



TANF Works!

TANF/WIOA
COLLABORATION SERIES
2019 - 11

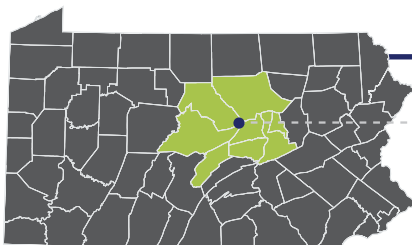
Central Pennsylvania

TANF/WIOA COLLABORATION

Since the passage of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) in 2014, many state Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and workforce system leaders have focused efforts to coordinate client services serving low-income or vulnerable populations. WIOA makes TANF a mandatory partner unless the Governor opted out. Coordination efforts are meant to improve service delivery and reduce duplication.

This brief highlights emerging TANF and WIOA agency collaboration practices among TANF agencies (called EARN) and American Job Centers (called PA CareerLink®) in the Central Pennsylvania area:

FIGURE 1: **Central Pennsylvania Workforce Development Corporation (CPWDC)**



The CPWDC covers over 5,000 square miles and nine counties: Centre, Clinton,

Columbia, Lycoming, Mifflin, Montour, Northumberland, Snyder, and Union. Approximately 630,000 people live in this primarily rural region of the state. The area has three "comprehensive" American Job Centers, branded in Pennsylvania as PA CareerLink®, with representation from all program operators and three "affiliate" sites with more limited services.



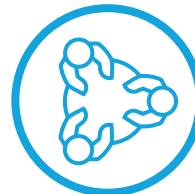
Joint Service Delivery

through joint client workshops, co-enrollment, aligned basic education services, and one case worker assigned to TANF and WIOA programs



Resource Sharing

through shared funding streams



Shared Learning

through staff meetings and cross training



Managing Collaborative Activities

through strategic committee membership and outreach



Special Focus

on providing transportation for clients in rural areas

Integrating Innovative
Employment & Economic
Stability Strategies into TANF Programs

Local Services Overview

TANF workforce services in Central Pennsylvania are offered primarily through the Employment Advancement Retention Network (EARN) program at the PA CareerLink®. While EARN is a TANF-specific program, participants can access programs funded by both TANF and WIOA (among other funding streams) through EARN. **FIGURE 2** shows the steps clients follow to access workforce services: where they start, which programs they enroll in, and case workers they work with as they seek employment.

