



December 1, 2017

Mr. Craig Harting, Chairperson
Northern Tier Workforce Development Board
Sullivan County Rural Electric
5675 Route 87
P.O. Box 65
Forksville, PA 18616

Dear Mr. Harting,

The Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry (Department) has approved the Northern Tier Region's Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) program year (PY) 2017-2019 Multi-Year Regional Plan. This approval extends to the local plan associated with the local workforce development area that composes this region. Such approval is effective through the end of PY '19 (i.e., June 30, 2020).

Approval of this plan does not constitute the approval of any practice that conflicts with federal and state statutes, regulations, policies and/or procedures; nor does approval preclude the commonwealth from, at its discretion, re-addressing any part of the plan if the content is found to conflict with such statutes, regulations, policies and/or procedures.

You and your staff are to be commended for your successful efforts to develop the multi-year plan in alignment with WIOA and the commonwealth's "WIOA Combined State Plan."

Please direct specific questions regarding the WIOA PY 2017-2019 Multi-Year Regional Plan and/or any future requests for plan modification to Michael White at michwhite@pa.gov or (717) 214-7173.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Eileen Cipriani". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Eileen Cipriani
Deputy Secretary for Workforce Development

cc: The Honorable Thomas S. Henry, Chair
Mr. Frank Thompson, Northern Tier Workforce Development Board Executive Director

Enclosure: Northern Tier Regional Plan

NORTHERN TIER

(Region 5)

WIOA PY 2017-2019

REGIONAL/LOCAL

PLANS

NOVEMBER 2017 – JUNE 2019

PY 2017-2019 WIOA Multi-Year Regional Plan



northern tier
regional planning &
development
commission

Region Workforce Development Area name: Northern Tier
Region _____

Effective Date: January 1, 2018

1.1. Identification of the region.

- Name: Northern Tier Region
- Workforce Development Area: Northern Tier Workforce Development Area comprising the counties of Bradford, Sullivan, Susquehanna, Tioga and Wyoming
- Key Region Committee Members: Frank Thompson, NT WDB
- Key Regional Committee meetings:

In the spring of 2017, the board held several meetings with local partners and stakeholders to gather their input and discuss methods to continue to enhance the local and regional workforce system. These meetings included:

April 12 – WDB, Youth Committee

April 21 – NTRPDC Executive Committee – Commissioners

April 25 – PA CareerLink Management Team

May 22- Susquehanna County Outreach meeting – stakeholders

May 23 – Bradford County Outreach meeting – stakeholders

May 24- Wyoming County Outreach meeting – stakeholders

May 24 – Youth Coordination meeting - staff

May 25 – Sullivan County Outreach meeting – stakeholders

June 1 – Tioga County Outreach meeting – stakeholders

June 14 – WDB, Youth Committee

June 16 – Executive Committee

June 28 – Adult/DW Coordination meeting – staff

Northern Tier Region of Pennsylvania



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1.2. Describe the collection and analysis of regional labor market data (in conjunction with the commonwealth).

The Northern Tier Workforce Development Area, comprised of Bradford, Sullivan, Susquehanna, Tioga and Wyoming counties, is a rural region appropriately located across Pennsylvania's Northern Tier with a population of 172,272. With the Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA) requiring greater services to those individuals with barriers to employment and concurrently greater services to employers and their sectors, the analysis of regional labor market data is critical to the success of the Northern Tier Workforce Development Area and the Commonwealth.

With a large expansive rural region such as this, it is important to best understand the critical labor market issues as they relate to the general population, the population with barriers, the overall employment opportunities, the sectors that comprise them, and the key issues the data drives the Northern Tier Workforce Development Board and the Local Elected Officials in both the regional and local (including individual county) multi-year WIOA plans.

Regional Labor Market Overview

The population in the Northern Tier region is estimated to have declined since the 2010 census and is projected to continue to decline over the next five years, while the population in Pennsylvania is projected to grow slightly. The population is estimated to change from 182,663 to 177,272, resulting in a decline of 3.0% between 2010 and 2017. Over the next five years, the population is projected to continue to decline by 1.6%¹. The population in the state is estimated to change from 12,702,379 to 12,822,858, resulting in a growth of 0.9% between 2010 and 2017. Over the next five years, the population is projected to grow by 0.8%. All counties within the Northern Tier region are expected to experience decline over the next several years with Susquehanna County expected to experience the greatest percent decline (2.45%).²

The current year median age for the region is 45.1, while the average age is 42.9. Five years from now, the median age is projected to be 45.4. Comparatively, the current year median age for the state is 40.9, while the average age is 41. Five years from now, the median age is projected to be 41.6. Sullivan County has the oldest population with the median age of 53.4, while Tioga County has the youngest with a median age of 43.2. Tioga County has the highest percentage of the population age 18 to 24 (10.4%).³

EDUCATION

Currently, it is estimated that 4.8% of the population age 25 and over in the Northern Tier region had earned a Master's Degree, 0.9% had earned a Professional School Degree, 0.7% had earned a Doctorate Degree and 11.3% had earned a Bachelor's Degree. In comparison, for the state, it is estimated that for the population over age 25, 8.0% had earned a Master's Degree, 1.8% had earned a Professional School

¹ Population Estimates per Claritas, Nielsen Answers

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

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Degree, 1.4% had earned a Doctorate Degree and 17.3% had earned a Bachelor's Degree. Bradford County has the highest percentage of the population who does not have a high school diploma or GED (12.2%) and Tioga County has the highest percentage with a Bachelor's degree or greater (19.7%).⁴

INCOME

The average household income is estimated to be \$66,792 in 2017, which is lower when compared to the state, which is estimated to be \$77,812 for the same time frame. The average household income in the region is projected to change over the next five years, from \$66,792 to \$72,776. While the average household income in the state is projected to change over the next five years, from \$77,812 to \$84,180.⁵

EMPLOYMENT

For the region, the employment status of the population age 16 and over is as follows: 53.7% are employed civilians (compared to 57.7% for Pennsylvania overall), 4.3% are unemployed civilians (vs. 5.0% for the state), and 42.0% are not in the labor force (vs. 37.3% for the state overall).

The occupational classification for the region include: 32.8% hold blue collar occupations (compared to 21.3% for the state overall), 49.5% hold white collar occupations (vs. 60.6% for the state), and 17.6% are employed as service & farm workers (vs. 18.1% for the state).⁶

Overall the general population of the Northern Tier Workforce Development Area is declining in the region while those remaining are older than the Commonwealth average or median. The per capita income is lower than the state with most families. Employment and labor market participation is significantly higher than the state average. General observation of employment indicates broad categories that largely require minimal education (i.e., less than a bachelor degree) compared to other sectors across the Commonwealth. This usually portends a population that is generally stable and wishes to maintain their residence and work in their current community with minimal commuting.

WIOA emphasizes serving those with barrier to employment. This next section reviews those with barriers and suggests priorities for consideration for serving and addressing.

POPULATIONS WITH BARRIERS

With the increased availability of labor market data, there is extensive information available on individuals with barriers across the Northern Tier. This includes poverty, youth aging out of foster care, language, returning citizens (ex-offenders), juvenile delinquency, TANF, teen pregnancy, maternal education, youth with disability, disability, homeless (both adults and youth). These barriers are examined here with suggestions on prioritizations for the Northern Tier region.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

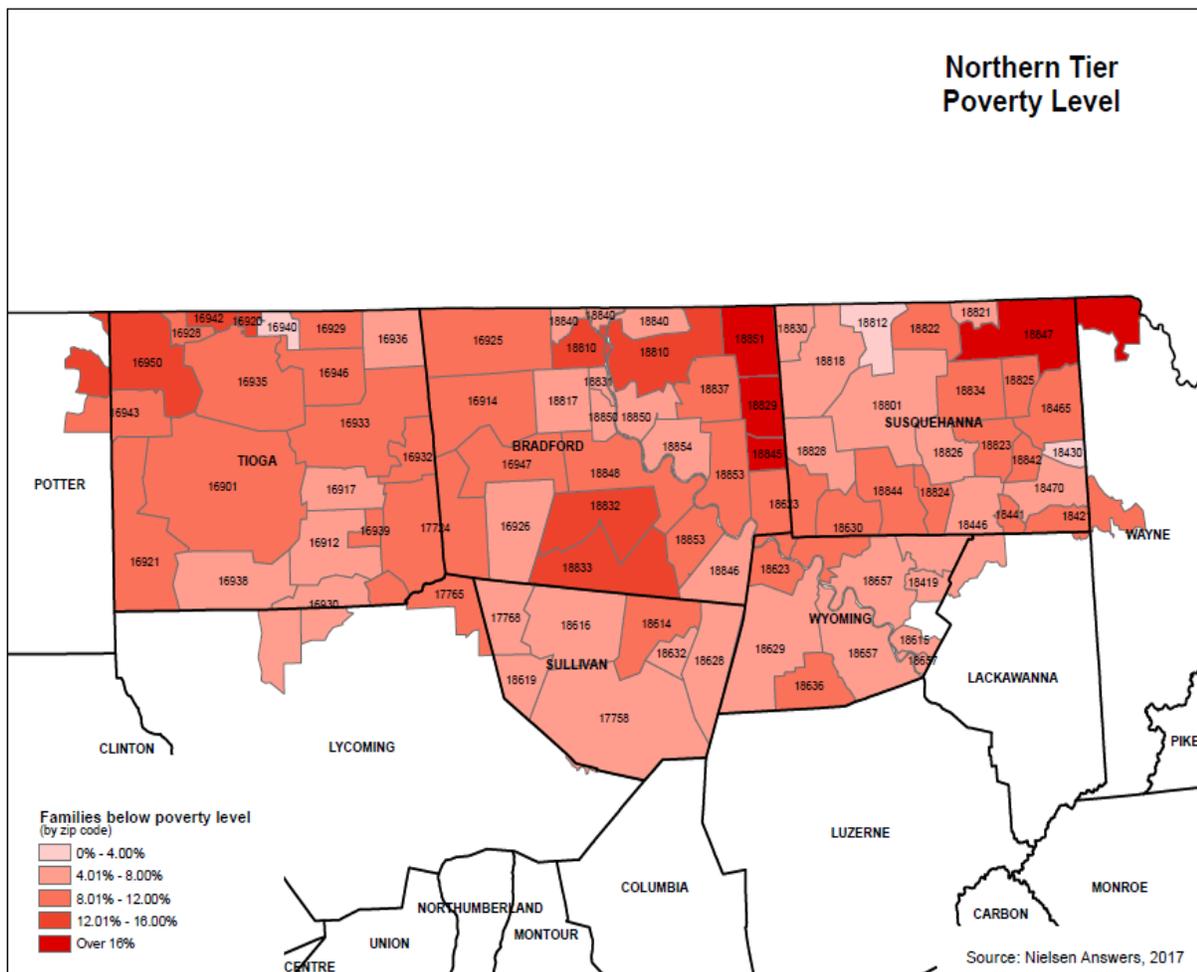
⁶ Ibid.

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POVERTY

Poverty does not work in a vacuum or silo on its own, it is often the foundation for other challenges that impact those with barriers. Poverty is a place to start, but this also encompasses other barriers.

Among the factors that often contribute to poverty are unemployment and underemployment. Many people live in poverty because they are unable to find a job that pays a living wage or to find a job at all. When looking at the region, 9.1% of families are living in poverty. There is a portion of Bradford County (Warren Center, Le Raysville, and Stevensville) and Susquehanna County (Susquehanna) with poverty levels greater than 20%. Bradford County (9.8%) has the highest percentage of families living in poverty. Single parents are more likely to be living in poverty, with 11.5% of households in the county considered single parent households. Bradford (12.2%) and Wyoming (11.8%) Counties have the highest percentage of single parent households.



EX-OFFENDERS

According to the Urban Institute⁷, most individuals released from prison held some type of job prior to incarceration and want legal, stable employment upon release. Some criminal justice research suggests that finding and maintaining a legitimate job can reduce former prisoners' chances of reoffending, and the higher the wage, the less likely it is that individuals will return to crime. However, most former prisoners experience difficulty finding a job after release. During the time spent in prison, many lose work skills and are given little opportunity to gain useful work experience. Moreover, the availability of job training programs in prison has declined in recent years. A large proportion of former prisoners have low levels of educational attainment and work experience, health problems, and other personal characteristics that make them hard to employ. Once in the community, not only are many employers reluctant to hire convicted felons, but many former prisoners are legally barred from certain occupations. In the Northern Tier region overall, in 2016 there were 263 individuals released from a state prison and in 2015 there were 2,553 released from a county prison (data not available for Sullivan County). Bradford County had the largest number released from a state (100) or county prison (1,148).⁸

INDIVIDUALS WITH A DISABILITY

According to the Division for Social Policy and Development Disability, in developing countries, 80% to 90% of persons with disabilities of working age are unemployed, whereas in industrialized countries the figure is between 50% and 70%. Persons with disabilities are frequently not considered potential members of the workforce.⁹ Perception, fear, myth and prejudice continue to limit understanding and acceptance of disability in workplaces everywhere. Myths abound, including that persons with disabilities are unable to work and that accommodating a person with a disability in the workplace is expensive. Contrary to these notions, many companies have found that persons with disabilities are more than capable.

When looking at the region, 6.0% of those employed have a disability, while 12.0% of those unemployed have a disability. In the region, unemployment is 77.3% higher for those with a disability (11.9%) compare to those without a disability (6.7%).¹⁰ Sullivan County has the largest percentage of individuals with a disability who are working (9.1%) and Wyoming County (19.8%) has the highest percentage of individuals with a disability who are unemployed. There are also 6,937 students receiving services through the local Intermediate Units, with over half (56.0%) of those students having a learning

⁷ Urban institute is a non-profit organization dedicated to elevating the debate on social and economic policy. They conduct research and offer evidenced based solutions to improve lives and strengthen communities (www.urban.org).

⁸ PA Department of Corrections

⁹ The Division for Social Policy and Development is part of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs which focuses on strengthening international cooperation for social development (www.un.org).

¹⁰ U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5 Year Estimates

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disability, 11.1% have an intellectual disability, 0.2% have a speech/language impairment, 10.8% have emotional disturbances, 15.6% have health implications and 6.3% have autism.¹¹

ADDITIONAL BARRIERS

Many additional barriers are key to understanding the Northern Tier region. In the region, there were 523 children between the ages 0-17 receiving TANF Assistance¹², 327 youth had a juvenile disposition in 2015¹³, and there were 201 births were to mothers with less than high school education¹⁴. According to the PA Department of Health, teenage pregnancy rate in Bradford County (31.2%) was above the state average (27.2%) while Susquehanna (14.0%), Tioga (19.4%) and Wyoming (20.5%) were below the state average. Data was not available for Sullivan County¹⁵.

In summarizing the additional demographics of the region, significant populations comprise the labor force that most likely have a lower participation rate than the general population. Additional demographics for those with barrier show significant populations:

- 9.1% of the families are living below poverty (Nielsen Answers)
- 2.5% of households speaks a language other than English at home (Nielsen Answers)
- 11.5% of the families are single parent families (Nielsen Answers)
- 2,563 individuals were released from county jail in 2016 and 263 individuals were released from state prisons in 2015 (PA Department of Corrections)
- In 2015, 167 children left foster care, 7.2% (12) aged out of the foster care system (PA Partnerships for Children)
- In June 2016, 523 children between the ages of 0-17 were receiving TANF Assistance (PA Department of Public Welfare)
- Of the estimated 74,237 individuals in the labor force:
 - 6.0% (4,460) of those employed have a disability
 - 12.0% (500) of those unemployed have a disability
 - 11.9% of the disabled population is unemployed
 - Unemployment is 77.3% higher for those with a disability
 - 6.7% unemployment rate for those without a disability
 - 7.5% is the overall unemployment rate(Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5 Year Estimates)
- During the 2015 Point in Time Count, 50 people were counted homeless that evening in January (HUD, Point in Time Count)
- In 2016, 155 students were homeless as defined by the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (PennLive)

¹¹ PA Department of Education Bureau of Special Education

¹² PA Department of Public Welfare (now PA Department of Human Services)

¹³ PA Juvenile Court Judge's Commission Annual Report

¹⁴ PA Department of Health

¹⁵ *ibid.*

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Populations with barriers typically are not one barrier but often multiple barriers. Based on this extensive review of those with barriers, it appears that key populations with barriers include generally those in poverty, disability and returning citizens. Emphasis on some youth/young adult populations could include teen pregnancy (depending on the county), youth aging out of foster care, and TANF. The labor market information demonstrates the need for ongoing priorities of those with barriers as they relate to primarily WIOA related to context provided by other local partners.

REGIONAL EMPLOYER OVERVIEW

Understanding where the jobs are and what jobs they are emphasize a demand side understanding of the labor market. This section reviews general employment trends, then sector trends and finally the county level occupations.

The Northern Tier region has a significant employer base. Comparing the density of the employment concentration (through Location Quotients), concentrated employment opportunities in the region and historical and emerging sector trends help better understand the gaps for employers and businesses across the Northern Tier Workforce Area.

Location quotient (LQ) is a valuable way of quantifying how concentrated a particular industry, cluster, occupation, or demographic group is in a region as compared to the nation. Per EMSI, LQ can reveal what makes a particular region “unique” in comparison to the national average. The Location Quotients for the key industry clusters as delineated by the Center for Workforce Information by Local Workforce Area are as follows:

	Agriculture and Food Production	Advanced Manufacturing	Building & Construction	Bio-Medical	Business Services	Education	Energy	Health Care	Hospitality, Leisure & Entertainment	Logistics & Transportation	Real Estate, Finance, and Insurance	Wood, Wood Products & Publishing
2015 Employment	2,891	5,116	4,580	123	3,003	5,701	4,668	9,272	4,982	2,287	1,568	4,151
Percent WIA Employment	4.94	8.75	7.83	0.21	5.13	9.75	7.98	15.85	8.52	3.91	2.68	7.10
Employment Growth (2010-2015)	264	-262	65	47	730	-606	2,348	135	160	440	-2	-105
Percent Growth (2010-2015)	10.0	-4.9	1.4	61.8	32.1	-9.6	101.2	1.5	3.3	23.8	-0.1	-2.5
2015 Average Wage (\$)	39,315	46,686	41,213	44,313	49,786	42,205	80,145	45,629	13,677	44,452	45,287	55,111
2015 National Location Quotient	1.38	1.16	1.21	0.18	0.40	1.01	3.73	1.09	0.70	1.12	0.49	4.70

Based on these Location Quotients, the top five industry clusters are Wood, Wood Products & Publishing, Energy, Agriculture and Food Production, Building & Construction, and Advanced Manufacturing. Given the history of extraction industries including Wood, Wood Products & Publishing and Energy, particular attention may need paid to these clusters.

Additionally, long term industry cluster projections for the Northern Tier Region also provide a window to employer demand to match job seeker supply. When looking at long-term industry projections, Construction, Professional and Business Services, and Education & Health Services account for significant growth in the region.

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Long-Term Industry Projections for Northern Tier WDA (2014-24)

Industry	Employment (2014)	Projected Employment (2024)	Employment Change (2014-2024)	
			Volume	Percent
Total Jobs	69,820	72,400	2,580	3.7%
Goods Producing Industries	20,000	20,290	290	1.5%
Agriculture, Mining & Logging	8,120	8,040	-80	-1.0%
Construction	2,530	2,970	440	17.4%
Manufacturing	9,360	9,280	-80	-0.9%
Services-Providing	43,970	46,170	2,200	5.0%
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	12,420	12,880	460	3.7%
Information	580	520	-60	-10.3%
Financial Activities	2,030	2,070	40	2.0%
Professional & Business Services	3,130	3,440	310	9.9%
Education & Health Services	14,480	15,700	1,220	8.4%
Leisure & Hospitality	4,760	5,070	310	6.5%
Other Services, Except Public Admin.	2,320	2,370	50	2.2%
Federal, State & Local Government	4,250	4,130	-120	-2.8%

Source: Long-Term Industry Employment Projections (2014-24)

*Data may not add due confidentiality

While construction is the highest volume with a projected increase of 17.4%, a special note must be made for the impact of the energy industry and its potential impact on the region.

Education and Health Services, Leisure and Hospitality, and Professional and Business Services are also projected to grow significantly. Information, Federal, State and Local Government, as well as Manufacturing are projected to decline. The region's workforce and economic development agencies are working to identify strategies to attract and train talent to reverse the decline in manufacturing employment. Several initiatives detailed below, directly address the challenges. Manufacturing, because of the strong supply chain effects, is a critical component along with Healthcare, Education and Professional & Business Services.

GENERAL EMPLOYMENT AND OCCUPATIONS

Often analysis of specific occupations across a rural area such as this provide for interesting and sometimes skewed data. Further analysis is appropriate in these cases. Largest and fastest growing occupations offer snap shot of the jobs.

Occupations related to the Oil and Gas industry are declining while those related to Motor Vehicle Parts Manufacturing, Animal Slaughtering and Vocational Rehabilitation Services are increasing. While Heavy and Tractor Trailer Truck Drivers is a declining occupation, it continues to be the top posted position.

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GROWING AND DECLINING INDUSTRIES

Industry	Change in Jobs (2015-2016)	
Other Motor Vehicle Parts Manufacturing	95	
Animal (except Poultry) Slaughtering	66	
Vocational Rehabilitation Services	50	
Specialized Freight (except Used Goods) Trucking, Local	-230	
Oil and Gas Pipeline and Related Structures Construction	-264	
Support Activities for Oil and Gas Operations	-429	

The recent boom then decline in the Marcellus Shale gas exploration and extraction demonstrates the volatility of the energy and extraction industries. While this has declined significantly because of the volatility combined with the volume does not mean there are not jobs in this sector.

Another method of confirming and corroborating long-term industry projections for the Northern Tier Region is through the North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS) codes. The Center for Workforce Information and Analysis on their website (www.workstats.dli.gov) notes, “data contained in these tables are the best available source of information for estimating job opportunities, developing training programs and gaining an insight into future employment trends”. The chart below is the ten-year Long-Term Industry Projections for the Northern Tier Planning Region.

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Northern Tier WDA Industry Employment 2014-2024 Long-Term Projections						
NAICS	Industry Title	Employment*		Change		Avg
		2014	2024	Level	Percent	Annual Change
	TOTAL ALL INDUSTRIES	69,820	72,400	2,580	3.7%	258
	GOODS-PRODUCING	20,000	20,290	290	1.5%	29
11	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	4,690	4,600	-90	-1.9%	-9
21	Mining, Quarrying & Oil & Gas Extraction	3,430	3,440	10	0.3%	1
23	Construction	2,530	2,970	440	17.4%	44
31-33	Manufacturing	9,360	9,280	-80	-0.9%	-8
	SERVICES-PROVIDING	43,970	46,170	2,200	5.0%	220
22	Utilities	360	370	10	2.8%	1
42	Wholesale Trade	1,600	1,600	0	0.0%	0
44-45	Retail Trade	7,550	7,740	190	2.5%	19
48-49	Transportation & Warehousing	2,910	3,170	260	8.9%	26
51	Information	580	520	-60	-10.3%	-6
52	Finance & Insurance	1,390	1,350	-40	-2.9%	-4
53	Real Estate & Rental & Leasing	640	720	80	12.5%	8
54	Professional & Technical Services	1,380	1,510	130	9.4%	13
55	Management of Companies & Enterprises	510	560	50	9.8%	5
56	Administrative & Waste Services	1,240	1,370	130	10.5%	13
61	Educational Services	4,980	4,990	10	0.2%	1
62	Health Care & Social Assistance	9,500	10,710	1,210	12.7%	121
71	Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	540	590	50	9.3%	5
72	Accommodation & Food Services	4,220	4,480	260	6.2%	26
81	Other Services, Ex. Public Admin	2,320	2,370	50	2.2%	5
99	Government	4,250	4,130	-120	-2.8%	-12
	Self-Employed Workers	5,850	5,940	90	1.5%	9

FOOTNOTES:
 -Data may not add to totals due to rounding.
 -Confidential data and industries with employment less than 10 are not shown but are included in all sub-total and total employment values.
 Source: Center for Workforce Information & Analysis

An analysis of the above confirms growth in Health Care & Social Assistance, Accommodations & Food Service, and Construction as the top three projected growth industries. Another NAICS industry cluster that the Northern Tier Planning Region may explore is the Self-Employed Workers. Sometimes also called the “Gig Economy”, this may be an area of consideration.

