

**Statewide Data and Efficiency Analysis  
of the  
PROMISE JOBS Program  
2011-2012**



**Completed  
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Upon taking office in January 2011, Governor Terry E. Branstad laid out four goals and objectives for the State of Iowa.

- Create 200,000 new jobs
- Increase Iowans family income by 25%
- Create the best education system in the nation
- Shrink government by 15%

In striving to meet the goals developed by Governor Branstad, Iowa Workforce Development has undertaken a data and efficiency analysis of the statewide PROMISE JOBS program. Issues reviewed include:

- Staffing, budgets & office hours
- DHS/IWD contract requirements
- Case file distribution
- Program performance measures

## PROMISE JOBS Program Analysis

The PROMISE JOBS program is Iowa's welfare to work requirement as outlined in the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) block grant. The Iowa Department of Human Services (DHS) contracts with Iowa Workforce Development (IWD) to administer workforce services to Family Investment Program recipients. IWD subcontracts with partners from Community Colleges, Councils of Government (COGs), and Community Action Agencies (CAAs) in 14 of the 15 Workforce Development regions to administer supportive services such as employment services, work readiness workshops, education and training, and supportive services referrals locally.

### **Analysis goal:**

The analysis contained in this report was conducted at the request of the Directors from Iowa Workforce Development (IWD) and Iowa Department of Human Services (DHS) to provide a better understanding of which service delivery model(s) create a cost efficient system that maximizes self-sufficiency services to PROMISE JOBS participants. In addition, the intent is to ensure that any modifications to the service delivery processes meet the program's purpose statement, DHS and IWD's vision statements listed below; and the Governor's goals and objectives.

**PROMISE JOBS Program Purpose statement:** Increase educational and employment opportunities for Family Investment Program (FIP) recipients and encourage participants to become self-sufficient. PROMISE JOBS means PROMoting Independence and Self-sufficiency through Employment, Job Opportunities and Basic Skills.

**IWD Vision statement:** Lead Iowa's workforce by empowering workers and businesses to succeed in a dynamic global economy.

**DHS Vision statement:** The Iowa Department of Human Services makes a positive difference in the lives of Iowans we serve through effective and efficient leadership, excellence, and teamwork.

### **Comparative Analysis & Methodology:**

An analysis and report of this magnitude has not been conducted on this program in its 23-year history. The analysis was conducted by the Workforce Services Administration, PROMISE JOBS Quality Assurance team. Data compilation of data sources began in September 2011 with analysis and report writing concluding in March 2012. Regional administrators were asked to compile data elements based on their local services and this information is referenced as PROMISE JOBS Efficiency Study Data Elements. The data collected by the regional groups included budget allocations, staff years of experience, work readiness workshop offerings, employment placements, education/training enrollments, travel reimbursement rates, and information on how/when the PROMISE JOBS program will be/is integrated into the enhanced IowaWORKS service delivery model.

All data components were analyzed at a statewide level and by region with a comparative analysis between IWD and partner services offered within each region. Region-to-region comparisons were not conducted for this analysis, as the goal is to determine which program service delivery model(s) provides the greatest opportunity to maximize program services to participants. Each regional analysis includes office overview, staffing and budget, caseload analysis, training and placements, and program strategies and recommendations.

## PROMISE JOBS Program Analysis

### **Analysis sources:**

Over the years, systems for capturing data have changed as have rules and policies that govern the PROMISE JOBS program. It was determined that the scope of the analysis should be limited to state Fiscal Years (FY) 2011 and 2012. The following data sources are included in this comprehensive analysis:

<sup>1</sup> *PROMISE JOBS Efficiency Study Data Elements data used.*

<sup>2</sup> *FY11 & FY 12 PROMISE JOBS Staffing Plan data used.*

<sup>3</sup> *IWorks data from September 30, 2011 used.*

<sup>4</sup> *Internal PROMISE JOBS staffing list used.*

<sup>5</sup> *LBP tracking data used.*

<sup>6</sup> *Appeals tracking data used.*

<sup>7</sup> *June 2011 WPR report used.*

<sup>8</sup> *Schedule received from each region via email.*

<sup>9</sup> *According to DAS Employee Leave schedule.*

<sup>10</sup> *Office hours were located on each regional website.*

## Statewide Executive Summary

### Analysis Findings:

All programs that IWD administers have consistencies and inconsistencies. This holds true with the PROMISE JOBS program. After reviewing the collected data, IWD administrators should have a clearer picture on potential areas to focus process improvement strategies. The goal of this analysis is to determine what core consistencies exist and where program delivery enhancements can be made to provide maximum benefit to the program participants relying on program services. The statewide findings on areas where improvements can be made are outlined below.