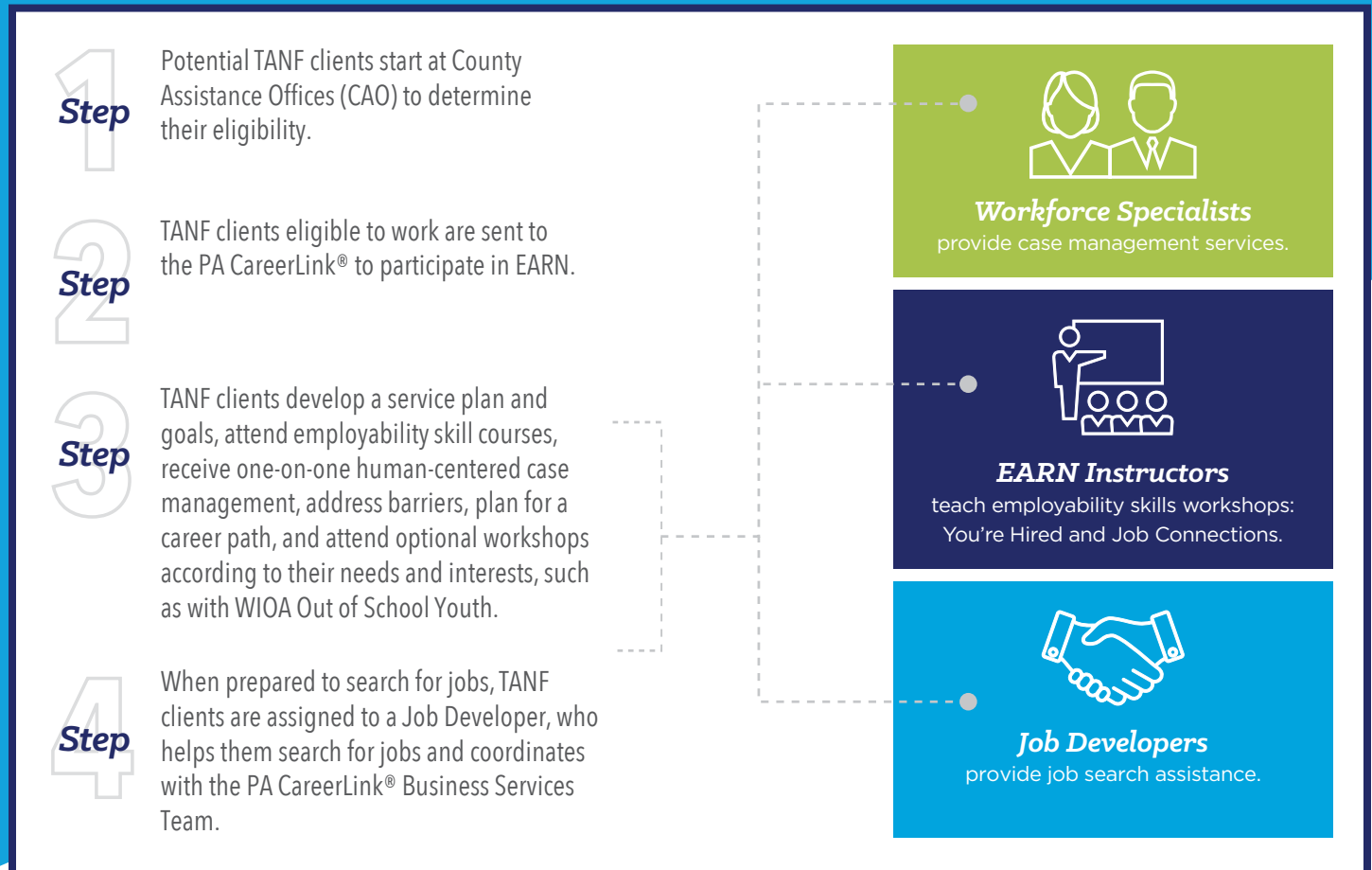


FIGURE 2: Central Pennsylvania TANF Client Services Flow Chart

Referral process and staff roles. TANF clients sign up for cash assistance online through COMPASS (Pennsylvania’s centralized online benefits tool) or by visiting the County Assistance Offices (CAO). As they move through the referral process, clients work with case workers who help them develop employment goals and track their progress.

- **County Assistance Offices (CAO) Case Worker**
The CAO determine clients’ TANF eligibility and refer work-eligible clients to PA CareerLink® to receive workforce services. Clients are assigned to a CAO case worker who follows their case and handles technical details related to TANF eligibility, changes in status, and minimum requirements.
- **PA CareerLink® Staff**
These staff collect basic information about new clients and refer them to programs and services, which may

include helping them apply for cash assistance through COMPASS. The goal is to make referrals simple for clients so that they feel like PA CareerLink® clients, rather than participants in multiple, fragmented programs.

- **EARN Workforce Specialist**

Once clients begin the EARN program, these case workers keep track of clients’ required work activities and coordinate their child care and transportation. While CAO case workers are still involved in their progress, Workforce Specialists are responsible for moving TANF clients towards employment.

Program services. EARN is a comprehensive program, offering many services and opportunities for TANF clients: case management, service plan development, barrier remediation, goal setting, and referrals for services from partners. Clients participate in employment skills workshops through Workplace

Excellence, offered twice a day by an **EARN Instructor**. The series of 20 workshops focuses on soft skills such as interviewing, communication, and employability. Clients also can participate in weekly Job Connections workshops, jointly planned and facilitated by EARN staff and WIOA staff (Title I – Out of School Youth).