HIGH PRIORITY OCCUPATIONS

The WDB is working with local training providers to ensure that there is an adequate supply of trained workers for these high priority occupations. The 2017 High Priority Occupations provide a confirming view of the occupations, based on the data above, that will lead toward quality jobs in the Northern Tier Region.

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2017 High Priority Occupations for Northern Tier Workforce Development Area

SOC Code	SOC Title	Educational Attainment	Wages (2016)			Employment			
			Entry Level	Annual Average	Exper. Level	Estimated 2014	Projected 2024	Percent Change	Annual Openings
13-2011	Accountants & Auditors	BD	\$28,900	\$54,630	\$67,490	370	400	8.1%	12
17-2112	Industrial Engineers	BD	\$63,360	\$98,470	\$116,030	400	380	-5.0%	12
25-2022	Middle School Teachers	BD+	\$54,720	\$65,120	\$70,320	360	360	0.0%	8
29-1141	Registered Nurses	BD	\$44,130	\$59,250	\$66,810	1,230	1,370	11.4%	43
29-2061	Licensed Practical & Licensed Vocational Nurses	PS	\$31,620	\$40,820	\$45,420	360	390	8.3%	13
31-1014	Nursing Assistants	PS	\$21,930	\$27,850	\$30,810	990	1,130	14.1%	36
41-1011	Supervisors - Retail Sales Workers	WK EXP	\$28,360	\$44,660	\$52,810	640	670	4.7%	16
43-3031	Bookkeeping, Accounting & Auditing Clerks	PS+	\$23,910	\$33,300	\$38,000	910	840	-7.7%	9
43-6014	Secretaries	ST OJT	\$21,300	\$30,680	\$35,370	1,220	1,220	0.0%	13
45-2091	Agricultural Equipment Operators	ST OJT	N/A	N/A	N/A	170	190	11.8%	7
47-2031	Carpenters	LT OJT	\$26,650	\$39,370	\$45,730	610	670	9.8%	13
47-2073	Operating Engineers & Other Construction Equipment Operators	MT OJT	\$28,380	\$41,370	\$47,870	860	950	10.5%	22
47-4011	Construction & Building Inspectors	WK EXP	N/A	N/A	N/A	190	220	15.8%	8
47-4051	Highway Maintenance Workers	MT OJT	\$27,360	\$36,890	\$41,660	370	370	0.0%	10
49-3021	Automotive Body & Related Repairers	LT OJT	\$20,880	\$34,360	\$41,090	210	230	9.5%	7
49-3023	Automotive Service Technicians & Mechanics	PS	\$23,630	\$32,210	\$36,510	650	670	3.1%	20
49-3031	Bus & Truck Mechanics & Diesel Engine Specialists	LT OJT	\$30,110	\$38,780	\$43,110	340	370	8.8%	8
49-9041	Industrial Machinery Mechanics	LT OJT	\$37,180	\$52,020	\$59,430	240	300	25.0%	11
49-9071	Maintenance & Repair Workers, General	LT OJT	\$23,450	\$34,810	\$40,490	730	780	6.8%	24
51-1011	Supervisors - Production & Operating Workers	WK EXP	\$37,640	\$58,270	\$68,590	970	940	-3.1%	15
51-4121	Welders, Cutters, Solderers & Brazers	MT OJT	\$32,690	\$44,150	\$49,890	180	210	16.7%	8
53-3021	Bus Drivers, Transit & Intercity	MT OJT	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
53-3022	Bus Drivers, School or Special Client	ST OJT	N/A	N/A	N/A	420	430	2.4%	7
53-3032	Heavy & Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	PS	\$33,100	\$45,170	\$51,210	2,140	2,310	7.9%	54
53-7051	Industrial Truck & Tractor Operators	ST OJT	\$27,190	\$39,220	\$45,240	380	400	5.3%	12

Source: CWIA, 2017

These high priority occupations represent the occupations most likely to be considered by job seekers and be requested by employers throughout the Northern Tier Region.

Based upon the occupational and sector demands, the key industries for consideration include health care, logistics and transportation, and construction. Additional review and sub-sector considerations lead the region to consider specific areas such as government, professional support services and other service industries.

These occupations appear appropriate to the job seekers needs and capabilities based upon the demographics of the Northern Tier Workforce Development Area.

1.3. Based on the analysis of the regional labor market and economic conditions, describe the region's workforce and economic development-oriented vision and goals.

The vision of the Northern Tier Workforce Development Board is that the local area will be a destination of choice for employers and jobseekers, where existing businesses experience growth and where new businesses are eager to locate because of the excellent job opportunities, economic vitality, quality of life and the presence of a skilled workforce. Therefore, the local workforce system will increase the employment, retention, and earnings of customers, and, as a result, improve the quality of the workforce, reduce welfare dependency, and enhance the productivity and competitiveness of the five-county workforce area.

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The Northern Tier's economic future depends on a workforce able to compete in today's global economy. In order for the region to be economically competitive and its residents to acquire careers that pay family-sustaining wages, the region needs to ensure that its workforce system is steered by business and job seeker needs. A skilled and well-trained workforce can be achieved by better aligning the workforce development system with industry and education.

The mission of the LWDB is to provide responsive and innovative leadership that meets the current and future needs of employers and jobseekers.

The current key workforce priorities of the Northern Tier Workforce Development Board are to:

- Strengthen the system's impact on the secondary school system which will increase awareness of job opportunities, necessary skills, PA CareerLink®, and help create a youth talent pipeline.
- Strengthen relationships with economic development and education partners
- Strengthen the relationships between the PA CareerLink® and the business community
- Ensure the workforce development system meets the needs of its customers, both businesses and jobseekers

The local area's mission, vision, and strategic goals, the local area as well as the state seek a business focused workforce system with a special care given to those with barriers in alignments with the state plan. This focus creates a better link between business and jobseekers. It allows business to grow and create more jobs. At the same time, it allows jobseekers to be trained in the skills that employers need. Both the state and the local area supports training for high priority occupations, career pathways, better job matching, and programs that address skill gaps.

The Northern Tier Workforce Development Area and the Northern Tier Workforce Developments Board's workforce and economic development goals are strongly aligned with the Governor's vision and goals for the Commonwealth. Please refer to section 2.3 of the Northern Tier Local Plan for specific information in this regard.

The NTWDB will continue to convene all regional partners including education providers, economic development agencies (local and regional), workforce partners, employers and other community based agencies, etc. on a regular basis to ensure that all partners have access to the labor market information to support the connection between education and training and the economy and align training provider curricula to the needs of existing and emerging sectors.

Additionally, through its industry partnerships, the NTWDB will continue to convene employers from the targeted sectors along with education and training providers and other partners to identify the specific skill needs and related training curricula that are required to fill the in-

demand, growth, and emerging occupations of the local area. The NTWDB will continue to monitor the effectiveness of existing education and training activities by collecting information on programs that are being supported by WIOA funds as well as the funds of core partners. It will identify the programs that have the strongest ties to employers' needs and the best success rates for producing graduates and job placements.

Finally, The NTWDB, NTRPDC, and PREP will continue to collaborate and coordinate our efforts while utilizing DCED's Executive Pulse system. This is the economic development system of record for tracking businesses served and business services. This will enable us to better coordinate business outreach services, share information and measure results.

1.4. Describe the regional service strategies aimed at achieving the vision and goals established for the region.

The LWDB cooperation with the Local Development District (LDD), the Northern Tier Regional Planning and Development Commission (NTRPDC), which is the agency housing services of both the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) and the LWDB, creates a partnership that is efficient and well-rounded for employer engagement. Employer outreach is necessary for both groups and the shared information helps identify challenges and develop solutions to those strategies. By further developing these partnerships, engagement is improved as well. There are six employers in the region with more than 500 employees, so beyond those six, every other employer is considered a small business.

Staff outreach, meeting and participation in events with businesses will be crucial as the area works to implement new programs such as apprenticeship models, career pathways initiatives, and transitional employment while enhancing the more traditional OJTs and incumbent worker training.

The LWDB works closely with Partnerships for Regional Economic Performance (PREP) which include the Small Business Development Center (SBDC), Northeast Pennsylvania Industrial Resource Center (NEPIRC), and county economic development partners among others to offer support and outreach to meet the needs of employers and jobseekers and identifying in-demand sectors and employers.

Working with employers in existing or emerging industries to determine their skill needs is crucial in meeting the workforce needs of the local area. When skill needs for high-growth occupations are known, the local area is better prepared to work with the needs of under-skilled workers. In order to meet workforce needs, the local area works with educational entities and businesses to design training programs with the skills that businesses need. In addition, the local area works with jobseekers to identify the types of job opportunities that are available and what transferrable skills that they have. This allows the businesses to get the candidates that they

need. By working together in industry partnerships, employers can more easily learn the resources available to help with business startup, hiring, and finance. In addition, the local area works with the local Small Business Development Centers in the region and often refer businesses to them for assistance. When possible, employers are encouraged to work together for cost savings and to develop training programs together when similar needs are present.

The LWDB's use of funds is geared to serving both the job seeker and the employer and to support the local area's vision for workforce development. The LWDB supports the PA CareerLink® and attempts to eliminate duplication of services and funds through the coordination of services in the one-stop centers. The LWDB offers ITAs to qualified individuals in the high priority occupations in order to gain better employment, wages, and retention. The LWDB leverages WIOA funds to serve as many people as possible. The LWDB is active with the industry clusters in the five counties which assist in training jobseekers in the skills that employers need. As a result of the successful consortium groups, members have received additional sources of training funds for their respective clusters. The work of the LWDB in industry partnerships in health care, technology, and manufacturing has helped the group to attract new participants and allowed them to focus on both higher and lower order activities.

The Northern Tier Workforce Development Board is cognizant of the need to leverage WIOA funds where possible and allowable to support the local workforce development plan beyond the constraints of WIOA. The LWDB's support of the industry cluster consortia is an excellent model of how the LWDB used its resources to capture seed money for the establishment of the groups, provided coordination to ensure support for the groups and leveraged funds to allow the groups to secure additional funding to assist in workforce development and staff capacity building. Because the LWDB has developed a level of local trust, many partners share information about potential funding streams with the LWDB staff. The LWDB works closely with the local economic development corporations to remain current on economic designations and needs in the area which could affect eligibility for grant monies. Our vision of a responsive system, greater service of employers, increased outreach to education, and a prepared workforce is what leads the LWDB, the staff, and the communication throughout the public workforce system.

By guiding workforce investments to the skill needs of the employers, the local area will be able to accomplish its vision of people being self-sufficient, a growing economy, and a trained workforce that attracts business to the community.

1.5. Describe the development and implementation of sector initiatives for in-demand industry sectors or occupations for the region.

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The LWDB works closely and collaboratively with the state and local areas and economic development for the sustainability of existing businesses and the growth and creation of small, new and emerging industries. The LWDB continues to strengthen ties to economic development and supports all the local industry partnerships. The one stop centers also work closely with new and emerging industries, the LWDB, and economic development to determine and meet critical needs. By learning about workforce needs from data, economic development, and employers themselves, LWDB is able to better design workforce and training programs with service providers and educational entities. The collaboration allows a case management system that communicates employer needs across multiple entities and allows for the leveraging of resources to meet those needs. Ongoing efforts between economic development and the LWDB are crucial in order to achieve regional prosperity. A region that has a strong workforce that is adaptable to new technologies and has success in attracting business is better able to retain business. This will allow the community to grow. By working with business to determine their skill needs for existing and emerging employers to prepare for high-growth occupations, the local area is better prepared to work with the needs of under-skilled workers. Workers that are under-skilled can be assessed to their aptitudes and skills levels and then advised of career pathways. The workers are then presented with training opportunities as well as supportive services.

Partnerships include the Governor's Action Team (GAT), of Partnerships for Regional Economic Performance (PREP) which include the Small Business Development Center (SBDC), Northeast Pennsylvania Industrial Resource Center (NEPIRC), and county economic development partners among others offer support to meet the needs of employers and jobseekers. Partnerships also include a very successful collaboration with the Northeast PA Region and their three Local Workforce Development Areas. Please refer to section 4.14 of the Northern Tier Local Plan for further information and detail on this part.

Based on employment figures, the largest industries within the region area are Health Care, Public Administration, Manufacturing and Retail Trade. When reviewing figures for the largest average wages by industry, manufacturing, education, health care, and information technology have the largest salaries. Industries that have high location quotients in the area include manufacturing, health care, energy, and building and construction. Therefore, the NTWDB focuses on industry partnerships, the Next Gen model, and communication as a crucial strategy in identifying skills needs, promoting career pathways, matching jobseekers to available jobs and training. These focuses are on healthcare and manufacturing. In addition, the NTWDB utilizes the High Priority Occupation List when reviewing regional and sector strategies.

These strategies link to the state as Pennsylvania promotes a workforce system based on the needs of employers, promotes career pathways, promotes industry partnerships, plans to better connect jobseekers and employers, and wants to utilize the HPO List more effectively.

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The NTWDB cooperation with the Local Development District (LDD), the Northern Tier Regional Planning and Development Commission (NTRPDC), which is the agency housing services of both the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) and the LWDB, creates a partnership that is efficient and well-rounded. Employer outreach is necessary for both groups and the shared information helps identify challenges and develop solutions to those strategies. By further developing these partnerships, engagement is improved as well.

Our local system will enable us to embrace the Next Gen model of employer engagement. This comprehensive and holistic approach will enable better services for the healthcare, manufacturing and any other sectors deemed appropriate within our area.

1.6. Describe how the region will connect employer labor force requirements and occupational demands with the region's labor force, including individuals with barriers to employment.

Our goal is to enhance the ability of workforce development and lifelong learning systems to service the underemployed worker and those with additional barriers. This includes participating in dialog with agencies in the community who are the primary point of contact for those issues.

The communication and referrals between PA CareerLink® partners and the many different agencies assisting those with additional barriers is the key to providing a comprehensive system. These groups include, but are not limited to: the county assistance offices, community action agencies, probation offices and non-profits such as Serve Inc, Futures, YMCA, and Area Agency on Aging.

Engagement with business organizations like Chambers of Commerce and the Business Service Team (BST) help determine employer needs, whether the needs are based on recruitment, skills, turnover, etc. This valuable interaction comes in the form of group interaction, which also can lead to one-on-one meetings. These meetings provide guidance on occupations and needs, which lead to the development and/or determining training gaps and opportunities.

Continuously educating PA CareerLink® staff, service agencies and the community regarding the spectrum of available services both inside and out of the PA CareerLink® system is necessary to avoid duplication of services and maximize and leverage resources. The PA CareerLink® management team continuously examines ways to align the PA CareerLink® service delivery system to more directly address issues involving underemployment, business services, and service to special populations. This population includes dislocated workers including displaced homemakers, migrant/seasonal workers, TANF customers, veterans, minorities, women and those with additional barriers to employment including older individuals, ex-offenders, persons with disabilities and persons with limited English proficiency. The PA CareerLink® Management Team assists the LWDB in ensuring availability of employment and training services to these special populations. Services for these individuals are equal to any other including all of the PA

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CareerLink® workshops, one-on-one services with staff, testing, referral process, as well as online opportunities such as JobGateway.

PA CareerLink® partners from Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, Veterans, Trade and Department of Public Welfare assist in accessibility and availability to these populations. Each individual is assessed by PA CareerLink® staff and referred to appropriate services. Options for skills training are explored utilizing various partnerships with Educational Opportunity Center (EOC), Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR), school district guidance departments, post-secondary education provider admissions offices and the WIOA Title I program. These same partners will assist in outreach services directly to special populations, and involve reasonable efforts to include members of both sexes, various racial and ethnic groups, individuals with disabilities, and individuals in differing age groups. Such efforts may include, but are not limited to: Advertising provider programs and/or activities in media, such as newspapers or radio programs, that specifically target various populations; Sending notices about openings in the programs and/or activities to schools or community service groups that serve various populations; and Consulting with appropriate community service groups about ways in which the providers may improve its outreach and service to various populations.

1.7. Describe the coordination of transportation and other supportive services for the region.

The transportation issues related to workforce development revolve around the lack of a local or regional transportation system. The system that does exist visits most communities twice daily at most. Any workforce customer without a vehicle or driver's license must rely on others for a ride, or face extremely restrictive windows to get to the PA CareerLink®, training, or employment. While the system provides the best service possible under the circumstances, the financial hurdles and lack of demand makes expanding these systems extremely cost prohibitive. There is a ride-share, low-income, and senior transportation program which serves Bradford, Tioga and Sullivan Counties. All transportation providers are partners with the system.

The area plans to address the issue with an increase in the hub and spoke concept, which will send staff to other community partners on a regular basis that will extend the services without bricks and mortar. The Title I providers are going to begin traveling to community facilities, like libraries, where they can meet with customers and provide services.

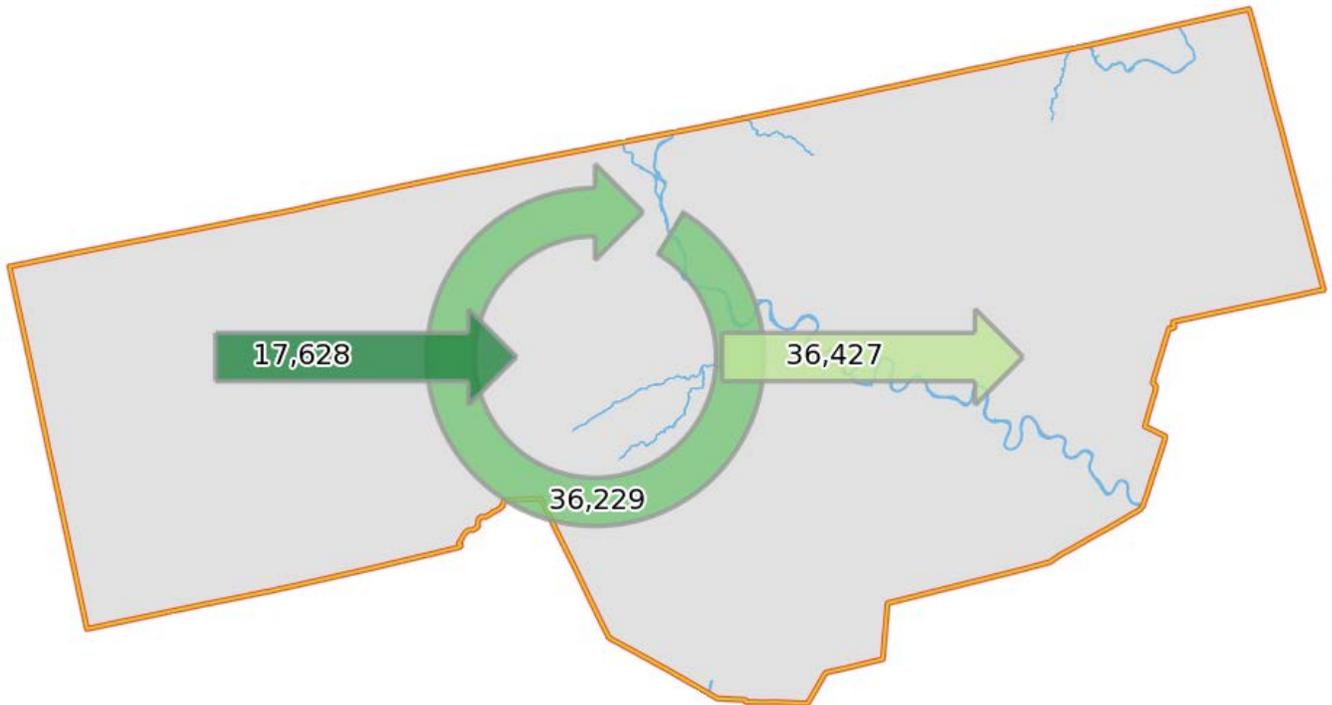
While the issues revolve around a lack of transportation opportunities, the following data and map outline the commuter patterns for the Northern Tier.

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Inflow/Outflow Report, Northern Tier County, 2013		
	2013	
	Count	Share
Selection Area Labor Market Size (Primary Jobs)		
Employed in the Selection Area	53,857	100.0%
Living in the Selection Area	72,656	134.9%
Net Job Inflow (+) or Outflow (-)	- 18,799	-
In-Area Labor Force Efficiency (Primary Jobs)		
Living in the Selection Area	72,656	100.0%
Living and Employed in the Selection Area	36,229	49.9%
Living in the Selection Area but Employed Outside	36,427	50.1%
In-Area Employment Efficiency (Primary Jobs)		
Employed in the Selection Area	53,857	100.0%
Employed and Living in the Selection Area	36,229	67.3%
Employed in the Selection Area but Living Outside	17,628	32.7%
Outflow Job Characteristics (Primary Jobs)		
External Jobs Filled by Residents	36,427	100.0%
Workers Aged 29 or younger	7,675	21.1%
Workers Aged 30 to 54	19,941	54.7%
Workers Aged 55 or older	8,811	24.2%
Workers Earning \$1,250 per month or less	7,386	20.3%
Workers Earning \$1,251 to \$3,333 per month	13,080	35.9%
Workers Earning More than \$3,333 per month	15,961	43.8%
Workers in the "Goods Producing" Industry Class	7,492	20.6%
Workers in the "Trade, Transportation, and Utilities" Industry Class	9,161	25.1%
Workers in the "All Other Services" Industry Class	19,774	54.3%
Inflow Job Characteristics (Primary Jobs)		
Internal Jobs Filled by Outside Workers	17,628	100.0%
Workers Aged 29 or younger	4,003	22.7%
Workers Aged 30 to 54	9,766	55.4%
Workers Aged 55 or older	3,859	21.9%
Workers Earning \$1,250 per month or less	3,521	20.0%
Workers Earning \$1,251 to \$3,333 per month	6,091	34.6%

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Workers Earning More than \$3,333 per month	8,016	45.5%
Workers in the "Goods Producing" Industry Class	5,489	31.1%
Workers in the "Trade, Transportation, and Utilities" Industry Class	4,315	24.5%
Workers in the "All Other Services" Industry Class	7,824	44.4%
Interior Flow Job Characteristics (Primary Jobs)		
Internal Jobs Filled by Residents	36,229	100.0%
Workers Aged 29 or younger	8,019	22.1%
Workers Aged 30 to 54	19,820	54.7%
Workers Aged 55 or older	8,390	23.2%
Workers Earning \$1,250 per month or less	8,296	22.9%
Workers Earning \$1,251 to \$3,333 per month	14,156	39.1%
Workers Earning More than \$3,333 per month	13,777	38.0%
Workers in the "Goods Producing" Industry Class	10,955	30.2%
Workers in the "Trade, Transportation, and Utilities" Industry Class	6,947	19.2%
Workers in the "All Other Services" Industry Class	18,327	50.6%
Source: U.S.Census Bureau, LED OnTheMap, 2013 Annual Average		



In-Commuting Patterns

Northern Tier Commuting Patterns					
<i>Where Workers Live Who Are Employed in Central PA</i>					
Home County	2011	2012	2013	Average	
				Count	Percent
Bradford County, PA	14,989	15,865	15,491	15,448	28.6%
Sullivan County, PA	1,134	1,172	1,072	1,126	2.1%
Susquehanna County, PA	6,680	6,824	6,804	6,769	12.5%
Tioga County, PA	9,353	9,083	8,452	8,963	16.6%
Wyoming County, PA	4,076	4,443	4,410	4,310	8.0%
Other Counties	16,991	17,630	17,628	17,416	32.2%
Total Jobs Held in REGION	53,223	55,017	53,857	54,032	100.0%

Northern Tier Commuting Patterns					
<i>Where Workers Live Who Are Employed in Central PA</i>					
Home County	2011	2012	2013	Average	
				Count	Percent
Northern Tier	36,232	37,387	36,229	36,616	67.8%
Luzerne County, PA	2,154	2,123	2,212	2,163	4.0%
Lackawanna County, PA	2,002	2,021	2,106	2,043	3.8%
Tioga County, NY	1,705	1,753	1,764	1,741	3.2%
Chemung County, NY	1,036	1,143	1,173	1,117	2.1%
Lycoming County, PA	1,127	999	1,040	1,055	2.0%
Other Counties	8,967	9,591	9,333	9,297	17.2%
Total Jobs Held in REGION	53,223	55,017	53,857	54,032	100.0%

- 1.8. *(Planning Regions Only)* Describe how the region established administrative cost arrangements, including the pooling of funds for administrative costs, as appropriate, for the region.

The planning region is a local area with administrative cost arrangements.

