



Ohio Department of Job and Family Services

Local Operations Transition Plan

October 1, 2001

Governor Bob Taft
Director Tom Hayes





Executive Summary

Developments in technology, rising customer expectations and reductions in funding demand that government continuously review and improve the service provided to its customers – Ohio's citizens and taxpayers. To better meet these demands, Governor Bob Taft merged the Ohio Bureau of Employment Services and the Ohio Department of Human Services to create the Ohio Department of Job & Family Services.

It was the first bold step that allows the State of Ohio to leverage resources, reduce duplication, and streamline services to employers, unemployed workers, first-time job seekers, and those seeking new opportunities. The July 2000, merger of the agencies laid the foundation to help Ohio families achieve independence.

As requested by the Ohio General Assembly, the following report outlines ODJFS plan to transition Ohio's unemployment system from its current 60 facilities to a One Stop System and 100 percent filing for unemployment benefits by phone.

Once customers can efficiently and effectively file their claims by phone, they will save the time and hassle of traveling to a local office. Instead, all future services will be conveniently consolidated in a One-Stop near them. Consequently, ODJFS will be required to transition its local service delivery and filing system to a claims processing system. This report outlines the new delivery of services; defines the new staffing levels and service locations; projects the initial and the long-term operational costs of administering unemployment in Ohio; and describes the six pilot transition programs.

The transition plan outlined in this report will utilize 1,017 full-time staff in 22 locations to provide unemployment compensation, job matching, and veterans services in Ohio. By consolidating resources, streamlining processes and partnering with Ohio's 97 local One-Stops, the Department will maintain an appropriate staffing level, reduce facility costs, and improve service to customers. It is estimated that this transition will save Ohio businesses and taxpayers more than \$17 million a year in personnel and facility costs. The savings are calculated by comparing the fiscal year 1999 (FY99) pre-merger costs to the projected costs of the new system in fiscal year 2004 (FY04). The \$17 million represents the additional amount that would have been expended by OBES in FY04 had no action been taken to merge the agency and streamline its operations.

The plan also outlines the Department's six pilot transition sites. In August, the Department sent a letter to each of the 88 counties asking if they were interested in participating as a pilot county for the transition of employment services from local ODJFS Offices to One-Stops. Each county was asked to provide a letter to the Department by September 4, 2001, expressing interest in participating. The Department received 29 letters of interest, encompassing 32 counties. The pilots will enable ODJFS to gauge the potential difficulties of transitioning to 100 percent filing by phone and One-Stops. As part of the transition, employment and veterans services personnel will be located in the One-Stops to support the efforts of the local system.

Most importantly, this transition plan frees up the Department's most valuable resource – its staff. By automating routine tasks and streamlining claims processing, Department staff will be available to assist the customer in a more personal and direct way. The consolidation of ODJFS Local Offices also enables the Department to leverage even more resources by merging other facilities, such as training centers and county support offices into more cost-effective sites.

CURRENT SYSTEM

ODJFS currently provides unemployment compensation, employment services, veterans services, and WIA services, which are delivered through the 60 local facilities and 64 One-Stop systems located around the state.

Unemployment Compensation (UC) provides partial compensation for wage loss to unemployed individuals who lost their job through no fault of their own. In Ohio, there are approximately 233,000 employers and 4.7 million employees covered by UC. The average eligible worker can receive up to 26 weeks of UC benefits. Customers may file for unemployment benefits by either calling 877-OHIOJOBS, visiting one of the local offices, or being placed on a mass layoff list that is filed with the Department. This year, about two-thirds of customers filed by phone or mass layoff.

Employment Services (also known as Wagner-Peyser Services) are available to all Ohioans. The goal is to bring job seekers and employers together. There are no eligibility criteria for employment services; any person interested in registering is welcome, and any business interested in finding qualified workers may do so. Federal and Ohio law mandates priority be given to veterans. Ohio mandates that customers who receive UC benefits, but do not have a “return to work” date, must register for employment services. ODJFS state employees provide these services through the local offices, call centers, and a limited number of One-Stops.