### Staffing, budgets, and office hours:

The data shows that several regions have higher than the state legislative required *management to staff ratios*.

**Table S-1** shows the statewide FTE staffing levels for FY2012. An example of high management to front-line staff ratios can be seen in the regional analysis. One region shows partners having five (5) managers to two (2) front-line staff and another partner with four (4) managers to five (5) front-line staff.

The DHS/IWD PROMISE JOBS contract requires each region to have one designated program supervisor. All 15 regions have identified an individual as the program supervisor, however several of the partners also have additional “non-program” management staff receiving program funding who have no direct program oversight. The intent to have a designated program supervisor was not to fill a space or add an additional layer of management but to have consistency especially in those regions where there are multiple service providers. Some regions have a designated program supervisor who has no supervisory authority, some regions the program supervisor continues to case manage participants thus taking away from or assigning supervisory duties to non-management staff, while other regions have so few front-line staff to justify having a program supervisor 100% of the time.

**Table S-1**

Statewide FTE Staffing Comparison FY2012			
	IWD	Partner	Statewide Total
Manager	6.1	8.0	14.1
WF Advisor	53.1	65.2	118.3
WF Associate/Support	10.9	13.0	23.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>70.1</b>	<b>86.2</b>	<b>156.3</b>

**Table S-2**

	Staff Requiring Justifications	
	101-109%	110% & Higher
FY2010	20	3
FY2011	6	15
FY2012	5	19

Reviewing data from FY2010 to FY2012 shows that there is an increase in the number program managers and front-line staff employed by the partners who are receiving *salaries that exceed 100% of state equivalent job titles*. **Table S-2** shows the annual trends for justifications from all partners beginning with FY2010.

The *hours of operations* for each regional center can be quite confusing, especially for a population that is as mobile as today’s society. With the recent reorganization of regional centers, some of the program participants may opt and are opting to seek services in a regional center different from their residence. For example, program participants from Newton may opt to seek services from the Marshalltown office since it is a closer commute than the Des Moines office. Staff coverage in a center is also an issue surrounding the hours of operation. Ten of the 15 regions have varying holiday schedules thus leaving a staffing void to providing optimal program services to participants. Several of the subcontracted partners are community college staff who follow the college holiday and break schedules. It is difficult to administer program services when partner staff are not present due to a shortened work week schedule; college closures during winter, spring and/or summer breaks; or holiday leave not consistent with state government holiday leave. Participants have a difficult time receiving services since many have the same holiday/break schedule and are required to continue participating in program services. Another issue with varying work schedules in some regions is in the ability to participate in scheduled staff training.

## Statewide Executive Summary

### DHS/IWD contract requirements:

Reviewing the data, it showed that there are inconsistencies in adhering to the contract requirements surrounding staffing plans and program monitoring practices that can have or are having adverse consequences to program service delivery. Having inaccuracies or lack of reporting in the **staffing plans** can have adverse affects on appropriately budgeting and cost allocating for the program reducing the level of service(s) provided to program participants. Examples of inaccuracies in staffing plan submissions include: inaccurate job titles and comparable salary ranges, not reporting “other compensation,” and listing of staff who have no program function but are receiving funding to cover staff costs. In addition, many regions are not accurately maintaining their cost allocation plans and charging staff time to other programs and providing no service to those programs. The same is true for the PROMISE JOBS program as some staff are charged to PROMISE JOBS but provide no service to the program.

The contract specifically mentions **monitoring of program services** and requires each region to have in place monitoring processes to ensure program compliance. Recent investigations have shown that the monitoring processes are not adhered to with regard to supervisor review and sign-off, case management reviews are either not being completed or given cursory review, and there is a consistent decline in the tracked Work Participation Rates (WPR). For example several regions issue \$1,000 (maximum amount allowed) to participants applying for Family Self-Sufficiency Grants (FSSG) without regard to procedures and policies listed in the regional plan, no request for receipts from participants, or employer job offer(s) were included in the case file. Lack of supervisory oversight and case management monitoring has created issues surrounding several components of the PROMISE JOBS program. Lack of monitoring oversight was the primary reason one region was recently restricted from administering the FSSG program for six months.

