

Report to the House and Senate Appropriations Committees FY 2009 Evaluation Operating Plan

This report provides the Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration (ETA) Operating Plan for Evaluations for Fiscal Year (FY) 2009. The Operating Plan outlines ETA's planned allocation by major priority areas and activities. The Evaluation funds are used for Program Year (PY) 2009, which begins July 1, 2009, and ends June 30, 2010. The FY 2009 appropriation for Evaluation is \$6,918,000.

Investment decisions in PY 2009 will be guided by the following six priority areas in the Five-Year Pilots, Demonstrations and Evaluation Strategic Plan for 2007-2012. It is important to note that the specific projects identified under each priority area will be planned in accordance with the limited resources available in PY 2009. This plan covers new projects that will begin in PY 2009 as well as significant prior-year projects that will receive additional funds in PY 2009.

Priority Area 1.) Integration of Workforce and Regional Economic Development

This priority focuses on measuring the success of integrating regional workforce investment and economic development, examining regional differences in economic performance and effectiveness, determining the drivers of "innovation hot spots" and job creation.

No new projects will begin under this priority.

Priority Area 2.) Methods of Expanding U.S. Workforce Skills

This priority focuses on increasing the skills of the workforce to help America retain its competitive edge. This research area is intended to measure the effectiveness of credentialing, research occupation projections, examine career ladders, explore the limitations on the capacity to train in certain occupational areas, and expand learning opportunities through the use of technology.

Under this priority, ETA plans to:

- Begin the Evaluation of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (Recovery Act) High Growth Healthcare Initiative.
- Begin the Random Assignment Evaluation of YouthBuild.

Priority Area 3.) Increasing the Labor Market Participation of Underutilized Populations

To meet the needs of the 21st century job market, every available segment of the U.S. population will need to be engaged, skilled, and prepared to enter or advance in the high-growth job opportunities afforded by the global economy. This priority area focuses on integrating underutilized segments of the population into the labor market and identifying successful strategies to increase participation and productivity.

Under this priority, ETA plans to:

- Continue the Prisoner Reentry Initiative (PRI) Impact Evaluation.
- Continue the Young Parents Demonstration grant program evaluation.

Priority Area 4.) Using State-Level Administrative Data to Measure Progress and Outcomes

This priority focuses on tapping into state-level administrative data for cost-effective research and evaluation purposes. Using administrative databases, rather than surveys, provides more longitudinal information; therefore, administrative data presents numerous advantages for conducting research.

Under this priority, ETA plans to:

- Begin the Recovery Act Youth Activities Evaluation.
- Continue conducting the Net-Impact Evaluation of the WIA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Programs.

Priority Area 5.) Post-Secondary Education and Job Training

The 21st century knowledge economy demands a highly educated and skilled workforce. The fastest growing jobs, on average, require a post-secondary credential – a vocational certificate or other credential, or an associates or higher degree. This priority focuses on expanding access to post-secondary education and job training for workers.

Under this priority, ETA plans to:

- Begin the Recovery Act Green Jobs Initiative Evaluation.

Priority Area 6.) Unemployment Insurance (UI)

This priority focuses on the efficacy of the current UI system for the 21st century workforce and economy, examines the incentives and disincentives to work, and looks at workers covered and not covered by UI.

No new projects will begin under this priority.