



Data for Impact

Virginia's Data Road Map for Opportunity Youth &
Applications for Workforce Boards Nationwide

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Upon enrolling in a workforce training program, jobseekers aspire to secure pathways to job placement, and ultimately, economic mobility and self-sufficiency. However, Virginia labor agencies that administer workforce development programs typically cannot assess the impact of their programs beyond employment and skills gain. Data on life barriers that impact individuals' employability, like poverty or justice system involvement, are gathered and stored in isolation among the Commonwealth's 12 Health and Human Service departments that span 95 counties. These data sets, as is the case in most states, are independently regulated by separate policies and individuals.

This "siloeing" of data across jurisdictions and government agencies prevents local, state, and federal decision-makers from assessing how their critically important but disparate services complement each other, and their collective impact. Federally-funded labor agencies can improve the effectiveness and coordination of their workforce development programs by integrating post-secondary education and employment outcomes with insights about public benefit utilization and justice system involvement, among others. Integrated data analyses ultimately empower workforce boards to build on the insights of their government peers to administer and coordinate programs to holistically meet the life needs of job seekers.

Supported by a \$300,000 Government Effectiveness Advanced Research Grant Research ("GEAR") Center Challenge [award](#) from the U.S. General Services Administration and the Office of Management and Budget, Third Sector is working with the SkillSource Group ("SkillSource"), the operating arm of Virginia Career Works – Northern (VCWN), on "Data for Impact."

- Data for Impact is an administrative data integration effort across Virginia's workforce, post-secondary education, public benefit, and justice domains. The goal is to leverage government data to better coordinate and understand how workforce development programs address life barriers faced by 18 to 24 year-old young adults with previous foster care or justice system involvement who are disconnected from school and work, and reside in Fairfax, Loudoun, or Prince William Counties.
- SkillSource is the first local workforce entity in the nation to use the Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act's ("WIOA") Pay for Performance provisions, which enable workforce boards to establish financial incentives for service providers to improve longer-term outcomes¹ for "hard to reach" populations. WIOA Pay for Performance catalyzed a broad program improvement effort centered on data integration. Establishing a data plan for SkillSource required a dedicated Third Sector team to (i) define outcome data metrics, (ii) educate, collaborate, and negotiate with various state agencies, and (iii) identify a feasible access and integration plan for multi-sector stakeholders, over the course of one year.

¹ Outcomes are defined as life changes experienced by a participant upon program completion, or months or years after program completion. For more details, see the Appendix.

- Learnings from the data access and integration process are applicable to the workforce community at large. While WIOA Pay for Performance provisions are a powerful tool for workforce boards to realign funding incentives for service providers and address critical outcome disparities, WIOA Pay for Performance implementation is not a prerequisite for data integration. Any data integration planning process in of itself identifies key ways to adapt data-driven improvements for existing workforce programs, and cross-sector and community partnerships to better support program participants.

This report has been divided into two parts: Part I contains specific recommendations for SkillSource and its Virginia partners, while Part II is a “toolkit” for workforce boards throughout the country looking to integrate cross-agency outcomes data based on learnings from Part I.

Part I: Recidivism and Self Sufficiency Data Road Map for SkillSource

Part I outlines specific recommendations and data considerations for SkillSource on how to define and access public benefits and recidivism data in Virginia for their post-secondary education and workforce program participants. The discussion of state-specific data sources, platforms, and processes is applicable to other workforce boards and human services agencies in Virginia.

Key Takeaways

Access: The most accessible metrics to measure recidivism and self-sufficiency in Virginia for Opportunity Youth are rearrest rates and point-in-time SNAP and TANF enrollments. Trade-offs for each of these metrics and their alternatives, and their potential data sources, are detailed in Sections 1-2.

Data Sources: The Commonwealth Data Trust led by Virginia's Chief Data Officer Carlos Rivero is the most feasible data source with integrated outcome capabilities for SkillSource or any workforce board to access. The Commonwealth Data Trust integrates individual-level data from multiple state agencies to allow for more accurate and nuanced analyses for workforce, recidivism, and self-sufficiency insights, among others. Commonwealth Data Trust resources are included in the Appendix, Section B. Alternatives to the Commonwealth Data Trust include partnerships with the Virginia Longitudinal Data System (VLDS) and establishment of individual Data Sharing Agreements with state agencies for one-time research projects or ad-hoc data integration efforts.

Insights: Whenever possible, integrated outcomes data should be disaggregated by race and ethnicity, as a step towards identifying outcome disparities and making informed funding or program decisions on how to address inequities. Continuous Improvement Processes and the inclusion of community stakeholders in critical decision-making are effective strategies for achieving equitable service delivery.

Part II: Data Integration Toolkit for Workforce & Beyond

The “Data Integration Toolkit” is intended for workforce boards and human services agencies focused on workforce outcomes and those administering WIOA funding, data, and programs. Part II offers guidance on how to select outcome metrics and plan for an integrated data strategy. It also serves as an introduction to the long-term value of data-driven Continuous Improvement Processes and performance-based contracting -- factors that led SkillSource to launch the Data for Impact initiative.

Key Takeaways

Data Use Vision: Integrated data on the outcomes of jobseekers helps government partners synchronize a continuum of workforce supports to improve economic opportunity for those most in need. How outcomes are defined (see recommendations in Part II, Figure A), and how their insights are translated into a Continuous Improvement Process (see Part II, Figure B), will impact the way in which data will be accessed and how a program’s vision can be implemented by local partners. Sections 2 and 3 discuss how to access and integrate outcomes data and underscore the substantial investment of time and resources needed to navigate a siloed data environment.

Incorporating Racial Equity: Defining outcomes, and the feasibility of accessing related data, are foundational elements for any Continuous Improvement Process. The opportunity to embed racial equity within the learning process, however, also requires strategies for engaging community partners to ensure outcomes data planning is responsive to the needs articulated by workforce participants and their support networks.

Sustainability & Accountability: WIOA Pay for Performance contracting is an impactful example in Northern Virginia of how to establish an accountability system to ensure outcomes data insights improve collaboration among policy, budget, and community stakeholders. A direct relationship between funding disbursement and program performance redefines the way in which referrals and enrollments are streamlined, program staff are trained, and data are mutually shared on a recurring basis between workforce board and government/community partners.

Integrated data insights, and an inclusive and accountable process to act on those insights, help workforce boards to steer effective and synchronized services within their communities. Labor agencies are ultimately well-positioned to continue leading the public sector’s transition toward results-oriented accountability by shifting data use from a compliance and reporting tool to a performance measure of results for taxpayer investments in the workforce system.

About Us



The SkillSource Group, Inc. (“SkillSource”) is the non-profit fiscal agent of Virginia Career Works - Northern (“VCWN”), responsible for administering public workforce services for Northern Virginia’s Area #11, which includes Fairfax County, Loudoun County, and Prince William County. While SkillSource and VCWN share a common mission, SkillSource is a separate entity with its own Board of Directions and governance structure. SkillSource administers Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funding, brings in revenue through grants and other fundraising, implements VCWN policies, and contracts, and oversees the Public Workforce System in Northern Virginia. For more information, visit vcwnorthern.com.



Third Sector Capital Partners, Inc. (“Third Sector”) advises governments on how to use public funding and data as levers to impact how government agencies, service providers, and other partners work with and improve the lives of the people they serve. This process leads to quantifiable improvements in people’s lives through the creation of new incentives that generate sustainable operational changes. When Third Sector’s work is complete, organizations entrusted to deploy public and private funds will have the systems, tools, and data to do more for their communities and address racial inequities.

Founded in 2011 as a 501(c)3 consulting organization, Third Sector has engaged over 60 communities to deploy over \$850mm of government resources towards outcomes. For more details, visit www.thirdsectorcap.org.

The U.S. General Services Administration ([GSA](http://www.gsa.gov)) is to deliver value and savings in real estate, acquisition, technology, and other mission-support services across government. One of its four strategic objectives is to design and deliver expanded shared services within GSA and across the federal government to improve performance and save taxpayer money.



The Government Effectiveness Advanced Research (“GEAR”) Center challenge was conceived by the U.S. General Services Administration (“GSA”) and the Office of Management and Budget (“OMB”) as a way to promote innovation in support of the President’s Management Agenda. The GEAR Center competition challenges problem-solvers, multidisciplinary teams to demonstrate the potential of the GEAR Center. These teams will describe how this model would tackle one or more of the major challenges facing government outlined in the President’s 2019 Management Agenda. The goal is to test the feasibility of the model before further investment and will inform how the GEAR Center could work to deliver these solutions. For more information, visit <https://www.performance.gov/GEARcenter>.



Through [Challenge.gov](http://challenge.gov), members of the public compete to help the U.S. government solve problems big and small. Since Challenge.gov was launched in 2010, more than 102 federal agencies have run more than 900 challenges.

INTRODUCTION

Data for Impact

Upon enrolling in a workforce training program, jobseekers aspire to secure pathways to job placement, and ultimately, economic mobility and self-sufficiency. However, Virginia labor agencies that administer workforce development programs typically cannot assess the impact of their programs beyond employment and skills gain. Data on life barriers that impact individuals' employability, like poverty or justice system involvement, are gathered and stored in isolation among the Commonwealth's 12 Health and Human Service departments that span 95 counties. These data sets, as is the case in most states, are independently regulated by separate policies and individuals.

This "siloeing" of data across jurisdictions and government agencies prevents local, state, and federal decision-makers from assessing how their critically important but disparate services complement each other, and their collective impact. Federally-funded labor agencies can improve the effectiveness and coordination of their workforce development programs by integrating post-secondary education and employment outcomes with insights about public benefit utilization and justice system involvement, among others. Integrated data analyses ultimately empower workforce boards to build on the insights of their government peers to administer and coordinate programs to holistically meet the life needs of job seekers.

Third Sector is supporting the SkillSource Group ("**SkillSource**") as it works to better understand the impact of its services on individuals between the ages of 18 and 24 who have had previous involvement with the justice or foster care systems and are currently disconnected from school and work (herein defined as "**Opportunity Youth**"). Currently, SkillSource has the capabilities to track Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act ("**WIOA**") outcomes of their participants, such as Measurable Skill Gain and employment. However, SkillSource has limited insights on how to improve support for Opportunity Youth or how they fare after completing workforce programs since currently they do not have access to recidivism and public benefits utilization outcomes.

Supported by a \$300,000 Government Effectiveness Advanced Research ("**GEAR**") Center Challenge [award](#) from the U.S. General Services Administration and the Office of Management and Budget, Third Sector is working with SkillSource on "Data for Impact:" an effort to access integrated, individual-level administrative data across Virginia's workforce, public benefits, and justice domains to better coordinate and understand how workforce development programs address life barriers faced by Opportunity Youth in three counties in Northern Virginia. Third Sector is advising SkillSource and their state partners on considerations for selecting outcomes to measure across siloed agencies, and developing a pathway for recurring, integrated data access for SkillSource and other workforce boards.

Virginia state officials continue to support the efforts of SkillSource, namely the learning, continuous improvement, and performance management objectives. GEAR funding was awarded because of this strong alignment between state and regional priorities and the strong data capabilities of the state, both of which will enable further dissemination of learnings to various government agencies and practitioners nationwide.

