

SEVA-RAPIDRESPONSE

Comprehensive Customized Workforce Transition Services for Mass Employee Layoffs and Business Expansions

by Curtis D. Wray and Dr. Deborah George Wright, Thomas Nelson Community College

Workforce Re-engineering and Re-employment Service Plan

MISSION:

To provide a global and technological skilled workforce for the future through a quality coordinated Regional Rapid Response Workforce Re-engineering and Re-employment Service.

SEVA Rapid Response delivers a systemic approach involving partnerships of the community, service providers, and the Virginia Workforce Network; and, in so doing becomes a major driver in regional workforce and economic development initiatives.

DEFINITIONS:

Rapid Response, Workforce Re-engineering, and Re-employment (RRWRR) Services - a proactive collaboration of organizations and partnerships with the primary focus of rapid re-engineering and re-employment of an experienced, viable, and highly skilled workforce for a constantly changing global and technological world. Workforce development and economic development are inextricably linked drivers that provide the impetus for the continuous re-training, re-engineering, and re-employment of the workforce. SEVA-Rapid Response provides a foundational process for the comprehensive brokerage of services for employers and employees prior to, during, and after layoffs.

Quality - Rapid Response events will provide the same level of quality, consistency, and intensity of service regardless of company size. Hence, the underlying strategic national vision and systemic approach for RRWRR services is to position the effectiveness of our coordinated job transition strategies in moving the workforce to re-training and re-employment that our customers cannot imagine proceeding without us.

Partnerships - Any person, employer, community service provider, agency, or group becomes a partner that is willing to collaborate with the organization's staff, services, and resources in a cohesive regional strategy to assist affected employers and/or employees to transition into economically stable employment as quickly as possible. Partners share a single workforce re-employment goal and exchange information and coordinate initiatives to achieve that goal. Active and positive partnerships start with "we" and not you, me, us, or them; and espouse and support teambuilding, teamwork, and envision the entirety of the process as systemic, synergistic efforts.

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Customers - All affected employers, employees, potential employers, agency employees, and community service providers committed to the mission, goals, and objectives of RRWRR as defined above.

SERVICES:

A full range of RRWRR services will be offered in the Southeast Region. There are five phases: (1) Positive Pro-active Outreach; (2) Layoff Aversion (frontend and backend); (3) Quality, and Consistent Rapid Response Events; (4) Customized Solutions; and (5) Continuous Improvement [see enclosure- page 6 below, - the Five Phases of Rapid Response].

Phase I: Proactive Outreach:

Rapid Response in the Southeast Region -In order for affected employers to use RRWRR services, they must first be made aware of these services in the Southeast Region. The goal is to increase employer awareness of RRWRR services prior to a layoff. Affected employers and employees should recognize and value the RRWRR service as an ethical, high-quality regional resource and will call whenever the need arises. When notified of a layoff, employees should see RRWRR services as a valuable asset in their impending job loss transition strategy. A positive proactive outreach program will diminish knowledge deficits and will empower the affected employer, employees, and all involved partners. Finally, it will develop a relationship with Rapid Response and the Virginia Workforce Network (VWN) partners that will result in customized re-engineering and re-employment services. Positive pro-active outreach will use the following methods:

The Positive Proactive Outreach Team – Virginia Workforce Network (VWN) employees that have direct contact with employers, the Rapid Response Coordinator, Local One Stop and Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs) Business Service Managers, Community College and Workforce Development Deans, Vice Presidents, and Associate Vice Presidents, the Virginia Employment Commission Directors, Veterans’ Representatives, Workforce Services Representative, Tax Representatives, and Business and Economic Development Coordinators can make employers aware of the benefits of RRWRR services via word of mouth, informed briefs, and a collaborative partnership systems approach. It is important to note that re-engineering and re-employment efforts start in the minds of employers receiving the knowledge about services that are available to them. It is a critical phase where the knowledge deficits are decreased; where ambassadorship is affirmed, and where change is accepted.

