

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

January 01, 2022 - December 31, 2023

Ulster

- 1. Administration**
 - 1.1 Administrative Structure
 - 1.2 TA and SNAP Employment & Training (SNAP E&T) Provider Agencies
 - 1.3 OTDA Jobs Staff Agreement
 - 1.4 Access to Services at New York State Career Centers
- 2. Orientation, Assessment and Employment Plan**
 - 2.1 Orientation (Reference 18 NYCRR 385.5)
 - 2.2 Temporary Assistance (TA) Employment Assessment
 - 2.3 TA Employment Planning (Reference 18 NYCRR 385.6 and 385.7)
- 3. Engagement**
 - 3.1 Federal “Engaged in Work” Requirement (Reference 18 NYCRR 385.2 (f))
 - 3.2 Strategies/Procedures for Accommodating Individuals with Limited English Proficiency
 - 3.3 Strategies/Procedures for Increasing Program Attendance
 - 3.4 Strategies/Procedures for Engaging Sanctioned TA Participants
 - 3.5 Strategies for Reducing the Need for TA
- 4. Work Activities**
 - 4.1 Allowable Work Activities
 - 4.2 Job Development
 - 4.3 Training Approval and Activity Enrollment Policies (Reference 18 NYCRR 385.9)
 - 4.4 Post-Secondary Education Approval and Enrollment Policies
- 5. Work Requirements**
 - 5.1 Meeting TA Work Requirements
 - 5.2 Meeting SNAP Work Requirements
- 6. Quality Assurance/Work Verification**
 - 6.1 Quality Assurance Process - Random Case Sampling
 - 6.2 Use of Outside Providers/Vendors
- 7. Supportive Services**
 - 7.1 TA and Non-TA SNAP Applicants and Recipients in Work Activities Approved by the District
 - 7.2 Post-Employment/Transitional Supportive Services
 - 7.3 Extended Support Services
- 8. Conciliation, Sanction and Dispute Resolution Procedures**
 - 8.1 Conciliation
 - 8.2 Sanction
 - 8.3 Dispute Resolution
- 9. Disability Determinations, Documentation and Requirements of Exempt Individuals**
 - 9.1 Disability Determination Process and Tools
 - 9.2 Mental Health Screening and Assessment
 - 9.3 Requirements for Exempt TA Participants (Reference 18 NYCRR 385.2 (e))
- 10. District Certification**
 - 10.1 Certification

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 Attachment

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.

This is not currently being done in-house due to the Pandemic. In the future we hope to engage with the OET to locate more available employment for our Employment Unit to refer our clients' to. We hope to be doing this on a weekly basis.

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.

Provider	Total Contract Cost/Year	Funding Source(s)	Categories of Clients Served	Programs, Services or Activities Provided
----------	--------------------------	-------------------	------------------------------	-------------------------------------------

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.

Provider	Funding Source(s)	Categories of Clients Served	Programs, Services or Activities Provided
----------	-------------------	------------------------------	-------------------------------------------

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:

The Deputy Commissioner of Administration supervises the Director of Temporary Assistance who is responsible for Temporary Assistance, including the oversight of all employment programs. The Principal Social Welfare Examiner coordinates WTW services within the Agency and with contracted providers within the community. Services include development of an individual employment/career path with:

- Initial Individual Assessments/ Employability
- Initial Individual Assessments/ Vocational
- Individual Job Search
- Educational Referral and Monitoring
- Referral for Supportive Services
- Attendance Monitoring
- CWEP (Community Work Experience Program)(When available)

Ulster County Department of Social Services is a partner with the local One Stop, which includes the local Department of Labor and Office of Employment and Training. In addition, Ulster County Department of Social Services has contracts and or agreements with the following:

- Family of Woodstock Inc.: For residential, non-residential and domestic--violence assessment services.
- UCAT (Ulster County Area Transit): For transportation- related assistance.