- 1.9. *(Planning Regions Only)* Describe the agreement between the local boards that describes how the planning region will collectively negotiate and reach agreement with the Department on local levels

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of performance for, and report on, the performance accountability measures described in section 116(c), for each of the local areas within the planning region.

The Northern Tier is a regional and local area, which already works across five counties and its local elected officials to meet performance and serve the area.

PY 2017-2019 WIOA Multi-Year Local Area Plan

Local Workforce Development Area name: Northern Tier

Effective Date: January 1, 2018

1. STRATEGIC PLANNING QUESTIONS: Local Area Workforce and Economic Analysis

Section 1.1

1.1. *Identify the composition of the local area's population and labor force.*

POPULATION

The population in the Northern Tier region is estimated to have declined since the 2010 census and is projected to continue to decline over the next five years, while the population in Pennsylvania is projected to grow slightly. The population is estimated to change from 182,663 to 177,272, resulting in a decline of 3.0% between 2010 and 2017. Over the next five years, the population is projected to continue to decline by 1.6%. The population in the state is estimated to change from 12,702,379 to 12,822,858, resulting in a growth of 0.9% between 2010 and 2017. Over the next five years, the population is projected to grow by 0.8%. All counties within the Northern Tier region are expected to experience decline over the next several years with Susquehanna County expected to experience the greatest percent decline (2.45%).

The current year median age for the region is 45.1, while the average age is 42.9. Five years from now, the median age is projected to be 45.4. Comparatively, the current year median age for the state is 40.9, while the average age is 41. Five years from now, the median age is projected to be 41.6. Sullivan County has the oldest population with the median age of 53.4, while Tioga County has the youngest with a median age of 43.2. Tioga County has the highest percentage of the population age 18 to 24 (10.4%).

Of the region's current year estimated population, 96.7% are White Alone, 0.9% are Black or African American Alone, 0.3% are American Indian and Alaska Nat. Alone, 0.6% are Asian Alone, 0.0% are Nat. Hawaiian and Other Pacific Isl. Alone, 0.4% are Some Other Race, and 1.2% are Two or More Races. The population of the state of Pennsylvania overall is more diverse: 79.8% are White Alone, 11.2% are Black or African American Alone, 0.2% are American Indian and Alaska Nat. Alone, 3.4% are Asian Alone, 0.0% are Nat. Hawaiian and Other Pacific Isl. Alone, 3.0% are Some Other Race, and 2.3% are Two or More Races. The region's current estimated Hispanic or Latino population is only 1.9%, while the state's current estimated Hispanic or Latino population is 7.2%. Sullivan County is the most diverse county in the region with 94.3% Caucasian, 3.6% African American, 2.1% another race.

HOUSEHOLDS

The number of households in the region has been declining since 2010 and is projected to continue to decline over the next five years. The number of households in the region is estimated to change from 73,860 to 72,906, resulting in a decline of 1.3% between 2010 and 2017. Over the next five years, the number of households is projected to decrease 0.8%. Comparatively, the number of household in the state is estimated to change from 5,018,904 to 5,099,166, resulting in an increase of 1.6% between 2010 and 2017. Over the next five years, the number of households in the state is projected to increase by 1.1%.

EDUCATION

Currently, it is estimated that 4.8% of the population age 25 and over in the Northern Tier region had earned a Master's Degree, 0.9% had earned a Professional School Degree, 0.7% had earned a Doctorate Degree and 11.3% had earned a Bachelor's Degree. In comparison, for the state, it is estimated that for the population over age 25, 8.0% had earned a Master's Degree, 1.8% had earned a Professional School Degree, 1.4% had earned a Doctorate Degree and 17.3% had earned a Bachelor's Degree. Bradford County has the highest percentage of the population who does not have a high school diploma or GED (12.2%) and Tioga County has the highest percentage with a Bachelor's degree or greater (19.7%).

INCOME

The average household income is estimated to be \$66,792 in 2017, which is lower when compared to the state, which is estimated to be \$77,812 for the same time frame. The average household income in the region is projected to change over the next five years, from \$66,792 to \$72,776. While the average household income in the state is projected to change over the next five years, from \$77,812 to \$84,180.

HOUSING

Most of the dwellings in the region (75.9%) are estimated to be Owner-Occupied in 2017, which is higher than the state (69.5%). One third of housing units in the region (31.4%) are estimated to have been built between 1939 or Earlier in 2017, which is comparable to the state (25.7%). Bradford (25.9%) and Tioga (25.2%) Counties have the highest percentage of residents who rent.

EMPLOYMENT

For the region, the employment status of the population age 16 and over is as follows: 53.7% are employed civilians (compared to 57.7% for Pennsylvania overall), 4.3% are unemployed civilians (vs. 5.0% for the state), and 42.0% are not in the labor force (vs. 37.3% for the state overall).

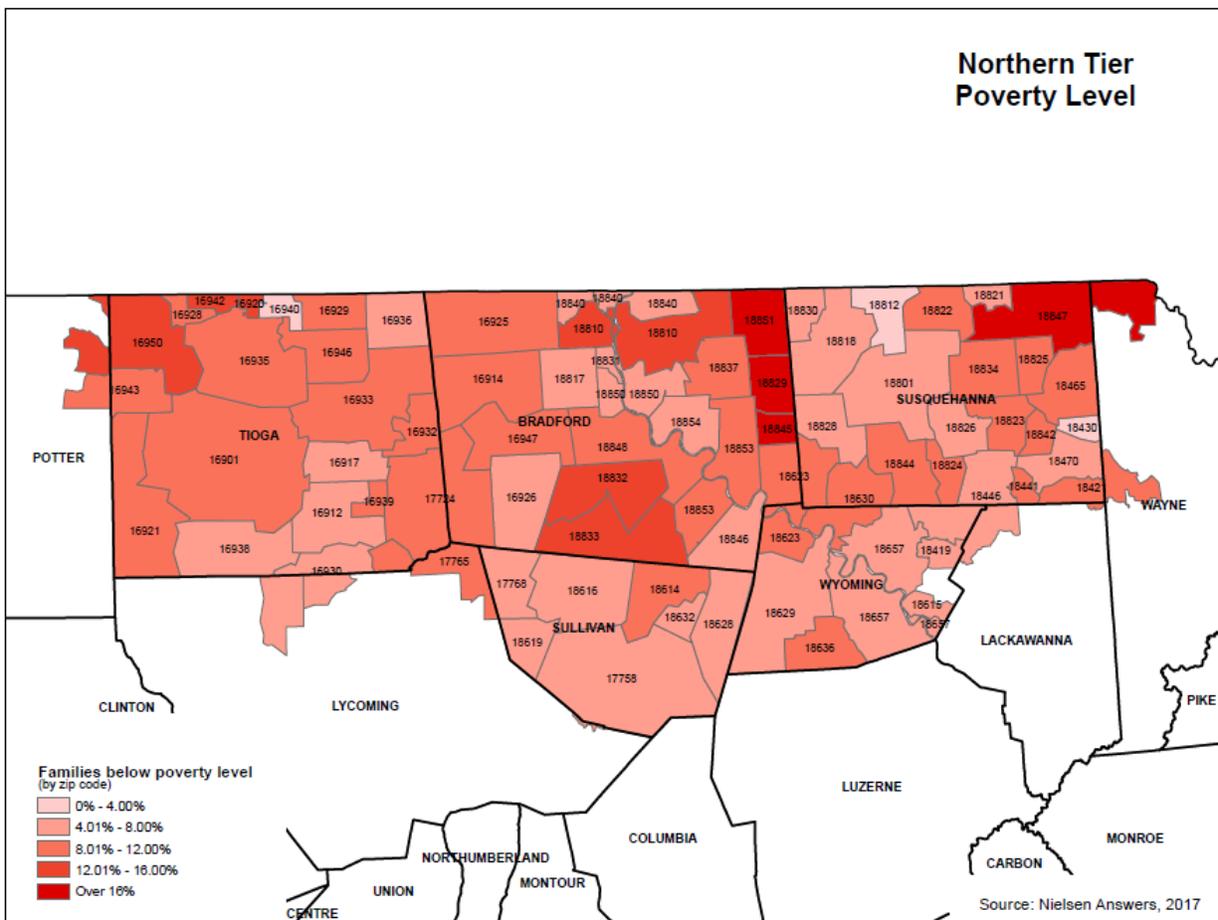
The occupational classification for the region include: 32.8% hold blue collar occupations (compared to 21.3% for the state overall), 49.5% hold white collar occupations (vs. 60.6% for the state), and 17.6% are employed as service & farm workers (vs. 18.1% for the state).

For the civilian employed population age 16 and over in region, it is estimated that they are employed in the following occupational categories: 13.1% are in Office and Administrative Support (comparable to the state rate), 11.1% are in Transportation and Moving (compared to a PA rate of 7.1%), 9.6% are in Production (vs. 6.4% for the state overall), 9.1% are in Sales and Related Services (vs. 10.3% for PA), 8.1% are in Management (vs. 9.2% for PA), 7.3% are in Construction and Extraction (compared to a PA rate of 4.6%), , 5.4% are Healthcare Practitioners and Technicians (vs. 6.9% for the state), 5.2% are in Education, Training and Libraries (vs. 5.9% for PA), , 5.2% are in Food Preparation and Serving (vs. 5.8% for the state), 4.8% are in Maintenance and Repair (vs. 3.3% for the state), 4.0% are in Building and Grounds Maintenance (vs. 3.6% for the state), 3.2% are in Personal Care Services (compared to 3.5% for PA), 2.7% are in Business and Financial Operations (compared to a PA rate of 4.7%), 2.7% are in Healthcare Support (2.8% PA), 1.7% are in Community and Social Services (2.0% PA),

1.5% are in Architecture and Engineering (vs. PA rate of 1.7%), 1.1% are in Farming, Fishing and Forestry (vs. 0.5% for PA), 1.5% are in Protective Services (2.0% for PA), 0.9% are in Computers and Mathematics (2.5% for PA), 0.7% are in Arts, Entertainment and Sports (vs. 1.6% for PA), 0.6% are in Life, Physical and Social Sciences (compared to PA rate of 1.0%), and 0.6% are in Legal Services occupations (vs. 1.1% for the state overall).

POPULATIONS WITH BARRIERS

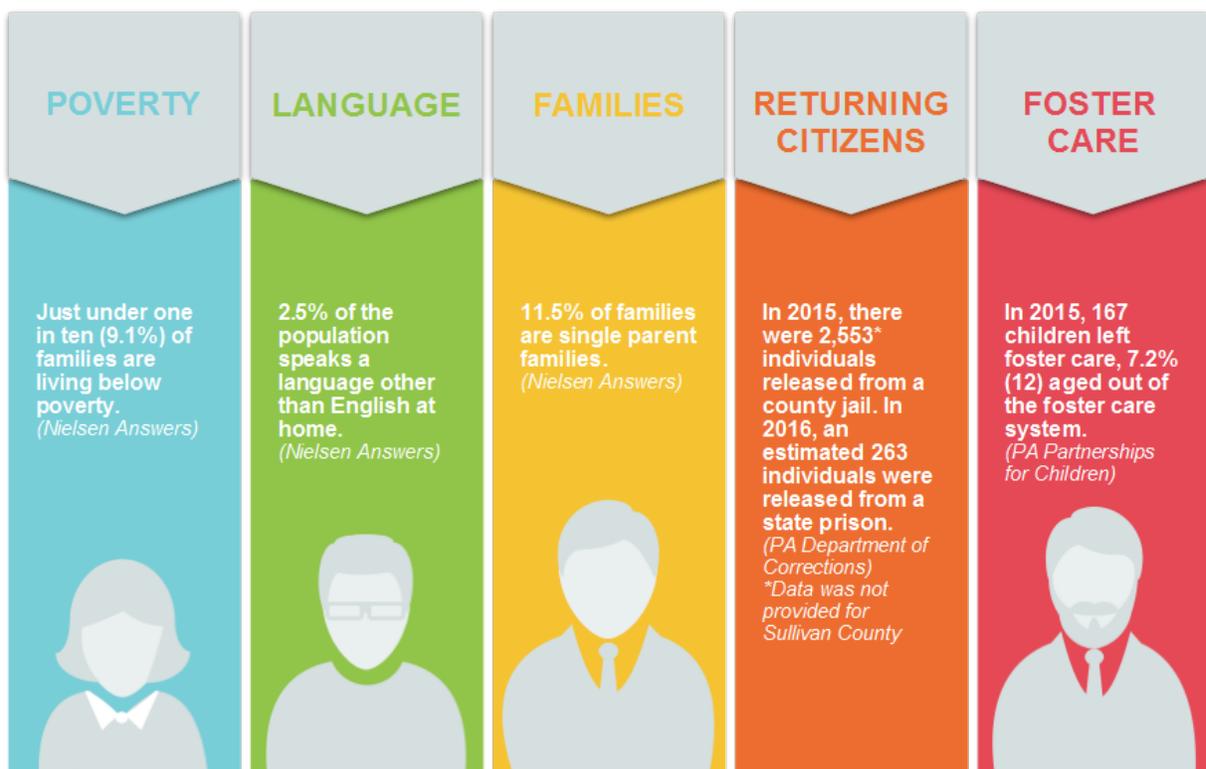
Among the factors that often contribute to poverty are unemployment and underemployment. Many people live in poverty because they are unable to find a job that pays a living wage or to find a job at all. When looking at the region, 9.1% of families are living in poverty. There is a portion of Bradford County (Warren Center, Le Raysville, and Stevensville) and Susquehanna County (Susquehanna) with poverty levels greater than 20%. Bradford County (9.8%) has the highest percentage of families living in poverty. Single parents are more likely to be living in poverty, with 11.5% of households in the county considered single parent households. Bradford (12.2%) and Wyoming (11.8%) Counties have the highest percentage of single parent households.



According to the Urban Institute, most individuals released from prison held some type of job prior to incarceration and want legal, stable employment upon release. Some criminal justice research suggests that finding and maintaining a legitimate job can reduce former prisoners' chances of

reoffending, and the higher the wage, the less likely it is that individuals will return to crime. However, most former prisoners experience difficulty finding a job after release. During the time spent in prison, many lose work skills and are given little opportunity to gain useful work experience. Moreover, the availability of job training programs in prison has declined in recent years. A large proportion of former prisoners have low levels of educational attainment and work experience, health problems, and other personal characteristics that make them hard to employ. Once in the community, not only are many employers reluctant to hire convicted felons, but many former prisoners are legally barred from certain occupations. In the Northern Tier region overall, in 2016 there were 263 individuals released from a state prison and in 2015 there were 2,553 released from a county prison (data not available for Sullivan County). Bradford County had the largest number released from a state (100) or county prison (1,148).

Research obtained from Children’s Rights has shown that youth who age out of foster care are less likely than youth in the general population to graduate from high school and are less likely to attend or graduate college. By age 26, approximately 80% of young people who aged out of foster care earned at least a high school degree or GED compared to 94% in the general population. By age 26, 4% of youth who aged out of foster care had earned a 4-year college degree, while 36% of youth in the general population had done so. In the region, approximately 12 children age out of foster care each year.



According to the Division for Social Policy and Development Disability, in developing countries, 80% to 90% of persons with disabilities of working age are unemployed, whereas in industrialized countries the figure is between 50% and 70%. Persons with disabilities are frequently not considered potential members of the workforce. Perception, fear, myth and prejudice continue to limit understanding and

acceptance of disability in workplaces everywhere. Myths abound, including that persons with disabilities are unable to work and that accommodating a person with a disability in the workplace is expensive. Contrary to these notions, many companies have found that persons with disabilities are more than capable.

When looking at the region, 6.0% of those employed have a disability, while 12.0% of those unemployed have a disability. In the region, unemployment is 77.3% higher for those with a disability (11.9%) compare to those without a disability (6.7%). Sullivan County has the largest percentage of individuals with a disability who are working (9.1%) and Wyoming County (19.8%) has the highest percentage of individuals with a disability who are unemployed. There are also 6,937 students receiving services through the local Intermediate Units, with over half (56.0%) of those students having a learning disability, 11.1% have an intellectual disability, 0.2% have a speech/language impairment, 10.8% have emotional disturbances, 15.6% have health implications and 6.3% have autism.

According to Youth. Gov., the high social and economic costs of teen pregnancy and childbearing can have short- and long-term negative consequences for teen parents, their children, and their community. Through recent research, it has been recognized that pregnancy and childbirth have a significant impact on educational outcomes of teen parents.

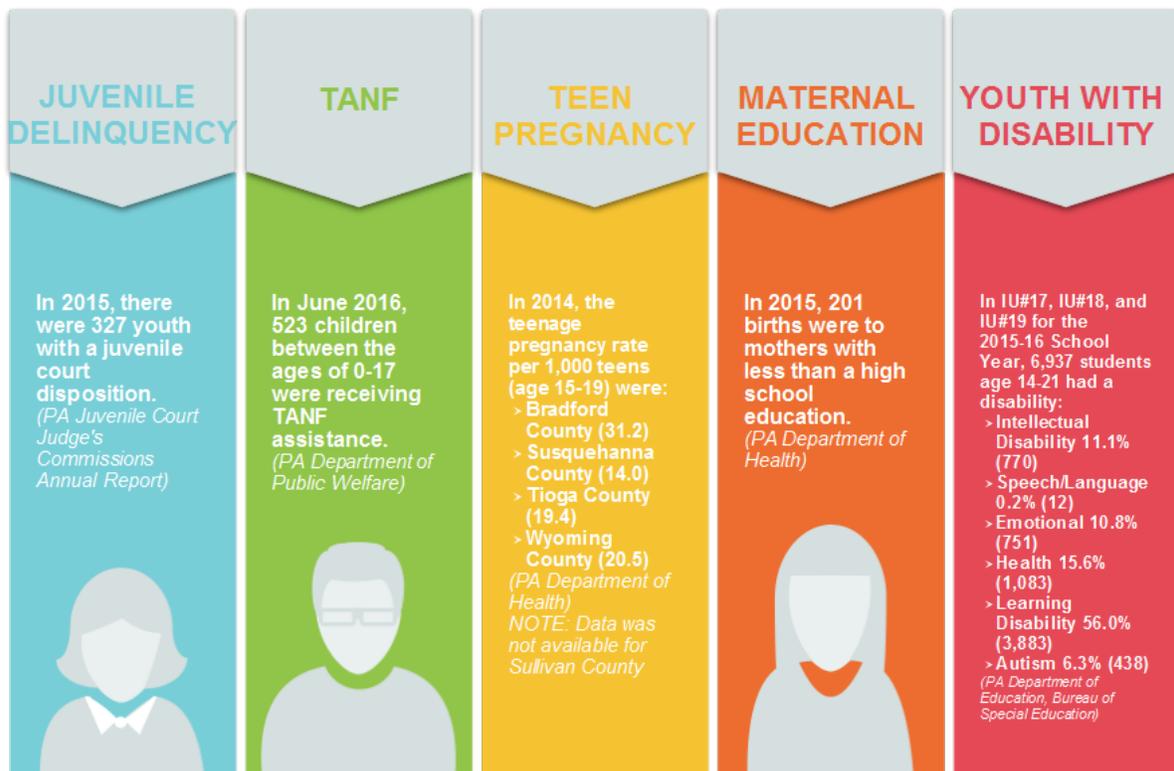
1. By age 22, only around 50 percent of teen mothers have received a high school diploma and only 30 percent have earned a General Education Development (GED) certificate, whereas 90 percent of women who did not give birth during adolescence receive a high school diploma.
2. Only about 10 percent of teen mothers complete a two- or four-year college program.
3. Teen fathers have a 25 to 30 percent lower probability of graduating from high school than teenage boys who are not fathers.

Children who are born to teen mothers also experience a wide range of problems. For example, they are more likely to:

- have a higher risk for low birth weight and infant mortality;
- have lower levels of emotional support and cognitive stimulation;
- have fewer skills and be less prepared to learn when they enter kindergarten;
- have behavioral problems and chronic medical conditions;
- rely more heavily on publicly funded health care;
- have higher rates of foster care placement;
- be incarcerated at some time during adolescence;
- have lower school achievement and drop out of high school;
- give birth as a teen; and
- be unemployed or underemployed as a young adult.

These immediate and long-lasting effects continue for teen parents and their children even after adjusting for the factors that increased the teen's risk for pregnancy—e.g., growing up in poverty, having parents with low levels of education, growing up in a single-parent family, and having low attachment to and performance in school. Teen pregnancy costs U.S. taxpayers about \$11 billion per year due to increased health care and foster care, increased incarceration rates among children of teen parents, and lost tax revenue because of lower educational attainment and income among teen mothers. Some recent cost studies estimate that the cost may be as high as \$28 billion per year or an average of \$5,500 for each teen parent. The majority of this cost is associated with teens who give birth before age 18.

According to the PA Department of Health in 2014, the teenage pregnancy rate for the Northern Tier Region ranges between a low of 14.0 for Susquehanna County (which was significantly lower when compared to the state, 27.2), to a high of 31.2 in Bradford County. The rate is not calculated for Sullivan County due to small numbers. There were 523 children between the ages of 0 and 17 receiving TANF Assistance in 2016, 327 youth had a juvenile disposition in 2015, and there were 201 births to mothers with less than a high school education. Bradford County has the highest teenage pregnancy (3.3%) and percentage of children born to mothers with less than a high school education (13.9%). Tioga County has the highest percentage receiving TANF Assistance (1.7%).



According to the National Coalition for the Homeless, meaningful and sustainable employment is the key to creating and maintaining housing stability. Unemployment, underemployment, and low wages relative to rent are frequent causes of homelessness and burden millions of families with the risk of becoming homeless. At the same time, individuals experiencing homelessness face obstacles to finding and maintaining employment.

The Point-in-Time (PIT) count is a count of sheltered and unsheltered homeless persons on a single night in January. HUD requires that Continuums of Care conduct an annual count of homeless persons who are sheltered in emergency shelter, transitional housing, and Safe Havens on a single night. Continuums of Care also must conduct a count of unsheltered homeless persons every other year (odd numbered years). In 2015, there were 50 individuals counted in the region. Data was not available for Sullivan County and there were no homeless individuals counted in Susquehanna County.

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act defines youth homelessness as:

- Children sharing housing due to economic hardship or loss of housing;
- Children living in "motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camp grounds due to lack of alternative accommodations";
- Children living in "emergency or transitional shelters";
- Children whose primary nighttime residence is not ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation (e.g. park benches, etc.); and
- Children living in "cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations".

In 2016, there were 155 students in the region who met the McKinney-Vento definition of homeless. Sullivan and Wyoming Counties are too small to report any homeless youth; Bradford County has the highest rate per 1,000 students (10.8).



EMPLOYMENT

Almost all of the largest occupations had a reduction in the number of jobs from 2015 to 2016. The fastest growing occupations are in health care and animal slaughtering.

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Largest Occupations

Occupation	2015 Jobs	2016 Jobs	Change in Jobs (2015-2016)	% Change	2015 Median Hourly Earnings
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	2,213	1,916	-297	-13%	\$19.51
Cashiers	2,165	2,108	-57	-3%	\$8.58
Retail Salespersons	1,711	1,699	-12	-1%	\$10.15
Office Clerks, General	1,346	1,303	-44	-3%	\$12.39
Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	1,329	1,280	-49	-4%	\$13.91
Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food	1,180	1,181	1	0%	\$8.63
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	1,099	1,066	-33	-3%	\$13.79
Registered Nurses	1,097	1,096	-1	0%	\$26.50
Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	1,088	1,113	25	2%	\$10.62
Construction Laborers	1,041	892	-149	-14%	\$15.21

Fastest Growing Occupations

Occupation	2015 Jobs	2016 Jobs	Change in Jobs (2015-2016)	% Change	2015 Median Hourly Earnings
Personal Care Aides	902	939	37	4%	\$9.55
Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	1,088	1,113	25	2%	\$10.62
Home Health Aides	460	479	19	4%	\$8.87

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Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedics	125	141	16	13%	\$12.41
Farmworkers and Laborers, Crop, Nursery, and Greenhouse	290	305	15	5%	\$10.95
Slaughterers and Meat Packers	219	230	11	5%	\$11.07
Meat, Poultry, and Fish Cutters and Trimmers	149	160	10	7%	\$11.85
Team Assemblers	411	421	10	2%	\$11.71
Nursing Assistants	815	825	10	1%	\$12.50
Social and Human Service Assistants	190	199	9	5%	\$12.33

Opportunity Occupations

Opportunity Occupations are employment opportunities that are generally considered accessible to someone without a bachelor’s degree and that pays at least the national annual median wage, adjusted for differences in local consumption prices. There are several in the region that only require a high school diploma; although most are part of an apprenticeship program or require on the job training and experience.