Veterans Services provide intensive job placement services and training assistance specifically for veterans. The Department also provides veterans numerous skill assessments, vocational guidance sessions, and referrals to support services. At present, veterans services are provided through local offices, various One-Stops, and several out-stationed sites such as County Veteran Service Organizations, Veterans Hospitals, and military bases.

One-Stops: Under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), funding is allocated to local workforce policy boards for the establishment of One-Stops and the delivery of training services. These systems are mandated to serve communities by functioning as the primary public resource for job and career counseling, training, job searching, employment services, and a range of ancillary services that include childcare and transportation. Their goal is to assist individuals in becoming employed and self-sufficient. One-Stops are different from ODJFS Local Offices in several distinctive ways. First, One-Stops are designed and operated locally. Second, they are mandated by WIA legislation to include a number of partners providing a more comprehensive array of services. Finally, WIA legislation mandates the delivery of such services, as employment services, UC and Veterans Services through WIA One-Stops.

REDESIGNED SYSTEM

The system is being redesigned for the following reasons: to provide a better and more efficient system of service, to reduce operating costs, and to comply with the 1998 WIA requirements.

The proposed staffing and site plan will utilize 1,017 full-time staff in 22 locations and provide a higher level of customer service. By consolidating resources, streamlining unemployment benefit processing, and partnering with One-Stops, ODJFS can maintain similar staffing levels, reduce facility costs, and improve services to customers. Additionally, for the first time, the customer will be able to dial a single toll-free number and get answers to general questions; file for unemployment, request personalized information about their claim from a customer service representative or an automated system, and instantly file for continued benefits through an automated system.

	PRE-MERGER (FY99)	CURRENT (FY02)	FUTURE (FY04)
One-Stops	Not Used	Partially Used	Fully Functional
# of Unique Facilities	60	60	22
# of Staff Required	1,235	1,054	1,017

It is estimated that the Department will see a yearly savings of more than \$17million (when the FY99 converted cost is compared to the FY04 estimation). More appropriately, the savings should be categorized as a yearly “cost avoidance.” A significant portion of the savings has already been realized as a result of the actions taken over the last two years to reduce the funded positions from 1,235 to 1,054. The remaining savings will result from the additional positions and reduced facility costs.

	CONVERTED COST	FY04 ESTIMATE	COSTS AVOIDED
PRE-MERGER (FY99)	\$87,314,881	\$69,689,834	(\$17,625,047)
CURRENT (FY02)	\$82,153,131	\$69,689,834	(\$12,463,297)

Personnel – costs were converted from FY99/FY02 to FY 04 by estimating 3.5 percent a year for salary increases and 2.41 percent for step and longevity increases. **Facilities** - costs inflated by 2.5 percent each year (MIS Costs included in facilities estimates)

PROCESSING STAFF SPACE REQUIREMENTS

What is the appropriate “core staffing level?” The staffing analysis was begun by determining the estimated yearly claims load. Two methods were examined. The first was to determine the average amount of initial and continued claims for a 10-year period. The second was to determine the median claims level for a 10-year period.

Year	Initial Claims	Continued Claims	Non-Monetary Determinations
1990	870,373	5,132,563	261,112
1991	1,032,189	6,867,871	309,657
1992	893,548	6,629,596	268,064
1993	615,436	5,008,650	184,631
1994	575,297	4,540,407	172,589
1995	629,528	4,199,693	188,858
1996	665,826	4,390,880	199,748
1997	583,693	3,937,423	175,108
1998	590,632	3,747,196	177,190
1999	502,168	3,539,845	150,650

Initial Claims - Accepting new and additional claims, issuing monetary determinations **Continued Claims** - Accepting and paying weekly claims for benefits --included are eligibility reviews, work search verifications, referrals to profiling, etc. **Non-Monetary Determinations** - Adjudication and issuing determinations on eligibility to receive benefit payments --the claims volume of Non-Monetary Determinations is based on initial claims times 30 percent

To balance the needs of maintaining a cost-effective system and being responsive to the workload demands, the median workload numbers were used to determine the appropriate full-time staffing level for claims processing. The median number has been met or exceeded 5 years of the 10-year sample and is a more practical way to establish the core workload. By applying the median number, the Department has the flexibility of using part-time employees during peak workload periods. However, facility requirements will be based on the 10-year average. (By using the 10-year average for facility requirements, the Department can guarantee there is workspace available for the part-time employees when and if they are needed.)