Job Developers then help clients from both EARN and the WIOA Adult program prepare for and apply to open positions. They also work with the **Business Services Team** to help participants find employment opportunities, including on-the-job training opportunities through EARN and WIOA. After EARN participants find a job, the program follows up with them for six months; clients report their employment hours and continue to receive one-on-one case management and other support services if they maintain their attachment to the program.



JOINT SERVICE DELIVERY

EARN and WIOA staff are combining resources to make their services more accessible to clients.

Joint client workshops. TANF and WIOA staff run the Job Connections workshop series together (described above), which is open to both TANF and non-TANF clients. TANF and WIOA staff managing the program bill their time to their programs (as usual) and the workshops take place in the PA CareerLink® space. The workshops are planned by a staff person from the EARN program and a staff person from the WIOA Title I Out of School Youth program. This joint planning effort began after instructors identified duplication in their workshop materials.

“ At one point, TANF was doing Job Connections and we were doing Job Connections and it really made no sense. We were on the same floor; we work down the hall from each other.

- A WIOA TEAM MEMBER

Aligned adult basic education services. The Central Susquehanna Intermediate Unit (CSIU) provides adult basic education services (WIOA Title II) in Central Pennsylvania. A new program manager joined the team in January 2018 and sought to integrate the adult education program with other programs, including TANF. However, it has been a challenge to convince EARN clients to enroll in CSIU programs. To address this issue, the CSIU is holding GED and HiSET¹ classes immediately after the EARN program ends, which may be a more convenient time for EARN clients. CSIU staff

hope that by offering more convenient class times, along with coordinating transportation and childcare assistance with EARN case managers, more clients will be able to attend courses and co-enroll in WIOA Title II services.

One case worker for TANF and WIOA programs. Specialized case workers engage with youth who are enrolled in the WIOA In School Youth Program (ISY), whether they are TANF, WIOA In School Youth, or dual-enrolled. The two-year ISY program works with students to find jobs, learn about different industries, and plan their careers. It also provides opportunities for paid work experiences, summer employment, and job shadowing. Both TANF and WIOA youth can participate in this program; WIOA eligibility requirements are stricter, so youth who are in WIOA are automatically eligible for dual enrollment in TANF. Additionally, Central has a Job Developer who works with both EARN and WIOA Adult job seekers.

Co-enrollment. Approximately 90 percent of youth enrolled in the WIOA ISY are co-enrolled in TANF. All youth in ISY receive the same services, regardless of program designation. Co-enrollment allows the region to serve more clients and offer paid-work experiences through a mix of funding streams. Clients may be co-enrolled in EARN and WIOA, typically to access additional trainings or to continue receiving follow-up supports.



RESOURCE SHARING

Central Pennsylvania has flexibility in using funds from multiple programs for staff and services.

Shared funding streams. Several staff positions are funded by multiple programs. For example, one Job Developer is funded by both TANF and WIOA. Similarly, one EARN instructor teaches employment skills classes to both EARN clients and to the general public at PA CareerLink®. The Business Services Team and the PA CareerLink® administrators are funded by all programs.

¹ The HiSET is an alternative high school diploma that out-of-school youth and adults without high school diplomas can earn by taking an exam – the High School Equivalency Exam. See: <https://hiset.ets.org/what>



SHARED LEARNING

Cross-program meetings encourage partners to strategize together how to best serve shared clients.

Staff meetings and cross-training. Staff attend weekly PA CareerLink® meetings, which keep partners up-to-date about the different programs.

Distributing information. The WIOA Title II (Adult Education) program manager is working to inform other PA CareerLink® staff about Title II services. She recently researched the other programs' goals, outcomes, and services in order to strategize how adult education could better partner with them. She then presented information about Title II services at staff meetings, correcting common misconceptions by making the following points: (1) adult education has few barriers to entry and can benefit many clients, and (2) adult education can help clients who have a high school degree as long as it covers topics at the high school level. For example, the program can help clients who need to brush up on math skills in order to pass an assessment, or new employees who need help with English language acquisition. The WIOA Title II manager is creating fact sheets about adult education services and other programs, which can be placed on the front desk and offered to other program staff to encourage referrals.

