

# NOVA Draft Two-Year Local Plan Modification

## Introduction

The Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA) requires that local workforce development boards develop and submit to the State local and regional strategic workforce development plans. [NOVA's 2017-20 Local Plan](#) was submitted in March 2017 and is still in effect. WIOA also requires a biennial update of regional and local Plans to ensure they remain current. The California Workforce Development Board has also made changes to the State Plan which require that Local Boards update their Plans to be consistent with the State's policy direction. The State Board is requiring local boards to focus on the following priorities in their local and regional Plans:

- Partnerships with county human service CalFresh programs.
- Partnerships with Local Child Support Agencies to provide workforce services to non-custodial parents.
- Partnerships with programs that serve individuals with disabilities, including strategies to implement Competitive Integrated Employment.
- Services for English language learners, the foreign born, and refugees.
- Aligning, coordinating, and integrating reentry and workforce services to the formerly incarcerated and other justice-involved individuals.

The NOVA Local Plan Modification focuses on the first four priority areas. The final priority is required to be addressed in the regional Plan, scheduled for release for comment in mid-February 2019.

The Plan which follows is written to correspond to direction from the State to respond to certain elements. Please note that per State [directive WSD 18-01](#), certain elements are included in the narrative portion of the Plan immediately below, and certain elements are included in the attachment that follows the narrative.

---

## Narrative

### A. CalFresh Employment & Training (E&T) Partnership

**(also see attachment)**

#### *i. Partnerships for service delivery*

This plan details the ways in which NOVA engages and works with the county Human Service agencies and other CalFresh E&T partners to support CalFresh customers on their journeys to sustainable employment and upward mobility.

The CalFresh E&T (CFET) Plans for Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties describe the E&T services available for this population and the services provided both directly and through partners. The direct program provides employment assistance to CF eligible employable clients who are out of work or underemployed. The primary goal of this program is to immediately direct clients toward available employment in an effort to prevent or end their dependency on public assistance. The counties operate one-stop centers with wrap-around services that provide opportunities and support for relief from poverty.

The Santa Clara County Social Services Agency external CFET program services are provided by the following partners: Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County, Goodwill of Silicon Valley, Sacred Heart Community Service, Silicon Valley Children's Fund, work2future Foundation and Working Partnerships USA. These partners provide the following components: job search training, workfare, work experience/internships, education, apprenticeships/pre-apprenticeships, on-the-job training and job retention. In San Mateo County, all E&T services are provided by the County Human Services Agency. Components include workfare, work experience/OJT, job search training, and education.

In addition, CalFresh partners from both counties are members of NOVA's Stakeholders' group. The NOVA Stakeholders' group is comprised of a broad cross-section of the workforce development community including: adult education, community colleges, job center providers, DOR, EDD, County CalWORKs/TANF, LCSS, CDCR, Veterans Administration, housing authorities, regional centers and community-based organizations serving youth, persons with disabilities, formerly incarcerated, veterans, disadvantaged and immigrant workers, among others. The Stakeholders' group is a valuable forum for members to share information about their respective programs to provide additional resources and enhance success for this population. Stakeholder partners are currently developing referral mechanisms and initiatives to enhance services.

#### *viii-x. Braiding resources and expanding services*

In Santa Clara County, third party partners providing program services use non-federal dollars to fund their CFET program. Invoices of CFET expenses are submitted to Santa Clara County monthly. Once approved, 50% of the allowable CFET costs are reimbursed to the third party partner. To leverage CalFresh funding and provide access to no- or low-cost training, County staff in both counties refer customers to community resources as appropriate, such as the ACCEL consortium of adult education providers in San Mateo County, and JobTrain. Individuals referred to the NOVA AJCCs may have access to additional grant-funded resources, such as career training.

Through the NOVA Stakeholders' group, the local workforce system partners will learn of programs and organizations serving particular types of CalFresh populations and ways to access and leverage these resources. In addition, the NOVA Workforce Board's Expanding Reach task force is exploring methods and best practices in order to reach a greater geography and underserved target groups, without additional resources from WIOA, such as through remote services and by partner capacity building.

#### *xi. Sector pathway programs*

In Santa Clara County, partners providing training funded through CalFresh offer sector pathway programs including those with industry recognized certification: A+ Certification, Google IT Support Professional Certification, Network+ Certification, HVAC Certification, pre-apprenticeship construction training program, Forklift Certification, and Safe Serve Certification. In San Mateo County, CalFresh E&T participants may access distance learning that includes Computer & Data Systems, and Software Applications. CalFresh participants on the autism spectrum may access Neurodiversity Pathways (access to careers in data science), a Goodwill program in which NOVA is a close partner. CalFresh participants working with NOVA may have access to other career pathway programs through WIOA funding. The NOVA Stakeholders' group affords all members the opportunity to learn of each other's training resources and share in program development as appropriate.