### Case file distribution:

Case management services can be staff time intensive depending on the component in which the participant is involved. **Table S-2** shows the components that participants are coded, the average time case management staff spend per case, and the number of cases showing in IWD’s case management system<sup>3</sup>. Reviewing the regional data it shows several regions have an inequity in division of case files and the types of services being provided. For example, an IWD case manager in one region has a higher percentage of cases where participants are conducting Job Search, have multiple barriers, and cases are coded as DS/DL/DF whereas the subcontract or counterparts in the same regions tend to have case files that are primarily employment or post secondary training only.

The greatest staff time consumer in the PROMISE JOBS program is case managing/processing of childcare. DHS utilizes a case management system for the childcare cases called KinderTrack. The amount of time spent on all of the activities/components is dwarfed by the amount of time spent on processing childcare payments and notices in KinderTrack. Participants are provided childcare assistance in order to participate in required program activities.

**Table S-2**

PROMISE JOBS Activity/Component	Average Hours/Case	# of Cases in IWorks <sup>3</sup>
Job Search (Individual/Group)	9.92	5,120
Appeal process	6.92	399
Program Orientation & Assessment	4.03	481
Family Violence Option	3.92	54
FIA Renegotiation	3.79	-
Voc Rehab	3.54	84
Post Secondary training	2.83	2,606
Unpaid Community Service	2.75	935
Work Experience	2.75	109
ABE/ESL	2.67	108
Self-Employment	2.54	279
Disability (short/long-term & family member) (DS/DL/DF)	2.42	1,704
Mental Health/Substance Abuse	2.42	1,004
HS/GED	2.38	1,161
Work Readiness Workshops	2.25	1,910
Family Development Self-Sufficiency (FaDSS)	2.21	1,321
Parenting classes/education	2.17	284
Employment	2.13	5,120
Limited Benefit Plan (LBP)	2.04	10,820
FSSG	2.00	-
X-Other	1.67	688
FIA Review	1.13	-
Family Planning	0.08	-
VR Wait list	0.08	-

## Statewide Executive Summary

### **Performance measures:**

Each region was required to provide a series of *data elements including employment and training enrollments*<sup>3</sup>. One of the goals of the PROMISE JOBS program is to assist participants in obtaining or retaining employment. IWD and the subcontracting partners offer a series of work readiness workshops, make referrals to educational training opportunities, and provide enhanced case management services to identify and remove barriers that may be preventing a participant from reaching the program goal. Despite the fact that IWD is an employment agency, and the Regional One-Stop offices are the local branches, not one local entity could provide figures on job placements in the region. Many provided “educated guesses” or “estimates” but no reliable data was captured. In addition, many of the partners that assist with providing services to PROMISE JOBS participants are connected to the local community college. When asked to provide placement/graduation/credentialing rates, not one region provided information citing that they were never asked to collect this type of information in the past.

Little if any outcome/performance measure analysis is conducted at the local level. The lack of this is a barrier to identifying areas of process improvements, service enhancements, and staff training needs. It appears that some local program administrators have lost sight of the program’s purpose as defined by its title and acronym:

### **PROMISE JOBS**

PROMoting Independence and Self-sufficiency through Employment, Job Opportunities and Basic skills.

## Issues & Recommendations

The following are the key issues noted from the regional analyses. All details describing the issues listed below can be found in the Statewide Executive Summary. As a result of this program analysis, many of the findings are and will be addressed in the contract between DHS and IWD and the subcontracts between IWD and the regional partners.

### 1. Staffing, budgets & office hours:

- a. Allow no more than two non-designated management to utilize program funding.
- b. Reduce the total percentage allowed for non-designated management to no more than 5% of allocated time. If a region selects two additional managers to utilize funding, the two shall share the 5% allotment.
- c. To optimize staff to management ratios, regions can share a designated supervisor. It is recommended to have one program supervisor cover two or three regions depending on staff levels and total case loads.
- d. Disallow the use of justification for salaries exceeding 110% of comparable state equivalent salaries.
- e. Require all partner and state staff office locations for the PROMISE JOBS program to operate on similar office hours and holiday schedules

### 2. DHS/IWD contract requirements:

- a. Review all staffing plans for accuracy on a quarterly basis. Any changes or re-assignments need to be reviewed and approved by Workforce Services division. A summary of changes should be included in the program quarterly report submitted to IWD Quality Assurance coordinator.
- b. Staffing plans should have a job title summary page outlining job duties for each staff listed and the following columns should be completed in their entirety: base pay, benefits/other compensation, and total pay.
- c. If a staff person is listed and working less than full-time but providing services to the PROMISE JOBS program, do not list staff that fall in this category as a full-time equivalent but rather as the percent of time spent on program based on hours worked.
- d. Have a consistent FSSG plan for all regions.
- e. Quality Assurance needs to conduct more frequent program monitoring visits that include reviewing expenses, FSSG applications/awards at a minimum, and case reviews.