Business Services Team sharing job opportunities. Central Pennsylvania takes a regional approach to providing business services, which are offered separately from job seeker services. After a competitive search for providers, the Tuscarora Intermediate Unit was selected to conduct business services for the entire nine-county CPWDC region. The Business Services Team is funded by all partners, including both TANF and WIOA. Staff report several benefits to this regional approach:

- **Creates a single point of contact for employers.**
Employers will not be called by multiple staff from different offices.
- **Aligns with large employer staffing across regions.**
Larger employers have footprints that span multiple counties or PA CareerLink® regions.
- **Eliminates competition across programs.**
With a single team employed by all programs, Business Services staff represent the interests of all programs.

The Business Services Team hosts "Match Meetings" at least once a month at each PA CareerLink®. Representatives from every program, including WIOA and TANF, attend the meetings. The

Business Services Team share information about new employment opportunities, and program staff offer information about clients who may be a good match.



MANAGING COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITIES

The EARN program is managed at multiple levels: county, local, and state.

Local-level management. The EARN Committee manages the program and sets policy. The CPWDC Workforce Development Board sits on the EARN Committee, alongside the Bureau of Workforce Partnership Operations and the CAO. As of June 2018, a Local Management Committee (LMC) broadened membership to include a wide range of community partners per the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services requirements. The large, multi-county region of Central Pennsylvania brings together dozens of partners who can share information about services and initiatives that can support EARN clients. CPWDC and their partners continue to refine the LMC so that this large group works effectively and complements efforts already taking place at the county level.

State-level management. The Pennsylvania Workforce Development Association (PWDA) formally manages the collaboration. PDWA advocates for the workforce development system needs and serves as a clearinghouse for workforce development information across the state. CPWDC staff are members of or chair several state-wide committees, which allows them to play a role in how collaboration is managed:

Human Services Work Group

CPWDC's senior operations manager co-chairs this group, which reinforces their relationship with the Department of Human Services (DHS).

Youth Technical Group

CPWDC's senior workforce coordinator is slated to co-chair this group, which affects youth workforce policies at the state level.

Operations Council

CPWDC's senior operations manager is an active member of this group, which focuses on continuous improvement of board and PA CareerLink® operations.

Policy Council

The CPWDC executive director co-chairs this group and is a member of the PWDA board of directors.



SPECIAL FOCUS

In Central Pennsylvania, a van provides transportation for EARN clients to and from the PA CareerLink®. When possible, the EARN van also brings clients to appointments and job interviews. Course instructors and case managers develop activities (such as worksheets or viewing videos) that can count toward clients' required activities and can be completed during the van rides.










TANF and WIOA Eligibility and Services in Pennsylvania

TANF. Approximately 34,000 of Pennsylvania's low-income adults are enrolled in TANF, where the annual earnings limit for a single-parent family of three is \$8,124 (SEE TABLE S.1).

Employment Advancement Retention Network (EARN) is a program that helps TANF clients in Pennsylvania who are deemed eligible to work. TANF clients can access a variety of work support, training, and education programs, depending on the type of services they need. Each path is managed by a different agency, with funding from a variety of sources, including TANF, WIOA Title I, WIOA Title II, and WIOA Title III.