SOC	Description	2016 Jobs	2021 Jobs	2016 - 2021 Change	2016 - 2021 % Change	Annual Openings	COL Adjusted Avg. Hourly Earnings	Typical Entry Level Education
41-4012	Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Except Technical and Scientific Products	533	545	12	2%	14	\$27.52	High school diploma or equivalent
47-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Construction Trades and Extraction Workers	390	429	39	10%	15	\$31.59	High school diploma or equivalent
47-2151	Pipelayers	33	42	9	27%	2	\$26.04	No formal educational credential
47-5013	Service Unit Operators, Oil, Gas, and Mining	147	191	44	30%	15	\$26.10	No formal educational credential
49-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Mechanics, Installers, and Repairers	267	275	8	3%	7	\$27.10	High school diploma or equivalent
49-9051	Electrical Power-Line Installers and Repairers	142	155	13	9%	9	\$32.02	High school diploma or equivalent
51-8092	Gas Plant Operators	32	39	7	22%	3	\$26.62	High school diploma or equivalent
53-1031	First-Line Supervisors of Transportation and Material-Moving Machine and Vehicle Operators	141	149	8	6%	6	\$28.90	High school diploma or equivalent

Source: EMSI, 2017

Occupations related to the Oil and Gas industry are declining while those related to Motor Vehicle Parts Manufacturing, Animal Slaughtering and Vocational Rehabilitation Services are increasing. While Heavy and Tractor Trailer Truck Drivers is a declining occupation, it continues to be the top posted position.

Growing & Declining Industries

Industry	Change in Jobs (2015-2016)	
Other Motor Vehicle Parts Manufacturing	95	
Animal (except Poultry) Slaughtering	66	
Vocational Rehabilitation Services	50	
Specialized Freight (except Used Goods) Trucking, Local	-230	
Oil and Gas Pipeline and Related Structures Construction	-264	
Support Activities for Oil and Gas Operations	-429	

Growing & Declining Occupations

Occupation	Change in Jobs (2015-2016)	
Personal Care Aides	37	
Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	25	
Home Health Aides	19	
Operating Engineers and Other Construction Equipment Operators	-119	
Construction Laborers	-149	
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	-297	

Key Sectors

The following sectors account for the largest amount of jobs in the region.



Health Care and Social Assistance

- Employs the highest number of jobs and is projected to continue to grow (currently employs 29% above the national average and pays almost \$3,000 less on average)
- Registered Nurses is a top occupation in the region as well as a top job posting
- Employs the highest paying occupations
- Personal Care Aides and Home Health Aides, Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedics, Nursing Assistants and Social and Human Service Assistants are among the fastest growing occupations
- Registered Nurse, Nurse Practitioner, Licensed Practical Nurse, Licensed Vocational Nurse, Patient Technician and Certified Nursing Assistant are among the top certifications requested by employers
- Currently training just enough nurses to meet employment demand

Government (including education, criminal justice and safety/protection services)

- One of the largest employing industries in the region and is projected to decline over the next several years (currently employs 5% below the national average, with wages almost \$10,000 less)
- Teaching, military, and law enforcement occupations make up the majority of employment opportunities in this sector
- Accounts for the largest amount of the regions imports
- Currently not enough students graduating from regional training providers with education related degrees to meet employment demand
- Commuters are leaving the region for employment opportunities in this sector

Manufacturing

- One of the top employing industries in the region and employs 83% above the national average (although has been declining and is projected to continue to decline)
- Wages are, on average, \$16,000 less when compared to the nation

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- Motor Vehicle Parts Manufacturing is a growing industry
- Team Assemblers is among the fastest growing occupations
- Accounts for the largest amount of the regions exports
- Sanitary Paper Product Manufacturing (LQ 167.52) accounts for the heaviest concentration in the region
- Currently not graduating enough trained workers to meet employment demand

Retail Trade

- Has been declining but it projected to continue to grow over the next few years, (currently employs 17% above the national average)
- Cashiers and Retail Salespersons are among the largest occupations. They are also among the top-posted occupations along with First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers and Customer Service Representatives.
- Commuters are leaving the region for employment

Location Quotient

The region is heavily clustered with Manufacturing and Mining and Quarrying industries. The region is heavily clustered in:

- Sanitary Paper Product Manufacturing
- Dimensions Stone Mining and Quarrying
- Secondary Smelting, Refining, and Alloying of Nonferrous Metals (except Copper and Aluminum)

NAICS	Description	2016 Location Quotient	Avg Earnings Per Job	COL Adjusted Total Current Earnings (COL Index 103.0)	2016 Payrolled Business Locations	Competitive Effect	2016 Jobs	2015 - 2016 Change	2015 - 2016 % Change	2016 Total Demand
322291	Sanitary Paper Product Manufacturing	167.52	\$89,641	\$87,030	2	(11)	1,917	(21)	(1%)	\$9,163,321
212311	Dimension Stone Mining and Quarrying	152.39	\$49,085	\$47,655	50	21	485	27	6%	\$4,676,057
331492	Secondary Smelting, Refining, and Alloying of Nonferrous Metal (except Copper and Aluminum)	106.59	\$80,465	\$78,121	2	(50)	435	(65)	(13%)	\$16,576,516
321219	Reconstituted Wood Product Manufacturing	69.89	\$61,186	\$59,404	1	(35)	388	(27)	(7%)	\$4,417,444
212319	Other Crushed and Broken Stone Mining and Quarrying	67.73	\$55,802	\$54,177	17	13	212	25	13%	\$6,318,332
321211	Hardwood Veneer and Plywood Manufacturing	46.59	\$39,716	\$38,559	2	25	284	20	8%	\$3,792,261
325992	Photographic Film, Paper, Plate, and Chemical Manufacturing	45.09	\$94,146	\$91,404	1	7	214	(10)	(4%)	\$2,966,636
331511	Iron Foundries	36.19	\$75,095	\$72,908	2	(11)	538	(47)	(8%)	\$1,958,841
327212	Other Pressed and Blown Glass and Glassware Manufacturing	27.20	\$89,626	\$87,015	1	(8)	178	(5)	(3%)	\$1,545,837
213115	Support Activities for Nonmetallic Minerals (except Fuels) Mining	23.75	\$42,627	\$41,385	3	(8)	28	(8)	(22%)	\$315,189
331410	Nonferrous Metal (except Aluminum) Smelting and Refining	20.78	\$92,041	\$89,360	1	(16)	75	(21)	(22%)	\$25,178,522
311611	Animal (except Poultry) Slaughtering	20.01	\$55,487	\$53,871	4	65	1,103	66	6%	\$84,444,403
321911	Wood Window and Door Manufacturing	19.63	\$40,333	\$39,159	1	(12)	391	2	1%	\$8,394,215
212399	All Other Nonmetallic Mineral Mining	18.99	\$55,064	\$53,460	3	10	30	9	43%	\$943,101
332117	Powder Metallurgy Part Manufacturing	16.58	\$41,918	\$40,697	2	7	60	7	13%	\$644,559
423320	Brick, Stone, and Related Construction Material Merchant Wholesalers	15.10	\$54,872	\$53,273	18	(11)	345	3	1%	\$5,115,363
333244	Printing Machinery and Equipment Manufacturing	13.98	\$100,894	\$97,956	1	(1)	43	(1)	(2%)	\$720,409
486210	Pipeline Transportation of Natural Gas	10.81	\$109,467	\$106,279	6	11	129	10	8%	\$5,639,909
321999	All Other Miscellaneous Wood Product Manufacturing	10.73	\$50,483	\$49,013	3	8	128	10	8%	\$3,388,825
211111	Crude Petroleum and Natural Gas Extraction	10.49	\$137,625	\$133,617	14	57	742	6	1%	\$49,217,981

The current key workforce priorities of the Northern Tier Workforce Development Board are to:

- Strengthen the system's impact on the secondary school system which will increase awareness of job opportunities, necessary skills, PA CareerLink®, and help create a youth talent pipeline.

The WDB is working with local training providers to ensure that there is an adequate supply of trained workers for these high priority occupations.

2017 High Priority Occupations for Northern Tier Workforce Development Area

SOC Code	SOC Title	Educational Attainment	Wages (2016)			Employment			
			Entry Level	Annual Average	Exper. Level	Estimated 2014	Projected 2024	Percent Change	Annual Openings
13-2011	Accountants & Auditors	BD	\$28,900	\$54,630	\$67,490	370	400	8.1%	12
17-2112	Industrial Engineers	BD	\$63,360	\$98,470	\$116,030	400	380	-5.0%	12
25-2022	Middle School Teachers	BD+	\$54,720	\$65,120	\$70,320	360	360	0.0%	8
29-1141	Registered Nurses	BD	\$44,130	\$59,250	\$66,810	1,230	1,370	11.4%	43
29-2061	Licensed Practical & Licensed Vocational Nurses	PS	\$31,620	\$40,820	\$45,420	360	390	8.3%	13
31-1014	Nursing Assistants	PS	\$21,930	\$27,850	\$30,810	990	1,130	14.1%	36
41-1011	Supervisors - Retail Sales Workers	WK EXP	\$28,360	\$44,660	\$52,810	640	670	4.7%	16
43-3031	Bookkeeping, Accounting & Auditing Clerks	PS+	\$23,910	\$33,300	\$38,000	910	840	-7.7%	9
43-6014	Secretaries	ST OJT	\$21,300	\$30,680	\$35,370	1,220	1,220	0.0%	13
45-2091	Agricultural Equipment Operators	ST OJT	N/A	N/A	N/A	170	190	11.8%	7
47-2031	Carpenters	LT OJT	\$26,650	\$39,370	\$45,730	610	670	9.8%	13
47-2073	Operating Engineers & Other Construction Equipment Operators	MT OJT	\$28,380	\$41,370	\$47,870	860	950	10.5%	22
47-4011	Construction & Building Inspectors	WK EXP	N/A	N/A	N/A	190	220	15.8%	8
47-4051	Highway Maintenance Workers	MT OJT	\$27,360	\$36,890	\$41,660	370	370	0.0%	10
49-3021	Automotive Body & Related Repairers	LT OJT	\$20,880	\$34,360	\$41,090	210	230	9.5%	7
49-3023	Automotive Service Technicians & Mechanics	PS	\$23,630	\$32,210	\$36,510	650	670	3.1%	20
49-3031	Bus & Truck Mechanics & Diesel Engine Specialists	LT OJT	\$30,110	\$38,780	\$43,110	340	370	8.8%	8
49-9041	Industrial Machinery Mechanics	LT OJT	\$37,180	\$52,020	\$59,430	240	300	25.0%	11
49-9071	Maintenance & Repair Workers, General	LT OJT	\$23,450	\$34,810	\$40,490	730	780	6.8%	24
51-1011	Supervisors - Production & Operating Workers	WK EXP	\$37,640	\$58,270	\$68,590	970	940	-3.1%	15
51-4121	Welders, Cutters, Solderers & Brazers	MT OJT	\$32,690	\$44,150	\$49,890	180	210	16.7%	8
53-3021	Bus Drivers, Transit & Intercity	MT OJT	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
53-3022	Bus Drivers, School or Special Client	ST OJT	N/A	N/A	N/A	420	430	2.4%	7
53-3032	Heavy & Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	PS	\$33,100	\$45,170	\$51,210	2,140	2,310	7.9%	54
53-7051	Industrial Truck & Tractor Operators	ST OJT	\$27,190	\$39,220	\$45,240	380	400	5.3%	12

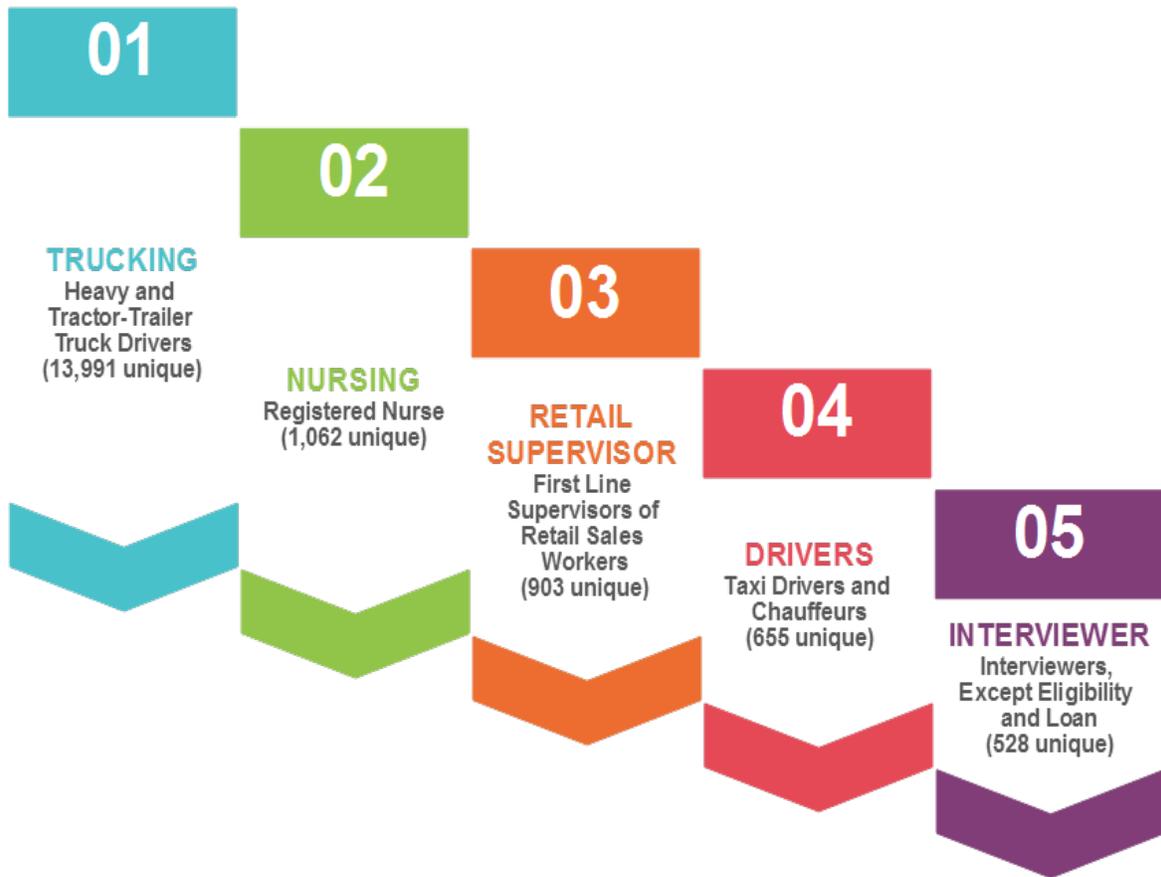
Source: CWIA, 2017

- Strengthen relationships with economic development and education partners

Source: EMSI, 2017

- Strengthen the relationships between the PA CareerLink® and the business community
- Ensure the workforce development system meets the needs of its customers, both businesses and jobseeker

Between December 2016 and May 2017 Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers was the most frequently posted position in the region.



Source: EMSI, 2017

Based on the job postings in the region, Recruitment, Driving and Training are sought after hard skills while, Project Management, Leading and Leadership are the top soft skills. Top requested certifications include: Commercial Driver's License (CDL), Registered Nurse, and Licensed Practical Nurse.

Top Hard Skills	
Skill	Postings with Skill
Recruitment	16,285
Driving	13,226
Training	10,951
Cargos	6,839
Insurance	6,839
Sales	6,790
Road Transport	6,769
Cleaning	5,259
Management	5,181
Customer Service	5,072

Source: EMSI, 2017

Top Soft Skills

Skill	Postings with Skill
Scheduling (Project Management)	9,157
Leading	1,877
Leadership	1,750
Cleanliness	649
Learning	634
Ethics	611
Coordinating	556
Listening	388
Mental Health	319
Creativity	241

Source: EMSI, 2017

Top Certifications

Certification	Postings with Certification
Commercial Driver's License (CDL)	19,423
Registered Nurse	2,644
Licensed Practical Nurse	1,159
Nurse Practitioner	411
Licensed Vocational Nurses	300
Board Certified	269
Certified Nursing Assistant	217
Patient Care Technician	118
Certified Benefits Professional	93
ANCC Certified	66

Source: EMSI, 2017

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According to the Pennsylvania State Data Center when looking at the number of occupations by industry for 2005 to 2015, Bradford County saw the greatest growth in Mining/Quarrying/Oil and Gas (1,278.8%) and Real Estate/Rental/Leasing (287.5%). Wyoming County saw the greatest decline in Healthcare/Social Assistance (-50.3%).

Industry	Fastest Growing		Fastest Declining	
	County	Change	County	Change
Accommodation/Food Services	Greene	95.5%	Wayne	-38.4%
Admin./Support/Waste/Remediation	Warren	571.4%	Clinton	-67.4%
Ag./Forest/Fishing/Hunting	Centre	387.5%	Cumberland	-83.3%
Arts/Entertainment/Recreation	Philadelphia	147.1%	Wayne	-78.0%
Construction	Greene	238.9%	Monroe	-48.2%
Educational Services	Columbia	237.7%	Jefferson	-65.2%
Finance/Insurance	Montour	83.6%	Venango	-51.8%
Healthcare/Social Assistance	Snyder	76.5%	Wyoming	-50.3%
Information	Greene	90.5%	Wayne	-55.9%
Manufacturing	Juniata	20.9%	Huntingdon	-49.5%
Mgmt. of Companies/Enterprises	Jefferson	534.0%	Union	-44.9%
Mining/Quarrying/Oil & Gas	Bradford	1,278.8%	Bucks	-67.1%
Other Services	Butler	35.6%	Dauphin	-29.0%
Professional/Scientific/Technical	Butler	193.3%	Lawrence	-36.4%
Real Estate/Rental/Leasing	Bradford	287.5%	Somerset	-77.3%
Retail Trade	Greene	122.6%	Armstrong	-29.4%
Transportation/Warehousing	Columbia	188.8%	Monroe	-68.1%
Utilities	Indiana	60.3%	Washington	-52.1%
Wholesale Trade	Armstrong	175.9%	Montour	-83.3%

Source: Pennsylvania State Data Center, State of Industry, 2017

When looking at location quotient data available from EMSI 2017:

- Sanitary Paper Product Manufacturing is most dominant in Wyoming County (LQ 992.60)
- Dimension Stone Mining and Quarrying is most dominant in Susquehanna County (LQ 647.39)

When looking at the largest occupations in the individual counties within the Northern Tier Region. The following table shows the largest number of occupations in each county:

- Wyoming County has the largest occupation with the highest wage
- Bradford, Susquehanna and Tioga Counties all have Cashiers as the largest occupation

Largest Occupations				
County	Occupation	2016 # Jobs	2021 Projected # Jobs	2015 Median Hourly Earnings
Bradford	Cashier	788	819	\$8.68

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Sullivan	Nursing Assistants	107	142	\$13.87
Susquehanna	Cashier	398	382	\$9.06
Tioga	Cashier	505	493	\$8.27
Wyoming	Paper Goods Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders	735	645	\$19.24

Source: EMSI, 2017

When looking at the fastest growing occupations in the individual counties within the Northern Tier Region. The following table shows the occupation with the largest increase in the number of occupations over the next 5 years in each county:

- Bradford County has the largest number of projected jobs for the fastest growing occupations with the highest wages
- Tioga and Wyoming Counties both have Retail Salespersons as the fastest growing occupation

Fastest Growing Occupations				
County	Occupation	2016 # Jobs	2021 Projected # Jobs	2015 Median Hourly Earnings
Bradford	Heavy and Tractor Trailer Truck Drivers	770	858	\$19.56
Sullivan	Home Health Aides	79	115	\$8.30
Susquehanna	Construction Laborers	248	280	\$14.96
Tioga	Retail Salesperson	478	515	\$10.28
Wyoming	Retail Salesperson	238	283	\$10.92

Source: EMSI, 2017

The following table illustrates the industry that accounts for the largest percentage of employment in each county within the Northern Tier Region.

- Healthcare and Social Assistance account for the highest percentage of occupations in Bradford, Sullivan and Susquehanna Counties (although wages vary drastically by county)

Employment By Industry				
County	Industry	# Jobs	% Jobs	2016 Annual Average Wage
Bradford	Healthcare and Social Assistance	5,587	24.0%	\$51,576
Sullivan	Healthcare and Social Assistance	404	24.5%	\$34,777
Susquehanna	Healthcare and Social Assistance	1,307	14.4%	\$29,590
Tioga	Manufacturing	2,006	15.8%	\$46,344
Wyoming	Retail Trade	1,216	12.5%	\$25,255

Source: Center for Workforce Information and Analysis, 2017

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The areas experiencing growth and decline vary by county and in some cases occupations are growing in one county are declining in another.

County	Fastest Growing Occupation	Fastest Growing Industry
Bradford	Nursing Assistant	Animal (except poultry) Slaughtering
Sullivan	Maintenance and Repair Workers General	Offices of Real Estate Agents and Brokers
Susquehanna	Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, including Fast Food	Limited Service Restaurants
Tioga	Personal Care Aides	Other Motor Vehicle Parts Manufacturing
Wyoming	Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	Vocational Rehabilitation Services

Source: EMSI, 2017

County	Fastest Declining Occupation	Fastest Declining Industry
Bradford	Heavy and Tractor Trailer Truck Driver	Support Activities for Oil and Gas Operations
Sullivan	Construction Laborers	Power and Communication Line and Related Structures Construction
Susquehanna	Construction Laborers	Oil and Gas Pipeline and Related Structures Construction
Tioga	Heavy and Tractor Trailer Truck Driver	General Medical and Surgical Hospitals
Wyoming	Heavy and Tractor Trailer Truck Driver	Drilling Oil and Gas Wells

Source: EMSI, 2017

LABOR MARKET TRENDS

Tioga County has the highest unemployment rate (6.2%) of all the counties in the region. Compared to the region overall (5.5%), all counties except for Susquehanna (5.0%) have higher unemployment rate. All counties and the region have a higher unemployment rate compared to the state (5.0%).

Unemployment Rates						
Bradford	Sullivan	Susquehanna	Tioga	Wyoming	Northern Tier	Pennsylvania
5.3%	5.7%	5.0%	6.2%	5.5%	5.5%	5.0%

Source: Center for Workforce Information and Analysis, 2017

Labor Market trends can be examined by looking at Long Term Industry Projections as well as other Labor Market Information. Regarding Long Term Industry Projections from 2014-2024, the total employment in the Northern Tier region is expected to increase by 3.7% or 2,580. This growth rate is lower than the projected growth rate for the state which is expected to increase by 7.7%. The following table provides a breakdown of the expected employment growth by industry. It is

important to understand the data however as an industry projected to experience a slight decline in an area that is experiencing an aging workforce will create job openings for job seekers in all occupational areas. Understanding this will be vital in the Northern Tier region as one of our top industries – Manufacturing, is expected to decline slightly, whereas Construction and Professional and Business Services and Education and Health Services are all expected to increase. It is also important to note that Leisure and Hospitality is also expected to grow by 6.5%.

Long-Term Industry Projections for Northern Tier WDA (2014-24)

Industry	Employment (2014)	Projected Employment (2024)	Employment Change (2014-2024)	
			Volume	Percent
Total Jobs	69,820	72,400	2,580	3.7%
Goods Producing Industries	20,000	20,290	290	1.5%
Agriculture, Mining & Logging	8,120	8,040	-80	-1.0%
Construction	2,530	2,970	440	17.4%
Manufacturing	9,360	9,280	-80	-0.9%
Services-Providing	43,970	46,170	2,200	5.0%
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	12,420	12,880	460	3.7%
Information	580	520	-60	-10.3%
Financial Activities	2,030	2,070	40	2.0%
Professional & Business Services	3,130	3,440	310	9.9%
Education & Health Services	14,480	15,700	1,220	8.4%
Leisure & Hospitality	4,760	5,070	310	6.5%
Other Services, Except Public Admin.	2,320	2,370	50	2.2%
Federal, State & Local Government	4,250	4,130	-120	-2.8%

Source: Long-Term Industry Employment Projections (2014-24)

*Data may not add due confidentiality

Locally collected labor market data is equally important when making workforce and economic strategic planning decisions. At various times, the NTWDB will complete surveys of various employers and industries to determine the local need. Knowing this “real time” data is helpful when meeting short term challenges for employers. In addition, by looking to Help Wanted Online Job Postings by Industry as well as by Occupation as provided to us by the Center for Workforce Information and Analysis we can see the real time demand our employers are experiencing. When looking at Help Wanted Online Job Postings in the Northern Tier region we are seeing an increase in several industries including Rolled Steel Shape Manufacturing, Ambulatory Health Care Services, Home Centers and Home Health Care Services. Regarding specific occupations, the following are almost always included: Registered Nurses, Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers, Retail Salespersons, and Personal Care Aides. The top 10 help wanted online job postings are listed below as well.