The Northern Virginia Team Independence Project

Data for Impact builds upon Third Sector's continued engagement with SkillSource on the [Northern Virginia Team Independence project](#) ("NVTI"), a three-year initiative (launched in 2017) that aims to serve a total of 100 Opportunity Youth through mobile outreach and enrollment in the community combined with targeted case management.

SkillSource contracts with the Fairfax County Department of Family Services ("DFS") to deliver workforce services at its six One-Stop Employment Centers.² Services provided at these centers include:

- Orientation and individualized case management
- Job postings and labor information
- Resources for local, national, and regional employers
- Job application assistance
- On-site recruitment
- Access to computer, fax, and printing resources
- Skills development and training resources
- Entrepreneurial programs

Aside from tracking and incentivizing outcomes directly related to post-secondary educational achievement and employment, broader outcomes of interest to SkillSource include recidivism reduction, appropriate public benefit utilization and reduced utilization over time, appropriate utilization of Medicaid, stable housing, and increased access to support services, among others.

The domains of public benefits utilization (in particular, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) and recidivism were chosen as areas of focus in order to examine how customized and effective job training can address the added barriers of poverty and justice involvement for Opportunity Youth seeking entry into the workforce.³ More importantly, when public benefit utilization and recidivism trends are understood in tandem with post-secondary educational achievement and employment metrics such as wages and retention, workforce boards can manage and adapt federally-funded programs toward quantifiable goals across a variety of economic stability and self-sufficiency domains

Accessing integrated data, starting with the data roadmap in this report, will allow SkillSource to:

- Quantify the holistic needs of their young adult participants

²The six One-Stop Employment centers are located across Northern Virginia in Leesburg, Reston, Woodbridge, Annandale, and two centers in Alexandria.

³SkillSource and Third Sector also explored the feasibility of integrating data reflecting healthcare utilization and housing stability although access restrictions specific to these two domains mean they are not currently included. Housing stability data during and after program enrollment is unusually fractured among county housing authorities, housing support non-profit organizations, and private market landlords. Additionally, data quality concerns within Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) databases would also make successful integration via administrative data difficult. Healthcare utilization data are protected by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act and other regulations that make ongoing access to individual-level records difficult.

- Collectively measure the life changes achieved by the program, and
- Secure the data needed to create financial incentives for the achievement of non-workforce outcomes.

NVTI is the first local workforce initiative *in the nation* to use the WIOA Pay for Performance provisions, which makes the project's data and insights uniquely useful in informing improvement of the training and workforce systems throughout the Commonwealth and in other states. Additionally, a deeper understanding of the impact of high-quality job training programs in these areas will help inform the return on investment of these services, which may (in part) take the form of cost savings due to reduced need for public benefits and fewer justice system interactions.

How to Navigate this Report

Part I: Recidivism and Self Sufficiency Data Road Map for SkillSource provides recommendations to SkillSource and other Virginia workforce boards and human services agencies on how to access cross-agency outcomes data. Part II: Data Integration Toolkit for Workforce & Beyond ("**Data Integration Toolkit**") will share insights on how to replicate SkillSource's outcomes-oriented approach in any workforce program or coordination effort.

Based on Third Sector's experience, this report will:

- **Describe** the availability of Virginia public benefits utilization and recidivism data and the feasibility of accessing such data for local implementers, like workforce boards
- **Discuss** the value of outcomes data integration and Continuous Improvement Processes for programs administered by local government agencies
- **Suggest** best practices for data selection, including a discussion of data disaggregation by race
- **Offer** recommendations and next steps at the local, state, and federal levels to improve future data integration and performance management

While this report captures lessons learned from Data for Impact and recommendations for workforce development boards across the Commonwealth of Virginia who are looking to integrate cross-agency data as SkillSource is, it may also be applicable to other stakeholders, including:

- Government agencies within and outside of Virginia interested in the pursuit of shared or integrated administrative data for better program outcomes
- State and federal departments funding workforce programs and overseeing data integration efforts
- Philanthropic partners interested in the sustainable application of outcomes data integration to address local disparities

PART I: RECIDIVISM AND SELF SUFFICIENCY DATA ROAD MAP FOR SKILLSOURCE

The siloed nature of data from different agencies - and the unique challenges of securing access to each data-set - is one of SkillSource's biggest challenges to collecting outcomes data in a timely manner and

fully operationalizing the promise of the Continuous Improvement Process (detailed in Part II, Section 2). The following section describes the available sources of recidivism and public benefits utilization data in Virginia, as well as considerations for metric selection.

Section 1: How to Access and Define Recidivism Outcomes Data

Accessing recidivism for Opportunity Youth in Northern Virginia requires access to justice system data sets across three counties: Fairfax, Loudoun, and Prince William Counties. There are significant challenges to consider when assessing recidivism because of the various accepted definitions and the county-level administration of probation, juvenile justice, and adult corrections services across various agencies. Below are recommendations for SkillSource to access recidivism outcomes data and a discussion of tradeoffs associated with the different types of recidivism definitions from three justice-related agencies in Virginia.⁴

Recidivism Data Recommendations

- SkillSource should consider rearrests (defined below) as the primary metric for tracking recidivism outcomes among young adults who were previously involved with the Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) or Virginia Department of Corrections (VADOC). Trade-offs to consider are detailed in the section below.
- A direct partnership with Virginia State Police (VSP) for recidivism outcome insights using rearrests as the primary metric is feasible to the extent the request is for anonymous, population-level data and in accord with the [Code of Virginia](#). Since SkillSource is not a public correctional agency, deidentified, individual-level data from VSP can potentially be secured on behalf of SkillSource through authorized organizations like the Police Department or Sheriff's Office.
- Collaborating with the Commonwealth Data Trust and accessing its justice information is the most streamlined process for accessing and interpreting any recidivism insights already integrated with other social service domains.

The Virginia Department of Corrections (VADOC)

The Virginia Department of Corrections ("VADOC") uses three metrics to measure recidivism - rearrests, reconvictions, and reincarcerations - and measures recidivism for time periods of six months to three

⁴Note: the justice system's normal processes have been delayed or otherwise altered due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which may skew recidivism metrics over the next several years. Most new incarcerations are being limited to cases where the individual is considered a threat to the public, and courts are significantly more backlogged than normal. For example, VADOC is releasing many inmates early, and has expressed concern about how individuals in re-entry will transition while many support programs have been downsized or paused.

years after an offender's involvement with the justice system. The VADOC primarily measures recidivism by assessing individuals who have been released from state-responsible ("SR") incarceration in Virginia. SR incarceration results from "a Virginia felony conviction with a sentence of one year or more or a parole violation with a sentence of two years or more."⁵

Definitions of and Considerations for VADOC Recidivism Outcomes

Rearrest: VADOC defines rearrest as "any arrest reported in the Virginia State Police criminal history database for a felony or misdemeanor offense, including supervision violations, within [a] specified time period after release" from SR incarceration. The VADOC does not consider local ordinance violations, such as non-criminal speeding, to be rearrests.

What makes rearrests distinct from reconvictions is that rearrest data does not take into account whether an individual is found guilty or innocent in any related proceedings. However, the data quality and measurement are consistent and accurate across all Commonwealth counties, and can be integrated within the same monthly or quarterly reporting cadence of most WIOA programs.

Rearrest data, as noted above, are administered by the Virginia State Police.

Reconviction: VADOC defines a reconviction as "a conviction resulting from a rearrest that occurred within [a] specified time period" after release from SR incarceration.

Reconviction data are stored at the courthouses where the convictions occurred (usually county courthouses). Access to reconviction data by workforce agencies typically requires in-person records review courthouse by courthouse. The state Supreme Court consolidates reconviction data, and it is highly unlikely an entity not affiliated with the state Supreme Court, like a workforce board, would be able to gain access to such data. Practically, it is difficult to ensure that reconviction data for a given set of individuals is complete or to access it in a timely (or time-efficient) manner.

Reincarceration: The VADOC considers reincarceration to be an SR incarceration after (and usually within three years of) a prior SR incarceration. This definition of reincarceration means that individuals are not considered "reincarcerated" if they are serving less than a year of jail time, are serving jail time for violating a local ordinance, or are in jail awaiting conviction or sentencing.

Recidivism as measured by reincarceration data can be skewed by the delays that court backlogs create between individuals' arrests, sentencings, and reincarcerations (if applicable). Individuals who commit an offense *during* the three-year period in which recidivism is measured, but whose corresponding incarcerations do not begin until *after* the three-year period, would not be captured by this recidivism metric. Additionally, if an individual was incarcerated under local responsibility - even if for a felony

⁵ Per [VADOC](#) and [Virginia's Judicial System](#), parole is a conditional early release from incarceration, contingent on an individual's good behavior after release. [Recidivism at a Glance: Releases from State Responsible Incarceration, May 2019](#)

sentence of a year or more - their incarceration would not become part of broader VADOC records until they were released on supervision, likely causing initial underestimates of recidivism.

Recommendations for Recidivism Metric Selection

While rearrests, reconvictions, or reincarcerations are all measures of recidivism, they each present unique challenges and opportunities. Rearrest metrics capture the broadest involvement with the justice system, since they include minor offenses that might not warrant incarceration (state-responsible or otherwise). Rearrest data will also have the shortest time frame for reporting since rearrest data are not dependent on a back-logged court system. When choosing a recidivism metric, workforce boards should be mindful that rearrests do not indicate charges, subsequent convictions or acquittals, or reflect the outcomes of legal due process.

Reconviction and reincarceration data may be better representations of reoffenses, since convictions and incarcerations result from a court's examination of a case's details and subsequent ruling. However, both of these metrics (especially reincarceration) would be significantly delayed due to the data reporting process between an arrest and case review in court.

Third Sector recommends that SkillSource rely on rearrest data for measuring recidivism of its young adult participants. Despite the limitation listed above, rearrest data are closer to "real-time" indicators than reincarceration data, and will reflect involvement for minor offenses that might still have a significant impact on an individual's ability to pursue employment or post-secondary education.

Lastly, it is important to note that none of the three recidivism metrics listed above - but especially arrests and rearrests - can be taken as direct indicators of criminal behavior. These metrics are impacted by racial bias and systemic racism, both of which play a role in Black, Indigenous, and people of color's disproportionate involvement with law enforcement and the justice system.

Data Sharing Agreement with VADOC

To obtain VADOC data, SkillSource and other local government agencies require a Memorandum of Understanding with the VADOC by starting with submitting a proposal to engage. The proposal needs to include the scope of the project, what specific data are being asked for, and a summary of the proposed partnership's impact on the VADOC.

After submission, the proposal is sent to a VADOC Director for review. During the review, the Director will consider the sensitivity of data requested as well as whether the proposed partnership would help the VADOC population and the community at large be better off, and how the proposal plans to engage other stakeholders, particularly community partners. A proposal for aggregate data, such as the percentage of a specific group of individuals recidivate is more likely to be approved whereas individual-level data (even de-identified) may require additional review.

For more information on how to access VADOC data and plan for proposals, please consult the [VADOC research website](#).

Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ)

The Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice (“DJJ”) serves youth (individuals under age 18) involved in the justice system and operates court service units (e.g., intakes, probation, parole). The DJJ measures recidivism by assessing the rearrest, reconviction, and/or reincarceration of individuals for specific types of involvement with DJJ. For its recidivism outcomes, the DJJ collects its own data for periods between three months and three years following an individual’s interaction with DJJ based on initial intake and release date reference points, among others. DJJ can monitor and serve youth until they turn 21 years of age. If youth turn 18 years of age and commit a new crime, they are considered adults, and VADOC, Virginia Criminal Sentencing Commission, and the State Compensation Board is able to report adult data with the DJJ for that individual.