1.3 OTDA Jobs Staff Agreement

a. OTDA Jobs Program Services - Target Groups. Check all services and target groups that apply:

Selected	Services
	Assessment/Employment Plan
	Supervised Job Search
	Job Readiness Training
	Job Club
	Job Placement Services
	Grant Diversion
	Job Development (employer outreach)
	WOTC pre-certifications

Selected	Target Groups
	Applicants
	FA & SNA with children
	SNA without children
	SNAP
	TANF 200%

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

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 (select all that apply):

- The district has employee(s) physically present at a Career Center
- The district has contract staff physically present at a Career Center

The district makes available direct access to its program staff via phone or technology at a Career Center

The district makes available copies of the LDSS-2921 (Common Application) at a Career Center

Other:

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.

Currently due to the Pandemic and office closures we have not had partners available. We look forward to re-developing these partners with this new Plan.

2. Orientation, Assessment and Employment Plan

2.1 Orientation (Reference 18 NYCRR 385.5)

a. Check one of the following:

- The district provides orientation in accordance with 18 NYCRR 385.5 and no additional information is provided at orientation.
- 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 (e.g. in a group setting, individually, or a combination of both). Please include the orientation procedure for exempt individuals and non-exempt individuals, if different:

A discussion of rights and obligations is held during the Temporary Assistance application process. The employment orientation is completed at the same time. This process is completed individually by the Social Welfare Examiner.

2.2 Temporary Assistance (TA) Employment Assessment

a. The district conducts assessments as required by 18 NYCRR 385.6(a) and 385.7(a). Check one of the following:

- The district enters assessments directly into WTWCMS
- The district uses the LDSS 4980 (New York State Assessment) and later enters information into WTWCMS.
- The district conducts assessments using a local equivalent tool, and later enters information into WTWCMS. Please attach the local equivalent tool. If the local equivalent contains additional elements beyond what is required, list them below:

b. Described below is the district procedure for the completion of an employment assessment:

At this time most Applicants are choosing to complete the intake process by phone. At this interview, the need for supportive services, prior work experience, learning needs, other skills, past education and family circumstances are discussed. The assessment is completed and reviewed by assigned staff. If the Applicant has not completed a face-to-face interview, a copy of the assessment is mailed with a request to review, sign and return to the Agency within 10 days.

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

UCDSS Employment Unit Staff: Social Welfare Examiner and Specialist are responsible for the initial assessment with applicants/recipients of Temporary Assistance.

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)):

Social Welfare Services Staff: Possession of AAS Degree or high school diploma/HSE, plus two years full- time- paid experience examining, investigating or evaluating claims for assistance, veteran/unemployment benefits, insurance or a similar program operating under established criteria for eligibility, or a combination of training and experience as indicated.

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

- Yes No

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

Yes No

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

Yes No

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

Intake, recertification, and change.

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

a. The district develops individual employment plans as required by 18 NYCRR 385.6(a) and 385.7(a). Check one of the following:

The district enters employment plans directly into WTCMS.

The district uses the LDSS-4978 (New York State Employment Plan) and later enters information into WTCMS.

The district develops individual employment plans using a local equivalent tool and later enters information into WTCMS. Attached is the local equivalent tool. If the local equivalent contains additional elements beyond what is required, list them below:

b. Check one of the following:

The same administrative unit or contractor that conducts employment assessments also develops employment plans.

A different district administrative unit or contractor develops employment plans, and their qualifications include:

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

At intake by a SWE.

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

Recertification, change and anytime there is a discrepancy in Employability Code.

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:

We will guide individuals in their effort to meet short and long term goals and therefore becoming self-sufficient.

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:

The Agency uses the Spanish application and we access the language line when necessary.

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 Agency would initiate contact with the participant first by phone, then in writing, to determine if there are barriers preventing participation.