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Top 10 Help Wanted OnLine Job Postings by Industry, May 2016 & 2017			
Industry Title	NAICS	May-2017	May-2016
All Other Miscellaneous Ambulatory Health Care Services	621999	48	22
Other Millwork (including Flooring)	321918	41	59
Offices of Physicians (except Mental Health Specialists)	621111	38	81
Home Health Care Services	621610	32	75
Temporary Help Services	561320	27	52
Commercial Banking	522110	21	29
Employment Placement Agencies	561311	18	7
Home Centers	444110	17	16
Nursing Care Facilities	623110	14	24
Other Gasoline Stations	447190	14	12
Source: The Conference Board, Help Wanted OnLine, 6/16/17			

Top 10 Help Wanted OnLine Job Postings by Occupation, May 2016 & 2017			
Occupation	SOC	May-2017	May-2016
Registered Nurses	29114100	84	110
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	53303200	77	91
First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	41101100	30	26
Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	49907100	30	12
Social and Human Service Assistants	21109300	25	18
Retail Salespersons	41203100	22	35
Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	29206100	20	48
Helpers--Production Workers	51919800	19	9
Physical Therapists	29112300	18	10
Physician Assistants	29107100	16	20
Source: The Conference Board, Help Wanted OnLine, 6/16/17			

The industry partnerships active in the Northern Tier region have asked for assistance with recruitment and retention issues since their inception. We have provided incumbent worker training and offer work readiness workshops through the PA CareerLink® centers in our region as well as other work preparation programs that assist job seekers so that they can identify the right career for them. We will continue to identify other methods to assist companies with retention issues such as

- In our health care industry partnership, we work with our long term care facilities and major health care networks on incumbent worker training that includes supervisor development, certified nurse operating room training, certified nurse operating room, med/surgical examination review, oncology review and perfecting patient care.

Below is chart that lists the occupations expected to grow by volume, by percent and by annual openings that supports the need to look at issues such as retention and recruitment.

Fastest Growing Industries in Northern Tier WDA (2014-24)			
By Volume Change:		By Percent Change: (min. employment of 100)	
Industry Title	Employment Change (Volume)	Industry Title	Employment Change (Percent)
Individual & Family Services	270	Waste Collection	33.3%
Outpatient Care Centers	90	Outpatient Care Centers	27.3%
Nursing Care Facilities	90	Individual & Family Services	25.2%
Gasoline Stations	80	Machinery & Equip. Rental & Leasing	20.0%
Machinery & Equip. Rental & Leasing	80	Employment Services	19.2%
Traveler Accommodation	60	Animal Food Mfg	18.2%
Management Of Companies & Enterprises	50	Pipeline Transportation of Natural Gas	18.2%
Other Professional & Technical Services	50	Other Professional & Technical Services	13.5%
Employment Services	50	Architectural & Structural Metals Mfg	11.8%
Waste Collection	40	Nursing Care Facilities	11.5%

Section 1.2

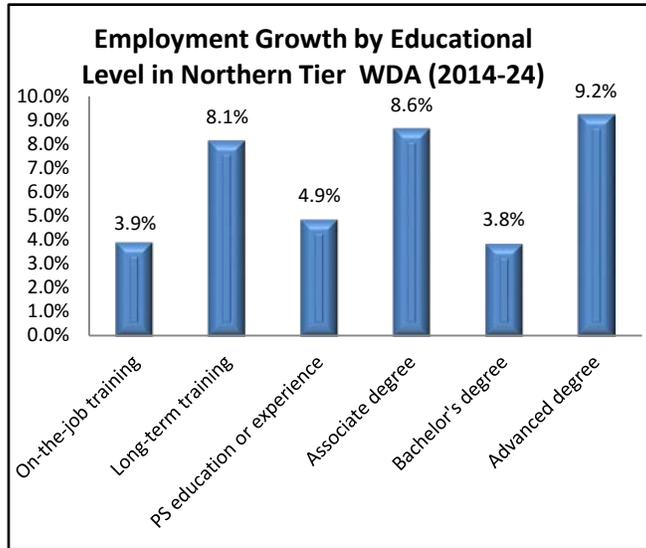
1.2. *How are skills gaps defined in the local area? Provide a description of the skills that are required to meet the needs of employers in region/local area?*

The most valuable information regarding skill gaps in the region comes from employers directly. We have established relationships with our employers at the board level as well as through our Healthcare, Technology and Manufacturing Industry Partnerships. PA CareerLink® business services staff and partners also have opportunities to interface with employers to identify their needs. We also conduct periodic and project specific employer surveys and focus groups. These relationships and data gathering efforts help us to keep a pulse on industry and their needs. Employers frequently state that they need “employability skills;” ability to pass a drug test, show up to work on time, be dependable, etc.

Another way to measure the skills gap is to compare the current educational attainment with the expected employment growth by educational level. In the Northern Tier Region. Currently, according to data available from CWIA, while 11.26% of the adult population 25+ of the region has a bachelor’s degree, 14.9% of the current employment requires a degree. However, the expected growth in employment requiring a bachelor’s degree is expected to decline by 2024. Although the percentage of employment requiring advanced degrees today is small (only 2.4%), the employment projection shows 9.2% growth in that area. Employment growth is expected to continue for occupations requiring an Associate degree by 8.6% and Long Term Training (8.1%).

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Educational Distribution by Educational Attainment Level for Northern Tier WDA	Employment (2014)	Percentage	Projected Employment (2024)	Percentage
Advanced degree	1,300	2.4%	1,420	2.5%
Bachelor's degree	8,080	15.0%	8,390	14.9%
Associate degree	810	1.5%	880	1.6%
PS education or experience	10,290	19.1%	10,790	19.2%
Long-term training	3,440	6.4%	3,720	6.6%
Moderate-term OJT	5,840	10.8%	5,970	10.6%
Short-term OJT	24,110	44.8%	25,150	44.7%
	53,870	100.0%	56,320	100.0%



Another method to identify skills gaps is to look at the difference between school program completions and the number of jobs that are open within a particular occupation. The following table lists the regional completions for training programs for occupations with 50 or more openings. The regional training programs are not meeting the local employment demand for jobs with 50 or more openings.

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CIP Code	Program	Regional Completions (2015)	Regional Openings (2015)	Median Hourly Earnings	Regional Jobs (2015)	Regional Jobs (2016)	% Jobs Change (2015-2016)
51.0000	Health Services/Allied Health/Health Sciences, General	0	261	\$24.86	5,561	5,608	1%
52.1803	Retailing and Retail Operations	0	210	\$10.39	5,658	5,551	(2%)
52.1804	Selling Skills and Sales Operations	0	116	\$12.48	3,194	3,140	(2%)
12.0505	Food Preparation/Professional Cooking/Kitchen Assistant	0	102	\$9.08	2,242	2,228	(1%)
12.0500	Cooking and Related Culinary Arts, General	0	96	\$10.71	2,302	2,323	1%
12.0508	Institutional Food Workers	0	96	\$9.11	2,104	2,095	(0%)
52.1801	Sales, Distribution, and Marketing Operations, General	0	85	\$13.81	2,417	2,380	(2%)
01.0608	Floriculture/Floristry Operations and Management	0	84	\$11.76	2,408	2,381	(1%)
51.2602	Home Health Aide/Home Attendant	0	80	\$9.32	1,362	1,419	4%
52.0408	General Office Occupations and Clerical Services	0	74	\$14.17	2,738	2,687	(2%)
51.1105	Pre-Nursing Studies	0	66	\$24.08	1,614	1,615	0%
49.0205	Truck and Bus Driver/Commercial Vehicle Operator and Instructor	0	64	\$17.54	3,142	2,824	(10%)
12.0507	Food Service, Waiter/Waitress, and Dining Room Management/Manager	0	63	\$8.90	1,219	1,188	(3%)
52.0201	Business Administration and Management, General	48	62	\$32.81	1,931	1,896	(2%)
51.1199	Health/Medical Preparatory Programs, Other	0	58	\$39.31	1,662	1,663	0%
13.0101	Education, General	6	58	\$28.39	2,055	2,029	(1%)
52.9999	Business, Management, Marketing, and Related Support Services, Other	0	56	\$20.49	2,029	1,995	(2%)
44.0000	Human Services, General	0	55	\$17.76	933	964	3%
13.1208	Waldorf/Steiner Teacher Education	0	54	\$26.86	1,797	1,782	(1%)
13.1207	Montessori Teacher Education	0	54	\$26.86	1,797	1,782	(1%)
52.0101	Business/Commerce, General	0	53	\$34.56	1,760	1,720	(2%)

We couple this information garnered from employers with statistics from the Center for Workforce Information and Analysis and other sources (such as EMSI). Understanding the knowledge and skills for specific occupations and the number of jobs available allows the PA CareerLink® case managers to discuss career pathways with their customers. Knowing how skills sets transcend into other occupations coupled with additional education and training is critical in good case management.

The most frequent Detailed Work Activities in job postings within this region include Calculate costs of goods or services (with 283 annual openings), Order materials, supplies or equipment (with 277), Sell products or services (with 273), Clean work areas (with 268) and Greet customers, patrons or visitors, with 227 annual job openings. The most frequently identified tools and technologies required of job applicants are Spreadsheet software (with 1,293 annual openings), Database user interface and query software (with 1,228), Personal computers (with 1,207), Word processing software (with 1,022) and Desktop computers with 1,013 annual openings.

Many of the occupations in the region require the same knowledge areas. The top 10 knowledge areas are expected to remain consistent over the next 10 years. These include Customer and Personal Service, English Language, Administration and Management, Public Safety and Security and Education and Training.

Top 10 Knowledge Areas, 2014-2024						
Knowledge Area	Number of Occupations	PA 2014 Employment Needing this Skill	PA 2024 Employment Needing this Skill	Percent of 2024 Employment	PA Change in Employment 2014-2024	Percent of Total Openings
Customer and Personal Service	245	49,030	51,370	71%	2,340	66%
English Language	260	51,660	54,000	75%	2,340	66%
Administration and Management	221	41,470	43,720	60%	2,250	64%
Public Safety and Security	185	37,260	39,290	54%	2,030	57%
Education and Training	190	32,460	34,270	47%	1,810	51%
Mathematics	210	41,730	43,410	60%	1,680	47%
Psychology	108	20,320	21,730	30%	1,410	40%
Law and Government	125	18,200	19,150	26%	950	27%
Mechanical	106	17,150	18,100	25%	950	27%
Production and Processing	119	19,760	20,700	29%	940	27%

The top job skills required in the region include Electronic Health Record (86 postings), Pediatrics (55), Lean Six Sigma (49), Flatbed Scanners (48) and Six Sigma (41). The top certifications required include Certified Registered Nurse (145), Driver’s License (93), Commercial Driver’s License (74), Basic Life Support (66) and Advanced Cardiac Life Support (64).

Another method of identifying skill gaps in the region includes surveying employers to identify training requests as well as participation in incumbent worker training. Below are requested trainings from employers in the Northeast Regional Healthcare Industry Partnership. The NTWDB manages and is the fiscal agent for this partnership. During the 2014-15 Program Year, requested and completed trainings included:

Perfecting Patient Care	Pittsburg Regional Health Initiative	March 17-20, 2015
Caring for Patients with Alzheimer’s/Dementia	Alzheimer’s Association	April 8, 2015

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Musculoskeletal Ultrasound	Thomas Jefferson School of Health Professions	May 9, 2015
Faces of Dementia	Alzheimer's Association	May 12, 2015

Although the training was not funded through the Industry Partnership, the request for incumbent worker training included:

ICD 10 Coding	29-1141	30	\$500	\$15,000	Certificate 95% Wage Gain 60% Retention 100% Promotion 15%
Perfecting Patient Care	29-1141 29-1171	25	\$1425	\$35,625	Certificate 95% Wage Gain 75% Retention 100% Promotion 10%
CNA Certification	31-1014	15	\$900	\$13,500	Certificate 100% Wage Gain 100% Retention 75% Promotion 75%
Dementia/ Alzheimer's Care	31-1014 29-1141	20	\$100	\$2,000	Certificate 100% Wage Gain 60% Retention 100% Promotion 20%
CPAN/ CAPA Exam Review	29-1141	25	\$325	\$8,125	Certificate 90% Wage Gain 80% Retention 100% Promotion 15%
CNOR	29-1141	20	\$245	\$4,900	Certificate 90% Wage Gain 80% Retention 100% Promotion 15%

During Program Year 2016-2017, the following programs were requested and completed:

Completed Training	# Trained	Training Cost	Participating Facilities
Improving Healthcare through Supervisory Development	20	\$12,600	Endless Mountains Health System The Guthrie Clinic Martha Lloyd
Certified Post Anesthesia Nurse (CPAN) Examination Review	16	\$6,750	Geisinger Wyoming Valley
Certified Nurse Operating Room (CNOR) Examination Review	11	\$3,108	Robert Packer Hospital Corning Hospital
Med-Surgical Examination Review	27	\$6,723	Towanda Memorial Hospital Troy Community Hospital Robert Packer Hospital

Perfecting Patient Care	21	\$33,570	UPMC Susquehanna Soldiers & Sailors Memorial Hospital The Green Home Broad Acres
Oncology Review Course	10	\$1,521	Robert Packer Hospital

*CNA-training has been requested for several years. It was on the training plan for this year but did not come together.

Section 1.3

1.3. What are the challenges the local area faces in aligning existing labor force skills and education and training activities with the needs of regional employers?

The Northern Tier Region faces a number of challenges in aligning existing labor force skills and education and training activities with the needs of regional employers. The biggest challenges faced by our region are the small number of training providers coupled with the small population. While we continue to look to recruit other training providers to offer programs for employers, it is often difficult to recruit enough participants to “fill a class” in order for a training provider to be able to offer any selected course. Additionally, while this gap could be filled (in theory) by offering on-line and computer based training, the lack of internet access in many areas of our region is a significant barrier.

Other challenges include ensuring that school and training program curricula matches employer needs, engaging out of school youth to complete high school and/or post-secondary training to attain the skills required by employers, matching the skills of job seekers to employer needs as well as identifying and eliminating barriers to employment for disadvantaged populations.

Specific strategies that the Northern Tier workforce development area will continue to pursue include:

- Continue with our current Industry Partnerships ensuring that they are employer driven and offer the opportunity for employers to share skill needs related to high-growth and high-demand occupations, sharing labor market information and workforce needs with the training providers to ensure that training providers are providing training programs that meet the needs of our employers, continue our work towards identifying career pathways and increasing our efforts to better match job seekers to jobs that are self and family supporting.
- As emerging sectors are identified and needs arise the board will form industry partnerships to meet the demand of the emerging industries.
- Continued collaboration with the WEDnet provider (Penn College) in our region This coordination takes place on a regular basis through regional PREP meetings so that our Industry Partnerships and WEDnet providers are working together to meet the training needs of our local companies.
- Continue to collaborate and coordinate efforts with Business Service Representatives, Chambers of Commerce, local and regional economic development agencies, WEDnet providers and continuing education agencies. We also work closely with the North East Industrial Resource Center (NEIRC) and the Scranton University Small Business Development Centers (SBDs) and Wilkes (for Sullivan County) to provide support for employers and those who aspire to be entrepreneurs.
- Our regional training providers attend our regional PREP meetings. This provide a forum for us to discuss local employers’ needs for training, skills and education. Providers also attend

Youth Council and WDB meetings as well. Providers are given local labor market information supplied to us by the Center for Workforce Information and Analysis (CWIA), results of any employer surveys implemented by the board, as well as feedback from our Business Service Teams. This enables them to be responsive to input given by employers regarding their needs.

- There are monthly meetings of the PA CareerLink® management team and the directors of the WIOA Title I programs. The ABLE providers and EARN providers meet as well. Strategy, performance, problems, solutions and protocol are all discussed. Business services, with an emphasis on partnerships and long-term sector strategies are an evolving process within the region as we work to understand employers who are willing to work with our customers with barriers and allow us to be a part of their planning.
- The Business Education Partnership (BEP) is creating a better connection between the area businesses and educational opportunities and the region's school system. We have 5 career coaches working in 16 different schools who are working one on one with students in classroom settings. They discuss career opportunities, bring in employers to discuss their needs. Within the past year, we offered six career fairs in partnership with local employers. Field trips are conducted to give students the opportunity to tour employer sites and learn about careers. This has created a direct connection between the Career and Technical Centers and local employers. We help to recruit employers to participate with schools for implementation of the Chapter 339 Mandate for career exploration.
- Expanding our **Fit4Work Reengagement Project**. This is a basic skills development program that works on entry level work-readiness and job skills for individuals who lack these basic skills, with an emphasis on those with a criminal background. We expect to expand this program to serve all counties and all industries over the next few years.
- Expanding Pre-Apprenticeship programs. Over the past few years we have offered several pre-apprenticeship programs to offer career awareness opportunities as well as job skills development. We expect to expand these offerings over the next few years.

Section 1.4

- 1.4. *Provide an analysis of local area workforce development activities, including education and training.*

The NTWDB continues to develop and strengthen the partnerships and participation in the workforce development system of three major groups: employers, educators and service agencies. The Northern Tier Workforce Development Board will develop and maintain an effective and efficient workforce system that uses the power and influence of the Northern Tier Workforce Development Board to attract partners, build alliances and coordinate resources. All of the meetings and regular discussions with these partners and management share the common goal of meeting the strategic and operational plans of the region.

The workforce development system consists of WIOA Title I, Adult Education and Literacy Acts programs, Wagner-Peyser Act employment services and the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation as well as other community based agencies which provide services to job seekers especially those with barriers to employment. These agencies include but are not limited to the county Office of Children and Youth, Human Service agencies such as the YMCA and Community Action.

Workforce service delivery in the Northern Tier Region is provided through our PA CareerLink®

centers. Within the local PA CareerLink® system, there is a commitment to quality and an understanding that the system is customer-driven. The PA CareerLink® provides universal service for everyone. As such, the local design of the PA CareerLink® centers is focused on: universality; customer choice; integrated systems and results-based accountability. In addition to the partners participating at the PA CareerLink® centers we have a referral network of community based agencies that work with us. These agencies have a long history of providing quality services to their communities.

NTWDB staff meet regularly with the PA CareerLink® staff, there are monthly meetings of the PA CareerLink® management team and the directors of the WIOA Title I programs. The ABLE providers and EARN providers meet as well. Strategy, performance, problems, solutions and protocol are all discussed. Business services, with an emphasis on partnerships and long-term sector strategies are an evolving process within the region as we work to understand employers who are willing to work with our customers with barriers and allow us to be a part of their planning. The Business Education Partnership (BEP) is creating a better connection between the area businesses and educational opportunities and the region's school system.

Strengths

Cooperation and Effectiveness. Operating within the unique system of a rural area, the NTWDB has established partnerships with economic development agencies, Chambers of Commerce, business and industry, post-secondary providers including Career and Technical Centers and University partners. Our Business Education Partnership has made great strides in connecting employers to school districts and K-12 education. The Chamber and other economic development agencies reach out quickly to our workforce system whenever a need arises to support a local business. Our local system will enable us to embrace the Next Gen model of employer engagement. This comprehensive and holistic approach, which utilizes partners across the board, will enable better services for the healthcare, manufacturing and any other sectors deemed appropriate within our area.

Priority Sectors. The local area's priority sectors of **healthcare and social assistance, technology, manufacturing, transportation and logistics, natural gas/energy and retail/hospitality** provide residents with a broad array of career choices. Health care, Technology and Manufacturing industry partnerships provide the opportunity for local employers to work directly with our PA CareerLink® centers and WDB staff to understand needs and create training opportunities to meet the needs of employers. The NTWDB's support of the industry cluster consortia is an excellent model of how the NTWDB used its resources to capture seed money for the establishment of the groups, provided coordination to ensure support for the groups and leveraged funds to allow the groups to secure additional funding to assist in workforce development and staff capacity building. For example, we coordinated entry level training (Fit 4 Natural Gas) which evolved into **ShaleNet** is a good example of how we developed short term training to get our local residents jobs in that emerging industry.

Variety of Education and Training Providers. While the Northern Tier region is very rural, we do have a number of post-secondary education and training providers that includes two career and technical centers that provide hands on training. Mansfield University is located in the region as are branch campuses of Keystone College, Lackawanna College, Penn College and Penn State Extension. WDB staff participates on many of the advisory boards of these institutions and are able to provide information and input regarding our employer needs. Post-secondary providers located within our five counties include:

1. Mansfield University
2. Keystone College
3. Lackawanna College,
4. Penn College
5. Penn State Extension
6. Susquehanna County Career and Tech Center
7. Northern Tier Career and Tech Center

Demand-Driven Activities. The workforce system partners collaborate on services to the business community in a number of ways, from joint visits to job fairs to more comprehensive projects like the **Fit4Work Reengagement** program recently established. These projects are a collaboration of our employers, the Workforce Development Board, PA CareerLink® center staff, and local schools to offer a certificate program that includes soft skills training and hands-on training to individuals who have barriers to employment who are interested in pursuing opportunities within our local industries.

Customer-Focused Services. WDB staff continues to work with the PA CareerLink® Operator regarding integration and non-duplication of services in our centers. Staff in the centers work together to collaborate on services for cost efficiencies and better services to our customers. The local design of the PA CareerLink® centers is focused on: universality; customer choice; integrated systems and results-based accountability. In addition to meeting the required performance standards, PA CareerLink® partners must ensure that customers have easy access to services without being hindered by the obstacles related to funding streams and agency distinctness. Customers must also be afforded an opportunity to investigate all of the available services and training options, including statistics and satisfaction rates prior to choosing a career path. Services, including the Career Resource Center, are available to anyone coming through our doors without eligibility restrictions.

Mobile Services. While our PA CareerLink® operators provide formal sites in two counties and affiliated sites in three other counties, mobile outreach services are provided at community locations in the remote and high poverty areas of the region to expand access to services. These include: Troy, Canton, Wyalusing, Sayre in Bradford County and Tioga, Blossburg and Elkland in Tioga County. The remaining counties are in the beginning stages of piloting mobile services. We are currently evaluating whether we will continue to outreach to these sites. Over the next several years, we will be examining the other high poverty areas of the region to further expand access to those with transportation and other barriers.

Business Education Partnership. Over the past several years, our Business Education Partnership has worked closely with the school districts to expand career exploration activities within the K-12 education system, enhance curriculum to meet employers' needs and connect youth to employers.

Weaknesses

Lack of training providers/courses. While our local training providers are a strength, the number of training providers is also an area of weakness, as it is difficult to start and gain momentum behind new programs when there are small numbers of potential participants. While our local training providers are eager to explore new ideas, it is difficult to run classes when there are less than 10 participants for a program. Many of our courses are more broad than specific, (such as mechatronics) when employers have only a handful of people who require training.

Lack of awareness of the local resources. While we have excellent outreach and relationships with

many organizations, there are still many who have no awareness of our services or the benefits available. We would like to continue to promote the resources and services available in our region for more employers and job seekers to take advantage of.

Limited Work-Based Learning Opportunities. Many careers in the Northern Tier Region may be best addressed by learning on the job and/or through a mix of work and learning activities. However, the workforce system does not always provide an array of relevant work-based learning opportunities to fill these needs.

Lack of Public Transportation. The current transportation system does not provide adequate access to all parts of the region where career opportunities are available.

Limited Childcare Services. The area may not have enough childcare providers for individuals who are currently working during, or interested in working, especially during the second or third shifts.

Gaps in Youth Services. While we are working on addressing these gaps through our Business Education Partnership and have made great progress over the past few years, there are still some gaps in the system. It is difficult for us to recruit youth into programs as there are few public places where out of school youth “hang out.” We are also in the process of developing better mechanisms for job shadowing and/or internship opportunities for youth, but we still lack a complete, comprehensive business education model to teach youth about the world of work, including soft skills training, filling out job applications, preparing resumes and cover letters, interviewing for a career, using a time card, etc. Transportation is also an issue for youth.