DJJ remains interested in improving its understanding of the adult outcomes of previously-involved youth, especially recidivism and employment outcomes. The agency has shared aggregate data with other agencies in the past, which could make it a valuable partner for SkillSource, or other workforce boards, to gather aggregate, recidivism data. SkillSource and other state agencies can seek aggregate data from DJJ for a group of people that fit specific criteria for a certain timeframe. Providing aggregate data for specific names of youth would depend on the context and purpose to the extent data insights could not be traced to specific people or help to identify individuals as having contact with DJJ.

Definitions of DJJ Metrics⁶

Rearrest: A rearrest indicates that a youth has been taken into custody, is petitioned for a juvenile intake complaint, or is arrested after previous involvement with DJJ. “Previous involvement” can include: probation placement, successful diversion, release after a commitment to the state (incarceration or other residential placement), parole, and release from parole. Note that rearrests are also tracked for recidivism if they are first-time diversions or successful diversions. As discussed with adult recidivism in the VADOC section above, rearrest data do not take into account whether an individual is charged and subsequently convicted or acquitted in any related proceedings.

Reconviction: The DJJ considers a previously DJJ-involved individual to be reconvicted if they are adjudicated (equivalent to being “convicted” as an adult) for a new delinquent act (an offense that would be considered a crime if the youth were an adult) or convicted of a new crime. DJJ has complete adjudication data for youth in the recidivism data samples.

⁶ Definitions of Virginia DJJ’s recidivism metrics are expansions of the definitions DJJ published in their [Data Resources Guide FY2019](#)

Reincarceration: The DJJ defines reincarceration as previously DJJ-involved individual “[returning] to commitment, incarceration, or secure confinement subsequent to a rearrest and reconviction for a new delinquent act or criminal offense.”

For all of the metrics listed above, DJJ receives recidivism information from VADOC, Virginia Criminal Sentencing Commission, and the State Compensation Board. Adult data can also be retrieved for the specific data sample being assessed.

Considerations for DJJ Recidivism Metric Selection

In keeping with VADOC recommendations listed above, the rearrest outcome metric is also the most appropriate recidivism metric for DJJ datasets. DJJ rearrest data are the logical complement to VADOC rearrest data, since they would allow SkillSource to know if some of their youngest participants recidivated between the ages of 18 and 21 across the DJJ and VADOC systems. Similar to VADOC rearrest data, DJJ rearrest data are likely to be more accessible than reconviction data and will capture minor crimes excluded from reincarceration data.

For more information on accessing DJJ data, consult the [Data Resource Guide](#) and the [Data & Research Units](#), and the corresponding Data and Research managers listed on each page.

Virginia State Police (VSP)

The Virginia State Police (“VSP”) is the institution in Virginia designated, by law, to store and manage criminal history data. The [Code of Virginia](#)⁷ strictly regulates which agencies can receive criminal history data from VSP. SkillSource, or any other workforce board focused on recidivism prevention through the provision of workforce development services, may be able to receive aggregate level rearrest metrics from VSP to the extent the information is not personally identifiable.

For workforce boards leading more rigorous, customized planning and research efforts requiring individual-level, but anonymized records, a formal partnership with a criminal justice or other state agency authorized by the Code of Virginia is required in order to derive insights from personal identifying information provided by VSP. Authorized agencies, in accord with the Code of Virginia, could serve as a

⁷ The *Code of Virginia* contains the general and permanent laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia that have been passed by the General Assembly and signed by the Governor. The Code determines which agencies and individuals have access to sensitive criminal history record information. While these codes are very specific and restrict access by type of entity as well as purpose of data acquisition. According to [§ 19.2-389: Dissemination of criminal history record information](#), authorized officers or employees of criminal justice agencies include full and part-time employees of the State Police, police departments, and sheriff’s offices “part of or administered by the Commonwealth or any political subdivision thereof, and who is responsible for the prevention and detection of crime...”. With this context, a potentially viable path for workforce boards is to be authorized as a subdivision of the Commonwealth working on recidivism prevention through the provision of workforce development services. To further flesh out this option, the Virginia Code Commission should be involved.

data intermediary for a workforce board to de-identify individual-level VSP data for research, evaluative, or statistical purposes, and ensure the confidentiality and security of the data.

VSP Recidivism Data

Criminal history record information (“**CHRI**”) is centrally stored in Virginia’s Computerized Criminal History System (“**CCH**”). CCH integrates the name, offense, and descriptor, among other arrest information, based on fingerprint data collected after arrests by the Automated Fingerprint Information System. Individualized records are formed and maintained with “reportable” arrests, offenses, dispositions, corrections (supervisions), and post sentencing information, among other criminal acts, based on the Code of Virginia.

Initial transmission of data to CCH from various sources is rapid, and CCH updates records with dispositions (courts’ final decisions on cases) on a weekly basis. CCH and Automated Fingerprint Information System assess subsequent involvement within the justice system, such as rearrest, probation, and incarceration. VSP can request information from other states about an individual’s criminal history (via an FBI-run database).

Access to CHRI is tightly regulated and limited by the *Code of Virginia*. All state agencies and other entities like employers or service providers (such as daycares and schools) have access to an individual’s CHRI for employment purposes. Use of such CHRI to conduct historical or current recidivism analyses, which may require access to but not disclosure of personally identifying information, however, is restricted to criminal justice agencies authorized by the *Code of Virginia*. Police Departments and Sheriff’s Offices are authorized and viable partners for workforce boards to pursue.

For further information on VSP’s criminal history database or potential data partnerships, please consult the [VSP administrative website](#).

Section 2: How to Access and Define Self-sufficiency Outcomes

The Virginia Department of Social Services (“**VDSS**”) oversees the deployment of public benefits such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (“**SNAP**”), formerly known as food stamps, and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (“**TANF**”), also known as cash assistance. SkillSource’s interest in public benefits stemmed from a curiosity around self-sufficiency as a long-term outcome of workforce development services. A recommended list of data elements from the Virginia Longitudinal Data System is presented as a proxy for self-sufficiency (see Appendix, Section E).

Self Sufficiency Data Recommendations

- SkillSource and other Virginia workforce boards should consider assessing point-in-time SNAP and TANF enrollments before and after workforce service delivery to measure the utilization of public benefits (recommended metrics from VDSS are presented in the Appendix, Section E). When combined with post secondary education and workforce outcome insights, an agency can begin deriving its own proxy measure for “self-sufficiency.”
- When possible, workforce boards should seek to understand if changes in public benefit utilization are indicative of improved economic mobility or a “positive exit.” To that end, SkillSource should explore direct access to public benefit data through the Commonwealth Data Trust (see Part I, Section 3) to understand how parallel utilization of public benefits and workforce services - as well as insights into childcare, transportation, and housing programs - support jobseekers and their families and contribute to overall self-sufficiency.
- If a partnership with the Commonwealth Data Trust is not feasible, workforce boards should independently partner with the Director of Benefit Programs at VDSS for access to benefit utilization data.

In Virginia, Third Sector recommends integrating known educational and workforce outcomes with SNAP and TANF utilization data centrally owned by VDSS. Healthcare utilization and housing stability data, although of interest, pose additional challenges. Data to determine housing stability during and after workforce program enrollment is fractured among county housing authorities, housing support non-profit organizations, and private market landlords. In addition, data quality concerns within Homeless Management Information System (“**HMIS**”) databases would also make successful integration via administrative data difficult. Appropriate healthcare utilization requires access to data that are protected by strict regulations, including the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (“**HIPPA**”), that make ongoing access to individual-level records more difficult.

When reviewing public assistance utilization, it is important to take a nuanced approach to interpreting data and drawing insights. Receiving benefits like cash assistance or food support, and achieving self-sufficiency are not mutually exclusive. Accessing TANF and SNAP support programs can be a step towards future economic mobility. While Virginia has eliminated its asset limit or “savings penalty” in its TANF program, SNAP recipients face the challenge of a sudden and often unexpected decrease or removal of

SNAP support with a small increase in liquid savings or wages.⁸ Insights emerging from frameworks like ALICE (detailed below) can help government partners better understand the relationship between support services and self-sufficiency.

There are known limitations to using reduced utilization of benefits as a proxy for self-sufficiency. Determining whether an individual has crossed the income threshold for benefit eligibility (sometimes referred to as a “positive exit”), or has become ineligible or was sanctioned for other reasons within or beyond their control, is complicated. Currently, there is no singular data element to indicate a “positive exit” from SNAP or TANF programs.⁹ In addition, benefit eligibility is often determined by household, so any change in TANF or SNAP eligibility criteria of another member of the household could impact enrollment status of an individual. Lastly, there are inherent limitations of relying on point-in-time, binary (yes/no), historical benefits enrollment data that are made available by the state as such metrics may not provide the necessary insights to workforce stakeholders to proactively adapt programming or partnership.

Given the considerations above, workforce boards like SkillSource should assess public benefits utilization data as one of many co-dependent elements of “self-sufficiency” rather than in isolation. Recommended VDSS data elements can be found in the Appendix, Section E.

Data Sharing Agreement with VDSS

Data sharing decisions within VDSS fall under the authority of the agency’s data business owners. If a workforce development board, like SkillSource, seeks access to public benefit programs utilization data, a conversation with the program director (e.g., Director of Benefit Programs for TANF, SNAP, Medicaid) is required. As detailed above for access to recidivism information, an outline of the data assets to be retrieved and rationale is necessary in order to receive approval from a program director. VDSS will subsequently determine how to fulfill the data request internally.

For more information on VDSS data access and national resources, please consult:

- [VDSS Office of Research and Planning](#)
- [VDSS Organizational Chart](#)
- [VDSS Institutional Review Board Members \(2019-2021\)](#)
- [TANF Data Collective](#): The Office of Family Assistance and the Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation (in the federal Administration for Children and Families) sponsors this data initiative

⁸ For more on asset limits or “benefits cliff”, please consult [The Center for Law and Social Policy \(CLASP\)](#) and the [National Conference of State Legislatures](#).

⁹ Based on the data dictionary published by the Virginia Longitudinal Data System (VLDS)

aimed at accelerating the use of TANF, earnings, and other administrative data for program improvement and evidence-building at the federal, state, and local levels.

- ALICE: VDSS has adopted the Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed (“**ALICE**”) framework as a benchmark for financial self-sufficiency. The United Way publishes ALICE data every two years and accounts for local costs of living. Workforce development agencies may want to consider aligning concepts of self-sufficiency with this framework as well, though it should be noted that ALICE is an indicator of relativity and not a measure or singular data point for an individual person's record within the VDSS data system. For workforce agencies with existing referral and program partnership with the United Way, consider exploring the adaptation of the ALICE framework for continuous improvement of specific programs. For more on the ALICE framework, visit [United for ALICE](#) and [ALICE in Virginia: A Financial Hardship Study 2020](#)

Section 3: Cross-Agency Data Solutions in Virginia: VLDS and the Commonwealth Data Trust

Virginia is home to two cross-agency, state-wide data systems that integrate individual-level data from multiple state agencies. SkillSource and other workforce boards can engage these data systems to streamline the fragmented data collection process and begin to evaluate the holistic impacts of their services. More importantly, consolidated data systems create the foundational basis to initiate program improvement opportunities for referrals, enrollment, and service delivery. Disaggregating program data by race, ethnicity, and geography of residence, among other demographic variables, particularly ensures improvement efforts identify disparate outcomes that could be addressed.

