



2019-20 PLAN NARRATIVE

A. Michigan Works! Agency (MWA) Identification Information

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B. Description of PATH Services to be Provided

1. Provision of Orientation and Client Assessment

- a. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) staff determines the readiness of Family Independence Program (FIP) applicants to be referred to the SEMCA contractors for Partnership. Accountability. Training. Hope (PATH) participation using the assessment tools required by the PATH program. Using the required standardized screening tool and interview techniques, the DHHS will identify potential barriers to self-sufficiency, including the risk of child abuse and neglect, and, as needed, refer applicants and recipients to appropriate resources for issues such as substance abuse, mental illness, domestic violence, learning disabilities, etc.

Orientation Process for FIP applicants

Once the applicant is identified to be work-ready, the client is referred to one of the SEMCA contractors matching the client's residence to the closest SEMCA contractor based on a zip code list established between DHHS and SEMCA. As a condition of eligibility for FIP benefits, the applicants must successfully complete a 21-Day Application Eligibility Period (AEP) and Orientation Program designed to facilitate barrier removal, familiarize applicants with the rigors of the PATH program and prepare them for stable attachment to the labor force and long term self-sufficiency. All SEMCA PATH staff have been trained as Career Coaches.

During the 21-Day AEP program, applicants will receive assessments of their skills and interests, assistance with removing barriers, access to life skills and job readiness workshops, along with one-on-one Career Coaching to assist with the long-term goal of finding and maintaining family sustaining employment. Throughout the weeks of the 21-Day AEP program, the applicant is required to document completion of assignments and submit such verification at each weekly review meeting with assigned Career Coach in which the Coach determines whether the applicant has satisfactorily completed the previous week's assignments.

Upon satisfactory completion of the three weekly assignments, but not prior to 21 days, an entry on the Completion Status Fields, prompting an interface between OSMIS to Bridges will notify DHHS of the applicant's affirmative completion status. Immediately following the completion of the 21-Day AEP program, the client will be enrolled in core and noncore activities to fulfill Work Participation requirements.

Orientation Process for FIP Recipients

Current FIP recipients referred to a SEMCA PATH location attend a Coaching based Orientation session accompanied by Job Search/Job Readiness workshops including Work Readiness workshops on interviewing techniques, job searching strategies, resume building and cover/thank-you letter. In addition, PATH staff collects information on the client's previous work history, educational background and potential barriers to self-sufficiency including transportation, substance abuse, mental illness, domestic violence and child care. Career Coaches schedule one-on-one meetings with participants to discuss barriers using the Bridges of Strength tool which identifies ten categories and 4 levels of impact. This allows the coach the opportunity to better determine the barriers and supportive services needs of the customers. A plan based upon SEMCA's Goals. Progress. Success. (GPS) program is developed for setting goals, identifying action steps, setting timetables, and clarifying responsibilities for each party. As part of the work readiness component, SEMCA contractors provide Work Readiness workshops on interviewing techniques, job searching strategies, resume building and cover/thank-you letter. The selected program will deliver workshops on work readiness and developing the right skills to find and maintain employment for PATH customers.

Refugee Assistance Applicants

Refugees referred for PATH services will be assigned ACCESS-Dearborn as initially determined by WDA, DHHS and SEMCA representatives. Depending on their FIP status, a refugee may be assigned to participate in the 21-Day AEP program if he/she is an applicant or PATH regular services if the refugee is a FIP recipient. In recognizing the challenges presented for this population including cultural adaption, language barrier, emotional distress, absence of social networks, and lack of transportation, SEMCA staff will ensure additional resources are committed to this group. ESL instructors will be available to assist with language instruction in addition to Coaches assisting with day to day activities and connecting the refugee with other governmental and business entities. Refugees also use the Bridges of Strength (in Arabic) and SEMCA's Refugee Navigator participates in PATH orientations.

b. PATH sites will use the screening tools developed by DHHS and Workforce Development Agency (WDA) including the following:

- PATH Readiness Survey (DHHS, MWA)
- Family Automated Screening Tool (DHHS, MWA)
- Screening and assessment tools developed/identified by WDA
- Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) and Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS)
- Bridges of Strength

The information gathered by the listed assessment allows PATH staff to develop the Individual Service Strategy. The Individual Service Strategy captures short term and long term career and educational goals for the customer, based on their current assessment from TABE or CASAS. SEMCA also uses an ISS-B which is more closely aligned with the Bridges of Strength. In an effort to address the barriers preventing the customer from obtaining employment, the plan may include the following activities: community service or work experience, vocational training, classes, job search, and basic skill enhancement. A combination of core and non-core activities may be utilized in order for the customer to continue meeting work participation requirements. During and after training, PATH staff will work to identify opportunities for gaining work experience, internships, community service, or clinical practicum's while making on-going adjustments to their job search plans.

2. Provision of Job Search/Job Readiness

Job Search and Job Readiness (JSJR) is a Core activity in the PATH program for current FIP recipients and it is an important component for the customer. The activity consists of the act of seeking or obtaining employment, preparation to seek or obtain employment, including life skills training, and substance abuse treatment, mental health treatment, or rehabilitation activities. JSJR activities are supervised by staff directly assigned to case manage the customers' activities on an ongoing basis no less frequently than once each day.

Job Search encompasses all reasonable job search initiatives including making contact with potential employers by telephone, in person, via the Internet, submitting resumes or e-mail applications to apply for job openings and/or vacancies, and interviewing for jobs.

Job Readiness includes any activity that prepares individuals to obtain and maintain employment. This is conducted in several ways by delivering workshops emphasizing general workplace expectations, and learning behaviors and attitudes necessary to compete in the labor market. This includes preparing resumes or job applications, training in interviewing skills, instruction in workplace expectations, and training in effective job seeking.

An individual's participation in JSJR assistance can count for a maximum of 12 weeks in the preceding 12-month period (a rolling 12-month period), of which no more than 4 weeks may be consecutive. For the purpose of the 12-week limit, a week is defined as 20 hours for a participant who is a single custodial parent with a child under age six, and is defined as 30 hours for all other participants. Thus, a maximum of 240 hours of JSJR per preceding 12-month period may be counted toward the participation requirements of single custodial parents with a child under six, and a maximum of 360 hours of JSJR may be counted toward the participation requirements of all other individuals. Thus, JSJR activities may be distributed over time, as opposed to previous federal regulations that required any time spent during a week in JSJR to be counted as one full week of the 12-week limit.

In order to count job search activities that participant engages in outside of the contractor service center or other MWA service provider location, participants are required to maintain a daily record of all employers visited in person or contacted via telephone, fax, or Internet, and must list the time spent engaged in making the contracts.

3. Provision of Other PATH Allowable Activities as Defined in State Policy

Work Experience

Work Experience is a Core Activity. A Work Experience Program (WEP) is an unpaid work assignment, performed in return for cash assistance. This activity is usually best suited for individuals lacking previous employment experience and/or job readiness skills which prohibit direct placement into Unsubsidized Employment. The goal of the WEP is to improve skills, attitudes, and the general employability of these individuals. This activity may include work associated with the refurbishing of publicly assisted housing. WEPs may be created with public sector, private sector, community-based, faith-based, or nonprofit employers or work site sponsors. If participants are placed into sites with faith-based or political organizations, participation must be voluntary on the part of the participant, and the work activity must be nonsectarian and nonpartisan in nature. Participants in this activity must be supervised on an ongoing basis, no less frequently than once each day in which the individual is scheduled to participate.

WEP assignments are not intended to create employee-employer relationships. The program is intended to benefit participants by providing them with short-term, on-site work experience, which will add to their appeal as potential employees and help them maintain employment once job placement has occurred. SEMCA contractor staff periodically evaluates the effectiveness of WEP assignment(s) to assess the participant's readiness for full-time unsubsidized employment.