The staffing is calculated by multiplying each claims average by its corresponding minutes per unit (MPU) time charge. The MPU formula is the average time required to process a single item. The MPU total is divided by 60 to determine the number of hours needed to complete one year's work. Finally, the total hours are divided by 1,742 (the Department of Labor's formulary work year for Ohio). To account for the impact of automation changes coming in 2002, a 30 percent automation factor is applied to the continued claims staffing total.

	Initial	Continued	Non-Monetary
Median Claims a Year	615,436	4,390,880	184,631
Minutes Per Unit (MPU)	49	4	79
Total Minutes	30,156,364	17,563,520	14,585,849
Total Hours	502,606	292,725	243,097
Staff Forecasted	289	168	140
30% Automation Factor	0	(50)	0
TOTAL CLAIMS STAFF	289	118	140

The staffing level of 547 represents the total number of full-time staff required to process all unemployment benefits in an average year. This accounts for initial customer intake (call centers), processing, adjudication, continuation of payments, responses to customer inquiries, etc. This number does not account for employment services, veterans service, management, or clerical support.

The same methodology outlined above was used to determine the facility needs. To determine the facilities requirements, the 10-year claims average (minus the high and low years to limit the impact of any significant spikes or drops) was used. The staffing level of 598 (plus 89 management and clerical positions) represents the total amount of space needed in an average year to support the full-time staff. Given the yearly fluctuations in claims, the only responsible strategy is to establish a core workload upon which to base the permanent staffing level -- regardless of the health of the economy. This allows the Department to react to quickly increasing workloads by having available workspace.

	Initial	Continued	Non-Monetary
Average Claims a Year	678,042	4,698,301	203,413
MPU	49	4	79
Total Minutes	33,224,058	18,793,204	16,069,627
Total Hours	553,734	313,220	267,827
Staff Forecasted	318	180	154
30% Automation Factor	0	(54)	0
TOTAL CLAIMS STAFF	318	126	154

EMPLOYMENT SERVICES STAFF REQUIREMENTS

Staffing projections for the employment services personnel (Wagner-Peyser services) are difficult to achieve because there are no federal formulas or standards for workload. Additionally, staffing patterns vary widely from state to state. To estimate the staffing needs for the employment services, historical staffing data from the last five program years was used.

The five-year average, though, does not take into consideration the efficiencies that will be recognized as a result of being co-located in the One-Stops. Additionally, the five-year average does not take into consideration the implementation of a new, self-service job matching system. ODJFS looked back at the five-year average and conservatively estimated these gains would balance out the two high years (1998 and 1999) and based the staffing on the remaining three years.

Year	Full Time Employees (FTEs)
1996	223
1997	231
1998	252
1999	260
2000	229
Average Staff 96 to 00	239
Average Staff 96, 97, 00	228

VETERANS SERVICE STAFF REQUIREMENTS

Ohio receives a Veterans Grant from the United States Department of Labor to meet the unique employment and training needs of Ohio's military veterans. These individuals provide employment assistance in addition to what is available through Wagner-Peyser programs and services. At present, Veteran Services are provided in 56 ODJFS Local Offices, various One-Stops, and several out stationed sites such as County Veteran Service Organizations and military bases. The full utilization of the Veterans Grant allows the Department to employ 133 veterans representatives. The breakdown is as follows: 67 Local Veteran Employment Representatives (LVERs) and 66 Disabled Veterans Outreach Program Specialists (DVOPs). The LVERs provide veterans preference services in One-Stops while the DVOPs provide direct enhanced services to veterans at local Veterans Administration offices, in medical facilities, and other appropriate locations. (By Federal requirement, 25 percent of the DVOPs must be out stationed in local Veterans Administration offices, Veterans medical facilities and other appropriate locations.)