Virginia Data Integration Recommendations

- Currently, the Virginia Longitudinal Data System (VLDS) is the most consolidated workforce data resource in Virginia. It contains data from nine agencies, has a centralized data dictionary, and a [single point of contact](#) to initiate a request. The major tradeoff with VLDS data is time: the data sets are of the prior year, analyses are not longitudinal, and querying the correct combination of metrics can be time consuming.
- The [Commonwealth Data Trust](#) led by Virginia's Chief Data Officer is the most expansive and user-friendly integrated data platform in Virginia for human services. The Commonwealth Data Trust builds on VLDS's infrastructure to deliver a more streamlined platform that could make it quicker and easier for any local government organization to gather and analyze individual-level, integrated, longitudinal data from multiple agencies on a recurring basis. If partnerships with the Commonwealth Data Trust or VLDS are not feasible, individual Data Sharing Agreements with other state agencies, like VSP and DSS, should be independently pursued.
- Obtaining workforce, self-sufficiency, and recidivism outcome insights across state lines can be secured through population-level analyses from the State Wage Interchange System (SWIS) and the Interstate Identification Index (III). Individual-level, anonymized insights, however, remain an operational challenge to integration (as is the case within Virginia).
- Whenever possible, de-identified, individual-level records from sources like VLDS or the Commonwealth Data Trust should be disaggregated by available race/ethnicity categories. Data disaggregation is an initial step towards integrating racial equity goals within a Continuous Improvement Process (detailed in Part II: Data Integration Toolkit for Workforce & Beyond), which may include modifying program or funding decision-making in ways that are shared with service providers and program participants.

Virginia Longitudinal Data System (VLDS)

The Virginia Longitudinal Data System (“**VLDS**”) is a federated data system¹⁰ comprising K-12 and post-secondary education, workforce data, and social services data. VLDS won the 2013 Governor’s Technology Award (IT Initiatives category) in Cross-boundary Collaboration for its first-in-the-nation collaboration among the four founding state agencies.

To date, the following agencies participate in VLDS:

- Office of Children’s Services (“**OCS**”)
- State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (“**SCHEV**”)
- Virginia Community College System (“**VCCS**”)
- Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services (“**DARS**”)
- Virginia Department of Education (“**VDOE**”)
- Virginia Department of Health Professions (“**DHP**”)
- Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ)
- Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS)
- Virginia Employment Commission (“**VEC**”)

Only selected, de-identified data elements from each agency are made available to VLDS and uploaded on an annual cycle. For a listing of these elements, please refer to the [VLDS Data Dictionary](#).

The unique data contributed by each agency into VLDS retain their agency-specific data governance,¹¹ source systems, and data collections. The VLDS Data Governance Council (“**Council**”) consists of a representative from each participating agency, and approves the VLDS research agendas, including “[Burning Questions](#)” relevant to Virginia residents and policymakers. Agencies provide their own specific [research agendas](#) and can update them as needed to align with agency priorities. For more information, please consult the [VLDS Book of Data Governance](#).

Currently, VLDS is accessible to researchers with a research agenda sponsored by one of the participating agencies listed above and approved by the Council. While one or more data requests are permitted for research projects, VLDS was not designed for conducting ongoing data validation for the purpose of Continuous Improvement Processes and program adjustments. VLDS returns de-identified record level

¹⁰ In a federated data system, “data are maintained separately in the databases of each participating state agency and are merged on-demand.” Individual privacy is protected as “no agency or researcher can match the data back to an identifiable student or individual.”

¹¹ Data governance refers to the policies and procedures that determine how data are managed, used, and protected. Definition source: [AISP Toolkit](#)

data matched across agencies using a one-way, random, unique identifier. These identifiers are generated anew with each data request and thus make it difficult to track the same individuals over time.

SkillSource and Third Sector sought data from VLDS in 2020 to establish historic baseline rates of public benefits and workforce service utilization, and post-secondary education and employment outcomes for Opportunity Youth in Fairfax, Loudon, and Prince Williams Counties. The data request remains under review as of this report's publication.

For more information on the capacity of VLDs or a potential partnership, please consult [Tod Massa](#), Director, Policy Analytics at SCHEV and VLDS lead and the [VLDS website](#).

Commonwealth Data Trust led by Virginia's Chief Data Officer Carlos Rivero

The [Commonwealth Data Trust](#), implemented by the Chief Data Officer, is a safe, secure, and legally compliant information sharing environment that establishes consistent requirements for government agencies through a standardized data sharing agreement process. The Commonwealth Data Trust provides a scalable alternative to multiple "point-to-point" sharing; promotes trust among its members through common rules for data security, privacy, and confidentiality; and reduces technical costs by onboarding to a single environment using standard National Information Exchange Model protocols. DataSAGE, Virginia's Secure Analytics and Governance Environment, is the technical implementation of the Commonwealth Data Trust and leverages the VLDS architecture (described above) to support restricted-use data sharing.

The Commonwealth Data Trust builds upon the foundation established by VLDS and assigns one common de-identification algorithm to all participating agencies allowing individual record-level data sharing and longitudinal tracking. Each participating agency maintains ownership of the data it contributes, but all partners are able to leverage the functionality of a collaboratively-developed, tech-enabled solution on a recurring basis. There is an established process and legal framework administered by a multi-agency governing council, which has authorized the infrastructure and architecture set up for technical data integration and analytics, and produced various agreements and protocols to ensure safe and recurring data integration and reporting. In addition to the VLDS data infrastructure, agencies and organizations participating in the Commonwealth Data Trust include:

- Virginia Department of Health
- Virginia Department of Emergency Management
- Virginia Hospital and Healthcare Association
- Virginia Department of Corrections
- Virginia Department of General Services / Consolidated Laboratory Services
- Library of Virginia
- State Compensation Board (local and regional jails)

Three key differences distinguish the Commonwealth Data Trust from VLDS. While VLDS is focused on education services and employment outcomes, the Commonwealth Data Trust has a wider scope that covers all state government services and potential outcomes experienced by Virginia residents. In

addition, the technical platform was expanded to include support for a cloud-based data consolidation and analytics platform as well as the implementation of the Secure Data Enclave giving data recipients a secure environment where they can access restricted-use data. The secure environment will be assessed and monitored by Virginia Information Technologies Agency's Enterprise Cloud and Oversight Services. Organizations that provision instances within this environment will have met VITA's security control requirements facilitating access to restricted-use data assets beyond academic research institutions. The expanded scope of the data trust and technical platform provide all stakeholders, including those that do not have the resources to establish and manage their own environments, the ability to share and access restricted-use data in a secure and appropriate manner.

SkillSource and Third Sector recommend the Commonwealth Data Trust as the best option in the Commonwealth for sharing data leading to actionable intelligence and cross-agency data for the purposes of outcomes validation and continuous improvement of programs. The Commonwealth Data Trust is fully operational, and anticipates onboarding multiple agencies in 2021. The Chief Data Officer continues to onboard data from several key agencies maximizing the Commonwealth Data Trust's value in analyzing recidivism and other public benefits outcomes data as described above and of interest to SkillSource.

Resources for any local government agency seeking to establish Memoranda of Understanding and Data Sharing Agreements with the Commonwealth Data Trust, and insight on general governance are included in the Appendix, Section B.

For more information on the capacity of the Commonwealth Data Trust or a potential partnership, please consult: [Loren Gonzalez](#), Communications, Outreach and Engagement Manager, Office of the Chief Data Officer, Commonwealth of Virginia and the [website](#) for the Office of the Chief Data Officer

Interstate Data Collection

The Opportunity Youth engaged by SkillSource's programs are transient and often move across state lines. Thus, for a truly accurate picture of the outcomes of young adult participants in the tri-county Northern Virginia region, data from Maryland and Washington, D.C. are needed in addition to state agencies within Virginia.

For accessing interstate workforce and post-secondary education data (such as those required for WIOA reporting), workforce boards can utilize the [State Wage Interchange System](#) ("SWIS"), administered by the federal Department of Labor and Department of Education. Virginia, Maryland, and Washington, D.C. all share the same types of data, although much of it, especially around public benefit utilization, is in aggregate form. While SWIS may not allow for full tracking of individual-level outcomes, it aligns data and metrics across states via population-level analyses.

Sharing interstate data on individual-level justice involvement or public benefits utilization is more difficult. The Interstate Identification Index ("III") is a potential integration opportunity to consider for regional recidivism insights. III is a national database for criminal record information that the Virginia State Police (referenced in Part I, Section 1) is authorized to access. Should SkillSource or any workforce board seek interstate recidivism data for a specific group of individuals from III, they should form a partnership with an authorized agency that can request information from the Virginia State Police.

Individualized public benefit utilization data would likely have to be obtained through unique Data Sharing Agreements made with the agencies in other states that oversee those services. The questions about data quality and availability criteria discussed in Part II, Section 2 can be helpful starting points for understanding which data will be most compatible with the existing data Virginia collects. Academic institutions or non-profits (such as Third Sector) can also support workforce boards in understanding storage, alignment, or aggregation of data across states.

Centering Racial Equity

SkillSource's WIOA Pay for Performance initiative originated from a commitment to be data-driven in pursuit of delivering improved workforce development services for Opportunity Youth. As described in the Introduction, once SkillSource began disaggregating its enrollment data for WIOA Youth programs, it became clear that Opportunity Youth were underrepresented among SkillSource's jobseekers departing the foster care or justice systems. By identifying and quantifying this gap in enrollment between Opportunity Youth and other young people in Northern Virginia, SkillSource was able to make financial and programmatic decisions to begin addressing the "access gap."

Access to integrated data systems, whether through the Commonwealth Data System, VLDS, or any interstate resources, will allow SkillSource and other workforce boards to apply a similar approach to understand how racial disparities in workforce, post-secondary education, and other outcomes inform the effectiveness of the workforce system at large.

Disaggregating data by race

Simple disaggregation can often be effective in showing significant differences in outcomes between demographic groups, as well as for identifying where along the service delivery continuum these disparities appear. As SkillSource seeks to understand the holistic impact of the services delivered to Opportunity Youth it will be critical to, whenever possible, disaggregate the data to measure the outcomes of people of color compared to White people, as well as within racial and ethnic groups.¹²

By disaggregating outcomes data, workforce boards can work with its service providers to make operational changes that address unique barriers faced by specific sub-populations, and continue to track whether these program adjustments are meaningfully improving workforce, recidivism, and self-sufficiency outcomes. Programmatic modifications could include culturally-informed outreach and enrollment strategies, intentional partnerships with community-based groups, and revision of terminology in program materials. Interpreting disaggregated insights, and developing modifications to

¹²Linking race with other intersectional characteristics (e.g., gender, sexuality, household composition, among others) rather than looking at it in isolation can shed light on unique experiences of individuals, particularly those from marginalized subgroups. The Continuous Improvement Process, as described in Part II, Section 3, and a process for soliciting input from stakeholders like program staff and jobseekers themselves can add nuance to otherwise static data. Intersectionality was coined in 1989 by professor Kimberlé Crenshaw and describes how race, class, gender, and other individual characteristics "intersect" and overlap with each other.

the workforce system accordingly, with other government partners and community stakeholders will help any workforce board balance data *and* qualitative insights, and contextualize the causes of racial/ethnic disparities. Additional strategies for accomplishing racial equity goals are listed in Part II: Data Integration Toolkit.