A work site sponsor, or other responsible representative, is required to supervise WEP participants' daily assignments. Also, SEMCA contractor case management staff must maintain daily attendance reports to ensure participants are meeting federal work participation requirements.

A participant's combined monthly hours of participation in WEPs and CSPs may not exceed the amount of cash assistance the participant receives per month divided by the state's minimum wage, in accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). The OSMIS will

provide a warning if the combined actual hours entered for WEP participation and CSP participation in a month exceed the number of allowable hours determined by the above formula. If the allowable monthly hours of WEP/CSP do not satisfy the participant's monthly core activity participation requirements, a core activity other than WEP or CSPs must be used to meet the remainder of the core activity participation requirement.

The State of Michigan is the worker's compensation insurer for FIP clients while they are assigned to work-related activities through the contractor, per DHHS Program Eligibility Manual 232.

The ultimate goal for the WEP participant is to achieve employment however because these customers are often lacking work experience the WEP can help them identify solid work skills as well as areas that need to be improved upon before the customer is ready to begin active jobs search and interviews.

Subsidized Employment

Subsidized Employment is a Core Activity. This is employment for which the employer receives a subsidy from TANF, P&I, or other funds to offset some or all of the wages and costs of employing a participant.

While there is no limit to this activity, it is to be used only on a limited basis. This activity allows an employer the opportunity to observe how the participant functions in a work environment. Participants must be supervised on an ongoing basis, no less frequently than once each day in which the individual is scheduled to participate.

SEMCA uses the SE program as a try out experience for both ether customer and employer. SEMCA will usually only enter into an SE agreement if the employer has identified a position they intend to fill at the end of the agreement period.

Community Service Program (CSP)

A Community Service Program is a Core Activity. CSP is in structured programs in which individuals perform work for the direct benefit of the community under the auspices of public or nonprofit organizations. CSPs must be designed to improve the employability of participants otherwise unable to obtain full-time employment. Time counted in CSPs may include training that is an integral, embedded part of the CSP and of limited duration. Participants in CSPs must be supervised on an ongoing basis, no less frequently than once each day in which the individual is scheduled to participate.

The CSP sites are approved by the SEMCA contractors. SEMCA contractor staff negotiates the terms of the placement of participants at community service sites. The contractor takes into account prior training, experience, and skills of a participant in making appropriate community service assignments.

A participant's combined monthly hours of participation in CSPs and WEPs do not exceed the amount of the cash assistance the participant receives per month divided by the state's minimum wage, in accordance with the FLSA.

The State of Michigan is the worker's compensation insurer for FIP clients while they are assigned to work-related activities (including CSPs) through the contractor, per DHHS Program Eligibility Manual 232.

The intent of CSP is to provide work experience to the participant, these situations often are arranged in non-profit environments or with partners who can provide supervision which also teaches work skills.

Providing Childcare Services to an Individual who is participating in a Community Service Program

Providing childcare services to an individual who is participating in a CSP is a Core Activity. This consists of providing childcare to enable another participant to participate in a CSP. This is an unpaid activity and must be a structured program designed to improve the employability of individuals who participate in it. Participants in this activity must be supervised on an ongoing basis no less frequently than once each day in which the individual is scheduled to participate.

Childcare provided to participants in other activities typically involves payment for services rendered and is classified as unsubsidized employment. Career coaches must ensure the activity is effective in helping move the childcare provider toward self-sufficiency. Training, certification, or mentoring will help make the activity meaningful and may be a first step toward the participant's attainment of employment in the childcare field.

Participants providing the childcare services must collect written certification in accordance with the documentation requirements stipulated in PI 06-34 and subsequent changes to document that childcare services were actually provided by them for someone engaged in CSP activities. This documentation must be collected by the contractor in order to verify the hours of participation for individuals providing the childcare. The hours should be cross-referenced with the CSP activity verification to ensure accuracy.

