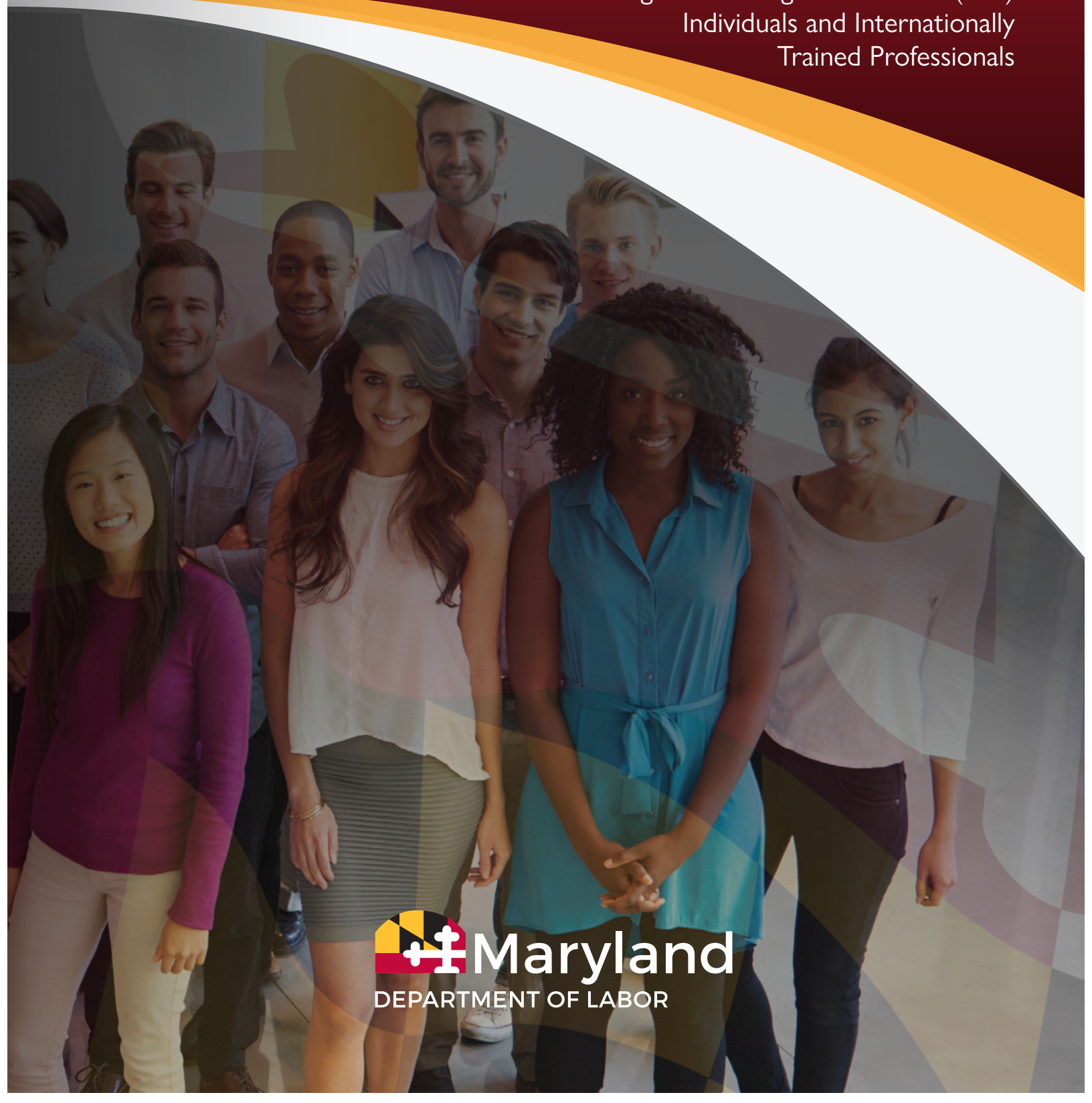


2023 NEEDS AND CAPACITY ASSESSMENT

for Serving Limited English Proficient (LEP)
Individuals and Internationally
Trained Professionals



2023 Needs and Capacity Assessment

for Serving Limited English Proficient (LEP) Individuals
and Internationally Trained Professionals

Introduction

Section 188 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) prohibits discrimination against individuals relating to the delivery of services. The regulations released by the United States Department of Labor require the formulation of a plan to ensure non-discrimination in the services provided by Maryland's workforce system. A major component of this plan focuses on services provided to limited English proficient (LEP) individuals and internationally-trained professionals (ITPs). This survey was originally conducted in 2017 and is being conducted again to inform the revision of the 2024 Division of Workforce Development and Adult Learning (DWDAL) and Division of Unemployment Insurance (DUI) Language Access Plan.

