

(b) It is the State's goal to assist its citizens in obtaining gainful employment and in reducing dependence on public assistance and unemployment insurance programs by:

(1) preparing unskilled youth and adults who are economically disadvantaged for entry into the work force;

(2) retraining those who have lost jobs or who must upgrade or replace their work skills or both; and

(3) providing training and related services, **INCLUDING SUPPORTIVE SERVICES FOR LOW-INCOME INDIVIDUALS**, to increase the employability of those who encounter barriers to employment.

(c) It is also the State's goal to develop a well trained productive work force which meets the needs of a changing economy by:

(1) developing and ensuring maximum utilization of timely statewide labor market information;

(2) linking employment and training services with economic development efforts;

(3) providing enhanced employment and training capabilities specially designed to meet the needs of business and industry, including industries that utilize advanced technology applications; and

(4) encouraging and initiating innovative employment and training strategies.

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(c) "Low-income individual" means an individual who:

(1) receives, or is a member of a family which receives, cash welfare payments under a federal, State, or local income-based public assistance program;

(2) received an income, or is a member of a family that received a total family income for the 6-month period prior to application for the program involved (exclusive of unemployment compensation, child support payments, payments described in paragraph (1) of this subsection, and old age and survivors insurance benefits received under Section 202 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. § 402)) that, in relation to family size, does not exceed the higher of:

(i) the poverty level for an equivalent period; or