3.4 Strategies/Procedures for Engaging Sanctioned TA Participants

a. Select all that apply:

Described below are the strategies the district uses to attempt to engage sanctioned participants as soon as they are sanctioned:

Described below are the strategies the district uses to attempt to engage sanctioned participants when the durational period of the sanction is completed:

Described below are the strategies the district uses to attempt to engage sanctioned participants during different times in the sanction period:

The Social Welfare Examiner discusses engagement at recertification or upon completion of a sanction period. Sanctioned individuals are encouraged to participate in any activity that will end the sanction. Approved programs are discussed and changes to assessments are completed

3.5 Strategies for Reducing the Need for TA

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

All employed FA and/or SNA family applicants are interviewed to determine eligibility for diversion. All supportive services including transportation, child care, in lieu of TA child care, etc., are all discussed.

4. Work Activities

4.1 Allowable Work Activities

a. Please select all the 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.

Case Type	Activity and Definition
FA SNAFAM SNA SNAP	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.
	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.
FA SNAFAM SNA SNAP	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 equivalence (HSE) diploma, in the case of a recipient who has not completed secondary school or received a certificate of general equivalence. 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.
	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>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, 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>
FA SNAFAM SNA	<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>
FA SNAFAM SNA SNAP	<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>
FA SNAFAM SNA SNAP	<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>
FA SNAFAM SNA SNAP	<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>
FA SNAFAM	<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>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.</p>
FA SNAFAM SNA SNAP	<p>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.</p>
	<p>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.</p>

4.2 Job Development

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

Yes

No

If Yes, select how the district participates in job development activities.

District staff contacts employers to solicit jobs for TA and SNAP Participants. Describe below how this is done, including number of staff, frequency of contacts, etc.

TA staff directly contact employers to solicit jobs for appropriate applicants' and recipients' job referrals on a bi-weekly basis.

District contracts or has an agreement with another agency to contact employers and solicit jobs for TA and/or SNAP participants. Describe below how this is done, including number of staff, frequency of contacts, etc.

This is not currently being done due to the Pandemic. In the future we hope to engage with the OET to locate employment for our Employment Unit (staff of 3) refer clients' to work on weekly.

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, 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:

At this time the Agency can not refer for these services as the Pandemic has limited our partnership programs current availability. We hope to re-establish partnerships and be able to refer in the future.

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:

At this time the Agency can not refer for these services as the Pandemic has limited our partnership programs current availability. We hope to re-establish partnerships and be able to refer in the future.

c. Described below are the 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:

At initial eligibility, employment assessment and plan, as well as any follow required.

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:

At this time the Agency can not refer for these services as the Pandemic has limited our partnership programs current availability. We hope to re-establish partnerships and be able to refer in the future.

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:

¿Clients must show a genuine interest in requested training;
¿Client has a definite plan to use this training to obtain unsubsidized employment;
¿Client will be trained in such employment so that a skill can be developed and transferred to more than one job;
¿Whether the client has a prerequisite skill;
¿Client¿s work experience;
¿Prior training record;
¿Participation record in other activities, as indicated by expressed attitude and behavior while participating in such activities;
¿While the Employability Plan is developed with the client, and with consideration to the client¿s wishes, the Social Services official will consider the need of the Social Services district to meet work activity participation rates before completing the individual¿s employability plan;
¿Ongoing approval by the district will be determined by attitude, behavior, attendance, progress in the current program, etc. of the individual, as well as the District¿s need to meet participation rates.

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

We have no providers at this time due to the Pandemic but hope to re-engage in the future and will follow the following standards:

- ¿ The courses offered are vocationally oriented;
- ¿ The training will provide the enrollee, upon successful completion, a marketable skill that will enable the enrollee to secure unsubsidized employment;
- ¿ The provider has a demonstrated track record of effectiveness in job development and placement;
- ¿ The training being engaged in will equip the enrollee with skills of which there is a demand in the local labor market;
- ¿ The State Education Department licenses the provider;
- ¿ The cost of training must be reasonable and can be covered through grants or loans. The Department determines the need to assist with testing and/or enrollment fees. Also reviewed is the possibility that the client can secure such training elsewhere at a lower charge or at no charge, of which the individual is responsible.
- ¿ The degree or certificate can be successfully completed within the required time frame.

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

This discussion occurs during the initial intake application, employment assessment and/or Employability Plan or at any time the situation arises.