Purpose

The purpose of this Needs and Capacity Survey is to assess how Maryland's WIOA Titles I, II, and III, and DWDAL Central Staff serve LEP individuals and ITPs. Responses will drive the creation of future technical assistance and cross training opportunities. This survey is being sent to staff from the State's American Job Centers (Title I and III), Adult Education Grantees (Title II), and DWDAL Central Office.

Notice for Survey Participants

The survey is anonymous and will only take about 20-25 minutes of your time. It is divided into three sections with a total of 24 questions. The information collected will be used to improve workforce system services to LEP and ITP individuals. Thank you for your participation.

Definitions

For the purpose of the survey, the following terms are defined as:

Limited English Proficient (LEP)

Individuals who do not speak English as their primary language and who have a limited ability to read, speak, write, or understand English can be limited English proficient. LEP individuals may be competent in English for certain types of communication (e.g., speaking or understanding), but still be LEP for other purposes (e.g., reading or writing).

Internationally Trained Professional

A work-authorized, internationally born and internationally trained individual with at least two (2) years of formal or informal education, training, or on the job experience that has led to special skills, training, knowledge, and/or abilities for certain types of work.

Section I: Professional Demographics

1. Where do you work? (Select one)

- American Job Center (WIOA Title I or Title III)
- Adult Education Provider (WIOA Title II)
- DWDAL Central Office

2. In which Local Area do you work? (Select one)

- DWDAL Central Office
- Anne Arundel County
- Baltimore City
- Baltimore County
 - Carroll County
 - Frederick County
 - Howard County
 - Lower Shore (Somerset, Wicomico, and Worcester Counties)
 - Montgomery County
 - Prince George's County
 - Southern Maryland (Calvert, Charles, and St. Mary's Counties)
 - Susquehanna (Cecil and Harford Counties)
 - Upper Shore (Caroline, Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne's, and Talbot Counties)
 - Western Maryland (Allegany, Garrett, and Washington Counties)

3. Which of the following best describes your job function? (Select one)

- Management or Senior Staff
- Staff who directly interact with customers/students
- Administrative staff who do not directly interact with customers/students
- None of the above

Section II: Limited English Proficient (LEP)

Limited English Proficient (LEP) Definition:

Individuals who do not speak English as their primary language and who have a limited ability to read, speak, write, or understand English can be limited English proficient. LEP individuals may be competent in English for certain types of communication (e.g., speaking or understanding), but still be LEP for other purposes (e.g., reading or writing).

4. How does your organization identify LEP individuals? (Select top three)

- Customer has a limited ability to speak, read, or write English
- Formal assessment (TABE CLAS-E, TABE, CASAS, BEST Plus 2.0, BEST Literacy, etc.)
- Self-identification by the non-English speaker or LEP individual
- Ask open-ended questions to determine language proficiency on the telephone or in-person
- Use of "I Speak" language identification cards or posters
- Based on written material submitted to the agency (e.g. complaints)
- We have not identified non-English speakers or LEP individuals
- Other (Please specify): _____

5. How do LEP individuals report hearing about your services? (Select top three)

- From immigrant-serving organizations and community groups
- From friends or family (word of mouth)
- From media specifically targeting LEP or foreign language-speaking populations, such as newspapers, radio programs, or social media
- Saw flyers/informational material in public locations
- Saw online posting of available services/programs (websites, Maryland Workforce Exchange)
- Saw social media pages/posts
- Received notices about programs and/or activities from a school, college, or community service group
- Received an email about available services
- After attending a reemployment workshop (RESEA/ROW) or receiving Unemployment Insurance benefits
- I don't know
- My organization has not served LEP individuals
- Other (Please specify): _____

6. If you collect and record primary language data from individuals, where is the information stored? (Select all that apply)

