*Welcome to LLA Reports, a podcast produced by the Louisiana Legislative Auditor’s office. This podcast is intended to be an oral representation of the written report it highlights and is primarily for the use of the Louisiana Legislature.*

This is Chris Magee. I’m the data analytics manager for LLA’s Performance Audit Services. This episode of LLA Reports focuses on our new report titled “Coordination of Public Assistance and Workforce Development Programs.”

The purpose of the audit was to evaluate the participation, costs, and outcomes for certain public assistance and workforce development programs and to identify areas for improved coordination among these programs.

In 2023, Louisiana spent approximately $3.27 billion dollars, primarily in federal dollars, on the following programs:

* The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program – or SNAP
* The SNAP Employment & Training Initiative – or SNAP E&T
* Temporary Assistance for Needy Families – or TANF
* The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act – or WIOA
* Unemployment Insurance – or UI
* The Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment – or RESEA – Program, and
* The Child Care Assistance Program – or CCAP

These programs served approximately 1.07 million individuals in 2023.

We found that while Louisiana has a unified WIOA state plan, it needs more collaboration among agencies and stakeholders to put together a unified vision and plan detailing how best to coordinate and administer public assistance and workforce development programs. The governor and cabinet-level leadership would need to take the lead in spurring improved coordination among these programs. Stakeholders with the various agencies and entities we interviewed as part of this review said any change to Louisiana’s current workforce delivery system must be a priority of the governor.

In addition, we found that other states have various levels of coordination among their agencies and programs. In Louisiana, potential strategies for improved coordination could include increased public information as well as data and/or document sharing. Several other states, such as Colorado, Michigan, Texas, Utah, and Washington have websites that provide a clear picture of available services and how residents can apply for those services.

We also found that measuring outcomes could help Louisiana determine which programs and which contractors and providers are the most effective in meeting their goals.Such information could help state leaders make more informed decisions about resources and funding.

As a result of our report, we developed five matters for legislative consideration.

We suggested the Legislature evaluate the makeup of the Workforce Investment Council – or WIC – and determine whether to reduce the size of the council.

We also suggested the Legislature encourage the WIC to assess the various paths to public assistance and workforce development services and evaluate where opportunities for collaboration exist.

We suggested as well that the Legislature encourage the development of a website that includes all public assistance and workforce development programs and how to access them.

In addition, we suggested the Legislature address the existing barriers to data sharing among state agencies and encourage technological integration where practical.

Finally, we suggested the Legislature encourage state agencies to develop targets and performance metrics to measure program outcomes.

*We hope you found this podcast informative, and that you’ll follow future episodes of LLA Reports.*

*This podcast was created as part of the audit report just discussed and is intended primarily for the use of the Louisiana Legislature. Both the full report and the podcast can be found on the LLA’s website at* [*www.lla.la.gov*](http://www.lla.la.gov)*.*

*Thank you for listening.*