TABLE S.1: Pennsylvania TANF Snapshot

	 Management Information System: <i>Comprehensive Workforce Development System (CWDS)</i>	 STATE DEPARTMENTS <i>Department of Human Services</i> (DHS) <i>County Assistance Offices</i> (CAO) coordinate eligibility for TANF cash assistance and for EARN <i>Local Management Committee</i> (LMC) is an advisory group that manages EARN
TANF Workforce Programming is called: <i>Employment Advancement Retention Network (EARN)</i>		
AVERAGE NUMBER OF RECIPIENTS PER MONTH FY2017^e <div> 130,386 Adults & Children</div> <div> 34,307 Adults</div> <div> 96,079 Children</div>		 \$8,124 Annual Earnings Limit for a Single-Parent Family of 3 ^c \$4,836 Annual Maximum Benefit for Family of 3 ^c \$489.4m Federal TANF Expenditures, FY2016 ^d

SOURCES: (a) A Descriptive Study of County- versus State-Administered Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Programs (https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/opre/county_tanf_final_report_submitted_to_acf_b508.pdf); (b) TANF Caseload Data 2017 (<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ofa/resource/tanf-caseload-data-2017>); (c) Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Cash Assistance (http://www.nccp.org/profiles/PA_profile_36.html); (d) TANF Financial Data in FY 2016 (<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ofa/resource/tanf-financial-data-fy-2016>)

WIOA. Most WIOA-funded services are available to individuals in Pennsylvania regardless of income, but many programs prioritize serving low-income individuals or those having one or more barriers to employment (SEE TABLE S.2). The principal WIOA

services offered to job seekers statewide include labor-exchange/ job search assistance, individualized career services, work readiness preparation, adult basic education, and occupational skills training. Some WIOA-funded programs also offer supportive services such as child care, transportation, tools and equipment, and uniforms.

TABLE S.2: Pennsylvania WIOA Snapshot

	<p>One-Stop Job Centers: PA CareerLink®</p>		<p>Management Information System: Commonwealth Workforce Development System (CWDS)</p>
	<p>GOVERNOR-APPOINTED BOARD OVERSEEING WIOA^b</p> <p>Bureau of Workforce Partnership and Operations (BWPO) administers federal and state workforce programs funded by WIOA</p>		<p>2017 ALLOTMENTS^c</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$26.1m Employment Service (Wagner-Peyser) Federal Appropriation \$29.4m WIOA Adult Federal Appropriation \$32.3m WIOA Youth Federal Appropriation \$42.3m WIOA Dislocated Worker Federal Appropriation

SOURCES: (a) Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Combined State Plan (<https://www.dli.pa.gov/Businesses/Workforce-Development/Documents/Pennsylvania%20WIOA%20Combined%20State%20Plan%2012-28-15.pdf>); (b) Program Year (PY) 2017 Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Allotments; PY 2017 Wagner-Peyser Act Final Allotments and PY 2017 Workforce Information Grants (<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2017/06/15/2017-12336/program-year-py-2017-workforce-innovation-and-opportunity-act-wioa-allotments-py-2017-wagner-peyser>)

Resources

- **Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Overview:**
<https://www.doleta.gov/WIOA/Overview.cfm>
- **USDHHS OFA PeerTA TANF/WIOA Resource Hub:**
<https://peerta.acf.hhs.gov/ofa-initiative/426>
- **USDOL TA Hub:**
<https://ion.workforcegps.org/>

This brief is based primarily on conversations conducted in spring-summer 2018 with WIOA and TANF program staff in Central Pennsylvania, the area's workforce development board, and contracted program operators. For more information about the content in this brief, contact Erica Mulberger (CPWDC) at emulberger@cpwdc.org. Kyla Wasserman (MDRC) and Audrey Hathorn (Public Strategies) were the IIESS site visit team members.

Suggested Citation: MDRC and Public Strategies (2019). "Central Pennsylvania: TANF/WIOA Collaboration." In *TANF Works! TANF/WIOA Collaboration*. Washington, DC: Office of Family Assistance, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

The Integrating Innovative Employment and Economic Stability Strategies (IIESS) initiative of the Office of Family Assistance (OFA), under contract number HHSP23337005T, publishes briefs and materials that document the collaboration between Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and public workforce systems under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). This material is intended to encourage peer learning among state and local actors so that low-income individuals can effectively access employment and family support services.