TOTAL STAFFING

The total staffing requirements add up to 1,017. This total is 37 less than the current staffing and 218 less than the FY99 pre-merger total.

Processing Staff	Wagner-Peyser Staff	Veterans Staff	Central Office Staff	Management & Clerical Staff	TOTAL PROPOSED
547	228	133	20	89	1,017

PROPOSED FY04 STAFFING	FY02 Staffing	FY99 Staffing
1,017	1,054	1,235
As Compared To ...	(37)	(218)

While this staffing level of 1,017 is the optimal number in an average year, it does not account for the current high claims period. The Department understands that the current high claims period has an impact on the staffing and service levels. Thus, ODJFS will retain its current fully staffed level of 1,054 until the claim load begins to drop back down. As the transition to the new system is made, the claims level will be analyzed and the natural attrition rate will be used to stabilize at the new staffing level of 1,017.

FUNCTION ANALYSIS

In order to ensure a smooth transition of services, ODJFS must address three broad issues – 1) the efficient filing of unemployment services by telephone, 2) the efficient processing of each claim, and 3) the face-to-face delivery of employment and veterans services in local communities.

Under the newly recommended system, the following functional centers will be required: call centers, processing centers and a mass layoff center. Each center will have a distinct and unique function. Depending on the day of the week and the time of the year, the claims and staffing levels in each center (excluding employment and veterans services) will shift cyclically. Based on historic customer traffic patterns, roughly two-thirds of the claims are filed on Monday and Tuesday. Adding to this imbalance, almost 40 percent of the yearly claims are filed in the months of July, December, January, and February. The staffing levels established in this plan account for these cyclical shifts.

Call Centers

The role of the call centers is to take 100 percent of the unemployment applications by phone. In order to ensure customers receive industry-leading levels of service, key performance measures were established. The service levels established are 80 percent of the calls will be answered in 30 seconds and the average time to file an application by phone will be seven minutes.

Based on historical data, 80 percent of the customers will file their claim through the call centers and 20 percent will file by mass layoff. Utilizing industry-specific call center staffing software, it was possible to exactly determine the staffing required to meet the service level of 80 percent of the calls answered within 30 seconds.

Given this customer traffic pattern, it will take a much higher number of call center representatives to handle the calls on Monday as compared to Friday. Clearly, it does not make sense to staff to the peak level on Monday and leave the rest of the week considerably overstaffed. During peak workload days of Monday and Tuesday, the Department will utilize the appropriate staffing to handle the call volume. Additionally, on Mondays, the service level will be adjusted to 80% of the calls handled within 180 seconds (3 minutes). During the lower traffic days, the call center staff will assist in the processing of the claims load. During the same lower traffic days, full-time call center staff not answering incoming calls or processing claims will function as personal employment counselors (PECs). The PECs will call customers to ensure that they are actively looking for work and have all the resources needed to conduct their job search.

To achieve the remaining increase in efficiency the Department will implement a state-of-the-art telecommunications system. The process of acquiring a new system began last August with a Request for Proposal for an Automatic Call Distribution (ACD) and Integrated Voice Response (IVR) system. The new system will merge all call center locations into one virtual call center and provide real-time information to quickly monitor performance. This new system will be capable of handling the increased call volume the Department expects to receive after the transition. The new phone system is scheduled for operation in February of 2002.

In addition, in an effort to reduce customer wait time, all work procedures and process management systems are being studied by Quality Services through Partnership (QStP) teams. Starting last summer, employees began reviewing all aspects of unemployment benefits processing. Their recommendations have already streamlined many procedures.

The plan calls for seven call centers located around the state. Three of the seven centers will be co-located with a processing center and one will be co-located with the mass layoff center.

