POLICIES AND PROCEDURES
FOR JOB CORPS PROGRAM YEAR 02
PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM:

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APPENDIX 501

INTRODUCTION

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR JOB CORPS'
PY 02 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

<u>INTRODUCTION</u>

A. **<u>General</u>**. Job Corps utilizes a comprehensive management system to assess program effectiveness in a variety of areas. The purposes of establishing and maintaining such a system are threefold: 1) to meet federal and legislative accountability requirements for the Job Corps system; 2) to assess centers' and contractors' accomplishments in implementing program priorities and serving students effectively; and 3) to have a management tool that provides useful and relevant feedback on program performance while encouraging continuous program improvement.

Job Corps' performance management system is comprised of five outcome measurement systems, as listed below:

- T   Outreach and Admissions Report Card
- T   Center Report Card
- T   Center Quality Report Card
- T   Career Transition Services (CTS) Report Card
- T   Vocational Training Report Card

Each measurement system assesses performance in specific areas of responsibility with respect to serving students. Together, these systems provide a comprehensive picture of performance throughout all phases of a student's Job Corps experience. Thus, it is critical that these systems be closely aligned to encourage collaboration throughout the Job Corps community in delivering quality services to students, and to provide an accurate reflection of efforts towards meeting clearly defined program goals.

B. **<u>Background</u>**.   The Workforce Investment Act (WIA) became law in August 1998, mandating major changes for Job Corps' performance assessment. The WIA includes an increased focus on accountability and contains core indicators of performance for Job Corps relating to recruitment, education and placement rates, wages, and long-term outcomes of graduates after initial placement. Job Corps has worked diligently to revise its outcome measurement systems to meet requirements outlined in the legislation.

Although WIA's focus is on Job Corps graduates and their long-term outcomes, Job Corps is committed to serving every student who enrolls in Job Corps, whether or not they graduate. It is quite simple: *every student counts*. Program priorities like the "Three R's (Returning to Basics, Reaching Out to WIA Partners, and Recommitting to Students)," outlined in the Job Corps' National Strategy Plan, and the implementation of the Career Development Services System (CDSS) to reinforce those principles, are indicative of Job Corps' renewed focus on providing

a continuum of quality services to students.

The CDSS is a comprehensive and integrated management system for equipping all Job Corps students with the necessary skills, knowledge, and transitional support for successful entry into and sustained participation in the workforce or advanced education environment. This system is designed to purposefully integrate all aspects of students' Job Corps experience, from the Outreach/Admissions process, through the Career Preparation Period (CPP) (students' first 60 days on center), the Career Development Period (CDP) (career preparation on-center), to the Career Transition Period (CTP) (post-separation service and tracking period). In order to succeed, centers and contractors must commit to not only making this philosophical shift in the way we serve students, but also in implementing collaborative strategies to support CDSS.

Job Corps' performance management system is viewed as one of the most solid data collection and accountability systems in the Employment and Training Administration (ETA). Thus, Job Corps is well positioned to address stringent expectations of the Department with respect to performance accountability, which includes program performance goals established under the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) and the transition to performance-based service contracting for center, OA, CTS contract procurements.

C.   **Approach**.   Each year, a team of Job Corps professionals (Job Corps representatives from centers, contractors, regional offices, and Job Corps senior management) assemble to review the current measurement systems to assess whether they accurately reflect performance and program priorities, and to make decisions for the next program year. In PY 00, great lengths were taken to overhaul the measurement systems to align them in keeping with the mission of the CDSS and WIA requirements. As the second year under this revised system comes to a close, it appears that, overall, the field has performed well and Job Corps continues to be a highly successful training program. The new system also makes it easier to understand and even identify connections in how all stakeholders contribute to students' Job Corps experiences. That is very useful now that the Job Corps system has fully implemented CDSS.

D.   **Design of PY 02 Performance Management System**. The PY 02 Performance Management System has been changed very little. As stated in the PY 00 PRH policy, (formerly) Appendix 801, "...it is our intent that the core measures in each outcome measurement system will remain unchanged for the next couple of years, with the exception of implementing 6- and 12-month follow-up measures in PY 01. This will allow for more continuity in the way Job Corps assesses its performance over time..." This is the case for PY 02; the core measures remain the same as those in PY 01.

Although the measures remain intact, there are modifications to four performance goals: former enrollee placement rate, graduate average wage at initial placement,

graduate average weekly earnings at 6 months, and graduate average weekly earnings at 12 months. The design of the performance management system is as follows:

1. **Definitions of Student Separation Status**: For purposes of the performance management system, the criteria for the status of graduate, former enrollee, and uncommitted student shall be those defined in PRH Chapter 6, Administrative Support.

2. **Core Components**: Job Corps' performance management system, with the exception of the Quality Report Card, consists of four basic components: outcome-oriented measures, goals, weights, and an overall rating. Performance measures reflect those program goals and objectives that are important to Job Corps' mission, are measurable, and are consistent throughout the system. The performance measures are used to assess student progress and Job Corps' effectiveness in accomplishing defined goals and objectives, while allowing for comparative analyses of performance based on the results. Performance goals are quantitative benchmarks that are set to establish a desired level of performance. Relative weights assigned to performance measures indicate areas of emphasis among responsibilities for serving students. The overall rating is the way in which results for the measures are aggregated and evaluated.