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(A.) Positive Proactive Outreach Initiatives

1. Informational flyers
2. Web pages/Sites and the Internet (www.SEVARAPIDRESPONSE.ORG)
3. Acknowledgement and modeling of best practices
4. Consistent and timely attendance at employer events
5. Public service messages and articles (virtual and hard copy), news media and periodicals
6. Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) involvement
7. Employer panels and briefs
8. Positive Proactive Outreach Team involvement
9. Employer pre-layoff and preparation outreach briefs to the WIB, Economic Development Directorates, Society for Human Resources, Employer Panels, Employer Manufacturing Councils, Hampton Roads Economic Alliance, Councils & partnerships
10. Strategic Ambassadorship/Word-of-Mouth Experiences

Phase 2: Layoff Aversion

Partners function as a network of community intelligence in a functional flow of information demonstrating a viable and collaborative relationship (*see enclosure 2, page 13 below – SEVA Informational Flow Chart titled Workforce Intelligence and Information Network*).

(A.) The Forecasting Teams -The purpose of this informational network is to engage forecasting teams to provide early warning on declining businesses, or negative economic impacts and emerging regional economic trends; and notification of current or impending employers experiencing layoffs, closures, or reductions in force (RIF); to develop strategies for growth potential, the impetus and direction for career pathways, re-training, recycling, and reengineering the workforce (see enclosure 1).

The Southeast Region Rapid Response Forecasting Team may meet monthly or when necessary to discuss layoff aversion, job search, rapid response, re-engineering, and re-employment strategies for affected employees and employers, with the underlying goal being to minimize the time affected workers remain out of mainstream employment.

The Southeast Region Rapid Response Forecasting Team will at a minimum consist of the following organizations regionally (1) local Community Colleges, (2) the Virginia Employment Commission local offices, (3) the local One-Stops, (4) Economic Development, and (5) the current affected employer or impending employer. Layoff aversion is a key and essential component in getting affected employees back to work; and, these five workforce entities play a critical role in providing a smooth transition and successful re-employment by leveraging and

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collaborating to bring available resources and strategies to bear, to re-employ affected workers prior to the layoff. Early warning and notification are instrumental in making frontend layoff aversion work and have optimal success. Frontend layoff aversion tactics are those efforts put in place to secure employment for an affected worker prior to an impending layoff when the date of the layoff is unknown or has not been established. Backend layoff aversions are those efforts put in place to secure employment after the layoff terminal date has been set; some phased layoffs may have occurred, but the layoff has not been completed or reached terminal date status.

(B.) The Rapid Response Coordinator-The Rapid Response Coordinator is the convener of the Forecasting Team and is the focal point for the confirmation of intelligence, the promulgation of facts, and the dissemination of information. The coordinator determines the requirement for convening the forecasting team and once convened, assures the transparent flow of information.

Phase 3: Rapid Response Events

There are important events when establishing long-term and sustainable trust relationships with affected employers and employees (*see enclosure 1*).

During Rapid Response events (conducting Rapid Response Managers Meetings and Briefs - RRMM/RRB) immeasurable intangibles are created during this interaction. They are - (1) relationships are developed, (2) trust is established, (3) there is a meeting of the minds on strategy and processes (an implied contract), (4) quality and satisfaction of effort are confirmed or reaffirmed, (5) strategic ambassadorships are formed. The best advertisement and promotion of the Rapid Response program are from those employees and employers affected by the job loss transition who see the value of Rapid Response in helping them in job searching, re-careering, training, and re-training in order to find mainstream re-employment as quickly as possible. Quality and consistency of effort will be mainstays and are the cornerstone of the events; and (6) the genesis for the re-engineering and re-employment of the workforce is developed. It starts in the minds of the affected employees during the Rapid Response Briefs. There starts the beginning of development of re-engineering and re-employment strategies for the acceptance of change, the genesis of their career pathway model, and shifting from old to new workforce paradigms.

(A.) Rapid Response Survey Instrument - To develop a transition services package in conjunction with the affected company, the Rapid Response team will gather information about employee needs by asking the company to complete a survey called the [Southeast Region](#)

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Rapid Response Needs Survey Questionnaire. It is important and key to note that this survey is customizable to meet the needs and demands of the affected workers. Developing a customized survey unique to each layoff will allow the Rapid Response Team to organize services and develop focused and required solutions necessary to help affected workers return to work as quickly as possible. Results from the needs survey can become the justification and substantiation for the request for additional services or funding streams.

Phase 4: Customized Workforce Solutions

To develop needs-based and demand driven solutions, ranging from (1) an integrated services transition center and (2) rapid re-employment pipelines for companies expanding to (3) career pathways in advanced technologies for dislocated workers, Customized Solutions are the seamless and optimum integration of services for affected workers in the form of training, retraining, up skilling, certification, and re-certification to meet the specified needs, requirements, and expectations of the new employers. It is an ongoing, continuous, re-evaluative process until re-employment is achieved.