Processing Centers

The role of the processing centers will be to fully process the claim after it is filed. This will include all activity in the claim from data collection to claim determination and payment. The majority of all of the unemployment work will be done in the processing centers. The plan calls for 18 processing centers around the state. Three of the 18 centers will be co-located with a call center.

Mass Layoff Center

Claims spikes and unbalanced filing levels affect both the call centers and the processing centers. Each processing center will be staffed based on an average claims load. When the levels spike during the peak months, there is the potential for them to become backlogged and increase processing times. In order to address these spikes, a mass layoff center is being created. The processing of the peak month mass lay-offs, plant closings and unexpected claim spikes will be consolidated into one mass layoff center located in Columbus. It will be located next to the new state-of-the-art post office being constructed at Port Columbus Airport.

The plan calls for one mass layoff center co-located with a call center.

FACILITIES SELECTION

By moving from 60 to 22 facilities, the Department will experience considerable gains in productivity and reduced facility costs. Site selections were based on factors such as cost of operation, quality of facilities, geographic location, and capacity. In addition, since the facilities will primarily be accessed by department employees, the selection of the proposed sites has been based on both maintaining current staff.

Undoubtedly, ODJFS employees are the Department's most important resource. They have spent years becoming proficient in their profession and have dedicated their careers to serving others. Their experience and knowledge are invaluable to the customer, as well as to the future of the Department.

In order to develop a facilities plan around the needs of employees, a web-based application was created that plotted each employee's home address, existing facilities, and locations of the One-Stops. From this data, differing commuting distances were analyzed. By using a 30-mile radius, it was possible to place 93 percent of the current workforce in 22 facilities. The following chart outlines the estimated costs and projected savings for the 22 sites.

City	Type	Staff	Square Feet	Site Total	1 Time
Akron *	CC, PC	50	12,500	\$67,287	\$806,056
Bowling Green	PC	16	4,000	\$56,000	\$242,400
Canton **	PC	40	10,000	\$140,000	\$606,000
Chillicothe	PC	18	4,500	\$63,000	\$272,700
Cincinnati *	CC, PC	79	19,750	\$67,667	\$1,210,485
Cleveland	PC	44	11,000	\$154,000	\$666,600
Columbus	MC, CC	96	24,000	\$264,000	\$1,454,400
Dayton	CC	26	6,500	\$91,000	\$393,900
Defiance	PC	18	4,500	\$63,000	\$272,700
Elyria **	CC	27	6,750	\$94,500	\$409,050
Ironton	PC	15	3,750	\$52,500	\$227,250
Jackson	PC	14	3,500	\$49,000	\$212,100
Lima *	CC	23	5,750	\$14,547	\$363,600
Mansfield *	PC	19	8,027	\$42,160	\$310,878
Marietta	PC	9	2,250	\$31,500	\$136,350
Painesville **	PC	19	4,750	\$66,500	\$287,850
Sidney **	PC	20	5,000	\$70,000	\$303,000
St. Clairsville **	PC	15	3,750	\$52,500	\$227,250
Tiffin**	PC	21	5,250	\$73,500	\$318,150
Toledo	CC, PC	48	12,000	\$168,000	\$727,200
Youngstown *	PC	44	11,000	\$45,588	\$741,744
Zanesville *	PC	26	6,500	\$41,120	\$449,955
	Sub Total	687	175,027	\$1,767,369	\$10,639,618
Central Office		20	5,000	\$70,000	\$303,000
Wagner-Peyser		228	57,000	\$798,000	\$3,454,200
Veterans		133	33,250	\$465,500	\$2,014,950
	Sub Total	381	95,250	\$1,333,500	\$5,772,150
	Grand Total	1,068	270,277	\$3,100,869	\$16,411,768

* denotes retained state-owned site, ** denotes retained leased site -- CC = Call Center, PC = Processing Center, MC = Mass Layoff Center **Assumptions** -- All costs include 5 percent over current rates. One-time costs @ \$15,150 per person include: \$4,900 furniture, \$1,200 moving expense, \$6,250 renovations (250 sq. ft. per person @ \$25), \$2,800 computer infrastructure, and \$3.6 million of the total represents capital improvements for 6 state-owned sites. IVR and related infrastructure costs are not included. Actual costs for out stationed Wagner-Peyser and Veterans staff are estimated at this time.