Lack of High Speed Internet or Internet. There are many areas of the region that lack internet connectivity and many areas also do not have high speed internet. Bradford County is currently researching what it would take to bring a fiber loop to the county that could meet this need and offer the service to others, but it will be some time before this comes to fruition.

Limited Resources. Many of the area’s unemployed workers possess at least one barrier to employment. The Board may not have the depth of resources required to fully serve all those in need, including development of specific programs/services for ex-offenders, those with limited English proficiency and adults with disabilities that are not currently in the workforce.

Business Participation. While we are successful in outreach to employers and getting them to come to meetings to learn more about what we are doing in the region, it is challenging to get the employers to follow through on the ideas and commitments discussed.

2. STRATEGIC PLANNING QUESTIONS: Vision and Goals

Section 2.1

2.1. *What are the local board's strategic vision and goals for preparing its workforce?*

Consistent with the state plan, WIOA provides local regions the opportunity to align workforce priorities across multiple partners, training providers, employers and others to ensure we are creating a skilled workforce for today and the future. "An effective workforce development system will be built on a foundation of alignment, innovation, employer engagement, accountability structures and improved data." (WIOA Combined State Plan). Therefore, the local workforce system will increase the employment, retention, and earnings of customers, and, as a result, improve the quality of the workforce, reduce welfare dependency, and enhance the productivity and competitiveness of the five-county workforce area.

The Northern Tier's economic future depends on a workforce able to compete in today's global economy. In order for the region to be economically competitive and its residents to acquire careers that pay family-sustaining wages, the region needs to ensure that its workforce system is steered by business and job seeker needs. A skilled and well-trained workforce can be achieved by better aligning the workforce development system with industry and education. A skilled and well-trained workforce can be achieved by better aligning the workforce development system with industry and education.

Through the strategic vision, mission and goals of our board, we will work with the Commonwealth to strengthen the workforce weaknesses that have been identified in the state plan that include:

- The workforce system in general and education and training providers in particular, are not well aligned with the needs of employers who provide jobs that pay.
 - Too many workforce programs operate in their own individual silos rather than being integrated into an overall system that allows leveraging multiple funds to better serve employers, job seekers and incumbent workers.
 - The workforce system lacks a support structure of training programs and employer peer learning opportunities, including apprenticeship programs and Industry Partnerships, which enables and encourages more employers to invest in their workers and implement best organizational practices that create more jobs that pay.

The ***vision*** of the Northern Tier Workforce Development Board is that the local area will be a destination of choice for employers and jobseekers, where existing businesses experience growth and where new businesses are eager to locate because of the excellent job opportunities, economic vitality, quality of life and the presence of a skilled workforce.

The ***mission*** of the NTWDB is to provide responsive and innovative leadership that meets the current and future needs of employers and jobseekers.

The current goals of the NTWDB include:

1. Partner with secondary schools to enhance the youth talent pipeline
2. Continue to engage industry sectors to address their recruitment and retention needs
3. Strengthen relationships with economic development and education to offer a seamless,

- integrated network of support to regional businesses
4. Enhance services to priority populations, focusing on those with multiple barriers
 - a. with a focus on those who lack transportation, have criminal backgrounds and/or poor work history and/or history of domestic violence, and/or those with low income and/or are skills deficient
 5. Ensure a customer-focused experience within our PA CareerLink® centers.

The local area's mission, vision, and strategic goals, the local area as well as the state seek a business focused workforce system with a special care given to those with barriers in alignments with the state plan. This focus creates a better link between business and jobseekers. It allows business to grow and create more jobs. At the same time, it allows jobseekers to be trained in the skills that employers need. Both the state and the local area supports training for high priority occupations, career pathways, better job matching, and programs that address skill gaps.

Section 2.2

2.2. What is the local board's strategy to work with the entities that carry out the core programs to align resources available to the local area, in order to achieve the strategic vision and goals for the local area?

The NTWDB's vision and policy directs investment in workforce preparation, skill development, education and training. These investments are targeted and align with assisting youth, job seekers and employers. The NTWDB aligns regional resources and acts as the intermediary to promote partnerships among businesses, non-profit agencies, economic development providers, educational institutions, community-based organizations, and employers. Through working together, stakeholders enhance the skills needed for workforce inclusion, employability, and educational and training levels of the current and future workforce.

The NTWDB is responsible for setting the standards of operations of the PA CareerLink® sites and overall workforce systems in the Northern Tier. The PA CareerLink® Committee is responsible for conveying the standards set by the LWDB by developing and implementing policies and procedures that coordinate partner activities and resources into a seamless, non-duplicative delivery system.

The Board's strategy to achieve its vision and goals reaches beyond the entities that carry out the core programs. The NTWDB will continue to pursue strategies that are aligned with the state's strategic vision and goals including:

- Innovative strategies:
 - Continue to develop alignment between economic development, workforce development and education
 - Continue to develop alignment between business and education to ensure curricula is matched to business needs. Continue to assist in matching the education level of our community to the needs, based on timely labor market information.
 - Better connect to all industries to identify actual needs. Ensure our PA CareerLink® centers continue to outreach and support the industry partnership model in order to keep a pulse locally on industry needs.
- Career Pathways:
 - Build on those already developed in manufacturing and other industries and

- incorporate state resources as they become available
- Encourage development and use of career pathways in Job Seeker and training provider curricula
- Intra-Regional Planning
 - Continue to collaborate with North East PA WDA and other WDAs on programs and initiatives where/when practical such as coordinating industry partnerships as well as continue to explore NextGen sector strategies
 - Continuing to connect with community based organizations and other non-traditional partners to enhance services and eliminate barriers
- Continuing to enhance youth programming:
 - Continue to expand our Business and Education Partnership
 - Workforce staff meets regularly with transition councils, school administrators, guidance counselors and teachers to educate them on programs and accept feedback/input about what youth and young adults in the Northern Tier need in terms of career planning and preparation. Regular discussion, updates and open communication prevent duplication of services.
 - Continue to develop and implement mentoring, job shadowing and career presentations
 - Educate organizations serving youth 0-14 to incorporate career exploration opportunities into their programs and services
- Convening all partners- this includes education providers, economic development agencies (local and regional), workforce partners, employers and other community based agencies, etc. on a regular basis to ensure all have access to the labor market information to make strategic decisions.
- Increase monitoring of all programs and offer technical assistance to ensure performance measures are met.
- Increase the use of technology to provide opportunities to job seekers and employers as well as training (and cross training) opportunities for staff in the PA CareerLink® centers and other partners.

Section 2.3

2.3. *How will the local board's vision and goals align with, support, and contribute to the governor's vision and goals for the commonwealth's workforce development system, as well any the goals and strategies articulated in the regional plan?*

As discussed in the **response to 2.1 on Page 30**, the mission of the Northern Tier Workforce Development Board is ***to provide responsive and innovative leadership that meets the current and future needs of employers and jobseekers.*** The goals that it has established to support its mission are aligned with the governor's vision and goals as articulated in the Commonwealth's WIOA combined state plan. Moreover, these goals collectively promote the economic growth and self-sufficiency of the Northern Tier Workforce Development Region by improving the overall quality of its labor force as well as support the recruitment and retention efforts of its local businesses.

- **Commonwealth Goal 1: Establish Career Pathways**

The Board's Goal 2, "Continue to engage industry sectors to address their recruitment and retention needs" speaks directly to Commonwealth's Goal to Establish Career Pathways. The Board recognizes the value of Career Pathways Plans and it is working with its regional partners to appropriately utilize

career pathways in its sector focused initiatives. The Northern Tier must continue to strengthen the relationships between the PA CareerLink® and the business community. That relationship is what provides the opportunity to develop pathways and the opportunity for jobs. The NTWDB will work with the state to follow, and enhance, the Career Pathways the state is establishing, to best suit the local demands and needs. The first goals will be healthcare and construction Career Pathways.

- **Commonwealth Goal 2: Invest in Talent and Skills for Targeted Industries and Strategic Partnerships with Employers and Educational Institutions**

The Board's Goal 2, "Continue to engage industry sectors to address their recruitment and retention needs" as well as the Board's Goal 1, "Strengthen the system's impact on the secondary school system which will increase awareness of job opportunities, necessary skills, PA CareerLink®, and help create a youth talent pipeline" address the Commonwealth's Goal 2 to Invest in Talent and Skills for Targeted Industries and Strategic Partnerships with Employers and Educational Institutions.

The Northern Tier WDB seeks to ensure the workforce development system meets the needs of its customers, both businesses and jobseekers. The WDB continues to sustain its Industry Partnerships and will create a series of training opportunities, such as industry-recognized stackable credentials for entry-level workers into targeted industries. The Northern Tier seeks to strengthen relationships with economic development and education partners with an annual goal of increasing outreach to employers by the Business Services Team and partners by five percent annually.

Working in collaboration with local employers, community based organizations, community partners, training providers, and education providers, the NTWDB will continue to fund training for high priority occupations, encourage career pathway development and use in developing training and funding training opportunities, develop work-based learning opportunities, and identify and engage in other activities that contribute toward a skilled workforce. The board will put particular emphasis on helping those with barriers to employment overcome obstacles so they can secure family-and life-sustaining careers.

The NTWDB will continue to fully utilize the resources and services available through those programs authorized by the Carl D. Perkins Act as well as through local school districts and training providers to increase educational achievements as well as postsecondary credentials. To increase access, enhance outcomes, maximize resources, and avoid duplication of efforts, the local board will promote collaboration among providers to the extent possible.

- **Commonwealth Goal 3: Increase Work-Based Learning Opportunities**

The Board's Goal 2, "Continue to engage industry sectors to address their recruitment and retention needs" as well as the Board's Goal 1, "Strengthen the system's impact on the secondary school system which will increase awareness of job opportunities, necessary skills, PA CareerLink®, and help create a youth talent pipeline" also address the Commonwealth's Goal 3 to Increase Work-Based Learning Opportunities. As a key component of its youth pipeline and sector engagement strategies, the Board will be exploring the development of work-based learning opportunities, such as work experience, internships, co-op programs, apprenticeships, and transitional jobs to meet any unique/specific skill needs of employers in the region. This will increase awareness of job opportunities, necessary skills, PA CareerLink® The NTWDB will have Career Coaches working within the schools, and business community, to make the connection between learning opportunities and the businesses.

Additionally, the board will continue to identify the need for and implement incumbent worker training programs to move workers into mid-level positions. The board will also continue to develop approaches to create a pipeline of qualified candidates to fill the entry-level positions vacated such as the ***FIT4Work Reengagement Project***.

We are working with our local employers and training providers to create credential and certificate programs that can upskill the current workforce. We recently completed a pre-apprenticeship program in collaboration with the Northeast region. As part of that program; participants were able to achieve a forklift certification, OSHA 10 certification, math for construction, a flagger certification. We are working on offering those certifications as a more universal pre-employment program that can be used for other industries.

Locally, the strategy we have been pursuing is to provide shorter term training program(s) to job seekers that will allow them to enter the workforce sooner and begin to earn a wage or to incumbent workers to help them move up the career ladder. These short-term training programs can be offered at much less cost than the current ITA process where only one individual benefits from the training. Success will be measured based on feedback from our employers and if these programs help them meet their hiring needs.

The local WDB is always seeking to expand our training offerings and will continue to seek other training providers and resources in the region. We are also working with regional partners to expand access to fiber optic internet services, so that we can provide more computer based and on-line training programs to supplement what is able to be provided in classroom settings, due to the rural nature of our local area.

- **Commonwealth Goal 4: Engage Employers to Strengthen the Connection of Education and Training and the Economy, Increase Investment in Critical Skills and Increase Jobs that Pay**

The Board's Goal 2, "Continue to engage industry sectors to address their recruitment and retention needs" as well as the Board's Goal 1, "Strengthen the system's impact on the secondary school system which will increase awareness of job opportunities, necessary skills, PA CareerLink®, and help create a youth talent pipeline" address the Commonwealth's Goal 4 to Engage Employers to Strengthen the Connection of Education and Training and the Economy, Increase Investment in Critical Skills and Increase Jobs that Pay.

The NTWDB will continue to convene all regional partners including education providers, economic development agencies (local and regional), workforce partners, employers and other community based agencies, etc. on a regular basis to ensure that all partners have access to the labor market information to support the connection between education and training and the economy and align training provider curricula to the needs of existing and emerging sectors.

Additionally, through its industry partnerships, the NTWDB will continue to convene employers from the targeted sectors along with education and training providers and other partners to identify the specific skill needs and related training curricula that are required to fill the in-demand, growth, and emerging occupations of the local area. The NTWDB will continue to monitor the effectiveness of existing education and training activities by collecting information on programs that are being supported by WIOA funds as well as the funds of core partners. It will identify the programs that have the strongest ties to employers' needs and the best success rates for producing graduates and job

placements.

Finally, The NTWDB, NTRPDC, and PREP will continue to collaborate and coordinate our efforts while utilizing DCED's Executive Pulse system. This is the economic development system of record for tracking businesses served and business services. This will enable us to better coordinate business outreach services, share information and measure results.

- **Commonwealth Goal 5: Strengthen Data Sharing and More Effectively Use Data**

The board's Goal 1 "Partner with secondary schools to enhance the youth talent pipeline," the board's Goal 2, "Continue to engage industry sectors to address their recruitment and retention needs," and the board's Goal 3, "Strengthen relationships with economic development and education to offer a seamless, integrated network of support to regional businesses," as well as Goal 4 "Enhance services to priority populations" all address the Commonwealth's Goal 5 to Strengthen Data Sharing and More Effectively Use Data. Each of those goals includes a strategy to share labor market information with partners to more effectively plan and measure the outcomes of the strategies and intervention efforts that are undertaken as part of the goal.

Also, to strengthen data sharing across state agencies and workforce development partners to understand education and employment outcomes and more effectively evaluate our efforts, the NTWDB, NTRPDC, and PREP will coordinate to utilize DCED's Executive Pulse system, which is their system of record for tracking businesses served and business services.

Section 2.4

2.4. *What are the local levels of performance that have been negotiated with the governor and chief elected officials?*

How will the local board's goals relate to the achievement of these measures?

As shown in the Performance Measures Table included as **Attachment A**, the Board and the local elected officials have agreed to adopt the levels of WIOA performance that have been established by the governor for the Commonwealth.

The Board's five primary workforce goals discussed in the **response to 2.3 on Page 32** fully support these measures and the Board further promotes performance achievement by including these factors as part of its expectations in agreements with subcontractors and the PA CareerLink® partners.

The goals of the NTWDB ensure that our area achieves the federal performance accountability measures. For the past several years, board members have engaged in high-level strategic discussions with our local partners about better serving our customers while meeting the federal performance accountability measures. Our Board recognizes that it will be more challenging to meet some of these measures as small downturns and upturns in the economy have a huge impact on our local numbers. It is also more challenging to enhance our focus on harder to serve populations identified in WIOA as well as the WIOA Combined State Plan. The goals that have been developed by the board support these measures as well in several ways.

1. Partner with secondary schools to enhance the youth talent pipeline
2. Continue to engage industry sectors to address their recruitment and retention needs
3. Strengthen relationships with economic development and education to offer a seamless, integrated network of support to regional businesses
4. Enhance services to priority populations, with a focus on those who lack transportation, have

criminal backgrounds and/or poor work history and/or history of domestic violence, and/or those with low income

5. Ensure a customer-focused experience within our PA CareerLink® centers.

NTWDB GOAL 1: Partner with secondary schools to enhance the youth talent pipeline

- This goal will assist in identification of recruitment of young adults that are in need of our service. The programs and services that we offer that meet the needs of youth will meet the WIOA Performance Indicators for youth of employment in second quarter rate, employment in fourth quarter rates, and could impact measurable skill gains and credential attainment rate.
- Youth receive career pathway information which leads them to placement in education or employment. The attainment of a degree or certificate ensures that youth are on a career pathway that will lead to a future job with the family sustaining wages. This all leads to a better prepared workforce of higher quality, which helps business grow in the local area and thus supports the local vision.

NTWDB Goal 2: Continue to engage industry sectors to address their recruitment and retention needs

- This goal will have an impact on several of the WIOA Title I Performance Indicators. More specifically, if the workforce system is better connected to the private sector this will result in an improved “Employment in Second Quarter Rate” as we better understand business needs. As we better prepare individuals for jobs in the local labor market there will be a better “Employed in Fourth Quarter Rate” for them as well. This goal will also affect the “Effectiveness in Serving Employers Rate” as we reach out to more businesses as well as the “Repeat Business Customer Rate” as we provide them more of what they need.
- This NTWDB Goal will also have an impact on the “Credential Rate” and “Skill Gains” as we continue to discuss the opportunities of credentials with our post-secondary providers as well as our career pathways efforts. We will see more individuals with the right education and training for the jobs in our labor market with the knowledge of the career pathways to move along in the company/industry.
- The NTWDB currently manages three Industry Partnerships for employers in our top industries – Healthcare, Technology and Manufacturing. The partnerships meet quarterly (and sometimes more frequently if they are working on a project) to discuss current training needs and skill gaps the industries are facing. It was through these partnerships that the skill gaps were made known. As more skill gaps are identified programs will be developed. This is expected to positively impact retention rates.

NTWDB GOAL 3: Strengthen relationships with economic development and education to offer a seamless, integrated network of support to regional businesses

- Similar to Goal 2, this goal will also improve the following WIOA Performance Indicators: “Employment in Second Quarter”, “Employment in Fourth Quarter”, “Effectiveness in Serving Employers Rate”, and “Repeat Business Customers Rate” for the same reasons as indicated above.
- The NTWDB has established partnerships with economic development agencies, business and industry, post-secondary providers including Career and Technical Centers. The board will enhance these partnerships by putting in place additional MOUs as well as generate increased

referrals through the increased outreach and promotion of the resources available within the workforce development system.

NTWDB GOAL 4: Enhance services to priority populations with a focus on those who lack transportation, have criminal backgrounds and/or poor work history and/or history of domestic violence, and/or those with low income and/or are skills deficient

- Priority populations that will receive special focus over the next few years include: low income, ex-offenders,
- This goal focuses primarily on WIOA performance indicators including “Employment in Second Quarter Rate,” and “The percentage of program participants who obtain a recognized postsecondary credential, or a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent.” It could also impact Measurable Skill Gains.

NTWDB GOAL 5: Ensure a customer-focused experience within our PA CareerLink® centers.

- The intent of Goal number 5 is to be sure to keep our customers engaged in our workforce system services. If we continue to design programs around our customer’s needs, then we will ensure success. This goal will have a direct impact on all of the WIOA Performance Indicators including more success in Entered Employment, Retention, and satisfaction.

The Board gauges its progress in meeting planned outcomes through the following indicators that are regularly reviewed and reported by the PA CareerLink® Services Committee:

- Number of first visits and total visits to the PA CareerLink®
- Number of *FIT4Work* graduates
- Number of persons completing occupational skill training and/or receiving certifications
- Number of high school equivalency diplomas achieved
- Number of individuals enrolled in EARN¹
- Number of individuals enrolled in Job Search Center
- Number of e-mail contacts; Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn followers

¹ EARN - Employment, Advancement and Retention Network is a program for welfare and low-income individuals with serious barriers to gaining and maintaining employment by providing comprehensive case management, remediation, education with special emphasis on individuals with limited English proficiency, skills training, work activities, job placement and retention activities, as well as providing supportive services, including payment for childcare.

3. OPERATIONAL PLANNING QUESTIONS: Local Area Workforce System and Investment Strategies

Section 3.1

- 3.1. *Provide a descriptive overview of the governance structure for the workforce system, including key stakeholders and entities in the local area.*

Organization Chart. An Organization Chart that depicts the structure of the Northern Tier Local Workforce Development Area is included as **Attachment B**.

The current local workforce system structure that has been developed in the Northern Tier WDA was a collaborative effort of the local elected officials, the Workforce Development Board and the Northern Tier Regional Planning and Development Commission. The appropriate agreements and boards have been established in the region to respect the individual roles of policy vs. program. The roles and relationships of each stakeholder follow.

Chief Local Elected Official (LEO)

The Chairman of the Board of Northern Tier Regional Planning and Development Commission serves as the Chief Local Elected official. The Executive Committee of NTRPDC is comprised of two county commissioners from each of the five counties and six private sector members for a total membership of 16. The third commissioner from each county serves as an alternate. Five of the local elected officials act as the officers of the corporation, and appoint the private sector board members to both the commission's executive committee. One of the officers acts as the signatory of the corporation. Local Chambers of Commerce suggest possible private sector workforce development board members to the NTRPDC Executive Committee, who appoints members to the workforce development board.

The functions of the executive committee include, but are not limited to: maintaining administrative oversight and liability for funds through participating on the Executive Board; designating a sub grant recipient or fiscal agent; appointing local board members; assisting in the development of the local plan; and negotiating local performance standards and other duties set forth by the Act. The Local Elected Official/ NTWDB Agreement spells out the specific relationship between the LEO and the NTWDB.

The Executive Committee of NTRDC maintains administrative oversight and liability for funds through participating on the NTRPDC Executive Board; designates a sub grant recipient or fiscal agent; appoints local workforce development board members; assists in the development of the local plan; and other duties set forth by the Act. This includes:

- Establish and appoint a Workforce Development Board to assist in carrying out provisions of the Act, as identified within the Local Elected Officials Agreement.
- Develop the mission, strategic vision, and policies for the WDB.
- Identify and close gaps in local / regional workforce resources.
- Develop a 5-year Comprehensive Workforce Development Plan.
- Designate operators of the PA CareerLink® (one-stop delivery system) and oversee their operations.
- Certify providers of workforce development and training in the area.
- Develop performance based accountability measures and use them to assess programs, measure customer satisfaction, and issue "consumer report:" or "report cards" on providers

- of training.
- Promote private sector participation in the local workforce development system.
- Develop and approve the WDB and related budgets.
- Receive additional non-federal, state, and other workforce funds as an integrated system.

Fiscal Agent and Administrative Entity. The LEO has appointed the Northern Tier Regional Planning and Development Commission as Fiscal Agent and Administrative Entity.

Northern Tier Workforce Development Board

The Northern Tier Workforce Development Board shall provide, in partnership with the NTRPDC Executive Board, the policy, program guidance and independent oversight services for all activities under the plan for this workforce development area pursuant to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. In addition, the Northern Tier Workforce Development Board, in mutual agreement with the NTRPDC Executive Board, is designated the administrative entity to conduct oversight responsibility in the course of normal and customary activities pursuant to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. This consent in no way circumscribes or limits the Executive Board's authority to exercise independent oversight activities.

Staff to the Northern Tier WDB are employees of Northern Tier Planning and Development Commission. This structure was developed and approved by the LEO, WDB, and NTPDC and is described in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Agreement (WIOA) and the Local Elected Officials Agreement. Staff serves the Executive Committee and NTWDB by providing monitoring, oversight, policy and strategy development, technical assistance, project development and additional funding opportunities.

Trehab Inc. and Bradford County Action are the WIOA Title I Operators. A PA CareerLink® Center is in two of the five counties. The PA CareerLink® Committee consists of the PA CareerLink® partners who are to provide oversight for the daily operation of the PA CareerLink® system.

There are currently **4** board staff including the following: The mailing address for all of the following staff as well as telephone and fax numbers are the same except where noted:

Frank Thompson, WDA Director
Melissa Fleming, Program Administrator
Jody McCarty, Program Manager
Bonnie Warner, Program Manager
Patty, Sturzen, Fiscal Assistant

All NTWDB staff work at this physical location: Northern Tier Regional Planning & Development Commission, 312 Main Street, Towanda, Pennsylvania 18848

Email: info@northerntier.org

Telephone: 888-868-8800 or 570-265-9103

Fax: 570-265-7585

Standing Committees of the WDB:

There are four (4) committees of the Northern Tier Workforce Development Board as described

below.

Frequency of Meetings: All committees meet quarterly in accordance with the WDB meeting and also when necessary as special circumstances arise. Meetings are often conducted with the use of technology such as email and conference calls being sensitive to time and travel demands on Board members. Members are asked to volunteer for the committee to which they can bring their expertise and experience. Committees are also open to interested parties who are not WDB members. The additional members are non-voting members who have expressed an interest in assisting the NTWDB in meeting our goals and objectives.

The committees are as follows:

✓ **PA CareerLink® and Contractor Committee**

Frequency of Meetings: Quarterly in accordance with the WDB meetings, or as needed.

