

Senior Community Services Employment Program (SCSEP) Durational Limit Policy Discussion Paper

1 Background

2 The Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) is a community service and work-based
3 job training program for older Americans administered by the United States Department of Labor
4 (DOL). SCSEP participants gain work experience in a variety of community service activities at non-
5 profit and public facilities. Participants work an average of 20 hours per week and are paid the highest of
6 federal, state, or local minimum wage. This training serves as a bridge to unsubsidized employment
7 opportunities for participants.

8 Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) is one of the current Department of Labor Senior Community
9 Services Employment Services (SCSEP) grantees. TWC subgrants the operations of this program to the
10 highest scoring applicant during a competitive process. In December 2020, TWC awarded to a new
11 subgrantee to provide these services in 84 counties in Texas (DOL selects other national grantees in
12 Texas for the remaining counties through a competitive process).

13 As allowed under a waiver approved by DOL on October 17, 2011, TWC implemented a Durational
14 Limit (DL) policy effective February 6, 2012, that extends an individual's participation in SCSEP past
15 48-month if certain eligibility is met. A Durational Limit Waiver allows for a temporary extension of 12
16 months per waiver if the participant meets at least one of the following statutory waiver factors:

- 17 • Is 75 years of age or older;
- 18 • Meets Social Security age requirements but does not receive Social Security benefits; or
- 19 • Lives in an area of persistent unemployment and has severely limited employment prospects.

20 While the waiver allows participants to continue in paid work experience for an extended period and this
21 in some cases may benefit the individual, employment is the primary goal, and other services are
22 available to assist participants in accessing more permanent employment.

23 Issue

24 TWC has operated under a Durational Limit policy since February 6, 2012. A durational limit policy is
25 not required by the Department of Labor.

26 TWC target to enroll is 458 participants and currently has 374 enrolled. There have been 16 durational
27 limit extensions granted so far in Program Year 2021. As of January 2022, there are approximately 57
28 participants that may be eligible for a durational limit extension. Although the full durational limit
29 placed on the program is 48 months, the program design is that participants enrolled will average 27
30 months in the program. Durational waivers allowing individual to remain in the program past the 48
31 month limit, impact the program design by increasing the average time that participants are in the
32 program. The current grantee has a plan in place to ensure that all participants enrolled do receive
33 assistance in transitioning to unsubsidized employment.

34 Proposed Change

- 1 The proposed change is to eliminate the Durational Limit policy requiring all participants to obtain
- 2 training, support services and unsubsidized training with the maximum 48 month individual
- 3 participation duration.
- 4 This will encourage proactive Individual Employment Plan (IEP) reviews and promote diligence in
- 5 training, job searches and job placement. Participants who are unable to obtain employment within 48
- 6 months will be referred to local area service providers for assistance after program exit.
- 7 If approved, adequate notice and other services will be provided to allow for a streamlined transition.
- 8 **Decision Point**
- 9 Staff recommends eliminating the SCSEP Durational Limit policy.