#### *xii. Supportive services*

The way NOVA and partners work together is to share data about assets and challenges and to connect through the NOVA Stakeholder Group and other forums including the Open Doors initiative, which includes Silicon Valley employers and agencies serving individuals with disabilities. CalFresh participants are eligible for supportive services that may include transportation, costs associated with school/ training, interview clothing, and tools of the trade to start employment. The Stakeholders' group is another resource to inform members of additional supportive services available in the community.

#### *xiii. Retention strategies*

CalFresh partners and AJCC staff (for co-enrollees) track attendance and progress for individuals in training programs and provide follow up services to individuals reporting placement to assist participants with retention and career advancement. Services include guidance on soft skills such as employer/co-worker communication, time management, and basic work ethics based on individual needs. Referrals are made to community services as needed. In addition, NOVA's Expanding Reach initiative shares valuable career navigation resources with the Stakeholders group etc. Working through strategic networks, NOVA and partners promote retention and upward mobility.

### **B. Department of Child Support Services Partnership**

**(also see attachment)**

#### *x, xii, xvi, xvii. Comprehensive provision of services and service coordination*

NOVA and Department of Child Support Services staff in both San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties have met to develop an initial understanding of respective services, and will continue dialog to assure a comprehensive provision of services. In addition, the NOVA Stakeholders' group is a means for members to share information about their respective programs to provide additional resources and enhance success for this population. The group also provides professional development through cross-training and is a forum for sharing labor market intelligence such as occupations and industries in demand that will facilitate customer progression into livable wage jobs and careers. The group is also

working on details for braiding resources and coordinating services between partners serving the same customer, including referral and information-sharing mechanisms. Additional partnerships and obstacles to providing services are covered in the Attachment.

*ix. Supportive services to support job retention*

In San Mateo County, child support services customers undergo a comprehensive vocational evaluation through the Human Service Agency's Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS) program. After an initial evaluation, VRS provides employment search support and job coaching services, if appropriate. An assessment of the need for supportive services is part of the evaluation, and referrals are made to appropriate partners, such as those identified in the Plan attachment, to address needs. In Santa Clara County, DCSS resources are not available for retention services; however, staff may refer to local agencies such as those identified in the Attachment. In addition, it is our vision for better coordination to enable county stakeholders to access NOVA content for job search and retention. Customers enrolled in WIOA grants may have access to supportive services resources, such as transportation and clothing assistance, through NOVA.

*xi & xiv. Workforce services eligibility impact and obstacles to partnership*

The right to work in the United States is a barrier to referral for services. Obligor who reside in rural, less accessible areas face barriers traveling to available services if they do not have their own transportation. In order for a customer to access WIOA Adult training funds, they must meet WIOA priority of service criteria; in addition, funds may be limited. Confidentiality requirements may impact referrals; however, the NOVA Stakeholders' group members are collaborating on a referral process, including necessary information release documentation.

*xiii & xx. Tools to motivate and support participation*

The DCSS has a Compromise of Arrears Program where eligible obligors can receive "forgiveness" of a substantial portion of arrears owed to the state for public assistance provided to their children. There are also "forgiveness" programs when parents are working to reunify with their children. DCSS can suppress certain automated enforcement actions, including suspension of an obligor's driver's or professional license. DCSS can review the potential postponement of certain court actions including contempt where an obligor can face jail time for lack of payment. Obligor who are working towards making payments may find a more cooperative or collaborative relationship with the other parent, perhaps reaching an agreement waiving a portion of past due arrears or increasing visitation with their minor children. NOVA's Stakeholders' group can help facilitate information sharing so that all workforce partners serving this population are aware of the tools that DCSS can legally use to support participation.

*xv. Retention in training programs and incentives to foster sustained participation*

DCSS can suppress certain automated enforcement or perhaps suspend other types of enforcement activities including filing contempt actions against those obligors who are not paying towards their child support obligations. DCSS may also release licenses for obligors that are participating in the program. See above for information on tools that can be utilized to incentivize parents obligated to pay support to remain engaged in training and

progress into livable wage jobs. In addition, NOVA is exploring ways to share its career navigation content that fosters retention and upward mobility.

In addition, staff of the agencies working with the individual will be checking on progress, providing support and encouragement, and sharing information and outcomes between agencies.