It is very difficult and expensive to attempt to re-engineer and retrofit all of the current ODJFS sites to support the focus of the new Department. The existing physical facilities were never built or intended to support today's basic housing standards and will require significant funds to bring them into compliance. The plan calls for keeping six (6) of the nineteen (19) state-owned facilities and six (6) of the forty-one (41) leased sites. The remaining 10 sites will be new leased property.

Consolidation and centralization by site allows more efficient space management and cost savings by:

- Reducing office space by eliminating redundant common areas such as reception areas, break-rooms, training rooms, meetings rooms, and conference space.
- Sharing resources in terms of staff, office equipment, and data and telecommunication systems.
- Reducing the number of service providers needed for janitorial, security, cleaning, repairs, utilities, and other maintenance services. The proposal reduces the site costs by almost \$3.7 million per year.
- Maintaining the 60 sites and renovating them to current standards would cost \$25.2 million. The proposal has an infrastructure cost of \$16.4 million, a cost avoidance of approximately \$8.8 million.
- Realizing an overall cost reduction of 42 percent in site costs, utilizing economies of scale.
- Where possible, regional offices and training centers will be consolidated with either a call center or a processing center to fully utilize the available space.

With the goal of providing a better level of service to the customer, another consideration was the distance a customer might be required to travel to dispute a claim. Statistics show that 28 percent of the claims are disputed a year. Approximately, 6,000-7,000 hearings a year are conducted in-person, the remaining disputes are conducted by phone. If a customer requests an in-person hearing, rather than a phone hearing, the Unemployment Compensation Review Commission has access to any of the 22 facilities and some of the One-Stops, whichever is most convenient.

FISCAL ANALYSIS

FY99 occurred before the merger. Therefore, in order to determine dollar-for-dollar costs, future value calculations were conducted year-by-year. This allowed comparison of the year-to-year costs on an equal basis.

ODJFS also projects approximately \$16 million in “one-time” costs for the 22 facilities. The one-time costs include facility-related expenses like furniture, moving, renovations, computer infrastructure, etc. It is important to note that had the merger/transition not occurred, ODJFS would have had to spend \$25,214,061 to upgrade the 60 current facilities. This is a cost avoidance of almost \$9 million.

In order to complete the necessary capital improvements required, the Department will be proposing a \$3.6 million line item in the upcoming Capital Budget due on October 15, 2001. The \$3.6 million will be used to upgrade the facilities and bring them up to code and in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. This cost is included in the one-time calculation.

This plan does not include the final cost for the new phone system. At the time this report was written the bids from prospective vendors were being evaluated. The early cost estimate is \$3.5 to \$4.5 million.

Year	PRE-MERGER (FY99)	CURRENT (FY02)	FUTURE (FY04)
FY99			
Personnel	\$61,981,886		
Facilities Ongoing	\$4,790,070		
Total Operating Costs	\$66,771,956		
FY 02 (Converted to 02 Dollars)			
Personnel	\$73,244,797	\$67,519,537	
Facilities Ongoing	\$5,158,381	\$6,317,914	
Total Operating Costs	\$78,403,178	\$73,837,451	
FY 04 (Converted to 04 Dollars)			
Personnel	\$81,895,356	\$75,535,217	\$66,588,965
Facilities Ongoing	\$5,419,525	\$6,617,914	\$3,100,869
Total Operating Costs	\$87,314,881	\$82,153,131	\$69,689,834
One-Time Infrastructure Costs	N/A	\$25,214,061	\$16,411,768

Personnel – costs were converted from FY99/FY02 to FY 04 by estimating 3.5 percent a year for salary increases and 2.41 percent for step and longevity increases. **Facilities** - costs inflated by 2.5 percent each year (MIS Costs included in facilities estimates)

ONE-STOPS

A vital component of the ODJFS plan to pilot the transition of the local office is the One-Stop system. The federal Department of Labor states that One-Stops are “the heart of the workforce investment system created under the federal Workforce Investment Act. These centers represent a partnership involving federal, state, and local public and private-sector providers.”