- Paper
- Electronic
- This data is not collected

7. Identify non-English languages encountered at your organization: (Select top five)

- Amharic (Ethiopia)
- Arabic (Middle East and North Africa)
- Bengali (Bangladesh and India)
- Burmese (Myanmar, formerly Burma)
- Chinese
- Dari (Afghanistan)
- Farsi (Iran)
- French
- German
- Haitian Creole
- Hindi (India)
- Italian
- Kinyarwanda (Rwanda)
- Korean
- Japanese
- Nepali
- Oromo (Ethiopia)
- Pashto (Afghanistan)
- Polish
- Portuguese
- Russian
- Spanish
- Swahili (Eastern and Southeastern Africa)

- Tagalog (Philippines)
- Tigrinya (Eritrea, Ethiopia)
- Thai
- Urdu (Pakistan)
- Vietnamese
- Yiddish
- Other (Please specify): _____

8. What type of language assistance services have you utilized to serve customers? (Select top three)

- Contracted telephone interpreters (oral)
- Contracted in-person/virtual interpreters (oral)
- Contracted translators (documents)
- Bilingual staff for interpretation (oral)
- Bilingual staff for translation (documents)
- Volunteer interpreters (provided by customer/student for oral communication)
- Volunteer translators (provided by customer/student for document translation)
- Other (Please specify): _____

9. When is language assistance training available for staff at your organization? (Select all that apply)

- Training was provided at the time of hire
- Training is provided periodically
- Training has not been provided
- Other (Please specify): _____

10. What outreach does your organization currently conduct to engage LEP individuals and immigrant communities in services? (Select top three)

- Create relationships with immigrant community leaders
- Create relationships with immigrant-serving organizations for the purpose of customer referral
- Post flyers/informational material in public locations in English only
- Post flyers/informational material in public locations in languages other than English
- Online posting of available services/programs (websites, Maryland Workforce Exchange)
- Publish information on media specifically targeting LEP or foreign language populations, such as newspapers, radio programs, or social media
- Send notices about programs and/or activities to schools, colleges, or community service groups
- Send emails about available services
- Social media pages/posts
- I don't know
- My organization does not conduct outreach to LEP individuals
- Other (Please specify): _____

11. What resources have you used to serve LEP individuals? (Select top three)

- Onsite or referral to English as a Second Language/Adult Basic Education classes
- Onsite or referral to American Job Center workshops
- Referral to childcare services
- Referral to transportation services
- Referral to relevant training programs

- Referral to scholarships and/or financial assistance for training programs
- Referral to immigrant-serving organizations
- Referral to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, energy assistance, Temporary Cash Assistance/Refugee Cash Assistance, medical, or SSI services
- Maryland Workforce Exchange
- Staff with immigrant-service expertise
- Multilingual staff to assist customers
- Assistance with the professional licensing process
- Business services and/or referral to employer connections
- I have not utilized any resources to serve LEP individuals
- Other (Please specify): _____

12. In what ways do you think your organization could enhance services for LEP individuals? (Select top three)

- Provide staff training on how to work with immigrants
- Provide staff training on how to work with LEP individuals
- Provide staff training on how to highlight international talent to employers
- Provide staff training on the licensing process and credential evaluation for internationally trained professionals
- Provide staff training on how to use interpretation and translation services
- Increase outreach to immigrant communities
- Institute a Language Access Plan specifically for our organization/site (i.e. This would be separate from the DW-DAL/DUI Language Access Plan)
- Build partnerships with immigrant serving non-profit organizations
- Hire more multilingual staff
- Hire staff to specifically work with LEP individuals
- Dedicate additional funding for services/programs specifically for LEP individuals
- I do not think services could be enhanced
- Other (Please specify): _____

13. Do you feel equipped with the skills and tools necessary to guide an LEP individual through the process of finding a job? If Yes or No, please explain in question 13a.

- Yes
- No
- Not applicable to my job function

13a. If you answered Yes or No to the questions above, please explain your answer by providing specific information.

Comment box: _____

14. What training or technical assistance do you require in order to improve service to LEP individuals through Maryland's workforce system?

Comment box: _____

Section III: Internationally Trained Professionals

Internationally trained Professional (ITP) Definition:

A work-authorized, internationally born and internationally trained individual with at least two (2) years of formal or informal education, training, or on the job experience that has led to special skills, training, knowledge, and/or abilities for certain types of work.