Additional Resources

Case studies and further reading on shared decision-making can be found in the Appendix. For more information on centering racial equity in data integration, including best practices for presenting disaggregated data:

- [A Toolkit for Centering Racial Equity Throughout Data Integration](#) - Actionable Intelligence for Social Policy (AISP) at the University of Pennsylvania
- [The Essentials of Disaggregated Data for Advancing Racial Equity](#) - Race Matters Institute
- [Principles for Continuous Improvement: Collaborative, Data-Driven Conversations](#) - Third Sector

Section 4: The Future of Data Work at the State and Federal Level

Successfully integrating justice and public benefits utilization data with traditional workforce development outcomes would represent a major advancement in the capability of local workforce development boards to serve the holistic needs of their jobseekers. However, this is a fraction of the potential impact of increased use of administrative data. In the coming years, as the Commonwealth and other governments across the country continue to develop greater analytical capacity, there is immense potential for workforce boards to lead in using data to drive actionable insights and better meet the various needs of jobseekers.

Today, workforce development boards and the providers they contract with operate with very limited visibility into an individual's history and their outcomes after program completion. By integrating datasets in new domains, such as public benefit utilization or justice system involvement, decision-makers can broaden their view of the impact of federal and state workforce development investments and use these data to inform program delivery changes and improve outcomes for job seekers.

The power of administrative data grows with each new data set that is integrated. A broader set of available data points will also strengthen future WIOA Pay for Performance contracts. Currently, workforce boards seeking to deploy financial incentives for outcomes achievement are constrained by the limited data that is readily available to them. More complete and easily accessible administrative data sets would permit workforce boards to better identify programmatic areas of focus, and establish agreements with local job centers or community based organizations that are most effective at driving meaningful improvements in the lives of their jobseekers.

The depth of administrative datasets create the possibility for governments to further understand the specific types of support that are most likely to benefit an individual based on the assets that they bring with them to job training and the unique barriers they need to overcome. Access to these datasets would inform both the redesign of services as well as more effective matching of individuals to specific services and accompanying supports. To realize this potential for better targeting of services, advances in data capabilities will be necessary to permit the analysis of individual-level linked records while preserving data privacy. Platforms such as the [Commonwealth Data Trust](#) led by Virginia's Chief Data Officer are a novel approach to reconciling these two important goals and thus unlocking the potential for administrative data to drive evidence-based decision-making.

Challenges remain to successfully integrate cross-agency outcomes data between counties within Virginia and across state lines. Federal partners can play a critical role in ensuring data integration work in Virginia continues to translate into specific gains in program performance, "return on (federal) investment," and improved accountability and coordination among WIOA-funded providers. More importantly, continued federal partnerships like GEAR ensure that there is a pathway for other workforce boards and local governments to establish sustainable outcomes data integration in order to develop the funding and

policy insights that will acknowledge and incentivize the long term and broader impacts of workforce services on other social service domains.

This Data for Impact initiative support by GEAR raised compelling data innovation themes for Federal GSA, OMB, and/or agency partners (Department of Labor, Department of Justice, and/or Health and Human Services) to consider for future collaboration with outcomes data visionaries throughout the country:

- **Role of Federal Policy/Requirements:** Is there a role for federal policy to create incentives for outcomes collection and integration in social services, post-secondary education, employment, and corrections departments that receive WIOA, TANF, Career and Technical Education (“CTE”), and Department of Justice (“DOJ”) funding?

Local innovators like SkillsSource and data visionaries like VLDS and Virginia’s Chief Data Officer would benefit tremendously from understanding what are the requirements (current or future) or incentives (financial or programmatic) for state agencies that receive federal funds to (i) collect multi-year outcomes information on a recurring basis and (ii) share de-identified, individual-level outcomes data insights across state departments. Nationally, numerous agencies articulate the importance of integrated data insights to streamline program referrals, improve service delivery, and make more informed funding allocations. Yet, the act of collecting outcomes and integrating those insights across agencies within a state is at the discretion of an individual agency’s leadership. A catalyzing opportunity could be to explore how WIOA, TANF, CTE, and DOJ funding agreements can facilitate, or even require, better outcomes integration among state agencies.

- **Continued data support and technical assistance:** Are there future opportunities like the [2019 GEAR Award](#) suited for local or state agencies willing and able to implement new program policies or fund disbursements through the use of actionable data insights?

Exploring the data integration efforts for performance-based contracting and the development of a “data plan” in Northern Virginia required a dedicated Third Sector team working for a year to (i) define data metrics, (ii) educate, collaborate, and negotiate with various state agencies, and (iii) identify a feasible access and integration plan. Replicating similar data planning efforts elsewhere or building on the milestones described above ensure that federal resources maximize the value of existing programs funded by WIOA, Perkins V CTE, TANF, and DOJ resources. Data efforts like GEAR accelerate the impact of WIOA Adult Training and Employment, WIOA Pay for Performance, and multi-agency efforts like the [Performance Partnership Pilots](#) and the [Engaging as One Workforce for America](#) initiative (and its [local](#) implementation).

Grant funding or technical assistance would support initiatives like the Commonwealth Data Trust to onboard new agencies reticent to share outcomes data, expand education and awareness efforts for agency leaders to understand the value of integrated data, and avoid duplicating efforts led by universities, non profit organizations, or private sector partners. Most importantly, additional resources would provide the means and credibility to staff an implementation effort to translate outcomes data insights into policy and funding changes, informed by a Continuous Improvement Process (described in the next section, Part II).

- **Convening Data Leaders to Share Lesson Learned:** What would be the appropriate forum in which state or county implementers relying on outcomes insights could elevate data access and integration challenges as well as share collaboration opportunities or lessons learned with Chief Data Officers, research partners, and other experts?

Understanding actionable “uses cases” for integrating data will help inform how a network of experts can be activated to solve a problem. Conversely, it also helps federal staff grasp the procedural, bureaucratic, and/or technical barriers that stifle state and local action aimed at meeting federal performance goals. There appear to be limited insights (stateside) on how state and federal data experts can support one another to reorient policy, data requirements, or staff capacity building within a workforce board.

PART II: DATA INTEGRATION TOOLKIT FOR WORKFORCE & BEYOND

Section 1: Why Integrated Data Matters

The critical elements that allow an individual to thrive and sustain economic self-sufficiency do not separate neatly into different categories. An individual's current job and career pathway are deeply intertwined with housing stability, access to public benefits, involvement with the justice system, and academic achievement, among other factors. Understanding the life impact of multi-million dollar workforce development efforts on public safety, nutrition, and self-sufficiency would dramatically improve government policy, multi-agency coordination, and funding decision-making and allow government to align program effectiveness with community need.

However, labor agencies in Virginia, like local workforce development boards, typically cannot quantify the impact of their services or improve their programs beyond the limited insights of initial employment placements or skill learning due to the siloed nature of outcomes data.

The Commonwealth's 12 Health and Human Service departments across 95 counties in Virginia, each with their own unique data use and privacy protocols, create various administrative hurdles to holistically understand how to steer effective support for job seekers with substantial barriers, namely intergenerational poverty and foster care/justice systems involvement.

For learners and job seekers, workforce programs that are uncoordinated with education or support services makes accessing any of them a daunting, ad hoc, and often repetitive process. On top of that, the services they are able to access may or may not be effective in stabilizing life circumstances beyond developing employable skills.

Evaluating and refining workforce services in isolation misses the opportunity for workforce boards to act more comprehensively and strategically about how the variety of public programs an individual may be accessing can be synchronized to address intersecting needs.

Integrated data allows government to:

- Deeply **understand** community need
- **Tailor** programs to the multiple challenges people face
- **Identify** the services most likely to lead to successful outcomes

In the same way the private sector has embraced linking various available consumer data points to tailor services and improve products, comprehensive data on the lived experiences and outcomes of jobseekers can improve the way governments manage workforce programs. Workforce boards can offer the appropriate services to meet community needs, and service providers can have more insights to design and continuously improve programs that will help jobseekers achieve their goals.

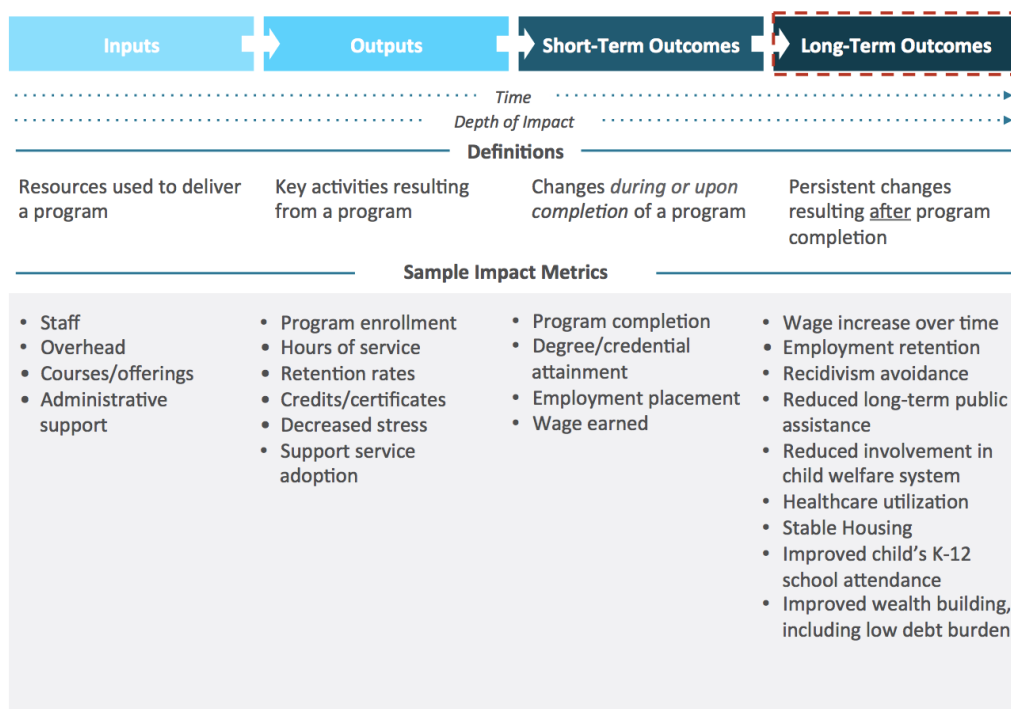
A Framework for Defining Outcomes and Continuous Improvement

“Outcomes” are the life changes that result from a program, and not the data detailing the staffing, referrals/enrollment, and other administrative functions of a contracted program. Figure A presents recommended metrics to measure progress and success of any federally-funded skill building, case management, and workforce training programs.

What makes outcomes measurement distinct from traditional forms of administrative data work is assessing program impact *after* a participant has completed the program.

For workforce boards, suitable time frames to assess outcomes performance are likely quarterly measurements (to align with WIOA reporting requirements) and more than one year after workforce development services are delivered (to ensure life barriers have been sufficiently addressed and have resulted in lasting life changes).

