

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES
FOR JOB CORPS PROGRAM YEAR 03
PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM:

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INTRODUCTION

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR JOB CORPS' PY 03 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

INTRODUCTION

- A. **General.** 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 agencies' accomplishments in implementing program priorities and serving students effectively; and 3) to have a management tool that provides useful and relevant feedback on performance while encouraging continuous program improvement.

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

- ✓ Outreach and Admissions Report Card
- ✓ Center Report Card
- ✓ Center Quality Report Card
- ✓ Career Transition Services (CTS) Report Card
- ✓ Vocational Reporting and Improvement System

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 the systems be closely aligned to encourage collaboration in delivering quality services to students, and to provide an accurate reflection of efforts towards meeting clearly defined program goals.

- B. **Background.** 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.

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**. The Career Development Services System (CDSS), Job Corps' comprehensive program strategy and service delivery system, reinforces this commitment by 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 credentials, 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), the Career Development Period (CDP), to the Career Transition Period (CTP). Similarly, the outcome measurement systems are integrated to make it easier to understand and even identify connections in how all stakeholders contribute to students' experiences in the program.

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, and CTS contract procurements.

- C. **Approach.** Each year, a team of Job Corps professionals (Job Corps representatives from centers, agencies, 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 with the mission of the CDSS and WIA requirements. As Job Corps enters the fourth year under this revised system, it appears that, overall, performance is strong and Job Corps continues to improve as a highly successful training program.
- D. **Design of PY 03 Performance Management System.** The PY 03 Performance Management System has been changed very little. The National Office of Job Corps' intent is to keep the system as stable and consistent as feasible; thus, the performance measures are unchanged. In order to ensure that the accountability system continues to reflect program priorities and effective delivery of services to students, slight modifications have been made to the system. Revisions have been made to some weights and performance goals so that emphasis is more appropriately tied to the level of accountability. The design of the performance management system is as follows:
1. **Definitions of Student Separation Status:** The criteria for graduate, former enrollee, and uncommitted dropout status, as defined in PRH Chapter 6, Administrative Support, shall apply to the performance management system.
 2. **Core Components:** Job Corps' performance management system, with the exception of the Quality Report Card, consists of four basic components: results-oriented measures, goals, weights, and an overall rating.

Performance measures reflect the program goals and objectives that are important to Job Corps' mission, are measurable, and are consistent throughout the system. The performance measures 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: results-oriented measures and goals, as defined above. The performance rating in each Quality Report Card measure stands alone; there is no aggregation of 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. 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. Performance standards can shift efforts to attaining minimum benchmarks or "clearing the bar," which is not conducive to continuous program improvement. The goal concept illustrates that high expectations have been defined for the program while recognizing achievement toward those goals. Goals are *future oriented* - where Job Corps wants to go as a program. Thus, the goals are high, yet attainable, as demonstrated by various centers and agencies this past year. It is expected that 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 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. Overall ratings are also used to determine the performance ranges for performance based service contracting. The following is an illustration of how an overall rating is calculated:

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

Measure	Goal	Actual	% of Goal Achieved	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 = 33; 33 hours x **\$8.20** per hour = **\$270.60** per week
 - 6 Months – Estimated average number of hours worked per week = 40; **\$355.00** per week/40 hours per week = **\$8.88** per hour
 - 12 Months – Estimated average number of hours worked per week = 40; **\$370.00** per week/40 hours per week = **\$9.25** per hour
6. **Changes in PY 03 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. **Graduate Average Wage at Initial Placement Rate.** The weight for this measure is adjusted. Please refer to the individual sections, as

each adjustment is tailored to fit the individual system. In the Center and CTS Report Cards, this will continue to be a model-based goal for centers and agencies, meaning that models will be used to calculate external variables that may affect each center's or agency's performance. As a result, individualized performance goals will be set. (*Center, CTS and Vocational Training Report Cards*)

- b. **Graduate Average Weekly Earnings at 6 Months after Initial Placement Rate.** The goal for this measure is increased from \$340 to \$355. Consistent with the philosophy of setting performance goals, this goal is increased since the majority of centers and CTS agencies were achieving PY 02 levels. However, the increase is modest to account for economic conditions that can impact results. This will continue to be a model-based goal for centers and agencies. (*Center, CTS and Vocational Training Report Cards*)
 - c. **Graduate 12-Month Follow-Up Placement Rate.** The weight for this measure is adjusted on the Center and Vocational Training Report Cards, but is unchanged on the CTS Report Card. Please refer to the individual sections, as each adjustment is tailored to fit the individual system. (*Center and Vocational Training Report Cards*)
 - d. **Graduate Average Weekly Earnings at 12 Months after Initial Placement Rate.** The goal for this measure is increased from \$360 to \$370. The benchmark is being adjusted for the same reason as the 6-month measure. It will continue to be a model-based goal for centers and agencies. In addition, the weight is adjusted on the Center and Vocational Training Report Cards, but is unchanged on the CTS Report Card. Please refer to the individual sections, as each adjustment is tailored to fit the individual system. (*Center, CTS and Vocational Training Report Cards*)
7. **Redesign of the Vocational Reporting and Improvement System:** The evaluation system for vocational training programs has been substantially redesigned to further emphasize the importance of achieving long-term labor market attachment and sustainable earnings for graduates. The new system, entitled the Vocational Reporting and Improvement System (VRIS), enables the Job Corps community to more effectively monitor and continuously improve all vocational training programs. It is composed of a Vocational Training Report Card, Performance Improvement Plans, and program incentives and sanctions. Significant changes, which are thoroughly described in Appendix 501d, include the following:
- The VRIS is a single system affecting all vocational programs, both center and NTC-operated. All programs will be assessed using the same indicators, weights, goals and rating system.