WIA requires a One-Stop in every WIA area of the state, providing customers with the information and services to start a career, plan a new one, or even prepare for retirement. The One-Stop is the place for job and career counseling, training, job searching, and a range of support services that include childcare, transportation, and other benefits. For employers, a One-Stop is the place to find job seekers for their growing workforce. WIA combined 14 programs in a streamlined, employment and training system that connects workers with jobs, businesses with workers, trainees with trainers, and disadvantaged citizens with the help they need to become self-sufficient. WIA will improve services through:

- Increased coordination of plans, programs, and activities;
- Locally driven, One-Stops offer choices to participants;
- Universal access of core services such as assessment, counseling, and job search assistance;
- Enhanced accountability for results;
- Business focused activities that promote economic development; and
- Increased flexibility that meets customer needs.

ODJFS Account Managers have visited with the county Job and Family Services Directors to determine the needs of the One-Stop in each area. Additionally, a “One-Stop Central” office and technical assistance team have been created to provide personal assistance to local WIA boards and One-Stop Operators. One-Stop Central provides a single point of contact for answers and assistance regarding the issues they are facing. The Department’s One-Stop Central will also continue to compile data from surveys, compliance monitoring reports, and on-site visits.

ONE-STOP TRANSITION PILOTS

In August, the Department sent a letter to each of the 88 counties asking if they were interested in participating as a pilot county for the transition of employment services from local ODJFS Offices to One-Stops. Each county was asked to provide a letter to this Department by September 4, 2001, expressing their interest in participating. The Department received 29 letters of interest, encompassing a total of 32 counties. The pilots will enable ODJFS to gauge the potential difficulties associated with transitioning. As part of the transition, employment and veterans services personnel will be located in the One-Stops to support the efforts of the local system.

Pilot Area One (Williams, Defiance, and Paulding Counties) These counties have agreed to work together as a single workforce development area to address the needs of the constituents in three counties. This area will also help ODJFS examine issues and concerns of a rural section of the state. Employees from the Bryan office will be transitioned to the Defiance office. Two (2) employment services representatives and three (3) veterans representatives will be located in the One-Stop.

Pilot Area Two (Cuyahoga County) The Department felt that it was important to transition a Conventional Workforce Development area, as well as Ohio Option areas. Cuyahoga County represented the opportunity to address conventional WIA issues and major metropolitan issues. Eighteen (18) employment services representatives and four (4) veterans representatives will be located in the One-Stop.

Pilot Area Three (Portage County) The staffing level in the Ravenna office (located in Portage County) will be at a critical low by the end of the year. Since the Ravenna facility is not one of the 22 final sites, it was beneficial for the Department to partner with Portage County in this transition. Additionally, the transition of this site will allow ODJFS the opportunity to gain valuable insight on the issues that will be related with the sale and transfer of a state-owned facility. Three (3) employment services representatives and one (1) veterans representative will be located in the One-Stop.

Pilot Area Four (Clark County) This partnership will allow the Department the opportunity to transition one of the current sites that will not be one of the final 22 sites. Three (3) employment services representatives and two (2) veterans representatives will be located in the One-Stop.

Pilot Area Five (Franklin County) Franklin County is also working in conjunction with the City of Columbus to develop a One-Stop System that contains numerous sites throughout the county. In addition, this partnership will allow the Department the opportunity to transition one of the current sites that will not be one of the final 22 sites. Twenty one (21) employment services representatives and six (6) veterans representatives will be located in the One-Stop.