Vocational Educational Training (VET)

Vocational educational training is a Core Activity. A maximum of 12 months of participation in this activity per participant per lifetime can be counted towards federal participation requirements. This 12-month lifetime limit applies to any hours of participation in the activity that are reported as actual hours during the month, regardless of whether the participant has enough hours to count in the work participation rate. Time limits do not start anew with the implementation of the Reauthorization of the TANF Final Rule. Any time that a recipient has spent in VET since the start of the Work First/PATH program applies towards the 12-month lifetime limit.

VET is outlined in the following categories: Vocational Occupational Training; Condensed Vocational Training; and Internships, Practicums, and Clinicals. These activities are organized educational programs that are directly related to the preparation of individuals for employment in current or emerging occupations. Participation time in a baccalaureate or advanced degree program may be included in this activity. VET programs are limited to activities that provide individuals the knowledge and skills to perform a specific trade,

occupation, or other particular vocation. Any and all VET must be occupationally relevant and in demand as determined by the SEMCA contractor staff. Participants in VET are supervised on an ongoing basis no less frequently than once each day in which the individual is scheduled to participate.

VET activities include basic and remedial education and English-as-a-Second Language (ESL) components. The educational or training organization providing the services determines such activities to be a necessary part of the training, and provide supporting documentation for its need. Such education must be embedded within the VET activity as a minor element of the program.

A standard for measuring progress is developed by the training/educational institution in order to monitor participants' progress. Progress is judged by mediums such as progress reports, report cards, grade point average, or a time frame within which a participant is expected to complete such education.

VET participation time is tracked by SEMCA contractor staff to ensure that the 12-month lifetime limit on countable VET participation time is not exceeded. Total VET participation time recorded may be found on the FSSP.

Hours of participation spent in VET that have exceeded the VET 12-month lifetime limit are reported on the OSMIS, despite not counting towards participation requirements. This information will be collected and may be beneficial in federal assessments of the state's overall work participation status, as these hours contribute information about the overall engagement levels of participants.

Vocational Occupational Training (VOT)

An occupationally relevant training component, directly related to a specific occupational field or specific job, which may combine classroom, laboratory, and other related activities.

Distance learning may be counted as part of this activity. Such time must be documented and verified as time in which progress was made, and must be in accordance with all documentation requirements specified in detail in case management PI 06-34 and changes.

Any participation time in this activity exceeding 12 months per individual may not be counted towards federal participation requirements.

Condensed Vocational Training (CVT)

A short-term (not to exceed six months) vocational training program requiring a minimum of 30 hours of classroom seat time per week. The contractor must determine that a CVT is occupationally relevant and in demand. Participants must also demonstrate sufficient progress in the program as determined by the contractor.

In cases where a CVT lasts less than six months, the participant is eligible for enrollment in one additional CVT for a combined period not to exceed a total of 12 months.

Internships, Practicums, and Clinicals

Full-time internships, practicums, or clinicals required by an academic or training institution for licensure, professional certification, course credit, or degree completion. The program must be occupationally relevant and in demand as determined by the contractor.

Participants must also demonstrate sufficient progress as determined by the contractor. The length of time for which a participant may be enrolled in this activity shall be limited to the educational institution's requirements for completion of the associated program. Any participation time in this activity exceeding 12 months per individual may not be counted towards federal participation requirements.

Internships, practicums, and clinicals that consist of unpaid activities in the private or public non-profit sector that directly benefit the community serving a useful purpose may be defined as a CSP. Should a contractor define an Internship, Practicum, or Clinical as a CSP, all conditions of CSPs must be adhered to.

Job Skills Training Directly Related to Employment

Job skills training directly related to employment is a Non-Core Activity. It consists of training and education for job skills required by an employer to provide individuals with the abilities to obtain or advance in employment or adapt to changing workplace demands. Job skills training can include customized training to meet the needs of a specific employer or it can be general training that prepares individuals for employment. This can include literacy instruction or language instruction when such instruction is explicitly focused on skills needed for employment or combined in a unified whole with job training. Job skills training directly related to employment should be supervised on an ongoing basis, no less frequently than once each day in which the individual is scheduled to participate.