Phase 5: Continuous Improvement

Conducting and reviewing employer satisfaction surveys, self-assessment and evaluation are critical and integral processes to ensure that Rapid Response and Workforce Re-engineering and Re-employment in the Southeast Region remains fluid, viable, relevant, and current for the future impacted by the globalization of commerce and trade and constantly changing technology. In an effort to improve quality by allowing for collaborative partnership input, the Rapid Response Self-Assessment Benchmarking Tool will be given to Rapid Response teams annually at Rapid Response Summits or Forecasting Team meetings to identify strengths, weaknesses, and areas where technical assistance may be requested. Rapid Response Re-engineering and Re-employment events will embrace and espouse the concept of continuous lifelong learning in life skills, job, and most importantly, job loss transition skills.

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(ENCLOSURE 1)

FIVE PHASES OF RAPID RESPONSE-LAYOFF AVERSION

DIMINISHING KNOWLEDGE DEFICITS AND EMPOWERING ACTION

| |
|--|
| <h3>PHASE I: POSITIVE OUTREACH</h3> |
|--|

Step 1: Rapid Response (RR) Coordinator identifies workforce areas affected (zip code analysis).

Step 2: Rapid Response Coordinator identifies potentially affected employers in the Southeast Region.

Step 3: RR Coordinator initiates a robust outreach plan to contact employers.

- a. Identifies employer and partner point(s) of contact.
- b. Develops and implements Rapid Response outreach plan and website by January 2012.
- c. Provides information and awareness on Rapid Response and Layoff Aversion resources and upsizing strategies to top 50 employers, to media, and to workforce and economic organizations and information networks: such as the Hampton Roads Workforce Development; Chambers of Commerce; Hampton Roads Economic Development Alliance; Peninsula Council for Workforce Development; Society for Human Resources (SHRM); The Hampton Roads Human Resource Management Association (HRHRMA); The Hampton Roads Military and Federal Facilities Alliance and others.
- d. Engages the partners in an outreach network- Identifies Virginia Workforce Network partner staff who can utilize their relationships and direct contact with employers to educate business employees and managers on SEVA Rapid Response services. All can inform employers of the benefits of Rapid Response verbally and through informational briefs in a collaborative partnership systems approach. The network includes:
 - The Rapid Response Coordinator
 - The One-Stop Director and Business Services Staff
 - The Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs) President and Business Services Staff
 - Community College Vice Presidents, Associate Vice Presidents, and Deans
 - Virginia Employment Commission Center Directors, Veteran's Representatives, Workforce Services Representative, Tax representatives, and Business Economic Development Coordinators
 - Economic Development Directors and Coordinators
- e. Informational flyers
- f. Web pages/Sites and the Internet

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- g. Public service messages and articles (virtual and hard copy), news articles in print media
- h. Replicate viable pilot projects elsewhere
- i. Strategic Ambassadorship /Real life experiences
- j. Outreach briefs workforce, economic and human resources organizations

Step 4: RR Coordinator provides continuous strategic and tactical input from local employer HR departments.

PHASE II: LAYOFF AVERSION

Step 5: RR Coordinator receives forecasting information (from intelligence-information, indicators, & warning).

Step 6: RR Coordinator contacts company official to verify information.

Step 7: Forecasting Team is updated (VEC, OSC, CC, ED, and others as required).

Step 8: RR Coordinator schedules prefeasibility discussion with company officials, sets viable action.

- a. Temporary layoff- coordinating furlough actions, timetable
- b. Permanent layoff-WARN/Non-Warn actions, timetable
- c. Facilitates conducting frontend and backend Layoff Aversion

Step 9: RR Coordinator notifies and meets with Forecasting Team.

- a. Determine effect on economy and business
- b. Determine objective
- c. Identify players
- d. Set standard operating procedures
- e. Determine plan of action (see Layoff Aversion Strategies)
- f. Coordinate workforce team in implementing plan

PHASE III: RAPID RESPONSE EVENTS

Step 10: RR Coordinator receives intelligence on layoff (call or email, WOM, media).

Step 11: RR Coordinator confirms layoff, closure with employer and/or receives WARN notification from VCCS.

Step 12: RR Coordinator distributes confirmed information or WARN to RR/Forecasting Team.