*xviii. Engaging community-based organizations*

NOVA regularly meets with community-based organizations to understand their programs and explore ways to work together to serve the non-custodial parent population. Organizations are invited to participate in NOVA's Stakeholders' group to share program information with other CBOs, adult education, community colleges, and other members and to participate in professional development.

*xix. Referral process and forms to track participants*

The NOVA Workforce Board's vision is to be a catalyst for strategic network development to create a responsive and efficient system of workforce services. The NOVA Stakeholders' group is currently working on a process for referral and tracking of individuals as they are referred from the LCSA office and Family Court. One possibility under exploration is a website accessible only via secure login providing a referral mechanism as well as a structure for information and outcome sharing.

### **C. Competitive Integrated Employment (CIE) Updated Partnership**

**(also see attachment)**

*v-vii. DOR / AJCC connections for service coordination and outreach*

NOVA has points of contact at the Department of Rehabilitation in both San Mateo and Santa Clara counties who can provide linkages to service providers and/or supportive services to individuals with ID/DD who are vocational rehabilitation customers. NOVA and DOR (as well as other agencies) are working on the process for referrals and information sharing. Adult education providers are interested in mechanisms for sharing assessments and opportunities for co-enrollment.

NOVA has met with DOR staff in both San Mateo and Santa Clara counties to consider ways to outreach to employers and others to support opportunities for CIE. DOR and the regional centers in our area (San Andreas and Golden Gate) can assist with development of and payment for internships with ID/DD customers. This provides a mechanism for employers to "try out" an individual and assess suitability for a long-term position. The regional centers can also provide support through job coaching. NOVA and DOR staff plan follow-up conversations to work out details for referrals to these and other employment resources, and NOVA will be participating in meetings of the Local Partnership Agreement (LPA) partners. Recruitment, referral, and employer engagement strategies will be included in these conversations.

#### *iv. AJCC staff training*

There are several ways that NOVA Job Center staff increase their knowledge about serving individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (ID/DD) and of the programs and resources available in the area. NOVA collaborates with a wide range of agencies, beyond the AJCC required partners, and convenes a quarterly meeting of these stakeholders to discuss service coordination and provide professional development and capacity building. Speakers are invited regularly to provide information to the group on topics of interest to all.

In addition, NOVA's career advisor staff have regular meetings that include professional development for working with special populations. Department of Rehabilitation staff have provided their Windmills disability and diversity awareness training. Some NOVA staff attended DOR's training on disclosing disabilities and presented to career advisor staff.

NOVA staff recently attended "Opening Doors for Differing Abilities in our Workplaces," a forum bringing together various organizations with an interest in increasing employment for individuals with disabilities by highlighting the business case for employing those with ID/DD and others. NOVA is following up to bring local employers together for further discussion.

### **D. Provisions for English Language Learners, the Foreign Born and Refugees**

#### *i. Braiding resources and coordinating service delivery*

ALLIES (Alliance for Language Learners' Integration, Education and Success) hosts the ESL Provider Network (EPN) - a twice yearly convening of ESL providers in Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties. It is a unique opportunity for ESL practitioners representing community colleges, adult schools, and community based organizations serving adult English learners to make connections, learn from each other, share collaboration success stories, get policy updates, and stay connected with ALLIES. Community organizations serving the immigrant and refugee population (such as legal and social services providers), public libraries, and local government agencies are welcome and encouraged to attend.

NOVA is on the EPN advisory group that provides guidance and direction to ALLIES' board and staff as the organization seeks to build out its capacity to promote regional multi-sector collaboration to benefit adult English learners and enhance their journey to employment and self-sufficiency. NOVA has also partnered with Upwardly Global, a national organization committed to integrating immigrant workers into the U.S. workforce, on a variety of workforce initiatives.

In addition, the local adult education consortia, ACCEL in the North Bay and the South Bay Consortium for Adult Education, provide an opportunity to replicate best practices and increase access to sector pathway programs, supportive services, and retention services.

*ii. Retention in sector pathway programs*

In 2016, ALLIES convened a diverse group of stakeholders to develop an Immigrant Integration Framework. The ambitious Immigrant Integration Framework is an attempt to address the full spectrum of immigrants' needs, assets and goals and offers a new, innovative way to identify and measure the critical factors for successful immigrant integration. The framework found that the ELL population needs wraparound support services to help in reaching their goals - services that are specific to this population. Immigrants and English learners need assistance in navigating education, healthcare, and legal challenges. Workplace culture must be addressed for employment success. In addition, staff cultural competency is critical in working with this population so that immigrants and ELLs feel comfortable and included. The Immigrant Integration Framework provides a system for users to enhance their current support for immigrants to help ensure retention as this population progresses into livable wage jobs and careers.