### 3. Case file distribution:

- a. The designated program supervisor needs to review caseloads at a minimum in order to distribute/reassign equitably.
- b. Each region should schedule no less than quarterly meetings with IWD QA to identify process improvements that reduce staff time spent on tasks, fiscal improvements, and program enhancements.

## Issues & Recommendations

4. **Program performance measures** *(to be included in quarterly report sent to IWD QA coordinator):*
  - a. Designated program supervisor should not carry a caseload so that more time can be spent reviewing and tracking performance and outcome measures.
  - b. IWD Central Office staff need to work closer with agency IT bureau to identify and implement system enhancements to capture performance and outcome measure electronically to reduce inaccuracies and doubt in data reporting.
  - c. Each region needs to incorporate the tracking and monitoring of PROMISE JOBS program outcome measures on job placements, wages at time of employment, education & training enrollments/completions/dropout rates, workshop enrollments/completions/dropout rates.
  - d. Each region needs to incorporate the tracking and monitoring of addressing FSSG barriers, job placements after receipt of FSSG funds, wages at time of employment of participants receiving FSSG funds, and number of cases no longer receiving FIP 60 days after receiving FSSG assistance.
  - e. Each region needs to track and monitor Limited Benefit Plan (LBP) reasons, first or subsequent choice, and number of LBP decisions that get appealed.
  - f. Each region needs to track and monitor reasons cases are not meeting Work Participation Rates (WPR).
  - g. Each region should create a program specific strategic plan.
  - h. Local leadership in partnership with the designated program supervisor need to identify how they plan to utilize the outcome/performance measure data. Including details outlining how to improve work participation and process improvement strategies in their region.

## Top Service Delivery Models

The review of the data shows the following regions have a service delivery model worth replicating. The analysis brought to the forefront four primary areas of concern: 1) staffing, budgets, and office hours, 2) DHS/IWD contract requirements, 3) case file distribution, and 4) program performance measures. Each of the regions highlighted had very few if any significant issues in the above mentioned categories. Regions not highlighted below should consider reaching out to these regions to discuss best practices that could be implemented in their service delivery model.

### **Rural Model:**

Region 14 (Creston) has a designated program supervisor who is not 100% program funded and that is acceptable considering the number for program staff and caseloads. The partner management requested only 3% of their time be funded with program monies. This further shows that the regional leadership in this region is more concerned with providing services to the participants versus covering administrative costs. A review of the distribution of case files shows that state and partner staff share equally in case management services. In addition this region case manages their files timely with very few cases remaining open once the participant no longer receives FIP. The training and placement results reflect a region geared toward education and training with job placement as the ultimate goal. This mirrors the purpose and goal of the program.

### **Micropolitan model**

Region 16 (Burlington) has implemented a pilot project to integrate the PROMISE JOBS program into the general service delivery model that focuses on including program participants in all services offered in the workforce One-Stop Center by requiring attendance of program participants in workshops where all clients from all programs attend. The model this region follows does not focus on administrative costs but more on getting the providing services to those in need. The data shows that this region is focused on getting the participants the skills they need to start or continue their job search with an educational focus on those who do not have the basic education level to obtain a job that moves them toward self-sufficiency. Participants in this region take an assessment test to determine their educational level and are required to attend GED or ABE courses if they are below 9th grade level. The data shows that this region operates in a team/partnership environment and sees itself as one entity.

### **Metropolitan model:**

Region 7 (Waterloo) has a model that focuses on getting the program participants the necessary job search, and basic skills, and education/training necessary to reduce the barriers to obtaining employment. The caseloads in this region are equitably distributed based on staffing levels. This region optimizes the management to staff ratio by focusing more on delivery of program services versus administrative costs. The data shows that office coverage is shared as both entities operate on the same office hour and holiday schedule not leaving one entity to cover days or weeks singularly. This region has very few case files that remain open after the participant is no longer receiving FIP benefits, which enhances their performance reports. This region also recognizes the need for a program supervisor to be 100% dedicated to the program and one who does not carry a caseload which allows for this person to focus more on process improvement strategies and performance measures.