Membership: WDB members and WIOA required partners in the Workforce Delivery System, as well as other members requesting to serve on the committee and as approved by the board.

Responsibilities and Activities: reviews PA CareerLink® as the retail side of the workforce system, its current benchmarks, who the partners are and services provided. The committee consists of NTWDB Staff, private sector, and non-profit groups. Based on this, the committee will evaluate both sites and offer input for improving services (employer and individual) and provide new ideas. This could include outreach opportunities, the process for engaging employers, etc.

✓ **Fiscal Committee**

Frequency of Meetings: Quarterly in accordance with the WDB meetings, or as needed.

Membership: WDB members and other members requesting to serve on the committee and as approved by the board.

Responsibilities and Activities:

1. Conducting financial oversight
2. Ensuring WIOA funds are spent in the most cost effective manner
3. Assisting with budget development
4. Approving, monitoring and recommending budgets
5. Reviewing financial monitoring and audits
6. Analyzing strategic plans and determining financial impact
7. Presenting financial information and recommendations to the Board

✓ **Youth Committee**

Frequency of Meetings: Quarterly in accordance with the WDB meetings, or as needed.

Membership: The Youth Committee consists of appointed voting WDB members from the appointed membership as well as non-voting members as approved by the board.

Responsibilities and Activities:

- The primary role of the Youth Committee is “to provide information and to assist with planning, the operational oversight, and other issues relating to the provision of services to youth (Section 681.100).”
 - Identify eligible providers of youth workforce investment activities in the local area by awarding grants or contracts on a competitive basis.
 - Develop performance and report measure for youth providers in addition to those required by WIOA.
- ✓ **Local Management Committee –**

Membership: the directors of the county assistance offices and the EARN providers

Frequency of meetings: Quarterly in accordance with the WDB meetings, or as needed

Responsibilities and activities:

- Provide programmatic oversight and strategic plan guidance and feedback to the local EARN program
- Coordinate referrals from the CAOs to the EARN program

Section 3.2

3.2. *What are the programs included in the local workforce delivery system and how will the local board work with the entities carrying out all workforce programs to support service alignment?*

The NTWDB’s vision and policy directs investment in workforce preparation, skill development, education and training. These investments are targeted and align with assisting youth, job seekers and employers. The NTWDB aligns regional resources and acts as the intermediary to promote partnerships among businesses, non-profit agencies, economic development providers, educational institutions, community-based organizations, and employers. Through working together, stakeholders enhance the skills needed for workforce inclusion, employability, and educational and training levels of the current and future workforce.

The NTWDB is responsible for setting the standards of operations of the PA CareerLink® sites and overall workforce systems in the Northern Tier region. The PA CareerLink® Committee is responsible for conveying the standards set by the LWDB by developing and implementing programs, policies and procedures that coordinate partner activities and resources into a seamless, non-duplicative delivery system.

PA CareerLink® Operator

Our one-stop operator was selected following a competitive procurement process as outlined in TEG 15-16, dated January 17, 2017. LWDB members reviewed each proposal and selected Bradford County Action (BCA) as the PA CareerLink® operator for the region effective July 1, 2017. BCA employs the Site Administrators, and holds the operational duties outlined in WIOA and the policies of the Commonwealth. These roles include functional management to ensure seamless service delivery and oversee the operations of the one-stop.

The operator is an intermediary to the partners and ensures an effective referral mechanism is in

place for the benefit of individuals and partners while also serving as an ambassador for the one-stop system to the community.

Title I Provider

Each year prior to the beginning of a new program year the WDB reviews the performance of the Title I Contractor for Adult and Dislocated Worker Services and makes a recommendation to renew or not renew the contract to the executive committee. This review includes the following:

- successful attainment of the federally mandated performance measure
- successful attainment of the WDB's goals including enrollment in key activities, career services, workshops, work-based training, and other training.
- review of expenditures including attainment of 80% obligation in Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth; and comparison of budget to expenditures

If any deficiencies are noted during this review or anytime throughout the year, the WDB will work with the Title I Contractor to address those concerns. Each year the contractor has been successful in fulfillment of the review that a new RFP process wasn't necessitated. We did coordinate an RFP process last program year but only the existing providers bid on the contracts.

Title II programs are provided by local Adult Literacy Training Providers, depending on the availability of literacy training in the individual counties. The Title I provider, Bradford County Action (BCA), has utilized this entire region to ensure the delivery of high-quality services. As one of the leading service providers, BCA is aligned with Tech Prep, and youth initiatives.

The PA CareerLink® Committee of operators consists of the paying partners in the PA CareerLink® which are representatives from the WIOA Title I operators, Bureau of Workforce Partnership and Operations, Department of Human Services and Office of Vocational Rehabilitation. The PA CareerLink® Committee is chaired by a WIOA Title I representative and organized by the site administrators, who are responsible for both the comprehensive PA CareerLink® sites in the region. The PA CareerLink® Committee, has been so designated by the NTWDB/local elected official agreement. It performs management functions through meetings held every two months. Meeting agendas, minutes and comprehensive reports are provided at every meeting.

The purpose of the PA CareerLink® is to create a seamless system of service delivery that will enhance the access to individual program services while improving long term employment outcomes for both job seeker and employer customers receiving assistance. The PA CareerLink® Committee designs the integration of systems and coordination of services, develops in cooperation with the fiscal agent an acceptable Resource Sharing Agreement utilizing equal access as the cost allocation methodology, evaluates performance and customer needs, maintains the one stop service plan, acts as a liaison with the NTWDB, promotes the PA CareerLink®, recruits partners, assures adherence to the provisions of Memorandum of Understanding, defines and provides means to meet operational goals, share and maintain data, responds to community needs, facilitates team building, and recommends to the NTWDB when necessary the need for additional affiliate sites. The NTWDB determines the number and type of PA CareerLink® sites in the area, defines minimum requirements for each site, sets performance standards, reviews, monitors, and evaluates performance, charters PA CareerLink® sites, and negotiates the memoranda of understanding of the PA CareerLink® partners to provide services.

There currently are two comprehensive PA CareerLink® sites in the Northern Tier region. PA

CareerLink® – Bradford/Sullivan is located at 312 Main Street, Towanda, 570-265-2171, 8:30 to 4:30 and PA CareerLink® Tioga is located at 56 Plaza Lane, Wellsboro, 570-724-1939, 8:30-4:30. The PA CareerLink® Site Administrator is responsible for oversight of both comprehensive sites and affiliated sites within the region. There is one BWPO Supervisor at each comprehensive site.

Due to the rural nature of our region, four affiliated sites are strategically located in our remaining counties ensuring representation throughout the Northern Tier. These sites make it possible to provide services in those areas in which it is not conducive for customers to access one of the comprehensive sites. All three sites are operated by WIOA Title I and EARN and provide full-time WIOA service staff offering WIOA and EARN services as well as links to services provided by other partners through the comprehensive sites such as Veteran and RESEA services. All four sites fall under the umbrella of the comprehensive PA CareerLink® Bradford/Sullivan.

Affiliated sites have a Trehab WIOA Supervisor on site and the locations are as follows:

Sullivan County: 210 Center Street, Dushore 570-928-8144, M: 7-5 Th: 7-4:30
Susquehanna County: 36 Public Avenue, Montrose 570-278-3818, W&Th 8-4:30 by appt
1302 Main Street, Susquehanna 853-1103, M-W: 7-5, Th: 7-4:30
Wyoming County: 1 Kim Avenue, Suite # 10, Tunkhannock, 570-836-6840, M-W: 7-5 Thurs: 7-4:30

Attachment C outlines the One Stop Location and Program Services.

As with the Commonwealth's alignment of core programs, the NTWDB will provide technical support and policy development and implementation to establish effective policies and procedures and inter-agency agreements that combine guidance, education, training and support services that prepare individuals for careers. The board will promote co-enrollment to align services and will encourage shared roles for guidance and support services to prevent duplication of services among core programs.

NTWDB representation and subsequent technical assistance, is provided to the Operator by the NTWDB's staff. Operator members also serve on the WDB and subcommittees of the WDB. A new WDB PA CareerLink® Operators' Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that identifies the coordinated roles of each is currently development (as of July 2017) . Roles and responsibilities do not differ in relation to the agency represented. The goal of the PA CareerLink® centers is to provide seamless delivery of services; therefore, separate and distinct roles were not identified. The following list, at a minimum, identifies roles and responsibilities of all PA CareerLink® Committee members:

- To develop and coordinate an integrated Plan;
- Review, Screen, and approve the selection of the PA CareerLink® Administrator on behalf of the WDB;
- Form a Management Team representing the partners in the Memorandum of Understanding;
- Ensure that Basic, Individualized, and Training Services are seamlessly integrated by the partners and available at every PA CareerLink® centers;
- Assist in the development of strategic plans and other related items for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act services;
- Integrate additional Investor Partner Performance Measures;
- Promote private sector involvement in the statewide workforce investment system;

- Develop methods of referral of individuals between the Operator and PA CareerLink® partners; and,
- And Support an effective and efficient PA CareerLink® centers throughout the region.

Northern Tier’s Regional Planning and Development Commission is currently the recipient of these funds.

Alignment with Other Partners Programs:

In addition, within the Northern Tier WDA there are additional agencies who provide a variety of services that both our job seeker and business customers can and do benefit from. The NTWDB considers all of these agencies as part of the service delivery network in the NTWDA. The agencies include but are not limited to: local and region economic development agencies, the Small Business Administration, Community Action and other human service agencies, County Offices of Children and Youth, Department of Public Welfare, Chambers of Commerce, etc. The NTWDB has taken great steps at ensuring that all agencies are working together to the best of their abilities and at the very least are aware of the other programs and services available to our customers.

The communication and referrals between PA CareerLink® partners and the many different agencies assisting those with additional barriers is the key to providing a comprehensive system. These groups include, but are not limited to: the county assistance offices, community action agencies, probation offices, Domestic Relations and non-profits such as Serve Inc, Futures, YMCA, and Area Agency on Aging.

Continuously educating PA CareerLink® staff, service agencies and the community regarding the spectrum of available services both inside and out of the PA CareerLink® system is necessary to avoid duplication of services and maximize and leverage resources.

This structure is designed specifically to support implementation of the strategies that are outlined in the NTWDB goals is aligned to achieve the state-wide goals as well.

Section 3.3

3.3. How will the local board work with the entities carrying out core programs to:

- *Expand access to employment, training, education and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly individuals with barriers to employment.*

The NTWDB’s vision and policy directs investment in workforce preparation, skill development, education and training. These investments are targeted and align with assisting youth, job seekers and employers. The NTWDB aligns regional resources and acts as the intermediary to promote partnerships among businesses, non-profit agencies, economic development providers, educational institutions, community-based organizations, and employers. Through working together, stakeholders enhance the skills needed for workforce inclusion, employability, and educational and training levels of the current and future workforce.

The NTWDB is responsible for setting the standards of operations of the PA CareerLink® sites and overall workforce systems in the Northern Tier. The PA CareerLink® Committee is responsible for conveying the standards set by the NTWDB by developing and implementing policies and procedures that coordinate partner activities and resources into a seamless, non-duplicative delivery system. Operational compliance concerns are addressed by the Workforce Development Board through

continuous oversight and monitoring of WIOA programs and the workforce system as a whole.

Individuals entering the PA CareerLink® center receive an orientation to partner services. Additionally, service overview is presented at various events throughout the community such as job fairs, career awareness events and various meetings attended by local workforce staff such as chamber or committee meetings.

For the purposes of determining eligibility, documentation is required as evidence supporting the legitimacy of an individual's acceptability for participation in WIOA funded programs. Eligibility must be confirmed by the local workforce staff and a supervisory/secondary review of eligibility determination is completed for all WIOA participants. This review is done prior to the customer receiving a WIOA service. WIOA allows for self-certification to validate certain eligibility requiring documentation which may cause undue hardship for the participant to obtain, especially those individuals with barriers. Staff must make every effort to obtain documentation to verify eligibility as self-certification is a last resort. Staff must case note all attempts made to obtain documentation prior to the use of self-certification. The use of telephone verification and documentation inspection verification to verify eligibility is allowable, especially in consideration of individuals with barriers. The use of telephone verification is preferred to self-certification and will be attempted prior to self-certification. Information obtained must be recorded in a Telephone/Document Inspection Verification form. WIOA program operators must report all WIOA program participants that utilize the self-certification form on their monthly cumulative participant reports. This information is utilized by LWDB staff to monitor a random sample of WIOA participants with self-certification for review. Monitoring staff conduct review of 10% of files with self-certifications on a quarterly basis. This is done to ensure self-certifications are done in compliance with the LWDB policy. Verification of eligibility through document inspection is appropriate when documents cannot be or may not be copied.

To accomplish this vision, the following resources and programs are utilized in accordance with federal and state regulations:

- Title I (Adults, Dislocated Workers and Youth)
- Wagner-Peyser Act employment services administered by DOL
- Title II Adult Education and Literacy Act Program administered by the Department of Education
- Activities authorized under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
- Title V of the Older Americans Act of 1965
- Career and Technical education programs at the postsecondary level authorized under the Carl D Perkins Act of 2006.
- Activities authorized under chapter 2 of Title 2 of the Trade Act of 1974
- Activities authorized under chapter 41 of title 38, United States Code
- Employment and Training programs carried out under the Community Services Block Grant Act
- Employment and Training activities carried out by the Department of Housing and Urban Development
- Programs authorized under State unemployment compensation laws
- Native American Programs;
- Migrant and seasonal farmworker programs; and

- Programs authorized under part A of Title IV of the social Security Act

Other Programs authorized by WIOA:

Red Rock Job Corps Services, located in Sullivan County is a no-cost education and career technical training program administered by the U.S. Department of Labor that helps young people ages 16 to 24 improve the quality of their lives through career technical and academic training. The Job Corps program is authorized by Title I-C of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (supersedes WIA 1998).

Please note that there are no programs in the Northern Tier PA region currently available for any of the following programs

- Youth Build
- Programs authorized under section 212 of the Second Chance Act of 2007

WIOA Adult

The WIOA Adult program is designed to assist those 18 and older who are in need of employment or career advancement. Priority of service is given to participants that are recipients of public assistance, low-income or basic skills deficient. Career services include assessments, individual employment plans and career counseling. If a participant is determined unlikely or unable to obtain or retain employment which leads to self-sufficiency, they may be in need of training services.

WIOA Dislocated Worker

Dislocated Worker programs assist workers before or after a layoff in identifying needs in order to develop a streamlined service strategy to facilitate rapid reemployment. This includes identifying training opportunities that may be needed to re-enter the workforce.

WIOA Youth

Youth programming is designed to service eligible youth and young adults through high-quality case management support toward educational attainment. Services include career guidance and exploration, summer and/or year-round work experience, skills training opportunities and support service. The goal for youth participants is advancement into post-secondary education or gaining employment with a self-sustaining wage. Youth programs are prioritized for out of school youth and youth with significant barriers to success, such as youth with a disability, pregnant or parent and those subject to the juvenile/adult justice system.

These three Title I programs are operated by Bradford County Action and Trehab throughout the region and are available within the PA CareerLink® System.

- *Wagner-Peyser Act Programs*

Services under the Wagner-Peyser Act are provided by partners from the Bureau of Workforce Partnership and Operations, Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry. These services are provided within the PA CareerLink® System and include vocational counseling, employee profiling, job

matching, job search assistance, and posting of employer job orders.

- *Programs authorized under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973*

Programs authorized under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 are provided by the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation and available through the PA CareerLink® System. These program services include vocational counseling and guidance, vocational evaluation, restoration, training, job placement and pre-employment training services for eligible and potentially eligible high school students with disabilities.

- *Programs authorized under Section 403(a)(5) of the Social Security Act (as added by Section 5001 of the Balanced Budget Act of 1977)*

The local County Assistance Offices through the State Department of Human Services provide services through TANF, authorized under Section 403(a)(5) of the Social Security Act. These services are targeted to welfare recipients and include information dissemination of welfare benefits. The services act as the sole determinant for eligibility of those benefits and are the referral resource to a multitude of local services, programs, and training options. The EARN Program receives referrals directly from the local County Assistance Office to provide TANF recipients with job readiness workshops, barrier remediation, job search skills, short term work experience, vocational education opportunities and follow up support during employment. The program is designed to move the TANF recipient from dependency on welfare benefits to self-sufficiency.

- *Activities authorized under Title V of the Older American's Act of 1965*

Activities authorized under Title V of the Older American's Act of 1965 are provided within the local PA CareerLink® system by the local SCSEP organizations including Area Agency on Aging, AARP Foundation and Associates for Training and Development and PathStone. These services are targeted to seniors through the PA CareerLink® system and include vocational counseling, paid work experience programs, employment training, and independent living counseling.

- *Postsecondary vocational education activities authorized under Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act.*

Vocational Technical School and Career and Technology Center partners provide these services as part of the PA CareerLink® services. Program services include the dissemination of information relative to financial assistance to attend post-secondary training and the provision for post-secondary occupational skills training.

- *Activities authorized under Chapter 2 of Title II of the Trade Act of 1974*

These activities include Trade Readjustment Act Program administration, including tuition assistance to Dislocated Workers who have lost their jobs due to imports. Program services, authorized under this funding and provided within the PA CareerLink® system, include rapid response to employees in the event of massive layoff or plant closure, tuition assistance for post-secondary occupational skills training, and income subsidies to assist candidates while in training. This service is provided by BWPO, Department of Labor and Industry.

- *Veteran's activities authorized under Chapter 41 of Title 38 United States Code*

Veterans' activities are provided by Veterans Representatives from BWPO, Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry. Services include career counseling, information on veterans' benefits, and tuition assistance for skill training.

- *Employment and Training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant Act*
These services are available within the PA CareerLink® System through local community action agencies or limited-purpose agencies (e.g. farm worker organizations).

- *Employment and training activities carried out by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)*

Where applicable, employment and training activities are provided by the existing Housing Authorities through the PA CareerLink® System. Services include information on HUD-funded employment and training activities, housing assistance, and housing subsidies.

- *Programs authorized under State unemployment compensation laws*

The Department of Labor & Industry Unemployment Compensation (UC) deputate operates programs authorized under state and federal UC laws. Services provided by the deputate include dissemination of information on the UC laws and claims assistance. BWPO provides access to those seeking to file applications and claims for UC benefits.

- *Programs authorized under Title II of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (adult basic education and literacy training).*

The Title I and the Title II provider are the same agency in our region. Adult basic education provides a full range of service from literacy to activities that support post-secondary and career readiness goals to adults that are basic skills deficient. Services include English language acquisition when needed. As one of the leading service providers, the current provider is aligned with Tech Prep, and youth initiatives. Representation of Title II Adult Education and Literacy exists within the system. Title II services are promoted through the mobile services and the advertising of mobile services, which directly targets the barrier population.

The Title II provider also is the Title I provider, so any interaction between the board and providers always involves both programs. The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) will establish procedures, and accompanying rubrics and documentation, for Title II applications to be provided to local boards to review for alignment with their local plan. After review and evaluation, the local board will be responsible for submitting recommendations to PDE and will also be responsible to provide technical assistance later in the process.

Title II is one of the partners providing mobile services, which are designed to take services to the customers as opposed to the customers coming to single county facilities.

Second Chance Act of 2007 Programs authorized under section 212 Reentry employment programs are being developed in partnership with the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections and offered through the PA CareerLink® System.

As described in **Section 3.1 on Page 39**, the NTWDB's strategic vision is enhanced by the WIOA services provided in the Northern Tier region, particularly in the PA CareerLink® centers. A central point of contact for these services results in a proactive, efficient and effective system. The NTWDB seeks to continuously improve the system and to ensure satisfaction on both our employers and job seekers. PA CareerLink® staff in our region work collaboratively to ensure the programs offered align with the NTWDB's vision to be a destination of choice for employers and jobseekers, where existing businesses experience growth and where new businesses are eager to locate because of the excellent job opportunities, economic vitality, quality of life and the presence of a skilled workforce.

All of the partners and their programs, as mentioned earlier, are aware of and part of the strategic planning of the Board. It is expected the programs offered through the PA CareerLink® center align with the strategic vision of the Board. This is evaluated on a regular basis both informally and formally. The PA CareerLink® Operator with oversight of our PA CareerLink® centers ensures the vision is being carried out.

The Northern Tier Workforce Development Board requires / expects the workforce system to be an integrated system that serves job seekers and employers that results in a workforce that meets the needs of employers and prepared and places those seeking employment, especially those with barriers to employment. This begins with outreach to the hard to serve categories as required in WIOA and the populations identified in the NTWDBs Priority of Service Policy.

The Northern Tier **Priority of Service Policy** establishes priority of service for individuals receiving individualized career and training services funded under the Title I Adult program in accordance with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

WIOA focuses on serving individuals with barriers to employment and priority of service is required regardless of funding levels. Individuals in the targeted groups are given priority over other individuals for receipt of individualized career and training services. Veterans and eligible spouses within these groups receive priority over non-veterans. The goal is to serve a greater percentage of adults from the priority targeted groups, at least 51%.

All Adult participants must meet the following general eligibility requirements:

- Age (18 years or older)
- Citizenship/Eligible to work
- Selective Service (If applicable)

Priority for Adult customers must be given to the following groups when providing individualized career and training services, in addition, training services will only be provided to residents of the Northern Tier region.

Recipients of Public Assistance – includes individuals who receive, or in the past six (6) months have received, or are a member of a family that is receiving or in the past six (6) months has received, assistance through one (1) or more of the following:

- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI); or

- State or local income based public assistance.

Low-income Individuals

- Recipients of public assistance (defined above)
- Individuals in a family with total income below the poverty line or 70% of the lower living standard income level
- Homeless
- Foster youth; and
- Individuals with disabilities with individual income below the poverty line or 70% of the lower living standard income level.

** A youth 18 or older who was determined low-income for the WIOA title I Youth program may be co-enrolled in the WIOA title 1 Adult Program without an eligibility re-determination and be counted as an individual who meets Adult priority of service, if the original determination was made no more than six (6) months prior to the date of co-enrollment.

Basic Skills Deficient – is defined as an adult who is unable to compute or solve problems, or read, write, or speak English, at a level necessary to function on the job, in the participant’s family or in society. An adult may be assessed as basic skills deficient through career advisor observations and documented in case notes. For example, the career advisor may observe that the adult is not able to read or fill out an application form, or does not have basic computer literacy. Career advisor may document basic skills deficient using any one (1) of the following:

- Basic skills assessment questions or test results
- School records
- Referral or records from a title II Adult Basic Education program
- Referral or records from an English Language Learner program

Case notes must provide an auditable trail back to the source of the verified information. For example, a career adviser verifies an individual is basic skills deficient by reviewing school records – case notes must include information such as name of school, date of enrollment which would allow an auditor /monitor to later retrieve this information. A hard copy of this information does not need to be kept in file. Standardized tests used to assess basic skills will include reading, writing or computing skills.

A youth 18 or older who is determined basic skills deficient for WIOA title I youth may be co-enrolled in WIOA title I Adult priority of service if original determination was made no more than six (6) months prior to date of co-enrollment.

Underemployed – individuals are employed full or part-time and also meet the definition of a low-income individual.

Individuals that do not meet any of the statutory priority categories listed above may receive services if determined eligible for the Adult program. Individuals earning a family income of equal to or above 235% of the poverty line will not be considered for training services unless prior approval is granted by the Northern Tier Workforce Development Board.

Adult Priority and Veteran's Priority of Service

Priority of Service for the Adult program must be applied in the following order:

1. Veterans and eligible spouses who meet priority (public assistance recipient, low income, and basic skills deficient or underemployed and low income) receive highest level of priority.
2. Other individuals (non-veterans or eligible spouses) who meet priority (public assistance recipient, low income, basic skills deficient or underemployed and low income) receive second level of priority.
3. All other veterans or eligible spouses who do not fall within a priority group, but do meet Adult program eligibility and local discretionary priority meet the third level of priority.
4. Individuals (non-veteran or eligible spouses) who do not fall within a priority group, but do meet adult program eligibility and local discretionary priority meet the fourth level of service.

Additionally, the NTWDB is in the process of working with the criminal justice system within the region to enhance services and training available to ex-offenders, with special emphasis on the **Fit4Work** program. The NTWDB is also working with the Domestic Relations offices in our region to make that program available to individuals with a history of being unable to meet child support obligations that need to reenter the workforce.