*iii. Local Plan incorporation with plans developed by stakeholders*

The County of Santa Clara receives funding from the Federal Office of Refugee Resettlement and, as a condition of that funding, is required to have a County Refugee Services Plan, which includes employment services. NOVA may refer refugee job seekers to these services. ALLIES connects with refugee service providers through the Refugee/Immigrant Forum, a coalition of providers and resettlement agencies that meets monthly. The group includes a subcommittee that is working on issues related to the skilled immigrant population (degree-holders) and is reaching out to education providers to develop pathways and to interface with CBOs, such as Upwardly Global, specializing in services for that population. NOVA will coordinate with local adult education providers as they develop plans that include services for the immigrant and ELL populations.

## Attachment to NOVA Two-Year Local Plan Modification

### A. CalFresh Employment & Training (E&T) Partnership

#### *i-ii. Partnerships*

NOVA serves CalFresh participants currently and is working with County staff in both San Mateo and Santa Clara counties to expand the reach of our AJCC services throughout our service area to serve additional CalFresh recipients. Such mechanisms may include streaming job seeker workshop content and providing AJCC staff on site. NOVA provides services onsite at the SparkPoint Center at Skyline Community College, which works with students and community members with financial needs, including CalFresh recipients. NOVA's Stakeholders' group includes representatives from both County social service agencies, as well as other organizations serving the CalFresh population, such as agencies serving the disabled and formerly incarcerated, and provides opportunities for cross training and sharing information and resources.

#### *iii. Size and characteristics of population*

In Santa Clara County, out of the overall CalFresh population of 75,043, 10,034 are in the NOVA service area, and 64 are E&T participants. The NOVA portion of the county includes approximately 1,500 CalFresh work registrants and about 1,100 ABAWD (Able Bodied Adults Without Dependents), as of 11/28/18. The majority are English speakers, and males and females are about evenly represented. According to the FFY2019 Santa Clara County CalFresh E&T Plan, there will be an estimated 6,101 voluntary E&T participants for the entire county (no separate NOVA breakout available).

In San Mateo County, there are a total of 21,355 CalFresh recipients as of 11/26/18. Per the County CalFresh E&T Plan for FFY2019, there will be an estimated 3,880 work registrants for FFY 2019 and about 2,478 ABAWD. There will be an estimated 840 voluntary E&T participants.

#### *iv. Types of services needed*

According to County CalFresh staff, the types of services needed include: GED/high school diploma, job search assistance, resume writing, ESL training, and work experience. There is a need for additional short-term vocational training due to funding limitations.

#### *v. Employment barriers*

Barriers facing the CalFresh population include: geographic distance (especially in San Mateo County, where many areas are not accessible via public transportation) which may pose a particular challenge for persons with disabilities, insufficient educational background, language barriers, homelessness, mental and physical health issues, substance abuse, criminal record, need for work clothing and tools, and domestic violence issues. Many of the service providers utilized for CalFresh services, including those eligible for 50% federal reimbursement, include support services such as transportation and clothing for the customers they serve. See below for information about partnerships to assist with barrier mitigation.



*vi and vii. Current and prospective partners & information sharing*

Social Services in both counties refer customers to community resources as appropriate, such as County Behavioral Health departments, the ACCEL (Adult-Education College and Career Educational Leadership) consortium of adult education providers in San Mateo County, and to NOVA AJCCs. AJCC staff may also refer customers in need of food assistance to Social Services, and customers can apply for benefits online at NOVA Job Centers. NOVA is currently working with County Human Services staff in both counties to explore expanding the reach of our services through remote access and/or on-site staff.

The NOVA Stakeholders' group, in which Social Services staff are participants, is a valuable forum for members to share information about the needs of the population served and request assistance, as well as to educate partners about their respective programs to provide additional resources and enhance success for this population.

## **B. Department of Child Support Services Partnership**

*i.* NOVA's vision is to be a regional catalyst to promote economic opportunity and shared prosperity for all, including special populations. NOVA is committed to working with local partners to help individuals from the child support population succeed in the labor market. NOVA has met with DCSS staff from both San Mateo and Santa Clara counties to discuss strategies for increasing employment opportunities. See below and the NOVA Local Plan Modification for details on partnerships.

*ii. Overview of Child Support Program population*

In San Mateo County, there were 9,106 cases as of September 30, 2018, of which 2,786 were non-custodial parents residing in San Mateo County. The largest populations were located in Daly City (15% of total), Redwood City (24%), and San Mateo (15%). Of obligors with a California address, 31% are unemployed and not incarcerated, and 12% are incarcerated.