Baccalaureate and advanced degree programs may be defined as Job Skills Training Directly Related to Employment. Such programs must be applicable to an occupation that the contractor has determined to be in-demand.

Up to one hour of unsupervised study time for each hour of class time may be counted towards participation requirements. Supervised, related study time may also be counted towards participation requirements. Total study time (including unsupervised and supervised time) counted towards participation requirements cannot exceed the hours required or advised by the particular educational program.

Distance learning may be counted as part of this activity. Such time must be documented and verified as time in which progress was made, and must be in accordance with all documentation requirements specified in detail in case management PI 06-34 and changes.

Participants must also participate in the required minimum number of hours of core activities in order to meet minimum federal participation requirements.

A standard for measuring progress should be developed by the training/educational institution in order to monitor participants' progress. Progress should be judged by

mediums such as progress reports, report cards, grade point average, or a time frame within which a participant is expected to complete such education.

Education Directly Related to Employment

Education directly related to employment is a Non-Core Activity. This activity is for work eligible individuals who have not received a high school diploma or a certificate of high school equivalency. It involves education related to a specific occupation, job, or job offer. The activity includes courses designed to provide the knowledge and skills for specific occupations or work settings, but may also include adult basic skills education and ESL. Where required as a prerequisite for employment by employers or occupations, this activity may also include education leading to a General Educational Development (GED) or high school equivalency certificate.

Up to one hour of unsupervised study time for each hour of class time may be counted towards participation requirements. Supervised, related study time may also be counted towards participation requirements. Total study time (including unsupervised and supervised time) counted towards participation requirements cannot exceed the hours required or advised by the particular educational program.

In order to be counted towards participation requirements, supervised study time must be supervised in a formal study hall at the SEMCA contractor agency or the educational institution, where a contractor staff person or appropriate representative of the educational institution can verify the participant's hours of study on a timesheet.

Distance learning may be counted as part of this activity. Such time must be documented and verified as time in which progress was made, and must be in accordance with all documentation requirements specified in detail in case management PI 06-34 and changes.

Participants must also participate in the required minimum number of hours of core activities in order to meet minimum federal participation requirements.

Participants in education directly related to employment should be supervised on an ongoing basis, no less frequently than once each day in which the individual is scheduled to participate.

A standard for measuring progress should be developed by the training/educational institution in order to monitor participants' progress. Progress should be judged by mediums such as progress reports, report cards, grade point average, or a time frame within which a participant is expected to complete such education.

4. Supportive Services

The PATH program acknowledges that supportive service procedures are in place for DHHS and the MWA's for providing services including automobile purchase, automobile repair, housing, utility, emergency food, clothing, and other services to FIP participants. The DHHS and SEMCA will develop procedures that will include the provision of supportive services. SEMCA utilizes the Bridges of Strength to perform a detailed assessment of all potential

barriers even those that are not directly tied to eligible supportive services funding. Customers with barriers that are not tied to funding are referred to community partners or back to DHHS for possible further assistance.

SEMCA, through its contractors, will provide all supportive service payments to include costs associated with services as allowed by TIA within the available 2019-20 budget. Services provided, may include, but are not limited to:

- a. **Auto Purchase:** Automobile purchases are allowable by SEMCA but are not to exceed \$2,000 per car.
- b. **Public Transportation Allowances:** Bus tickets, mileage reimbursement or Lyft may be provided to customers determined to be in need of the transportation assistance in order to participate in the PATH program employment seeking activities. Allowable activities include traveling to and from the customer's home to a child care provider, job club, training, educational facility or to a specific job interview. Allowances for public transportation or private vehicle mileage reimbursement may be provided up to the pending receipt of the customer's first paycheck or up to two months following the customer's verified employment, whichever is later.

Payments for the transportation may be made directly to the customer, to a transportation provider for a specific customer or a number of customers, or through the bulk purchase of tickets/tokens that are issued individually, but paid for or redeemed as a group.

Compensation for transportation is the actual cost for public transportation of forty cents (\$.40) per mile for the use of a private vehicle.