FIGURE A: AN OUTCOMES LOGIC MODEL FOR WORKFORCE¹³



¹³ See Glossary for definitions of Inputs, Outputs, Short-Term Outcomes, and Long-term Outcomes

Collecting the outcome insights listed in Figure A is critical to understanding how a workforce program leads to transformative life changes among its participants. Using these data, various stakeholders can understand whether the provider is implementing its model with fidelity and whether program activities are leading to the intended impacts. Government funders like the Department of Labor (DOL) or philanthropy can measure the “return on investment” to ensure their dollars support high-impact programs. Similarly, disaggregating outcomes data by racial, socioeconomic, gender, geography and other demographic variables (as defined in Part I, Section 3) can improve stakeholder understanding of life barriers faced by participants that experience disparities in program access and outcomes.¹⁴

Managing programs toward specific, pre-defined outcomes like those listed in Figure A requires data, policy, and budget experts to collaborate with communities through a Continuous Improvement Process (see Figure B: Continuous Improvement Process).

An outcomes-oriented Continuous Improvement Process allows governments to:

- **Understand** real-time program and participant performance
- **Identify** needed changes or “course corrections” in programming based on these data insights
- **Leverage** human-centered design principles to understand critical barriers and/or circumstances that threaten stable employability outside of the workforce domain
- **Improve** coordination and collaboration among community partners and other agencies

FIGURE B: CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT PROCESS



For more on Continuous Improvement Processes, please refer to [Third Sector's “best practices” blog](#).

¹⁴ [The Roadmap for Racial Equity: An Imperative for Workforce Development Advocates](#), National Skills Coalition, Sept. 2019.

Section 2: Data Availability and Opportunities for Integration

Selecting Outcomes Data

Determining which outcomes in Figure A can be accessed by a workforce board, and if the data insights will be relevant for workforce stakeholders can be challenging. SkillSource, Third Sector, and relevant state data owners relied on the following three-part framework over a four-month time frame to determine the feasibility of accessing and integrating outcome data across various agencies and counties in Virginia.

Data Availability

To assess outcome data availability, government agencies must identify the data source of interest and who determines access and use of such data. Once data sources are known, the following questions allow for a closer examination of data accessibility:

- Which jurisdictions or agencies need to be involved in authorizing data sharing and related privacy protocols?
- What are the additional approvals / Data Sharing Agreements required to access those data?
- Is there internal capacity and support to access and analyze those data?

Data Quality

To assess whether a particular data set or source is considered accurate and reliable, workforce boards and government agencies can consider the following questions:

- How are outcomes data currently collected by state data partners?
- Can the outcomes be disaggregated by race and other demographic characteristics?
- Is it possible to assess whether differences in access to services are affecting outcome disparities for underserved groups?

Data Measurement

To decide what is the appropriate level of data specificity for measurement, it can be helpful to consider:

- Are the data available on a per person basis? Or are there typical groupings/cohorts that are already assessed by agencies?
- When and how often are these data measured, collected, and reported?

The above parameters are applicable to any outcomes data set administered by governments, universities, or other data partners.

Pathways for Data integration

Integrating outcome insights - from employment, to health, to justice involvement - instead of relying on isolated analyses requires more substantial monitoring and measurement infrastructure. In today's systems, the simpler (although less streamlined) approach is for a workforce board to establish Data Sharing Agreements with each government agency of interest that administers its own subject-matter data.

Data sharing is when an agency shares its aggregate data for a defined time period through a legally authorized and secure process. While data sharing allows the receiving agency to assess population-level trends, it is usually difficult or impossible to match individual records across agencies, and to look at individual progress or more nuanced trends that could be seen in disaggregated data.

Data integration is when agencies execute Data Sharing Agreements that authorize enough personally identifiable information (PII) to allow individual records to be matched or linked between agencies while adhering to privacy and confidentiality protocols.

Data integration is significantly more labor-intensive for two main reasons: (i) rigorous contracts and systems are needed to ensure that PII remains confidential and (ii) establishing a system that allows for the continuous matching and updating of individual records is challenging and time-consuming. Ultimately, though, established integrated data systems make it significantly easier to track a single individual's outcomes in a range of areas, and ascertain the impact of a specific program or experience.

The Commonwealth Data Trust (see Part I, Section 3) is an example of a state-led integrated data system. Its ability to provide a single record per individual - with data from multiple agencies on a longitudinal basis - makes it a great resource when seeking integrated insights on multiple life outcomes of a specific population group. Other noteworthy comparable examples of state-led integrated data systems throughout the nation include:

- [Arkansas Research Center](#)
- [Georgia Policy Labs](#)
- [Maryland Longitudinal Data Center \(MLDS\)](#).
- [Mississippi State University National Strategic Planning & Analysis Center \(NSPARC\)](#)
- [Texas PK-16 Public Education Information Resource \(TPEIR\)](#)
- [The Kentucky Center for Statistics \(KYSTATS\)](#)

Strategies to Embed Racial Equity in Continuous Improvement Processes

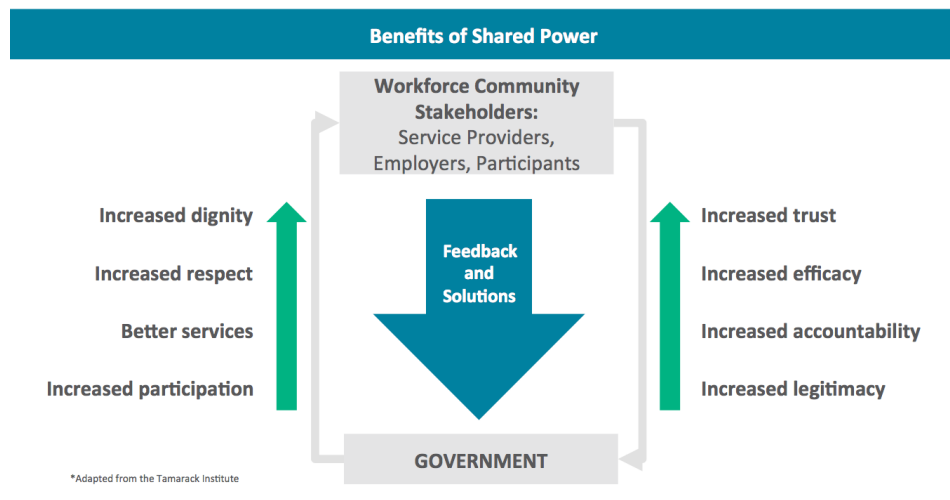
Defining outcomes, and charting the feasibility to access such data, are foundational elements for any Continuous Improvement Process. Assessing opportunities to embed racial equity within the process,

however, also requires strategies for engaging community partners to ensure outcome data planning is responsive to the needs articulated by workforce participants and their support network.

As mentioned in Part I, Section 3, simple data disaggregation can often be highly effective to show large differences in outcomes between groups, as well as for identifying where along the service delivery continuum these disparities appear. By ensuring that the necessary demographic data are collected to disaggregate enrollment and program outcomes data by race and ethnicity, workforce boards can identify and begin to address racial disparities that hinder employability. Disaggregation can also help contextualize structural factors that may influence program access and engagement.

Centering racial equity in data practice, however, goes far beyond disaggregating data by race. Disaggregated data insights can be leveraged in government decision-making to address known racial disparities, independently or with community stakeholders who deliver workforce services (e.g., service providers and employers) or benefit from services (e.g., program participants and their advocates). Acting on new data insights to address disparities includes (re)designing programs, implementing services, and (re)allocating funding and resources, among other activities. Sharing government “power,” defined here as decision-making authority about how a workforce system operates and who is served by its programs, with community stakeholders of the workforce system is an example of how government can consult, perhaps even authentically collaborate, with other stakeholders to improve services. As depicted in Figure C, the benefits of shared decision-making are naturally complementary to the goals of any Continuous Improvement Process.

FIGURE C: BENEFITS OF SHARED POWER



Strategies for engaging workforce community stakeholders, and thereby ensuring that services and policies are continually responsive to the workforce needs also prioritized by providers and participants could entail:

- **Human-centered Program Design:** Multi-phase design process that engages workforce participants to participate in the problem-solving, as part of a Continuous Improvement Process (e.g., improve program outreach, enrollment, or any outcomes listed in Figure A)
- **Community-based Participatory Action Research:** Engaging community members in the definition of problems, collection and analysis of data, and design of workforce development services to ensure that data-driven practices are culturally meaningful, valid, and appropriate.
- **Community Leadership:** Assigning community members authority or decision-making (e.g., in committees or boards) using the same data insights of a workforce board.
- **Community Approval:** Giving community members final approval as to whether or not an initiative should proceed as designed.

While the suggestions above are key components of continuous improvement, for workforce boards just beginning to shift towards an outcomes orientation and starting to center racial equity, data disaggregation is an accessible first step towards improving outcomes for individuals with the highest barriers to economic opportunity.

Appendix, Section A presents two case studies on how engagement strategies centered on racial equity supported Continuous Improvement Processes in Santa Cruz County, CA and Broward County, FL to improve workforce, family support, and two-generational outcomes.

Recommended Reading

- [A Toolkit for Centering Racial Equity Throughout Data Integration](#) - Actionable Intelligence for Social Policy (AISP) at the University of Pennsylvania
- [The Essentials of Disaggregated Data for Advancing Racial Equity](#) - Race Matters Institute
- [Principles for Continuous Improvement: Collaborative, Data-Driven Conversations](#) - Third Sector
- [Three Design Principles for Listening to Communities](#) - Third Sector
- [Leveraging Data as a Strategic Asset Part II: Decision-Making and Accountability](#) - Third Sector

Section 3: Applications of Pay for Performance in Workforce Development

The federal government's Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act's ("WIOA") Pay for Performance provisions catalyzed a broad program improvement effort centered on data integration.

WIOA Pay for Performance enables workforce boards to allocate a financial incentive to service providers to focus on longer-term outcomes for any population group through performance—or "bonus"—payments.

Northern Virginia's SkillSource Group ("**SkillSource**") is the first local workforce entity in the nation to use the WIOA Pay for Performance provisions. SkillSource's innovative WIOA Pay for Performance program, the [Northern Virginia Team Independence project](#) ("**NVTI**"), is a three-year initiative (launched in 2017) that aims to serve a total of 100 Opportunity Youth¹⁵ through mobile outreach and enrollment in the community combined with targeted case management. The programming addresses key barriers to engage hard-to-reach young adults in the region and aims to provide much needed support to this population with high barriers to economic opportunity.

SkillSource contracts with the Fairfax County Department of Family Services ("**DFS**") to deliver workforce services at its six One-Stop Employment Centers with over 60 eligible training providers that are certified by SkillSource. These six centers are located across Fairfax, Loudoun, and Prince William Counties in Leesburg, Reston, Woodbridge, Annandale, and two centers in Alexandria. Services provided at these centers include:

- Orientation and individualized case management
- Job postings and labor information
- Resources for local, national, and regional employers
- Job application assistance
- On-site recruitment
- Access to computer, fax, and printing resources
- Skills development and training resources
- Entrepreneurial programs

WIOA Pay for Performance empowered SkillSource to develop a "performance" framework to indicate progress in redirecting resources toward a specific population in need. Instead of only reporting how NVTI participants fared after completing the program, DFS and SkillSource are financially incentivized to ensure that the program results in lasting impact for up to one year after services were rendered. Figure D below identifies the skills gain, employment, and education outcomes as the "bonus payment" benchmarks that SkillSource and its partners had the data capacity to measure. Non-workforce outcomes of interest, such as recidivism and public benefit utilization were not included in the original NVTI contracts due to challenges in outcomes data access (described in more detail in Part 1 of this report).