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Step 13: RR Coordinator schedules Manager's Meeting (RRMM) with employer, partners and union representatives.

Step 14: RR Coordinator schedules RR Employee Briefs (RRB) and conducts Needs Survey

Questionnaire. The RR Coordinator:

- a. Collects, tabulates surveys
- b. Distribute timely results to the Rapid Response Team of Partners for each applicable layoff

Step 15: Team implements Team Responses (work first, pipeline, career pathways, career readiness certificate) based on results of needs survey and affected employee and employer feedback.

Step 16: Notify and involve union representatives (if applicable) in transition planning. Include Union representatives in all email correspondence and meetings and invite to all RRMMs and RRBs.

Step 17: Provide technical assistance on obtaining trade certifications. Will work closely with Virginia Employment Commission Trade Act Manager, and will keep informed of all regional trade initiatives.

Step 18: If applicable, will provide initial trade consultation to the employer on trade certification at the scheduling of the RRMM.

Step 19: Natural Disasters and Emergencies resulting in mass job loss dislocation and/or disaster unemployment assistance, will be executed and handled as Rapid Response Events and a team of applicable partners. The Virginia Employment Commission will execute its internal Plan of Action for disaster unemployment assistance. Based on the damage, meetings and Rapid Response events may be held in places other than the employer's site. Forecasting Team, Layoff Aversion Strategies (frontend and backend) are germane to all disaster and emergency events

PHASE IV: CUSTOMIZED WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS

Step 20. Outreach, Layoff Aversion Strategies, and Rapid Response Events (RRMM and RRB) are needs based and demand driven.

Step 21. Oversees the optimum integration of the needs of the affected worker are being met by the service providers in the form of training, retraining, up skilling, certification, and re-certification to meet the needs, requirements, and expectations of the new employers.

Step 22. Process is re-evaluative, ongoing, and continuous until reemployment is achieved.

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PHASE V: CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Step 23: RR Coordinator submits Employer Satisfaction Feedback Questionnaire to each affected employer after the Rapid Response Event:

- a. Collect and review survey
- b. Discusses discrepancies and distributes results to Team
- c. Include all Rapid Response Employer Satisfaction Surveys in Annual Report

Step 24: RR Coordinator debriefs with team to review, identify best practices and improvements.

Step 25: RR Coordinator files report with VCC Office Rapid Response Program Manager

- a. Weekly Report-Every Friday by COB
- b. Quarterly- January 15, April 15, July 15, and October 15
- c. Annually - July 31
- d. Employer Satisfaction Survey-Upon Completion of On-Site Rapid Response Events

Step 26: RR Coordinator maintains a minimum 5-year electronic file.

- a. Warn and Non-Warn email notification communications
- b. Employer/Employee email communications
- c. VCCS event forms and Technical Training emails
- d. Employee Needs Survey questionnaires
- e. Employer Satisfaction Feedback Survey questionnaires
- f. Rapid Response Event Forms
- g. VCCS Rapid Response Weekly, Quarterly, and Annual Reports

Step 27: RR Coordinator maintains website, web-blasts posting data, reports, and resources.

Step 28: RR Coordinator holds, when required, Forecasting Team Meetings and Quarterly Summits for Continuous Updates, and Improvements.

- a. Attends Professional Development Training and provides updates on Rapid Response-Layoff version, teambuilding, collaboration, and partnerships
- b. Sharing best practices on strategies, methods, and procedures
- c. Annual Rapid Response Self- Assessment Benchmarking

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LAYOFF AVERSION STRATEGIES

1. Political Initiatives
2. Apprenticeship Training
3. On-the-Job Training
4. Incumbent Worker Service Programs
5. Competency Testing
6. Curriculum Development
7. Incumbent Worker Skill Training
8. Job Search Assistance
9. Re-employment Assistance
10. State Funding Assistance
11. Employer-Employee Resources- Handbook-Website
12. Economic Development-Business Retention-Business Recruitment Initiatives
13. Employment Pipeline
14. Upsizing Strategies
15. Business Development (Business Planning and Resources)
16. Job Development
17. Outsource Entrepreneurs
18. Federal/State Funding Assistance
19. Department of Professional Occupational Regulations
20. Career Pathway Initiatives
21. Other

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MANAGER'S MEETING DISCUSSION AGENDA