    The Quality Report Card consists of two basic components: outcome-oriented measures and goals, as defined above. The performance rating in each Quality Report Card measure stands alone. There is no aggregation of performance results across measures. The Quality Report Card is a valuable measurement system that complements the other systems by assessing the quality of the services provided by Job Corps. The Quality Report Card captures information on aspects of center life that are not accounted for in the other measurement systems - Job Corps center capacity utilization, effectiveness of center operations, and student satisfaction with respect to safety.

3. **Performance Goals**: As mentioned above, performance goals are the quantitative benchmarks for the outcome measurement systems. Unlike previous years in which standards were established based on a range of performance, each outcome measure is scored against a single performance goal. Center/contractor performance is measured as a percentage of the goal(s) achieved.

    There are advantages to setting goals rather than standards. For example, performance goals are consistent with continuous improvement concepts. The goal concept illustrates that high expectations have been defined for the program while recognizing center and contractor achievement toward those goals. This concept is designed to encourage enhanced efforts to achieve

goals.   Performance standards can shift efforts to attaining minimum benchmarks or "clearing the bar," which is not conducive to continuous program improvement.

Use of performance goals represents a major shift in how Job Corps approaches performance measurement, and, therefore, necessitates a similar shift in how performance is perceived as a result. Goals are *future oriented* - where Job Corps wants to go as a program. Thus, the goals that are set are high; they are benchmarks to strive for. Yet they are also attainable, as demonstrated by various centers and contractors this past year. It is expected that centers and contractors' performance will improve over time as strategies are directed toward reaching goals.

Example: The goal for 60-day commitment in OMS is 95%. If a center has a commitment rate of 70%, its rating on that measure would be 74%, meaning that the center has reached 74% of the goal (70/95 = 73.7). The rating indicates there is room to grow in achieving the goal.

4.   **Weights and Overall Rating:** With the exception of the Quality Report Card, weights are assigned to each PY 02 measure to reflect areas of emphasis in accountability for achieving positive student outcomes. The overall rating is the way in which results across all of the measures are aggregated to create an overall rating. The following is an illustration of how an overall rating is calculated:

SAMPLE MEASUREMENT SYSTEM:
Outreach & Admissions (OA) Report Card

Measure	Goal Achieved	Actual	% of Goal	Weight	Rating*
Female Arrival Rate	100%	90%	90%	30%	**27.0%**
Total Arrival Rate	100%	85%	85%	20%	**17.0%**
30-day commitment rate	95%	81%	85%	30%	**25.5%**
60-day commitment rate	90%	73%	81%	20%	**16.2%**
	Formulas: **% of goal achieved x weight = rating** **Sum of Ratings = Overall Rating**				**85.7% Overall Rating***

5.   **Comparison between Initial Wage and Earnings Measures**: Regarding student outcomes in employment compensation, several outcome measurement systems report the average hourly wage of graduates initially, then report long-term compensation as average weekly earnings. This

difference can make it challenging to identify the progressive earnings levels expected. Provided below is a comparison between the wage and earnings measures that clearly illustrates the earnings progression:

- Initial Placement – Average number of hours worked per week = 34; 34 hours x **$8.20** per hour = **$278.80** per week

- 6 Months – Estimated average number of hours worked per week = 40 **$340.00** per week/40 hours per week = **$8.50** per hour

- 12 Months – Estimated average number of hours worked per week = 41; **$360.00** per week/41 hours per week = **$8.78** per hour

6. **Changes in PY 02 Affecting Multiple Accountability Systems**: Provided below are changes that affect two or more outcome measurement systems. Specific changes to individual systems are contained in each system's section, which follows this introduction:

   a. **Former Enrollee Placement Rate.** The national goal for this measure is reduced from 70% to 60%. This reduction reflects the decision to set a more realistic benchmark, while still emphasizing the importance of serving former enrollees to the fullest extent possible. *(Center and CTS Report Cards)*

   b. **Graduate Average Wage at Initial Placement Rate.** The national goal for this measure is increased from $7.90 to $8.20 to align it with Job Corps' PY 02 GPRA performance goal for this outcome. This will continue to be a model-based goal for centers and contractors, meaning that models will be used to calculate external variables that may affect each center or contractor's performance. As a result, individualized performance goals will be set. *(Center, CTS and Vocational Report Cards)*

   c. **Graduate Average Weekly Earnings at Six Months after Initial Placement Rate.** The national goal for this measure is increased from $310 to $340. There was no baseline data upon which to establish this goal in PY 01. Now that data is available for performance in this measure, a more accurate benchmark can be established. This will continue to be a model-based goal for centers and contractors. *(Center, CTS and Vocational Report Cards)*

   d. **Graduate Average Weekly Earnings at Twelve Months after Initial Placement Rate.** The national goal for this measure is increased from $325 to $360. The benchmark is being adjusted for the same reason as the six-month measure, and will continue to be a model-based goal for centers and contractors. *(Center, CTS and Vocational*