- c. **Auto Related Expenses:** Up to \$900 per customer may be authorized in any twelve (12) month period, but not within 60 days of vehicle purchase, for a vehicle that is his/her primary means of transportation for employment related activities, even if public transportation is available.
- d. **Other Supportive Services:** Other one-time work-related expenses, such as, but not limited to, the purchase of tools, license fees, etc., that are necessary for the individual to fully participate in the PATH program are allowable.
 - **Special Clothing:** Special clothing purchases are authorized up to \$250 per customer during a twelve-month period.
 - **Moving Expenses:** Expenses for moving may be authorized up to \$1,500 during a customer's Family Independence Program eligibility period.
 - **Medical Expenses:** Payment(s) may be made for medical expenses and/or services not covered under Medicaid, but are necessary in order for the individual to fully participate in the PATH program.

SEMCA in cooperation with our contactors and DHHS partners is making a concerted effort to provide transportation to our customers. Activities such as employment opportunities, paid and unpaid work experience, interviews, education and trainings are crucial to our customer's success. As public transportation has become more limited we are prepared to provide our contractors with the resources they need to provide adequate transportation.

5. Case Management

SEMCA contractor staff provides case management/coaching activities to assist participants to obtain employment and achieve self-sufficiency in order to eliminate their need for FIP assistance. SEMCA contractor staff will utilize, TUAPATH, which is an online intuitive tool that will allow customers to track their hours of activity and submit information electronically. SEMCA contractor staff makes every effort to place a minimum of 50 percent of clients who participate in the PATH program in positions that provide wages equal to the state's minimum wage or greater. Examples of case management activities include working with employers to develop career ladder programs and/or provide more working hours to a participant enrollment of participants into training programs, assessing needs for supportive services, consulting with the participant's DHHS case manager to address situational barriers, and using other community agencies for additional necessary services. SEMCA contractor staff serves all persons electronically referred from DHHS, including FIP clients who are in their last months of sanction and have reapplied for FIP.

SEMCA contractor staff conducts three-way meetings as necessary, to further address situational barriers, increase communication between parties, and generate resolutions to conflicts prior to acts of non-compliance and required triage meetings. Career Coaches of PATH participants may participate in home calls with the DHHS specialists at the contractor's discretion. SEMCA does not have an internal policy regarding re-referrals that may lead or trigger to a mandatory three-way meeting with the participant.

Additional continuing process:

6. Vision 100

Though Vision 100 is no longer an active assessment for PATH, SEMCA works closely with its DHHS partners to achieve the Vision 100 goals outlined in WDA PI 12-27. We continue to attend Administrative meetings which are scheduled every other month and includes the director (or their representatives) of Wayne County DHHS, the director of Monroe County DHHS, the CEO of SEMCA and the director of Detroit Employment Solutions Corp.

Quarterly, a PATH partner meeting is held with managers and front line staff to discuss new policies, address issues, share best practices and build working relationships. These meetings have become very helpful in preventing breakdowns in communication as the partners now match names and faces and work cooperatively to serve customers and meet WPR. These meetings include SEMCA, DESC and DHHS and are led by each entity on a rotating basis.

Some contractors and DHHS partners in the system continue to meet on an individual basis to discuss issues directly related to their caseloads.

This working relationship has led to a dramatic increase in WPR for all of the partners.

7. Transportation Resource Representatives (TRR's)

SEMCA has a TRR for both Monroe County and Wayne County. Both will engage the transportation providers in our region as well as the contractor network to maximize transportation options for all of our customers in the region.

8. Priority of Service

SEMCA is in the unique position to be the fiduciary agent for the Workforce Intelligence Network (WIN) which is a collaborative effort of MWA's and Community Colleges focused on providing real time employment information. This relationship allows SEMCA and its partners to have access to relevant employment and industry information.

9. Program Planning and Coordination

The relationship between SEMCA and its DHHS partners will continue to discuss innovative ways to work together on orientations. As noted above the targeted meetings of the partners allows for the sharing of information, the coordination of planning and the forum for evaluation and change if needed.