determination process, does the district administer a screening tool for TA participants to help determine whether a referral for a mental health evaluation is warranted?

No

- b. Describe the district’s policy for determining when a program participant is offered a mental health screen:

N/A

- c. What screening tools does the district use (reply yes or no to the options as they apply)?

Screening Tools the District Uses

Yes or No:	Screening Tools
No	LDSS 5009 - Mental Health Screening Tool
No	The computer assisted version of the Modified Mini Screening tool (MMS)
No	Other Screening tool (described here):

- d. If using the MMS, indicate below the district’s cutoff score (7, 8 or 9) for referral to a mental health evaluation.

N/A

- e. Describe below the procedure the district uses if the screening tool warrants a mental health evaluation referral:

N/A

9.3 Requirements for Exempt TA Participants (Reference 18 NYCRR 385.2 (e))

- a. An exempt individual who has the potential to be restored to self-sufficiency through rehabilitation may be required to accept medical care to assist them in recovering from a mental or physical impairment, accept referral to and enrollment in a program of vocational rehabilitation, training, and/or other essential rehabilitation, and provide requested evidence that the individual is participating in the assigned program.

Described below is the district’s procedure for determining if an individual, who is unable to work due to mental or physical impairment, has the potential through treatment or other rehabilitative activities to improve the ability to work. This determination is different from the determination of the individual’s disability exemption as covered in Section 9.1 of this Plan. Indicate who makes or assists in this determination that an individual can restore or improve employability through treatment or other rehabilitative activities (e.g., medical practitioner, employment worker, TA worker, local review team, etc.). Also indicate the source and type of information used to make the determination (e.g., information from individual’s medical practitioner, district contracted provider, specialist evaluation obtained as result of district referral, etc.).

Schenectady County works with recipients to determine if a disabled individual has the potential to be restored to self-sufficiency by reviewing the medical documentation submitted by the recipient. This decision is made by the Examiner and TA Supervisor. District will refer recipients to IMA for physical and behavioral evaluation to assist in determining the potential for employability.

The Temporary Assistance Unit continually monitors the recipients coded 70, 41, 42, and 43 to update as deemed appropriate.

- b. Described below is the district's procedure for developing a treatment plan and for referring the participant to appropriate treatment, etc.

Schenectady County reviews cases and obtains medical documentation in implementing treatment plans in accordance with the medical practitioner's treatment plan recommendation. The plan is discussed with the individual along with their responsibility to attend the treatment program. Referrals to treatment programs come from the TA Examiner and/or SJTA Employment Counselor.

- c. Described below is the district's procedure for tracking the participant's compliance with their treatment plan, including who in the district is responsible for monitoring compliance. Include elements such as monthly confirmation of attendance at rehabilitation or other factors to judge participation and progress, along with how often the treatment plan is updated.

A TA Supervisor monitors participant compliance with the treatment plan by reviewing case notes, requesting medical documentation from providers, calling recipients into the Department to review and document their treatment participation at time of re-certification or at the completion of a treatment program. We require that all applicants for and recipients of Public Assistance take all necessary action to reduce their need for assistance and participate in any rehabilitative treatment that will restore full or partial employability.

10. District Certification

10.1 Certification

As a condition of the receipt of federal and State funds the Local District Commissioner of Schenectady County Department of Social Services submits this Temporary Assistance (TA) and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Employment Plan (Plan) to the New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance. The Plan outlines the administration of employment services for TA and SNAP applicants and recipients for the period January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2025. Submission of this Plan certifies that the district has read and accepts the terms of this certification and hereby affirms that employment services programs will be administered in accordance with all applicable federal and State policies, laws, regulations, and provisions of this Plan.

1/04/2024
Brandy Hillard-Bouldin
Commissioner