¹⁵Opportunity Youth are defined here as individuals between the ages of 18 and 24 who have had previous involvement with the justice or foster care systems and are currently disconnected from school and work.

FIGURE D: NVTI OUTCOMES

	Outcome	Metric (Timeframe)
Current NVTI P4P Outcomes	Skills gain	Measurable skills gain (during programming)
	Employment	Youth placed in employment, training, or education (2 quarters and 4 quarters after exit)
	Education	Attainment of degree or certificate (4 quarters after exit)
Aspirational Outcomes	Reduction in recidivism rates	Rearrests (4 quarters or more after exit)
	Decrease in use of public benefits	Number of months enrolled in TANF (4 quarters or more after exit)
		Number of months enrolled in SNAP (4 quarters or more after exit)
		Medicaid Case Indicator (4 quarters or more after exit)

SkillSource’s performance-based contracting model serves as an impactful example of how to establish an accountability system to ensure outcome data insights improve collaboration among workforce board policy and budget personnel, and service providers implementing workforce development programs. The performance-based contract provided “bonus payments” to service providers based on specific outcome metrics, all in addition to the standard reimbursement for program services. Establishing a relationship between funding disbursed to service providers and the workforce outcomes achieved by young adult participants, even with a limited bonus pool, redefined the way in which referrals and enrollments are streamlined, program staff are trained, data are mutually shared on a recurring basis between workforce board and government/community partners, and how the broader community of stakeholders is invested in collaboration.

The interdisciplinary nature of pay for performance creates an incentive for funders like the Department of Labor, government agencies, service providers, and when appropriate, jobseekers, to work together to develop a “continuous feedback loop” to reassess the most effective use of policy, dollars, services, and data on a recurring basis.

In the example of NVTI, the shared mission of SkillSource, DFS, and regional community partners to improve post-secondary education and workforce outcomes for Opportunity Youth changed their working relationship with each other. Over 20 government agencies and non-profit partners specializing in foster care and juvenile justice services across the three counties were engaged at the onset of WIOA Pay for Performance planning, and remain active in the following efforts:

- **New partnerships:** Continuous collaboration and improvement of joint programming among referral partners, including confirming the size of the eligible population in the region and assuring agreement on performance benchmark setting.
- **Increased staff training:** Establishment of bi-annual on-site staff trainings for referral partner organizations to ensure consistency in eligibility criteria approval and referral reporting.
- **Alignment between referral and enrollment conversion:** Monthly reports on the number of eligible youth completed by referral partners, and recurring updates from NVTI on program enrollment and performance to ensure interim headcount and key performance indicator goals are met.
- **Continuous Improvement:** Quarterly meetings for referral partners to track progress and coordinate/improve efforts to strengthen referral processes.

While SkillSource, along with the San Diego Workforce Partnership are among the first agencies to adopt WIOA Pay for Performance, to date there are over 30 government agencies nationwide utilizing similar forms of performance-based contracting, like WIOA Pay for Performance, in other social services and non-workforce domains. Uptake in performance-based contracting in recent years has created an increased demand for more actionable uses of administrative data to allow local governments quantify local need and measure progress in meeting that need. This existing and continuously available data allows local governments to make continuous improvements towards desired program outcomes, rather than deploy data insights for state or federal compliance reporting.

For more on SkillSource's Northern Virginia Team Independence WIOA program visit <https://vcwnorthern.com/about/>

For more on WIOA Pay for Performance or implementing performance-based contracting in workforce development: info@thirdsectorcap.org.

APPENDIX

A. Case Studies: Centering Racial Equity Through Community-Involved Continuous Improvement

The case studies below offer two examples of how local government agencies have gone beyond data disaggregation to center racial equity in their programs and services through community-involved Continuous Improvement Processes.

Case Study: Santa Cruz County Human Services Department (Santa Cruz County, CA)

As part of the Administrative Data Pilot (Santa Cruz ADP), Santa Cruz County's Human Services Department (HSD), Third Sector, and Stanford's Center on Poverty and Inequality worked together to gain access to numerous workforce related administrative datasets to better understand the short- and long-term effects of subsidized employment programming for CalWORKS (TANF) recipients.

Santa Cruz ADP gathered in-depth info from participants, employers, and providers to develop outcome goals and improvement ideas that respond to the needs of the system and people's lives, then helped providers prototype and test ideas with government funding unlocked by the project.

A collaborative group of community stakeholders remained involved in the ongoing contract monitoring and Continuous Improvement Process through monthly meetings between HSD officials and the non-profit service providers. These pre-arranged meetings are designed to ensure that if parties are finding that the programs are not meeting the needs of participants, incremental process, service, and data feedback improvements can be deployed in order to make the most impact as soon as possible for the participants served. HSD and providers also review disaggregated outcomes data semiannually, consistent with the availability of state data.

For more information see: ["Principles for Continuous Improvement: Santa Cruz Human Services Department's Journey"](#)

Case Study: Children's Services Council of Broward County (Broward County, FL)

The Children's Services Council of Broward County, Florida (CSC Broward) has strengthened its ability to advance positive outcomes for the children and families served by its programs by developing more equitable relationships with service providers focused on co-creating improved outcomes for program participants to address structural racism. To achieve this goal, CSC Broward and Third Sector worked together to:

- Plan and implement a provider frontline staff convening called "Get the Scoop"
- Engage providers in the procurement process and encourage them to identify outcomes and related data that would help better inform their service delivery called "Learning Outcomes",
- Update procurement language to heighten the focus on data, equity, and partnership, and

- Work with the CSC Broward Research, Analysis, and Planning (RAP) team to practice collaborative conversations with providers that expand the role of providers to include the function of being co-researchers.

Through this work, CSC Broward has built a replicable and sustainable process for furthering equity and improving outcomes through co-learning with service providers, strengthened the agency's capacity to foster relationships with providers, and created forums for sharing these lessons learned with other government agencies. By working with providers as partners in outcomes achievement in the context of a holistic co-learning system focused on using feedback and data, CSC Broward-funded service providers now have:

- Increased access to data on key questions they have about service delivery,
- A better understanding of the role of data in benchmarking progress towards outcome goals,
- Access to regular opportunities for co-learning with CSC Broward to support the use of data at their organizations to inform programs and services, and
- Regular avenues for engaging with CSC Broward to co-create program and system solutions to improve outcomes for participants of its programs.

For more information, please see: ["Empowering Families: Building Quality Feedback Loops to Support Better Outcomes"](#)

B. Virginia's Commonwealth Data Trust Resources

"The Commonwealth Data Trust, led by the Chief Data Officer, is a safe, secure, and legally compliant information sharing environment that establishes consistent requirements for trust members through a standardized Data Sharing Agreement process. The Data Trust provides a scalable alternative to multiple "point-to-point" sharing, promotes trust among its members through common rules for data security, privacy, and confidentiality and reduces technical costs by onboarding to a single environment using standard NIEM protocols. The Data Trust will ensure and support data discovery and analytics for agencies and organizations across the Commonwealth of Virginia."¹⁶

The Data Governance Framework supports the execution of the Commonwealth Data Trust through strategic oversight by the [Executive Data Board](#) and operational oversight by the [Data Governance Council](#).

- [Data Trust Agreement](#) - this establishes the relationship between the data provider and the trustee (CDO). This agreement is used for organizations contributing data into the data trust. Signing this agreement doesn't mean the entity gets access to trust member-contributed data.
- [Data Trust Agreement Amendment Form](#) - this document is used when a data provider needs to amend their data trust agreement to include new data, new constraints, or any other changes to the trust agreement exhibits.

¹⁶Source: [Chief Data Officer](#)

- [Data Trust User Agreement](#) - this describes the relationship between the trust and recipients of trust member-contributed restricted-use data. This agreement is primarily for organizations that have projects that need access to restricted-use trust data. Agencies can act as trust users, but this is mostly for organizations like academic institutions, non-governmental organizations, and localities to be able to consume trust resources.
- [Data Trust Individual User Non-Disclosure Agreement](#) - this document lays out the roles and responsibilities individuals have with regard to using and safeguarding restricted-use trust data. Every team member on a data trust user project must have a signed NDA on file in order to access trust resources (no exceptions).

C. Data Integration Resource List

- Integrated Data Systems and Outcomes-Oriented Contracting series - Actionable Intelligence for Social Policy (AISP) at the University of Pennsylvania and Third Sector
 - [Part I](#) - Integrated Data Systems
 - [Part II](#) - Data governance, legal framework, technology, and human capacity required to implement integrated data systems)
- [Introduction to Data Sharing and Integration](#) – AISP
- [Outcomes-Oriented Expanded Subsidized Employment Toolkit](#) - California Department of Social Services (CDSS), California Welfare Directors Association (CWDA), and Third Sector
- Principles for Continuous Improvement series - Third Sector
 - [Collaborative, Data-Driven Conversation](#)
 - [Building a Data Dashboard](#)
- [ROI and Beyond: Establishing a Framework for Improving Workforce Systems](#) – BrightHive and Third Sector
- [SAYING YES TO STATE LONGITUDINAL DATA SYSTEMS: Building and maintaining cross agency relationships](#) - National Skills Coalition, Workforce Data Quality Campaign

D. Glossary

- **CCH** - Virginia's Computerized Criminal History System, a legacy system that is the sole repository for Virginia's arrests and court dispositions and relied upon by the entire criminal justice community (law enforcement, courts, Commonwealth attorneys, jails, etc.) for accurate offender information. CCH System records are based on fingerprint submissions from law enforcement which ensures the accuracy of the records. (Source: [Virginia State Police](#))
- **CCRE** - Virginia's Central Criminal Records Exchange, a system maintained by the State Police (as required by the Code of Virginia), which "collects and disseminates criminal history information.

This information includes demographic, charge, disposition, and corrections data for adults and juveniles arrested in Virginia on charges that are reportable to the CCRE and on persons under the supervision of the Department of Corrections." (Source: [Virginia State Police](#))

- **Continuous Improvement Process** - a continuous, data-driven feedback loop between providers, participants, government, and other partners providing actionable intelligence that can promote continuous learning, improved service delivery, and better outcomes. See Part II, Section I Figure B for more insights.
- **COVID-19** - referring to the severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) pandemic
- **Data for Impact** - an effort by SkillSource and Third Sector to better understand the impact of SkillSource's services on Opportunity Youth through cross-agency data integration.
- **Data integration** - Data integration involves data sharing that includes identifiable information (e.g., name, date of birth, SSN), so that records can be linked, or integrated at the individual-level" ([AISP](#)).
- **Data sharing** - Data sharing is when an agency shares its aggregate data for a defined time period through a legally authorized and secure process.
- **DJJ** – The Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice
- **GEAR Center Challenge** - The Government Effectiveness Advanced Research (GEAR) Center challenge was conceived by the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to encourage the public, academia, and industry to build cross-sector, multidisciplinary teams to demonstrate the potential of the GEAR Center. SkillSource and Third Sector received a GEAR Center award to conduct this work.
- **NVTI** - The Northern Virginia Team Independence Initiative, SkillSource's workforce development program targeted at Opportunity Youth using WIOA Pay for Performance
- **VCWN** - Virginia Career Works – Northern, the regional Workforce Development Board
- **Opportunity Youth** - individuals between the ages of 18 and 24 who have had previous involvement with the justice or foster care systems and are currently disconnected from school and work
- **Outcomes** - measures of longer-term program impact, as opposed to program inputs or outputs
 - **Inputs** - the resources needed for a provider to deliver a program, such as staff and overhead. Tracking information on inputs is necessary to effectively administer a program and a budget, but these data does not provide insight into the long-term impact on participants.
 - **Outputs** - the key activities resulting from participation in a program, such as program enrollment and length of service. Outputs, like inputs, are typically assessed by providers and are useful indicators to understanding operational progression (e.g., program attendance, retention, or time-commitment), but generally convey limited information on true programmatic impact.
 - **Short-Term Outcomes** - changes experienced by a participant during or upon completion of a program. These outcomes can include degrees/credential attainment or employment

placement upon completion. Short-term outcomes typically utilize the same data sources as long-term outcomes, but require less time to determine impact and are more directly linked to the services delivered.