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

After the development of the Employability Plan, the individual is notified verbally and in a written communication.

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:

A review is completed at each application and 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:

A review is completed of the medical, and any activity assigned will be taken into consideration in regards to medical limitations. The District will inform work activity providers of an individuals' identified work limitation. Once the district has determined that a client may be work limited, an appropriate worksite will be secured and the client referred for an interview and placement. The site supervisor will be advised of such limitations by the district via a written notice describing limitation and/or accommodations required to meet the participant¿s needs.
Once a recipient with work limitations has been placed, the District representative will query the site supervisor on a periodic basis to determine if the client is being assigned duties with limitations. Additionally, the District receives monthly timesheets on which the site will be expected to indicate what duties the client has been assigned to according to the limitations. The District can send a representative to the site to observe the work in which the client is assigned.

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:

2 year degree.

b. Described below is how the district will ensure that enrollments in post-secondary education beyond the 12-month lifetime limit are combined with a weekly average of at least 20 hours in paid employment activities which may include work study, work experience or community service:

SWEs monitor using WTWCMS at every recertification and through monthly attendance sheets.

c. 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 checked below (Select all that apply):

- It has been determined that the student voluntarily quit their job or reduced earnings to qualify for initial or increased TA.
- 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.
- 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.
- The institution or student fails to monitor and report information regarding the student's attendance and performance as required.
- The student fails to progress toward the completion of a course of study without good cause, as determined by the district.
- 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.
- Additional reasons as stated below:

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. Include in this description 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).

Describe below how the district plans to meet federal and State TA participation rate requirements. Included is the weekly hours standard participation requirement 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 who status changed from exempt to nonexempt. Information regarding engaging exempt individuals is entered in Section 6:
 Upon case opening, and a full assessment, recipients are followed up with an individual Employability Plan. Referrals may be given for an employment activity.
 Enrollments are assigned to TA staff to generate attendance sheets (per our attendance policy). Clerical staff assists with the timely return of the attendance information.
 It is expected that recipients will be engaged in accountable activity within the first month of case opening and when having lost employment.
 Ulster County continues to request County Departments to participate in CWEP.
 Recipients will be called into the Agency within 10 days of an Employability Code change from exempt to non-exempt.

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

Households with Dependent Children Average Monthly 50

Households without Dependent Children Average Monthly 150

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:

Weekly and monthly review of COGNOS reports by Supervisors. Reports include participation/engagement reports ,as well as Employment status and Employment reports. Following supervisory review, reports are given to SWE's in the employment unit for appropriate action.

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:

The district assigns TA applicants to Job Search.

Yes No

Applicant Job Search	Min. Contacts	Min. Hours	Additional Information
TANF and SNA MOE	10	20	Nonexempt applicants are referred to applicant job search as part of the Temporary Assistance application process. Applicants are required to do ten individual job searches per week and spend a minimum of 20 hours per week on job search activity.
SNA Individuals	10	20	Nonexempt applicants are referred to applicant job search as part of the Temporary Assistance application process. Applicants are required to do ten individual job searches per week and spend a minimum of 20 hours per week on job search activity.

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. Also 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:

The district assigns TA recipients to Job Search.

Yes No

Recipient Job Search	Min. Contacts	Min. Hours	Additional Information
TANF and SNA MOE	10	20	Recipients will be required to participate in a supervised job search activity with a minimum of 10 contacts and a minimum of 20 hours per week. In addition, they may be enrolled in other activities at the same time, but for no more than a total of 40 hours per week. Transportation and supportive services will be issued as needed for participation. All will be monitored, not less than weekly.
SNA Individuals	10	20	Recipients will be required to participate in a supervised job search activity with a minimum of 10 contacts and a minimum of 20 hours per week. In addition, they may be enrolled in other activities at the same time, but for no more than a total of 40 hours per week. Transportation and supportive services will be issued as needed for participation. All will be monitored, not less than weekly.

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.