1. Extent and timing of layoff
2. Tertiary impacts
3. Layoff aversion /impact lessening strategies
4. Identification of Layoff Aversion (LA)/ Impending Layoff (IL) regional resources and funding available
5. Number, demographics, skill levels of affected workers
6. Trade Act impact and implications
7. Number of retirees
8. Number receiving severance pay and severance allocation date
9. Available jobs and needed competencies
10. Current and potential pre and post-layoff training programs (community college & WIB updates)
11. Unemployment insurance, holiday, vacation pay, and wages
12. Employer Satisfaction Survey
13. Employee Needs/Feedback Survey and Virtual Survey Taking dates (if applicable)
14. Employee resources (handbook, guidance, website)
15. Department of Professional Occupations and Regulations (DPOR)
16. Rapid Response briefs and schedules
17. Follow-up strategies and initiatives
18. The importance of having Rapid Response services on-site prior to the layoff
19. Coordination with outplacement firms
20. Union involvement/participation
21. Transition of services from employer's site to career services site
22. Rapid Response Website (SEVA RapidResponse.org)
23. Other

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RAPID RESPONSE BRIEFS

1. Notify and collaboration with affected Workforce Investment Boards, One Stop, local employment commission offices, economic development, and community colleges of Rapid Response Brief
 2. Notify the team of briefing format and incorporate up-to-date changes
 3. Register all participants who will receive additional resources
 4. Provide summary of the briefing objective and outcomes
 5. Provide strategic insight to the why (job seeking and lifelong learning)
 6. Provide overview of the transition opportunity
 7. Provide information on accessing today's resources and additional information
 8. Provide insider tips for job search and application/interview success
 9. Provide partner briefings and question and answer
 - Virginia Employment Commission
 - One-Stop
 - Community College
 - Economic Development
 - Affected Employer
 - Additional partners as required
 10. Discuss, distribute, collect employee needs survey questionnaires or direct to the website when scheduled
 11. Define the meaning of a dislocated worker and protecting that status
 12. Explain the importance of source or expert information while in transition
 13. Describe the impact of technology when in job loss transition
 14. Provide information on being the Best "Transitioner"
 15. When required offer/provide on-site customized services such as transition team, seminar workshops, resource center, 211 and FAMIS
- REMEMBER....

- Be consistent in instruction, guidance, and direction to the affected employee
- Be clear, concise and use an understandable format
- Always explain and define acronyms prior to usage

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ACRONYM LEGEND

| | |
|----------|--|
| 211 | FREE INFORMATION ABOUT COMMUNITY SERVICES (THROUGH VIRGINIA DSS) |
| ALP | ADULT LITERACY PROGRAMS |
| CC | COMMUNITY COLLEGE |
| ED | ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT |
| FAMIS | FAMILY ACCESS TO MEDICAL INSURANCE SECURITY |
| FTM | FORECASTING TEAM MEETING |
| DPOR | DEPARTMENT OF PROFESSIONAL OCCUPATIONS AND REGULATIONS |
| DRS | DEPARTMENT OF REHABILITATIVE SERVICES |
| DSS | DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES |
| DUA | DISASTER UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE |
| HRHRMA | HAMPTON ROADS HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION |
| II&W | INFORMATION, INDICATORS, AND WARNING |
| IL | IMPENDING LAYOFF |
| LAO | LOCAL AREA OF OPERATIONS |
| LA | LAYOFF AVERSION |
| LWIB | LOCAL WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD |
| OJT | ON THE JOB TRAINING |
| OSC | ONE STOP CENTER |
| POA | PLAN OF ACTION |
| NON-WARN | LAYOFF NOTIFIED OTHER THAN BY OFFICIAL WARN |
| RIF | REDUCTION IN FORCES |
| RR | RAPID RESPONSE |
| RRB | RAPID RESPONSE BRIEFS |
| RRMM | RAPID RESPONSE MANAGER'S MEETING |
| RRWRR | RAPID RESPONSE AND WORKFORCE REENGINEERING AND REEMPLOYMENT |
| SHRM | SOCIETY FOR HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT |
| SOP | STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES |
| SS | SOCIAL SERVICES |
| SSA | SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION |
| TR | TERRITORIAL RESPONSIBILITY |
| TRA | TRADE READJUSTMENT ACT or TRADE READJUSTMENT ASSISTANCE (Contextual) |
| TAA | TRADE READJUSTMENT ASSISTANCE |
| UI | UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE |
| VCCS | VIRGINIA'S COMMUNITY COLLEGES |
| VEC | VIRGINIA EMPLOYMENT COMMISSION |
| VRS | VOCATIONAL REHABILITATIVE SERVICES |
| VWN | VIRGINIA WORKFORCE NETWORK |
| WIB | WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD |

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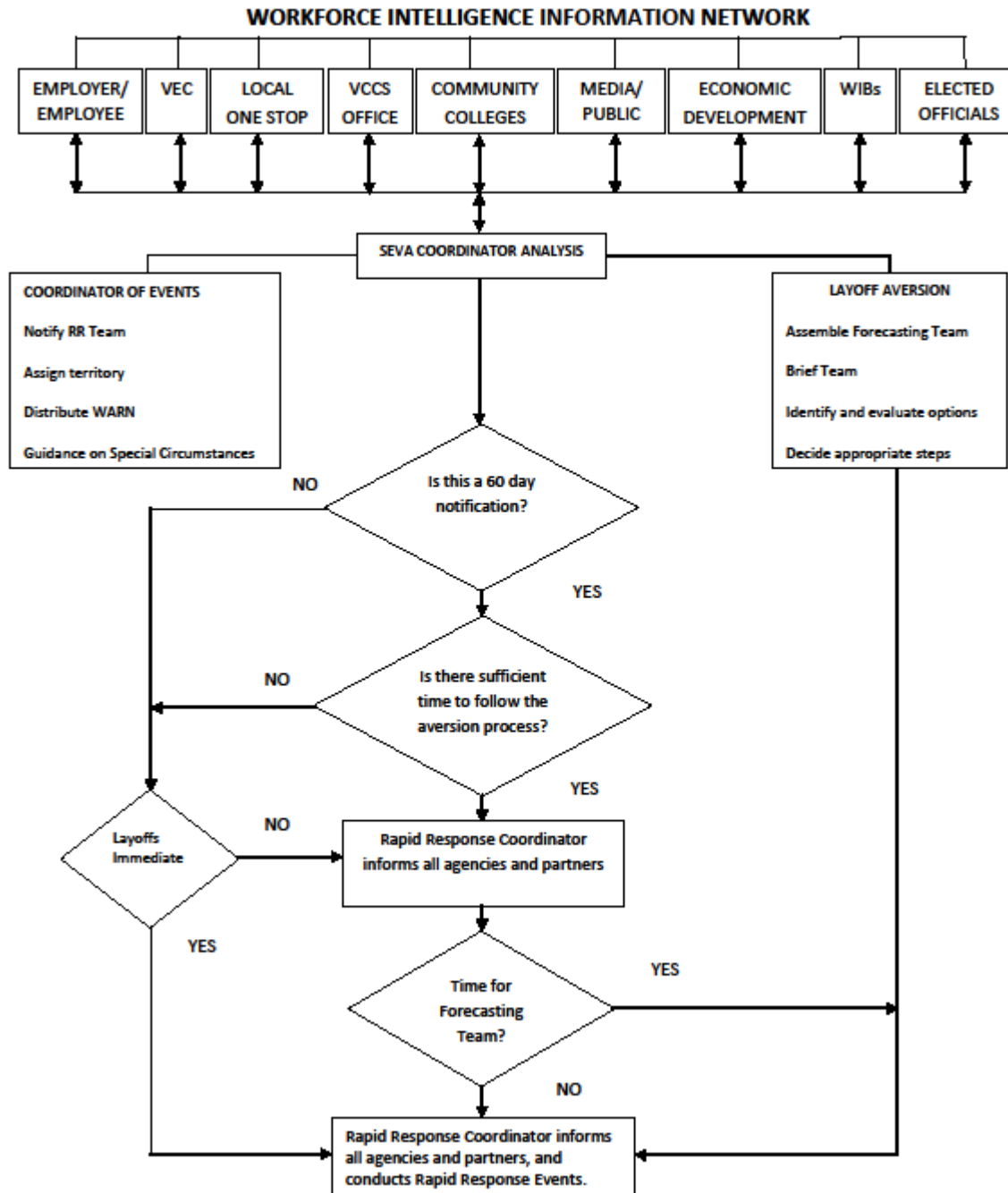


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(Enclosure 2)



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CREDITS

The Service Plan Credits

The Service Plan was created and written by Mr. Curtis D. Wray, Rapid Response Coordinator, Southeast Region.

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It was truly a team effort! Many thanks to all.

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