- **Long-Term Outcomes** - changes experienced by a participant in a particular time frame after program completion. They are designed to assess holistic programmatic impact over a longer time frame and may involve new data sources to gain insight into domains outside of workforce, like involvement in the justice system.
- **Outcomes oriented /outcomes-based / performance-based contracting** - an innovative form of contracting where payment is partially or fully contingent on the achievement of outcomes (e.g. number of jobseekers that secured employment) rather than headcount or the provision of prescriptive services. Outcomes contracting generally allows providers flexibility to serve participants according to their diverse and changing needs.
- **Pay for Performance** - another term for performance-based contracting; similar to outcomes oriented contracting, except payment is based on outputs (e.g. number of jobseekers that received a service) compared to a cost-reimbursement model where payment is based on costs incurred from the provision of services.
- **Positive exit** - describing a beneficiary's discontinuation of public benefits because they have achieved a level of financial security rather than being sanctioned for other reasons
- **Post-secondary educational achievement** - attainment of a secondary school credential, certification, and/or diploma (or their recognized equivalents)
- **SkillSource** - the non-profit fiscal agent of Virginia Career Works - Northern ("VCWN"), responsible for administering public workforce services for Northern Virginia's Area #11, which includes Fairfax County, Loudoun County, and Prince William County. <https://vcwnorthern.com/>
- **Third Sector** - a non-profit that advises governments on how to use public funding and data as levers to impact how government agencies, service providers, and other partners work with and improve the lives of the people they serve. This process leads to quantifiable improvements in people's lives through the creation of new incentives that generate sustainable operational changes. www.thirdsectorcap.org
- **VADOC** - The Virginia Department of Corrections
- **VDSS** - The Virginia Department of Social Services <https://www.dss.virginia.gov/>
- **VLDS** - The Virginia Longitudinal Data System <http://vlids.virginia.gov/>
- **VSP** – The Virginia State Police
- **WIOA** - The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act directs Department of Labor funds (in 2 year cycles) towards comprehensive workforce development services for job seekers, with the objective of meeting employers' needs by increasing employment, job retention, earnings, and occupational skills among all job seeker populations. See WIOA Pay for Performance. For more, visit: <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/wioa>
- **WIOA Pay for Performance** - programs using WIOA-funded pay for performance contracting. WIOA Pay for Performance differs from other performance-based contracting efforts in four ways:

- **Focus on long-term outcomes** - WIOA performance measures are tracking participant outcomes farther out than the Workforce Investment Act did, assessing outcomes at four quarters after program exit in addition to the previously required two quarters. With WIOA Pay for Performance, local areas can structure contracts in new ways that allow for longer timelines for interventions and payments based on even longer-term outcomes.
- **10% set-aside “no year” funds** - the flexibility of no year funding means payment points can occur well beyond the normal two-year WIOA funding cycle. Local areas can now link payment to long-term success for young people, incentivizing providers to address the needs of participants holistically with comprehensive services.
- **Option to include bonus payments:** the use of bonus payments is allowable under Pay for Performance, though they must be used to expand the contractor’s capacity, not as payment for profits.
- **Requirement of a Pay for Performance contracting strategy:** WIOA Pay for Performance contracts require a specific contracting strategy, including a feasibility study, which has been loosely defined by DOL. It is important to note that, even if states did not include Pay for Performance language in their state plan, they can still engage in Pay for Performance.

For more on WIOA Pay for Performance, visit Third Sector’s website:

https://www.thirdsectorcap.org/wp_content/uploads/2016/09/TSCP_WIOA_P4P_Summary_public_updated.pdf

E. Sample Public Benefit Utilization VDSS Data Elements Available Through VLDS

DSS TANF Customer by Year	This table contains information specific to active TANF clients. The data come from their TANF case records. There is one record per person, per year, per FIPS code.	Calendar Year Number	The calendar year when the DSS Customer was active in the TANF program
DSS Customers By Year	This table contains general demographic information for VDSS customers enrolled in one or more programs. There is one record per person, per year, per FIPS code.	TANF Case indicator	Indicates whether the Customer was on an active/inactive TANF case for at least one month during reporting year.
DSS TANF Customer by Year	This table contains information specific to active TANF clients. The data come from their TANF case records. There is one record per person, per year, per FIPS code.	TANF First Month of Year	First month of the calendar year in which the Customer appears on an active TANF case

DSS TANF Customer by Year	This table contains information specific to active TANF clients. The data come from their TANF case records. There is one record per person, per year, per FIPS code.	TANF Last Month of Year	Last month of the calendar year in which the Customer appears on an active TANF case
DSS TANF Customer by Year	This table contains information specific to active TANF clients. The data come from their TANF case records. There is one record per person, per year, per FIPS code.	Number of Months enrolled in TANF	Total number of months during the calendar year in which the Customer appears on an active TANF case
DSS TANF Customer by Year	This table contains information specific to active TANF clients. The data come from their TANF case records. There is one record per person, per year, per FIPS code.	TANF Program Category	The type of TANF program (TANF, TANF_UP, TANF VIEW, TANF VIEW-UP, Diversionary assistance (DA), Full Time Employment Program(FEP) etc) assigned to TANF Customer
DSS TANF Customer by Year	This table contains information specific to active TANF clients. The data come from their TANF case records. There is one record per person, per year, per FIPS code.	TANF Participation Code	Indicates how the Customer's participation is defined on the TANF case
DSS TANF Customer by Year	This table contains information specific to active TANF clients. The data come from their TANF case records. There is one record per person, per year, per FIPS code.	TANF Exclusion Code	Indicates the Customer's status on the TANF case - participated (A00)/ or reason for exclusion
DSS TANF Customer by Year	This table contains information specific to active TANF clients. The data come from their TANF case records. There is one record per person, per year, per FIPS code.	TANF Employment Code	Indicates whether employment registration is mandatory or Exempted for valid reasons for the client.
DSS TANF Customer by Year	This table contains information specific to active TANF clients. The data come from their TANF case records. There is one record per person, per year, per FIPS code.	TANF Disability Code	The type of disability assigned to the TANF Customer
DSS TANF Customer by Year	This table contains information specific to active TANF clients. The data come from their TANF case records. There is one record per person, per year, per FIPS code.	TANF Earned Income	Indicates whether the TANF customer had earned income during the calendar year. Expected values are Y for Yes and N for No.

DSS TANF Customer by Year	This table contains information specific to active TANF clients. The data come from their TANF case records. There is one record per person, per year, per FIPS code.	TANF Unearned Income	Indicates whether the TANF customer had unearned income during the calendar year. Expected values are Y for Yes and N for No.
DSS TANF Customer by Year	This table contains information specific to active TANF clients. The data come from their TANF case records. There is one record per person, per year, per FIPS code.	TANF Case Number	The Customer's unique TANF Case number. Can be used to link others to the same case.
DSS SNAP Customers by Year	This table contains information specific to active SNAP clients. The data come from their SNAP case records. There is one record per person, per year, per FIPS code.	Calendar Year Number	The calendar year when the DSS Customer was active in the SNAP program
DSS Customers By Year	This table contains general demographic information for VDSS customers enrolled in one or more programs. There is one record per person, per year, per FIPS code.	SNAP Case Indicator	Indicates whether the Customer was on an active/inactive SNAP case for at least one month during reporting year.
DSS Customers By Year	This table contains general demographic information for VDSS customers enrolled in one or more programs. There is one record per person, per year, per FIPS code.	SNAPET Case Indicator	Indicates whether the Customer was on an active/inactive SNAPET case for at least one month during reporting year.
DSS SNAP Customers by Year	This table contains information specific to active SNAP clients. The data come from their SNAP case records. There is one record per person, per year, per FIPS code.	SNAP First Month of Year	First month of the calendar year in which the Customer appears on an active SNAP case
DSS SNAP Customers by Year	This table contains information specific to active SNAP clients. The data come from their SNAP case records. There is one record per person, per year, per FIPS code.	SNAP Last Month of Year	Last month of the calendar year in which the Customer appears on an active SNAP case
DSS SNAP Customers by Year	This table contains information specific to active SNAP clients. The data come from their SNAP case records. There is one record per person, per year, per FIPS code.	Number of Months enrolled in SNAP	Total number of months in the calendar year in which the Customer appears on an active SNAP case

DSS SNAP Customers by Year	This table contains information specific to active SNAP clients. The data come from their SNAP case records. There is one record per person, per year, per FIPS code.	SNAP Program Category	Type of SNAP program participation; Public Assistance (PA) or Non Public Assistance (NPA)
DSS SNAP Customers by Year	This table contains information specific to active SNAP clients. The data come from their SNAP case records. There is one record per person, per year, per FIPS code.	SNAP Participation Code	Indicates how the Customer's participation is defined on the SNAP case
DSS SNAP Customers by Year	This table contains information specific to active SNAP clients. The data come from their SNAP case records. There is one record per person, per year, per FIPS code.	SNAP Exclusion Code	Indicates the Customer's status on the SNAP case - participated (A00)/ or reason for exclusion
DSS SNAP Customers by Year	This table contains information specific to active SNAP clients. The data come from their SNAP case records. There is one record per person, per year, per FIPS code.	SNAP Employment Code	Indicates whether employment registration is mandatory or exempted for valid reasons
DSS SNAP Customers by Year	This table contains information specific to active SNAP clients. The data come from their SNAP case records. There is one record per person, per year, per FIPS code.	SNAP Disability Code	The type of disability assigned to the SNAP Customer
DSS SNAP Customers by Year	This table contains information specific to active SNAP clients. The data come from their SNAP case records. There is one record per person, per year, per FIPS code.	SNAP Earned Income switch	Indicates whether the SNAP Customer had earned income during the calendar year. Expected values are Y for Yes and N for No.
DSS SNAP Customers by Year	This table contains information specific to active SNAP clients. The data come from their SNAP case records. There is one record per person, per year, per FIPS code.	SNAP Unearned Income switch	Indicates whether the SNAP Customer had un-earned income during the calendar year. Expected values are Y for Yes and N for No.
DSS SNAP Customers by Year	This table contains information specific to active SNAP clients. The data come from their SNAP case records. There is one record per person, per year, per FIPS code.	SNAP Case Number	The Customer's unique SNAP Case Number. Can be used to link others to the same case.

DSS Customers By Year	This table contains general demographic information for VDSS customers enrolled in one or more programs. There is one record per person, per year, per FIPS code.	MEDICAID Case Indicator	Indicates whether the Customer was on an active/inactive MEDICAID case for at least one month during reporting year.
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Source: [VLDS Data Dictionary](#)