15. What barriers have you noticed preventing ITPs from obtaining jobs in their field of study and/or sector of past experience? (Select top three)

- English language barriers
- Cultural barriers
- Difficulty with licensing or certification processes
- Lack of work experience in the U.S.
- Lack of social and professional networks
- Lack of understanding of the U.S. job system
- Lack of U.S. education credentials
- Difficulty promoting their own skills and experience
- Insufficient funds for licensing, training, or higher education
- Poor interview skills
- Poorly crafted résumés
- Challenges employers/workforce systems encounter in assessing international education and/or training
- I have not noticed ITPs facing barriers to obtaining jobs in their field of study and/or sector of past experience
- Other (Please specify): _____

16. How does your organization engage with businesses on behalf of ITPs? (Select top three)

- Work with businesses to fill job vacancies with internationally trained talent
- Ask businesses to sit on workgroups or task forces
- Facilitate visits to job sites
- Encourage use of Maryland Workforce Exchange
- My organization does not engage with businesses on behalf of ITPs
- My organization does not engage with businesses
- Other (Please specify) _____

17. What assets do you think ITPs bring to the Maryland workforce? (Select top three)

- International Work experience
- International education
- Ability to speak other languages
- Ability to diversify the workplace
- Global perspective
- Small Business/Entrepreneurship expertise
- Motivation and work ethic
- I do not think ITPs bring assets to the Maryland workforce
- Other (Please specify): _____

18. What resources have you used to serve ITPs? (Select top three)

- Onsite or referral to English as a Second Language/Adult Basic Education classes
- Onsite or referral to American Job Center workshops
- Onsite or referral to relevant training programs
- Referral to academic credential evaluation services
- Referral to scholarships and/or financial assistance for training programs
- Referral to immigrant serving organizations
- Maryland Workforce Exchange
- Staff with immigrant serving expertise
- Multilingual staff to assist customers
- Assistance with the professional licensing process
- Business services and/or referral to employer connections
- I have not utilized any resources to serve ITPs
- Other (Please specify): _____

19. How could ITPs be better connected to WIOA services? (Select top three)

- Creation of a centralized online service hub specifically for ITPs
- Increased outreach to immigrant communities
- Partnerships with immigrant serving organizations
- Integration of education and training opportunity information into the intake process at American Job Center
- Train and/or hire staff to specifically assigned to work with ITPs
- Distribution of English as a Second Language/training program lists to customers
- Translation of vital documents into major, non-English languages for your area
- Assistance with existing tools such as Maryland Workforce Exchange
- I do not think adjustments to the system are needed to better connect ITPs to WIOA services
- Other (Please specify): _____

20. What types of collaboration would better assist you in serving ITPs? (Select top three)

- Regular meetings between my organization's staff and those who serve ITPs at other WIOA partner agencies
- Training from immigrant serving organization's staff
- Training from State/local WIOA partner's staff
- Regular meetings with the leaders of immigrant communities
- A forum to share best practices
- Joint professional development trainings with WIOA partners and immigrant-serving organizations
- I do not think collaborations are needed to better assist my work in serving ITPs
- Other (Please specify): _____

21. How does your organization prepare ITPs to engage with businesses? (Select top three)

- Provide training on how to use the Maryland Workforce Exchange
- Coordinate mock interviews with potential employers
- Schedule guest speaker appearances
- Offer workshops on the licensing process with industry professionals
- Organize Job or Career Fairs
- My organization does not facilitate business engagement for ITPs
- Other (Please specify): _____

22. In what ways do you think your organization could enhance services for ITPs? (Select top three)

- Provide staff training on how to work with ITPs
- Provide staff training on how to highlight international talent to employers
- Provide staff training on the licensing and credential evaluation process for ITPs
- Provide staff training on how to use interpretation and translation services
- Conduct increased outreach to immigrant communities
- Institute a Language Access Plan specifically for my organization/site (i.e. This would be separate from the DWDAL/DUI Language Access Plan)
- Partner with immigrant serving nonprofit organizations
- Hire more multilingual staff
- Train and/or hire staff to specifically work with immigrants/ITPs
- Offer additional funding for services/programs specifically for ITPs
- I do not think services could be enhanced
- Other: _____

23. Do you feel equipped with the skills and tools necessary to guide an ITP through the process of finding a job in their field of study and/or sector of previous work? *If Yes or No, please explain in question 23a below.*

- Yes
- No
- Not applicable to my job function

23a. If you answered Yes or No to the question above, please explain your answer by providing specific information.

Comment box: _____

24. What training or technical assistance do you require in order to improve service to ITPs in Maryland's Workforce System?

Comment box: _____