- The VRIS includes a Minimum Productivity Rule which requires each vocational program to place (vocational completers only) a minimum of 51% of its contracted training slots every program year. This Rule is a prerequisite that must be achieved before further analysis of the seven core indicators is conducted.
- The seven core indicators, and their weights, are as follows:

Vocational Completion Rate	20%
Initial Placement Rate	20%
Job Training Match (JTM) Placement Rate	20%
6-Month Follow-up Placement Rate	10%
6-Month Follow-up Average Weekly Earnings*	10%
12-Month Follow-up Placement Rate	10%
12-Month Follow-up Average Weekly Earnings*	<u>10%</u>
	100%

- * The model-based goals for both the 6 and 12-Month Average Weekly Earnings are the same as those established for the Center Report Card.

In an effort to drive long-term success in the labor market for graduates, Initial Wage and JTM Wage have not been assigned a weight, while the weight assigned to JTM Placement Rate and each of the four long-term indicators have been increased.

- The rating formula has been simplified by capping the score for each of the seven core indicators and the total score at 100%. Programs will be rated on the following scale:

A	exceptional performance	90-100%
B	above average performance	80-89%
C	average performance	70-79%
D	unsatisfactory performance	0-69% (<i>includes programs failing to meet the Minimum Productivity Rule</i>)

- Vocational programs with sustained performance at the 'A' level will be recognized by the national office, based on recommendations from the regional office.
- The regional office may place programs (including NTC programs) on Probation that perform at the 'D' level, following a regional office-administered Appeals Process. The region will also require all 'D'

level programs, and designated ‘C’ level programs to have a Performance Improvement Plan.

- Programs performing at the ‘D’ level at the conclusion of the probation year may be recommended for closure/slot reduction following a national office-administered appeals process. The national director makes all final decisions regarding program closures/slot reductions.

8. **Current Policies Affecting Multiple Accountability Systems that Remain Unchanged in PY 03:** Provided below are policies pertaining to two or more measurement systems that remain unchanged in PY 03:

- 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 eligibility requirements. A table listing the “flow back” credit distribution to centers is contained in the Center Report Card section. (*Center, CTS and Vocational Training Report Cards*)
- 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, the models may require recalculation.

Model-based goals may be appealed if new or extenuating circumstances exist that are beyond the control of the center or CTS agency 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 agency 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 Reporting and Improvement System sections) with supporting documentation (i.e., pay stub, written statement on letterhead, business card stamp on employer verification form, or school/training institution transcript) that corresponds to the student's applicable survey week. The appeal form and the documentation are to be sent to the National Office of Job Corps, Attention: Program Accountability Unit.

The national office will review the appeal form and documentation, and reach a decision on whether or not to grant 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 Training Report Cards*)

- c. **Students who are Medical Separations with Reinstatement Rights (MSWRs).** Students who leave a center in MSWR status will not automatically be assigned career transition services with a CTS agency. Students who do not return to the center within the 6-month MSWR period will be assigned CTS services during the final close-out separation process according to their separation status (graduate, former enrollee, or uncommitted dropout). The CTS/CDSS application will not accept placement data for students in MSWR status until they are separated by the center. These students will subsequently enter the applicable placement and earnings pools for the Report Cards either when they are placed or when their service ("due or received") period expires. (*Center, CTS and Vocational Training Report Cards*)

- d. **Deceased Students.** In the event of a student's death either during or after enrollment in Job Corps, he/she will be removed from applicable performance data pools. In the event of death during enrollment, the student will be removed from all Report Card center outcome pools in which their passing would have a negative impact. In the event of death after separation and during the eligible career transition services period, the student will be removed from CTS, CDSS, and Report Card placement pools. These students will also be removed from follow-up survey queues. Regional office approval is required in order for the Job Corps Data Center to process these removals. The region must notify the Data Center within 3 months of the student's death. *(OA, Center, CTS and Vocational Report Cards)*
- e. **Placement Upgrades.** In PY 03, 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 to rectify this in the future. *(Center, CTS and Vocational Training Report Cards)*

- E. **Format of Performance Reports.** In PY 03, 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. A new reporting period began each July at the start of the next program year. 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 12-month period.
- F. **National Data Integrity Group (DIG).** 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 has established the Data Integrity Group (DIG) to complement the responsibilities of the National Office's Program Accountability Unit. This team of data analysts is 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.

- G. **Effective Date.** Data collection under the PY 03 system begins on July 1, 2003. The first report reflecting PY 03 outcomes is expected to be issued in August 2003.

Following are Appendices 501a, 501b, 501c, and 501d, which provide specific information on the individual outcome measurement systems for PY 03.