Depending upon participation hours needed, based upon case category and household composition, clients are required to complete a self employment worksheet and/or submit their self -employment earning ledgers, Schedule C of their Federal Income Tax return or a letter of self-declaration of wages/earnings. Additionally, clients are required to verify actual hours of employment. Self- employment hours would be approved, however ,additional work activity may be required to meet participation rate.

5.2 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):

NTA SNAP applicants and recipients are informed of the services available at intake, recert and by mail.

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.

Job Search is available; these services are offered and discussed. Although Ulster County DSS does not mandate NTA SNAP applicant/recipients to participate in work activities.

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):

At point of contact, intake, recert and visit NTA SNAP are advised of services.

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, NYCWAY 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 (Employability Code 38 or 48), and/or parent or caretaker relative of a child in the household under 12 months of age, (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 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 WTWCMS?

Yes

No

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

Yes

No

c. If No, describe below the process used:

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:

- . Uniform/clothing allowance to gain, maintain or retain employment ; not to exceed \$200.00
- . Fees for licenses necessary for employment not to exceed \$250.00
- . Tools and equipment necessary for employment not to exceed \$300.00
- . Auto repairs not to exceed \$500
- . Driver's license and automotive registration fees - not to exceed \$300
- . Payment of car insurance for up to three months not to exceed \$500 total for three months

These supportive services will need to be approved by the staff level of Senior Social Welfare Examiner or higher. Supportive services above these limits will have to be approved by the staff level of Deputy Commissioner or higher.

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. (Select all that apply)

- Bus pass/token
- Gas card/voucher
- Mileage reimbursement at IRS Business rate (effective 1/1/21 is 56 cents/mi)
- Mileage reimbursement at IRS Medical/Moving rate (effective 1/1/21 is 16 cents/mi)
- Other mileage rate (please explain methodology used to establish reimbursement rate):

If the participant rides with someone, and is expected to pay a share of the cost for transportation, the agency may provide such payment (at the same rate) to the provider upon documentation of attendance and mileage. Tokens for public transportation can also be provided and under special circumstances, taxi service may be considered.

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:

Ulster County attempts to locate sites within the 2 miles. Some towns offering work experience may provide transportation. An individual may be required to walk 2 miles in accordance with their physical ability. Participation work limitations will be reviewed prior to any assignment to ensure limitations are accommodated and not exceeding participant capabilities for each site. In addition, the safety of the route is reviewed.

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:

The District provides supportive services for non TA individuals who are under the 200% of poverty using Diversion eligibility guidelines to enable them to obtain or retain employment.

- . Non-recurring expenses related to childcare such as daycare registration applications or service fees;
- . Clothing necessary to maintain employment ; not to exceed \$200.00;
- . Fees for licenses necessary for employment not to exceed \$250.00;
- . Tools and equipment necessary for employment not to exceed \$300.00;
- . Non-recurring transportation costs;
- . Referrals to providers for assistance with housing, health and family problems.

7.2 Post-Employment/Transitional Supportive Services

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

From case opening to case closing, the Agency goal for each individual is self-sufficiency. SWE's meet with each applicant and recipient to discuss their plan toward self-sufficiency. Upon case closing, supportive services are again reviewed. There is also a discussion regarding separate determination for SNAP, as well as discussion of the need for Diversion Assistance.

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:

Non-recurring expenses related to clothing necessary to retain employment not to exceed \$200.00, fees for licenses necessary for employment, not to exceed \$250.00, tools and necessary equipment for employment, not to exceed \$300.00, reasonable costs of necessary repairs to a participants' automobile and payment of insurance premiums not to exceed \$1000.00, non-recurring transportation costs, and referrals to providers of assistance with housing, health and family problems.

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.):

Transitional services are discussed and applied for if eligible.

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. (Select all that apply and describe the procedure below).