Report Cards)

7. **Current Policies Affecting Multiple Accountability Systems that Remain Unchanged in PY 02:** Provided below are policies pertaining to two or more measurement systems that remain unchanged in PY 02:

a. **Transfers to Advanced Training Programs.** The current policy that grants "flow back" credit for centers that send students who have either attained a GED/high school diploma or completed a vocational trade to Advanced Training (AT) programs remains unchanged. Under this policy, the sending center receives an education credit for the transfer, which is replaced by applicable placement credits if the student is placed in a job. All students who transfer to an approved AT program must meet the advanced program's specific eligibility requirements. A table listing the "flow back" credit distribution to centers is contained in the Center Report Card section. *(Center, CTS and Vocational Report Cards)*

b. Appeal Process. Appeals may be made to the National Office of Job Corps related to the model-based goals developed for centers, CTS contractors, and National Training Contractors (NTCs), and/or for the purpose of questioning the outcome for a student processed through the 6- and 12-month post-placement follow-up system.   Provided below is a description of the process for both types of appeals:

(1) Appeal Process for Model-Based Goals. Model-based goals are developed using the most recent data available. As a result, the goals should accurately represent the factors that impact achievement of goals. If, however, major changes occur in the factors that influence the GED/High School Diploma, Combination GED/HSD/VOC attainment, wage and/or earnings models, then occasionally recalculations to the models may be needed.

Model-based goals may be appealed if new or extenuating circumstances exist that are beyond the control of the center or CTS contractor and are unable to be resolved during the year. Data or supporting documentation related to the appeal must be submitted to the National Office of Job Corps, Attention: Program Accountability Unit. Entities that submit documentation for appealing a model-based goal will be notified of the decision within 45 days from the date the full documentation is received.

(2) Appeal Process for 6- and 12-Month Survey Results. The National Office has developed an appeals procedure for the 6-

and 12-month placement and earnings measures. Appeals of these outcomes can be made by the center from which the student separated, the CTS contractor to which the student was assigned, or the NTC contractor responsible for post-program services. The appeal must be filed by the last day of the month following the month in which the student's record first appears on the reports on individual student outcomes.

The appeals process requires that an appeal form be completed (see attachments in the Center, CTS and Vocational Report Card sections) with supporting documentation (i.e., pay stub or written statement) that includes the dates of the 6- or 12-month survey period (for employed students) or a statement from the relevant school or training institution documenting the student's enrollment/ attendance in the relevant time period. The appeal form and the documentation are to be sent to the National Office, Attention: Program Accountability Unit.

The National Office will review the appeal form and documentation, and reach a decision on whether or not to override the CIS (formerly SPAMIS) system with a credit for the 6- and 12-month placement and earnings measures. The decision will be recorded and forwarded to the appealing entity within 30 days of receipt. Outcomes of this appeal will be incorporated in subsequent performance reports. *(Center, CTS and Vocational Report Cards)*

c.   **Placement Upgrades.** In PY 02, 6- and 12-month survey responses will continue to be used to capture improvements in placement status since initial placement. The rationale is that long-term measures are in place to accurately capture the progressive improvements that Job Corps graduates make as they advance through their careers.

Upgrades in Job-Training-Match (JTM) are not currently captured in the follow-up surveys, primarily due to the intricate coding system (O*NET) used to identify JTMs and its impact on the surveys. The National Office of Job Corps is exploring options for tying JTM upgrades to the follow-up survey collection so that this information can be reflected in the future. *(Center, CTS and Vocational Report Cards)*

E.   **Format of Performance Reports.** In PY 02, the format for reporting performance will continue to be a rolling, 12-month format. Previously, performance was reported on a monthly basis and built up cumulatively as the program year progressed. By the end of the program year, reports reflected 12 months of data, and a new reporting period began in July. With a rolling report, reports cover a 12-month reporting period and "roll over" each month to a new, 12-month period. The reports

do not begin anew at the start of a new program year. Features of this new system are as follows:

- New centers will begin with 1 month of data and will build up to a rolling report by the 13th month.

- Centers with new contractors will report data over the entire the 12-month period.

F. **Creation of National Data Monitoring Unit**. As stated previously, Job Corps' performance management system is considered to be extremely effective in terms of data validity, integrity, and collection. In keeping with Job Corps' mission to continuously improve program effectiveness, the National Office of Job Corps is establishing a data monitoring unit to complement the responsibilities of the National Office's Program Accountability Unit. This team of data analysts will be charged with tracking and scrutinizing performance at a detailed level to ensure that the high standards of the performance management system continue to be met. It is anticipated that this entity will be operational by the Fall of 2002.

G. **Effective Date.** Data collection under the PY 02 system begins on July 1, 2002. The first report reflecting PY 02 outcomes is expected to be issued in August 2002.

Following are Appendices 501a, 501b, 501c, and 501d, which provide specific information on the individual outcome measurement systems for PY 02.