Pilot Area Six (Lawrence County) When workers had jobs in multiple states, they may establish a Combined Wage Credit (CWC) claim in any state. The federal Interstate Benefits regulations instruct states to accept CWC claims only when claimants are “physically present” in that state. Ohio has a legislative Rule (4141-27-01) that reinforces this in-person requirement. The Ironton office in Lawrence County receives the majority of the out of state “physically present” filings. The Lawrence County transition will allow ODJFS the opportunity to understand and address the issues associated with these claims. One (1) employment services representative and one (1) veterans representative will be located in the One-Stop.

ONE-STOP DEVELOPMENT

One-Stops are the foundation of the local workforce system. Today, 64 Workforce Areas operate 97 individual One-Stop centers. These centers are unique to each community and provide the necessary means of succeeding in both rural and urban counties. The One-Stops employ trained staff who provide advice, skill assessments and referrals to workforce development programs and services. The goal of the centers is to assist individuals in becoming employed and self-sufficient. The One-Stops also provide business services, such as customized training for employers, initial screening of job applicants, accurate labor market information, and lists of training providers.

One-Stops are different than ODJFS Local Offices in several distinct ways. They are designed and operated locally, while ODJFS Offices are administered by the state. One-Stops are mandated by WIA legislation to include a number of partners providing a more comprehensive array of services, and WIA legislation mandates the delivery of Wagner-Peyser services from One-Stops.

The majority of membership on local policy boards is composed of representatives of employers. The membership also includes elected officials, as well as representatives from education and labor. Workforce policy boards are given the charge of establishing a system that accommodates the needs of mandated One-Stop partners.

As part of the WIA a statewide structure of local One-Stop service delivery systems has been built in Ohio. The next step in the process is to ensure that the system is fully implemented. ODJFS has established a goal of having all One-Stops fully functional by the end of 2002. In order to reach that goal the following steps are, or have been taken:

- **Development Program** – Governor Taft has allocated \$5 million to be made available to One-Stop areas for continued development of their systems. These funds will be allocated to individual areas based on their level of operational readiness and can be used to meet needs as identified locally.
- **Support Unit** - A “One-Stop Central” unit has been created within the Office of Workforce Development at the state level. The purpose is to provide one point of contact for answers and assistance regarding One-Stop issues. This unit will also coordinate the activities of the technical assistance staff relating to One-Stop development.
- **Technical Assistance** – A team of 11 specially trained WIA/One-Stop Technical Assistance staff have been assigned to begin providing assistance to local WIA boards and One-Stop operators. The “problem solvers” will be available to address funding, administrative and service issues as well as provide guidance in the full implementation of a One-Stop System.
- **Best Practices Resource Guide** – The guide will contain general information about best practices in various aspects of One-Stop operation and will include contact information for One-Stops which have exemplary programs or expertise in specific areas. This information will also be placed on the ODJFS WIA/One-Stop web site.
- **Marketing Package** - As local WIA Area One-Stop systems fully develop and meet readiness criteria, the Governor’s Workforce Policy Board has committed to delivering a comprehensive localized marketing package to promote the use of the One-Stops.
- **One-Stop Workshops** – ODJFS, in partnership with the Department of Labor, will host One-Stop technical assistance workshops. Exemplary One-Stop systems from Ohio, as well as other states will be brought in to share their experiences and expertise through workshops and roundtables.

Timeline

Task	Start Date	Finish Date
Phone System RFP Released	8/15/01	8/15/01
Phone System RFP Closed	9/20/01	9/20/01
Announce Pilot Counties	9/28/01	9/28/01
Transition Report to General Assembly	10/1/01	10/1/01
Presentation to House Finance Committee	10/2/01	10/2/01
Phone System Vendor Selected	10/22/01	10/22/01
New Phone System Operational	2/1/02	2/1/02
Pilot Transition Begins	3/1/02	3/1/02
Pilot and Document	3/1/02	6/30/02
Analyze Pilot Data	7/1/02	9/30/02
Finalize Full Rollout of Transition	10/1/02	12/30/02
Transition Remaining Sites	1/1/03	1/1/04