In person

By phone

By mail

The SWE in the Employment Unit is responsible to implement the conciliation and good cause process. SWE staff make the determination of willful and without cause. The Senior SWE in the Employment Unit reviews the decision.

b. Who makes the TA good cause/willfulness determination? (Select all that apply)

The client's employment worker

A supervisor in the district

A separate entity (describe below):

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. (Select all that apply and describe the procedure below)

In person

By phone

By mail

The SWE is responsible to implement the conciliation and good cause process. SWE staff make the determination of willful and without cause. The Senior SWE reviews the decision.

d. Who makes the SNAP E&T good cause/willfulness determination? (Select all that apply)

The client's employment worker

A supervisor in the district

A separate entity (describe below):

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:

The procedure for engagement of SNAP recipients in a work activity to demonstrate compliance and to avoid a SNAP E&T sanction for all SNAP employment conciliations (except employment assessment) was willful and without good cause, is to require the recipient to submit at least five job searches within a ten-day period after conciliation. The person conciliated without good cause and willful would be required to complete an employment assessment of the individual's skills and prior work experience when an employment assessment is the reason for conciliation.

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:

Once the individual has demonstrated compliance by participation in an assigned work activity for five days, TA benefits are restored retroactive to the date the individual indicated a willingness to comply, but no earlier than the expiration of the minimum duration period.
Temporary Assistance benefits are restored retroactive to the date the individual claimed to be unable to participate, but no earlier than the expiration of the minimum duration period, provided the individual has cooperated with efforts to document the exemption.

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:

SNAP benefits are restored retroactive to the date the individual claimed to be unable to participate, but no earlier than the expiration of the minimum duration period, provided the individual has cooperated with efforts to document the exemption.

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.

- An independent entity which has an agreement with the district
- Supervisory staff who are trained in mediation and who have no direct responsibility for the individual's case
- 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. (Select all that apply, and describe the process)

- District participates in the OTDA managed contract for independent medical evaluations.
- District contracts directly with a physician to provide independent medical evaluations.
- District accepts physician's statement provided by participant.
- District accepts physician's statement provided by participant but refers for an independent evaluation when deemed necessary
- Other process

At intake, recertification, and any other contact with the participant, when a disability is claimed, the participant is given a LDSS-4526 to be completed by their physician and returned to the Agency within a 10 day period of time. Once completed they are reviewed and coded.

b. 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. (Select all that apply)

- District directs the contracted physician or individual's physician to determine status.
- District review team reviews and determines status (described below).
- Specialized disability/medical staff or unit reviews and determines status (described below).
- Other

The medical documentation is returned by the client to DSS. The Supervisor or the Specialist in the Employment Unit reviews all medical information and makes a determination of the applicable code. The medical is then sent to the SWE to code appropriately and take any other appropriate action.

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?

- Yes No

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

c. What screening tools does the district use? (Select all that apply)

- LDSS 5009 - Mental Health Screening Tool
- The computer assisted version of the Modified Mini Screening tool (MMS)
- Other Screening tool (describe below)

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

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

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.).

Examiner and Specialist in the Employment Unit will be responsible to work intensely with the applicant and recipient to ensure that they are gainfully participating in efforts to restore themselves to self-sufficiency. Staff assigned to work with this population will review the medicals presented by physicians and or the recommendations made by the Provider Agencies to determine if the individual has the potential to be restored to self-sufficiency. Treatment plans and professional medical recommendations will be considered in the determination. Medical statements, progress notes and reports will all be reviewed.

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

For all types of treatment not related to drug/alcohol issues, the medicals are received from the physicians and reviewed as described above. The client must attend the appropriate treatment program as prescribed by their treatment providers. This can include the need for psychiatric treatment as well. Schedules for prescribed treatment is countable and entered into WTWCMS

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.

Attendance is collected no less than monthly. Automated attendance requests are sent monthly. The SWE receives attendance turnaround and schedules a second assessment appointment with medical information and need for additional documentation. Updates are requested monthly, or as needed, to validate medical conditions and to plan for self-sufficiency.

10. District Certification

10.1 Certification

As a condition of the receipt of federal and State funds the Local District Commissioner of Ulster 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 01, 2022 through December 31, 2023. 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.

10/28/2021 2:16:26 PM

Michael Iapoce

Commissioner