Santa Clara County DCSS has a total caseload of 32,050 cases as of October 31, 2018. Data in the child support system shows that approximately 80% of these obligors reside in California. Of those obligors who reside in California, approximately 50% reside in Santa Clara County.

*iii, iv, vi. Barriers and assessment of services needed*

Customers in the child support program often face challenges that make it difficult for them to comply with their child support obligations and to obtain permanent employment. Some of these issues are:

- Unemployment
- Lack of education
- Undocumented

- Homelessness
- Ex-offenders
- Substance abuse
- Mental health and/or other disabilities

Other obligors face unexpected job loss or an inability to find employment in their chosen field. Compounding their financial situation are issues surrounding the custody, visitation, and support of their children which may involve court action or other potential automated enforcement, including the suspension of their driver's or professional licenses, bank levies against their accounts, and interception of the unemployment or disability income toward the payment of support. Another barrier is the need for immediate income; however, in many cases the initial employment placement does not match the customer's skills and desired career path. Also, customers may be hampered by lack of information about services and networks available to assist with overcoming barriers.

*v, vii, viii. Current baseline services and resources to assist with overcoming barriers*

Currently SMDCSS refers obligors who are residents of San Mateo County and have the legal right to work in the United States to a comprehensive vocational evaluation (CVE) through the Human Services Agency's Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS) program. After an initial evaluation, VRS provides employment search support and job coaching services, if appropriate. The current contract with the Human Services Agency is through July 31, 2021.

SMDCSS refers clients to community-based organizations including but not limited to: Service League, Project 90, Core Service agencies, Bay Area Legal Aid, and Family Law Facilitator. Additionally, the Department has a current Memorandum of Understanding with the Human Services Agency of San Mateo County for vocational rehabilitation services and evaluations. The Department utilizes the Community Information Handbook published by the Human Services Agency of San Mateo County for information on existing resources for customers.

Currently Santa Clara County DCSS does not have a formal screening and referral process. Caseworkers have participated in trainings with local organizations and may refer customers to these agencies. Also, Santa Clara County DCSS maintains a Resource Library, available to caseworkers, with informational flyers from local agencies. Customers may be referred to these agencies or programs which include but are not limited to: a friendly hire list of local employers, Bay Area Workforce Development Boards, City of San Jose Clean Slate Program, Homeless Veterans Rehabilitation Program, Job Train, and SCC Fatherhood Collaborative.

Participation in the NOVA Stakeholders' group, which includes representatives from community colleges, adult education, and CBOs, will fulfill a need for cross-training to understand additional specialized services available in the community for enhanced services to the child support population. Stakeholder group members are developing a referral process to use between service providers.

## **C. Competitive Integrated Employment Updated Partnership**

### *i- iii. Partnerships to increase CIE*

Entering the innovation economy has been particularly challenging for individuals with disabilities and others who are disconnected from the fast-shifting economic mainstream. This reality hurts not only workers, but also employers who are denied access to channels of undervalued talent.

In response, NOVA is partnering with employers, educators, and community-based organizations to create career pathways for diverse populations into the heart of the region's innovation economy. These partnerships are focused on connecting innovation employers with sources of hidden talent. One example of NOVA's work to realize this vision is the Neurodiversity Pathways program. NOVA is partnering with Goodwill of Silicon Valley to prepare individuals on the autism spectrum for high-skill careers in data science and data analytics.

NOVA is committed to working with DOR and other local partners to increase CIE for ID/DD job seekers. NOVA has met with DOR staff from both San Mateo and Santa Clara counties to initiate discussions relative to strategies for increasing employment opportunities. NOVA is a participant as a community partner in the San Mateo County Local Partnership Agreement (LPA) and will work with DOR and other identified Agreement partners. Santa Clara County is in the process of updating its LPA and has included NOVA in the process, including a recent community meeting.

In addition to DOR, NOVA is partnering with numerous organizations, both as part of the LPA, and also organizations that are a part of NOVA's Stakeholders' group. These include the Golden Gate Regional Center and San Andreas Regional Center, both of which offer a multitude of services to those with developmental disabilities. Each Center has an employment specialist, as well as the ability to offer paid internships. The Centers are an excellent vehicle to expand opportunities for employment. Other Stakeholders' group members serving the ID/DD population include Abilities United, Gatepath, Hope Services, Center for Independence of Individuals with Disability San Mateo, and numerous community colleges and adult schools. As more organizations serving this population are identified, they will be invited to participate in the Stakeholders' group.