

**Combined State Plan for Nebraska's Workforce System
Program Years 2024 – 2027
(July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2028)
2026 Modification**

Public Comments and Plan Partner Responses

The Nebraska Departments of Education, Health and Human Services, and Labor and the Nebraska Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired released a draft of the Combined State Plan for public comment, as required under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. The Plan was published on January 30, 2026 and accessible at <https://dol.nebraska.gov/ReemploymentServices/WIOA/WIOAPartners/Plans>. Public comment on the draft was requested for the 30-day period beginning January 30, 2026, and ending March 2, 2026. Comments on the draft plan were accepted by email submitted to ndol.wioa_policy@nebraska.gov or in writing to the attention of the State WIOA Team, Office of Reemployment Services, Nebraska Department of Labor, 550 South 16th Street, Lincoln, NE 68508. Comments were also accepted during a public hearing held on February 12, 2026, at 10am CST at the Nebraska VR Program offices located at 500 South 84th Street in Lincoln. This hearing was broadcast simultaneously at the following Nebraska VR Program locations across the state through interactive video conferencing:

- Kearney – 315 West 60th Street, Suite 400
- Omaha – 1313 Farnam on the Mall
- Scottsbluff – 505A Broadway, Suite 500

In addition, The Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Economic Assistance released a draft of the 2026 Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Nebraska State Plan Modification for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) for public comment from March 12, 2026, through April 25, 2026. Comments on the draft plan were accepted by email submitted to DHHS.TANFCommunityPrograms@nebraska.gov or in writing at PO Box 98947; 301 Centennial Mall South; Lincoln, NE 68509. Comments were also accepted during a public hearing held on April 27, 2026, at 10am CST at the Nebraska State Office Building at 301 Centennial Mall South in Lincoln.

Comments received are listed in Table 1, along with plan partner responses.

Table 1. Public comments and plan partner responses

Commenter and topic	Comment	Response to comment
<i>Commenter:</i> Erin Porterfield, Executive Director of Heartland Workforce Solutions, Omaha, NE <i>Topic:</i> General State Plan	Commenter stated they wanted to hear some of the highlights that would be changes that they should attend to through the American job center or workforce development boards.	Plan partners will provide a brief highlights document to local area administrators and will host a meeting with the local areas to discuss these updates.
<i>Commenter:</i> Erin Porterfield, Executive Director of Heartland Workforce Solutions, Omaha, NE	Commenter stated they are pleased to see in the unemployment insurance area the sharper time	Plan partners thank the commenter for their feedback.

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<i>Topic: Unemployment Insurance</i>	frames for response – that will be really helpful as they respond to people in the Omaha area.	
<i>Commenter: Amber Pelan, Program Director with Saunders County Youth Services, Wahoo, NE</i> <i>Topic: SNAP and TANF Work Requirements</i>	I am writing to express concern regarding the work requirements associated with the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). While encouraging employment and self-sufficiency is an important goal, the current structure of these programs does not align with the economic realities facing many families. Under current Nebraska guidelines, the monthly income limit for a family of four to qualify for benefits is \$3,483. While this may appear reasonable on paper, it becomes unrealistic when compared to basic living expenses. For example, a modest budget for a family of four might include: • Rent: approximately \$1,500/month • Child care: often \$800–\$1,200/month (or more depending on age and provider) • Utilities: approximately \$250–\$350/month • Groceries and basic household needs: \$700–\$900/month Even using conservative estimates, these expenses can easily exceed \$3,200–\$3,900 per month before accounting for transportation, health care, clothing, school expenses, or emergencies. It is not realistic. This means that families who earn just enough to approach the income limit are often still unable to meet their basic needs. At the same time, if their earnings increase slightly, they risk losing SNAP or TANF benefits entirely. This creates a “benefits cliff,” where working more hours or accepting higher pay can actually leave families worse off financially.	Plan partners thank the commenter for their feedback and appreciate the commenter’s recognition of the importance of employment and self-sufficiency, while also highlighting the financial realities many households experience as they work toward economic stability. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) system recognizes that barriers such as childcare costs, housing expenses, transportation, and the “benefits cliff” can significantly impact a participant’s ability to obtain and retain employment. WIOA partners are committed to supporting individuals and families through coordinated workforce, education, and supportive service strategies designed to improve long-term economic mobility rather than short-term employment outcomes alone. Through partnerships among workforce agencies, human services, adult education, vocational rehabilitation, community organizations, and employers, the workforce system seeks to: • Connect individuals to career pathways that lead to higher-wage, in-demand occupations; • Provide access to training, upskilling, and credential attainment opportunities; • Coordinate supportive services, including transportation assistance, child care referrals, and case management where available; • Help participants navigate transitions as earnings increase and public benefits change; and • Promote employment opportunities that support long-term self-sufficiency and family stability.

Commenter and topic	Comment	Response to comment
	Work requirements assume that employment alone will eliminate the need for assistance. However, many individuals in this population are working in lower-wage jobs where full-time employment still does not cover the basic cost of living, particularly when child care is required. I respectfully urge policymakers to consider aligning work requirements with realistic income thresholds and the actual cost of living for families. Without adjustments, these policies may unintentionally place additional strain on families who are actively working but still cannot afford housing, food, and child care. Thank you for your time and consideration.	The commenter's input regarding the interaction between public assistance eligibility thresholds and actual living costs are valuable and will be shared with appropriate program and policy stakeholders as part of the public input process.