Once case management has begun with a customer the board expects that all staff look at job history, work experience and skills to ensure that all are tied to an occupation on the High Priority Occupation (HPO) list. The board also expects all PA CareerLink® centers to host job fairs for employers who are hiring. The board has also partnered with other agencies to implement programs such as **Fit4Work**. These programs are directly related to some of the most in demand occupations in our region and result in employment that will put the customer on a career pathway to success.

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA or Opportunity Act) requires priority be given to public assistance recipients, other low-income individuals and individuals who are basic skills deficient, when providing individualized career services and training services using WIOA title I Adult program funds. In addition, Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) No. 3-15 specifies that priority should also be applied to individuals that are both underemployed and low-income. WIOA provides a focus on serving individuals with barriers to employment, and the intent of this priority in the law is to ensure access to these populations on a priority basis. Under the WIA priority was required for public assistance recipients and other low-income individuals when funds were limited. Under the WIOA, priority of service is required regardless of the funding levels and also is expanded to include individuals who are basic skills deficient.

- *Facilitate the development of Career Pathways and co-enrollment, as appropriate, in core programs (specify on-ramps from adult education).*

The NTWDB recognizes the intent of Congress through WIOA to utilize our funding to better serve those with barriers to employment. While we have historically served this population through our system there is now a heightened sensitivity to their needs. Services will continue to be refined to best meet their needs and to collaborate with partner agencies on the removal of barriers. Below

please find more detailed information on service strategies for specific populations with barriers to employment:

The PA CareerLink® management team continuously examines ways to align the PA CareerLink® service delivery system to more directly address issues involving underemployment, business services, and service to special populations. This population includes dislocated workers including displaced homemakers, migrant/seasonal workers, TANF customers, veterans, minorities, women and those with additional barriers to employment including older individuals, ex-offenders, persons with disabilities and persons with limited English proficiency. The PA CareerLink® Management Team assists the NTWDB in ensuring availability of employment and training services to these special populations. Services for these individuals are equal to any other including all of the PA CareerLink® workshops, one-on-one services with staff, testing, referral process, as well as online opportunities such as JobGateway.

Other strategies underway include:

- Our Title 1 provider is also our GED provider who provides GED services for individuals who are incarcerated before they are released. We work on lining up services and support before they are released. Incarcerated individuals get an overview of PA CareerLink® services and a preview of the Fit4Work. They also do individual meetings to provide an initial assessment and develop a service strategy to prepare for employment after release.
- Customers in our PA CareerLink® centers are supported by Career Pathways Navigators who provide assessment and referral services as well as help job seekers understand the career pathways available in local industries and how to develop the knowledge, skills and abilities to be qualified for job opportunities on those pathways. They also help job seekers link to educational and employment opportunities within the region.
- We are also working on developing a work crew through our Title 1 provider to offer transitional work experience (road crews, painting and maintenance etc.) for individuals who are or were incarcerated. These work sites will be developed in cooperation with local municipalities. This provides up to four weeks of work experience so that individuals can start to pay their fines and reduce recidivism rates.
- We have been offering mobile services to provide easier access to our PA CareerLink® services for those with transportation barriers.
- Utilizing technology to conduct virtual workshops.
- Creating a library of on-line workshops that can be utilized by individuals with transportation and/or other barriers when they can get access to the Internet.

Section 3.4

3.4. *What strategies will be implemented in the local area to improve business/employer engagement that:*

- *Support a local area workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses in the local area;*

Based on employment figures, the largest industries within the region area are Health Care, Public Administration, Manufacturing and Retail Trade. When reviewing figures for the largest average wages by industry, manufacturing, education, health care, and information technology have the largest salaries. Industries that have high location quotients in the area include manufacturing, health

care, energy, and building and construction. Therefore, the NTWDB focuses on industry partnerships and communication as a crucial strategy in identifying skills needs, promoting career pathways, matching jobseekers to available jobs and training. In addition, the NTWDB utilizes the High Priority Occupation List when reviewing regional and sector strategies.

These strategies link to the state as Pennsylvania promotes a workforce system based on the needs of employers, promotes career pathways, promotes industry partnerships, plans to better connect jobseekers and employers, and wants to utilize the HPO List more effectively.

The NTWDB cooperation with the Local Development District (LDD), the Northern Tier Regional Planning and Development Commission (NTRPDC), which is the agency housing services of both the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) and the LWDB, creates a partnership that is efficient and well-rounded. Employer outreach is necessary for both groups and the shared information helps identify challenges and develop solutions to those strategies. By further developing these partnerships, engagement is improved as well.

The NTWDB has implemented several regional strategies to facilitate engagement of businesses and other employers. These methods include:

Industry Partnerships

Industry Partnerships are an important strategy for meeting the skills needs of businesses, the career goals of workers and the economic development goals of the Commonwealth. Industry Partnerships bring together multiple employers in the same industry cluster to address common or overlapping human capital needs such as recruitment, retention and training. The overall goal of an industry partnership is to increase the local and global success of the industry as a whole. The industry partnerships are also providing stronger connections between job seekers and employers in local areas where the workforce system must be designed to support the needs of regional employers.

The Northern Tier Workforce Development Board oversees one industry led partnership (Healthcare,) and partners with the NorthEast region on Technology and Manufacturing partnerships. By working with new and emerging businesses within these clusters, we have been successful in aggregating training needs for multiple firms with similar needs. This has helped us create an employer-driven approach to workforce development. By increasing the economies of scale the partnerships have been able to provide incumbent worker training to employers at a lower cost. The partnerships have also helped to align the services of education and training providers with private sector and employer needs, have helped us share best practices, and have established relationships that accelerate industry-wide product and process innovation. The partnerships have also implemented programs that help address the challenges of connecting youth to careers.

The NTWDB will also continue to build on the successes achieved in its current industry partnership as it implements the Commonwealth's new Next Generation sector initiative as well.

Small Businesses and New and Emerging Industries

The Northern Tier region is made up of mainly small employers – in fact after each of the county's top employers, all of the employers are small businesses.

Small businesses need a comprehensive suite of services available at the PA CareerLink® centers to from helping customers identify resources for entrepreneurship, self-employment and small business development to acting as their human resources department when they are ready to make their first and subsequent hires. Most often small business is referred to agencies such as the Scranton & Wilkes University Small Business Development Centers or the North East Industrial Resource Center for further assistance. We will continue to strive for the goal that PA CareerLink® staff and in particular Business Service Teams have the knowledge of all opportunities available to employers.

In addition, all businesses including whether they are small or part of a new/emerging industry will benefit from the On-the-Job Training Program (OJT). On-the-Job Training (OJT) is training provided by the employer to a Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) eligible trainee, who has completed the required individualized career services available via the PA CareerLink® centers, has been unsuccessful in obtaining employment through such services, and has been approved for OJT participation by the Title I staff.

- *Manage activities or services that will be implemented to improve business engagement;*

Business Service Teams.

The Northern Tier Regional Business Service Team has representation from each County. Our Local Veterans Employment Representative (LVER) is the chairperson; they meet quarterly face to face and have county specific meetings. They identify employers for outreach and talk with the PA CareerLink® staff to identify job seekers that would be a good match for the employer needs. The Northern Tier staff meets with the business service team staff. The team is starting to use the Executive Pulse system to share information with the economic development partners in the region.

Additionally, OVR business services staff can identify resources to diversify their workforce to include individuals with barriers to employment. Specifically, for individuals with disabilities, OVR provides multiple services to the business community designed to assist businesses with onboarding pre-screened qualified applicants with disabilities. OVR onboarding supports for a qualified new hire can include: reasonable accommodation consultation, initial probationary wage reimbursement (on the job training – OJT), referral on tax credits or deductions. OVR also offers no-cost consultation on the Americans with Disability Act (ADA) accessibility standards and helping a business retain current employees following an accident, injury or disability.

- *Better coordinate regional workforce and economic development strategy, messaging, engagement and programs; and*

The NTWDB and PA CareerLink® staff work meet monthly with the local and regional economic development providers. This allows for information sharing, planning and coordination of outreach strategies. Our workforce staff also utilize the Executive Pulse system to help facilitate referrals, information sharing and outreach tracking.

- *Strengthen linkages between the PA CareerLink® service delivery system and unemployment insurance (UI) programs.*

Unemployment Insurance Linkages. The local area complies with the Commonwealth's Register for Work and Work Search law by helping unemployed individuals register on the JobGateway® system. It also provides a telephone in the PA CareerLink® Center so that Unemployment Compensation (UC) Claimants can call the statewide toll-free UC number regarding any benefits questions they may have.

At the PA Careerlink® Centers, they are provided with an orientation of services and are given an initial assessment to determine their specific workforce needs. Based on their unique circumstances, they may be referred to additional services and resources, such as job search workshops, staff-assisted job-search activities, partner programs, supportive services, and/or training activities to help them secure a new job, or begin a new career.

Any potential UC eligibility issues identified during RESEA, or any other UC Claimant interaction are referred to the State's Unemployment Insurance department for resolution.

Additionally, the Office of UC Service Centers conducts seminars on a variety topics relating to the rights and responsibilities of employers. UC Representatives have presented several of these seminars in the Northern Tier Region in collaboration with PA CareerLink®. These seminars are often well attended and give employers a unique opportunity to meet with a UC representative to discuss issues or concerns and become educated on rights and responsibilities they may not otherwise seek out if not presented in this format. The collaboration between UC Service Centers and PA CareerLink® helps to enhance already established employer relationships and attract employers new to the overall system.

3.5. *How will the local board coordinate local area workforce investment activities with regional economic development activities that are specific to a local area? How will the local board promote entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services?*

Coordination with Regional Workforce and Economic Development Strategy. The NTWDB works closely and collaboratively with the state and local areas and economic development for the sustainability of existing businesses and the growth and creation of small, new and emerging industries. The NTWDB continues to strengthen ties to economic development and supports all the local industry partnerships.

The one stop centers also work closely with new and emerging industries, the NTWDB, and economic development to determine and meet critical needs. By learning about workforce needs from data, economic development, and employers themselves, NTWDB is able to better design workforce and training programs with service providers and educational entities. The collaboration allows a case management system that communicates employer needs across multiple entities and allows for the leveraging of resources to meet those needs.

Ongoing efforts between economic development and the NTWDB are crucial in order to achieve regional prosperity. A region that has a strong workforce that is adaptable to new technologies and has success in attracting business is better able to retain business. This will allow the community to grow. By working with business to determine their skill needs for existing and emerging employers to prepare for high-growth occupations, the local area is better prepared to work with the needs of under-skilled workers. Workers that are under-skilled can be assessed to their aptitudes and skills levels and then advised of career pathways.

The workers are then presented with training opportunities as well as supportive services. Partnerships include the Governor's Action Team (GAT), of Partnerships for Regional Economic Performance (PREP) which include the Small Business Development Center (SBDC), Northeast Pennsylvania Industrial Resource Center (NEPIRC), and county economic development partners among others offer support to meet the needs of employers and jobseekers.

Training for Self-Employment. Entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services should provide the basics of starting and operating a small business. Individuals who are interested self-employment are referred to community partners, such as the Small Business Development Center, and the North East PA Industrial Resource Center and the Northern Tier Regional Planning and Development Commission to receive specialized assistance that includes but is not limited to:

- Entrepreneurship education that provides an introduction to the values and basics of starting and running a business. These programs often guide individuals through the development of a business plan and may also include simulations of business start-up and operation.
- Enterprise development which provides support and services that incubate and help individuals develop their own businesses. Enterprise development programs go beyond entrepreneurship education by helping individuals access small loans or grants that are needed to begin business operation and by providing more individualized attention to assist in the development of viable business ideas.
- Access to micro-loans and grants available to start or expand businesses
- Consulting and business assistance services to help start or expand businesses.

4. OPERATIONAL PLANNING QUESTIONS: Local Area Workforce Delivery System

Section 4.1

- 4.1. *Provide a descriptive overview of the local area workforce delivery system, including key stakeholders and entities in the local area.*

The workforce development system consists of WIOA Title I, Title II - Adult Education and Literacy Acts, Wagner-Peyser Act employment services and the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation as well as other community based agencies which provide services to job seekers in particular those with barriers to employment. These agencies include but are not limited to Job Corps, Community Action agencies, behavioral health agencies, juvenile and adult probation agencies and homeless and housing agencies.

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014 require that each local workforce development area has at least one comprehensive one-stop center providing an accessible marketplace for employer and job seekers to be effectively matched. In Pennsylvania, the one-stop centers are known as PA CareerLink® centers. The Northern Tier Workforce Development area has two Comprehensive PA CareerLink® centers and four Affiliate PA CareerLink® sites. The key stakeholders and their roles in the local workforce delivery system are outlined in detail in **Section 3.3 on Page 44**.

Bradford County Action (BCA) is the competitively procured PA CareerLink® operator for the region. BCA employs the Site Administrators, and holds the operational duties outlined in WIOA and the policies of the Commonwealth. These roles include site functional management to ensure seamless service delivery and oversee the functional supervision.

The operator is an intermediary to the partners and ensures an effective referral mechanism is in place for the benefit of individuals and partners while also serving as an ambassador for the one-stop system to the community.

Local Elected Officials are included in correspondence with the board and are encouraged to offer input and feedback on the direction and operations of the workforce system. Staff of the board meet with stakeholders, local elected officials, advocacy groups and anyone willing to offer suggestions and input to the system. These meetings range from county-level meetings, to business organizations, to regional meetings with staff from many of the workforce service providers. The value of these meetings is two-fold as everyone in attendance learns the missions of others at the table, which then improves the referral and understanding of the workforce system.

Title II programs are provided by local Adult Literacy Training Providers, depending on the availability of literacy training in the individual counties. The Title I provider, Bradford County Action (BCA), has utilized this entire region to ensure the delivery of high-quality services. As one of the leading service providers, BCA is aligned with Tech Prep, and youth initiatives. Services under the Wagner-Peyser Act are provided by partners from the Bureau of Workforce Partnership and Operations, Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry. These services are provided within the PA CareerLink® System and include employee profiling, job matching, job search assistance, and posting of employer job orders. Programs authorized under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 are provided by the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation and available through the PA CareerLink® System. These program services

include vocational counseling and guidance, vocational evaluation, restoration, training, job placement and pre-employment training services for eligible and potentially eligible high school students with disabilities.

The EEO officer for the Northern Tier Region is Melissa Fleming, WIOA Program Administrator, fleming@northerntier.org. Responsibilities include monitoring and investigating LWDA activities and activities of its subrecipients to ensure compliance with nondiscrimination and EO obligations under WIOA Title I. EEO officer reviews written policy to ensure that they are nondiscriminatory, develops and publishes LWDA procedures for processing discrimination complaints and ensuring those procedures are followed. EEO officer is responsible for dissemination of information and works with the Equal Opportunity Liaisons assigned to each PA CareerLink® center to ensure that customers are aware of their rights and report incidents related to potential discrimination or accessibility.

PA CareerLink® EO Liaison for Bradford is Allen Hubler, Site Supervisor, BWPO, ahubler@pa.gov. Tioga EO Liaison is Joseph Brelo, Site Supervisor, BWPO, jbrel@pa.gov.

The competitive process for services includes a request for proposal, which are then reviewed and scored by the local board, which makes a recommendation to the executive board of local elected officials for approval.

Bidding Procedures and Quotations

NTRPDC and all **sub recipients** are responsible for implementing a bidding procedure to obtain quotes. Proper bidding procedures must be adhered to, regardless of the method of procurement. The established procedure must ensure that a linkage is maintained with the Small Business Administration and other agencies that are able to assist in identifying small and minority-owned businesses. Formal Bidding procedures involve establishing levels for dollar amounts that require such procedures as advertising, sending out formal letters requesting bids from vendors, obtaining sealed bids, etc. The unit cost should reflect the lowest price quote received. If the lowest price is not utilized, justification must be documented. Formal procurement procedures must be described in the approved Local Operational Plan.

Invitations for bids or RFP's shall be based on a clear and accurate description of the technical requirements for the material, product or service to be procured. Such descriptions shall not, in competitive procurements, contain features that restrict, eliminate or otherwise restrain competition.

In order to ensure compliance with requirements set forth in the Act and Federal Regulations, the use of specific "brand names" must be avoided when developing a description of the property open for bid. However, sub recipients may use a "brand name or equal" description to define performance or other prominent requirements of a procurement. The practice of using specifications developed by manufacturers inherently places restrictions on other bidders, unless it is clearly stated that other bidders may use similar standards of equal functions. The solicitation must make it clear that the description is used to establish standards and that other vendors meeting the standards are eligible to submit proposals or bids.

If the unit cost of the item to be acquired is \$5,000 or more, NTRPDC and its sub recipients are required to obtain at least three (3) written quotations, prior to submitting the request for approval.

However, BWPO may waive this requirement, for property purchased with WIOA funding when it has been determined that NTRPDC and/or sub recipients are purchasing from State contracts. If Fiscal Agents wish to determine whether they qualify for State contract purchasing privileges, they must contact the Department of General Services, Bureau of Purchases, telephone (717) 787-5733. When submitting the Property Acquisition Request and Report Form (Attachment 1) to BWPO for approval, this information must be included on the form. Failure to include the required information may delay the approval process.

Each Fiscal Agent is required to submit a Property Acquisition Request and Report Form to the Bureau for approval to purchase property with a unit acquisition cost of \$5,000 or greater, as outlined in the TAG. When the lowest quotation is not utilized or sole source procurement is requested, a detailed justification must be provided on a separate page. A separate form should be used for each item of a different description. Because this form is a request and report form, it is completed on a sequential basis, as indicated below.

Section 4.2

4.2. Identify the one-stop partners (required and other) authorized to provide required and other programs within the local area. Describe briefly the role(s) of the one-stop partners (required and other).

A complete listing of the PA CareerLink® Partners that are authorized to provide services in the local area is found in the One-Stop Location and Program Services Chart included as **Attachment C**. This chart identifies the comprehensive and affiliate locations, the services available at each, and the roles and resource contributions of each of the Partners.

TITLE I Services:

WIOA Adult

The WIOA Adult program is designed to assist those 18 and older who are in need of employment or career advancement. Priority of service is given to participants that are recipients of public assistance, low-income or basic skills deficient. Career services include assessments, individual employment plans and career counseling. If a participant is determined unlikely or unable to obtain or retain employment which leads to self-sufficiency, they may be in need of training services.

Our Title I providers, Bradford County Action and Trehab, Inc., provide staff in our PA CareerLink® centers to provide basic, individualized and training services in the career resource centers. They also provide staff who act as a Career Pathways Navigator in collaboration with the Wagner-Peyser staff to conduct initial assessments and make appropriate referrals to services. They completely staff the Career Resource Center (CRC) and provide the majority of available workshops. They also provide financial resources to support the financial obligations for the space and technology for the Career Resource Center. They pay for the Wi-Fi service in the centers to support the classroom training provided. They conduct the orientations in the correctional facilities, provide our mobile services and coordinate our **Fit4Work** programming in Bradford County. EARN services are also provided by our Title I providers.

WIOA Dislocated Worker

Dislocated Worker programs assist workers before or after a layoff in identifying needs in order to develop a streamlined service strategy to facilitate rapid reemployment. This includes identifying training opportunities that may be needed to re-enter the workforce.

WIOA Youth

Youth programming is designed to service eligible youth and young adults through high-quality case management support toward educational attainment. Services include career guidance and exploration, summer and/or year-round work experience, skills training opportunities and support service. The goal for youth participants is advancement into post-secondary education or gaining employment with a self-sustaining wage. Youth programs are prioritized for out of school youth and youth with significant barriers to success, such as youth with a disability, pregnant or parent and those subject to the juvenile/adult justice system.

These three Title I programs are operated by Bradford County Action and Trehab throughout the region and are available within the PA CareerLink® System.

Wagner-Peyser Act Programs

Wagner-Peyser staff provides employment services to job seekers and employers through PA CareerLink® centers. Services to job seekers include, but are not limited to: job search and job placement assistance; career counseling; needs and interest assessments; proficiency testing; workshops; development of an individual employment plan; and case management. Services to employers include assistance in developing and posting job orders, referral of qualified job seekers to job openings and organizing job fairs. Both job seekers and employers are also provided with labor market information to help inform their activities.

The services offered to employers, in addition to referring job seekers to available job openings, include: help developing job-order requirements, matching job seekers' experience with job requirements, skills and other attributes, helping employers with special recruitment needs, arranging for job fairs, helping employers analyze hard-to-fill job orders, helping restructure jobs and helping employers deal with layoffs.

Wagner-Peyser staff are co-located in the PA CareerLink® centers and share the cost of technology in our Career Resource Center. They provide Career Pathway Navigation services and conduct workshops. They also provide services under the RESEA (Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessments).

Programs authorized under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

Programs authorized under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 are provided by the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation and available through the PA CareerLink® System. These program services include vocational counseling and guidance, vocational evaluation, restoration, training, job placement and pre-employment training services for eligible and potentially eligible high school students with disabilities.

The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) provides services to Individuals with disabilities to help them secure and maintain employment and independence. These services are designed to prepare

OVR customers to become qualified trained members of the workforce increasing regional workforce diversity and the overall number of skilled workers available to business in the region.

OVR provides for one staff person on the RSAB (Resource Sharing Agreement Budget) in each PA CareerLink® center.

Programs authorized under Section 403(a)(5) of the Social Security Act (as added by Section 5001 of the Balanced Budget Act of 1977)

The local County Assistance Offices through the State Department of Public Welfare provide services through TANF, authorized under Section 403(a)(5) of the Social Security Act. These services are targeted to welfare recipients and include information dissemination of welfare benefits. The services act as the sole determinant for eligibility of those benefits and are the referral resource to a multitude of local services, programs, and training options.

The local county assistance offices contribute financially to the operation of both comprehensive PA CareerLink® sites. They are also part of our referral system and share information to better serve our customers.

Activities authorized under Title V of the Older American's Act of 1965

Activities authorized under Title V of the Older American's Act of 1965 are provided within the local PA CareerLink® system by the local Area Agencies on Aging and older work organizations, such as AARP. These services are targeted to seniors through the PA CareerLink® system and include vocational counseling, paid work experience programs, employment training, and independent living counseling.

They provide a Greeter staff person as an in-kind contribution to the operation of our PA CareerLink® centers.

Postsecondary vocational education activities authorized under Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act.

Vocational Technical School and Career and Technology Center partners provide these services as part of the PA CareerLink® services. Program services include the dissemination of information relative to financial assistance to attend post-secondary training and the provision for post-secondary occupational skills training.

We work with them to develop training programs that meet the needs of our local employers and we refer students to them.

Activities authorized under Chapter 2 of Title II of the Trade Act of 1974

Trade Act programs are focused on getting participants reemployed and ensuring those individuals maintain employment. The TAA Program includes training, employment and case management services, job search allowances, relocation allowances, Trade Readjustment Allowances (TRA), Reemployment Trade Adjustment Assistance (RTAA) and Alternative Trade Adjustment Assistance

(ATAA), and the Health Coverage Tax Credit (HCTC) (a benefit available to eligible TAA recipients which is administered by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS)).

The TAA program was first established at the USDOL by the Trade Act of 1974, and has been amended several times. Individual workers who are members of the certified worker group apply for benefits and services at a PA CareerLink® office. Individual workers who meet the qualifying criteria may receive: job training; income support in the form of Trade Readjustment Allowances (TRA); job-search and relocation allowances; Health Coverage Tax Credit (HCTC) as determined by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS); and for workers age 50 and older, a wage supplement in the form of Re-Employment Trade Adjustment Assistance (RTAA; (ATAA)). Additionally, all workers covered by a certification are eligible for employment and case-management services, including basic and individualized career services either through the TAA program or through and in coordination with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and the Wagner-Peyser Act (reference TEGL No. 3-15).

These activities include Trade Readjustment Act Program administration, including tuition assistance to Dislocated Workers who have lost their jobs due to imports. Program services, authorized under this funding and provided within the PA CareerLink® system, include rapid response to employees in the event of massive layoff or plant closure, tuition assistance for post-secondary occupational skills training, and income subsidies to assist candidates while in training. This service is provided by BWPO, Department of Labor and Industry.

Veteran's activities authorized under Chapter 41 of Title 38 United States Code

JVSG is a BWPO administered program which assures the commonwealth will be able provide special individualized services to disabled veterans. Disabled Veteran Outreach Program (DVOP) staff work in conjunction with PA CareerLink® partners to identify veterans and establish an appropriate plan to meet the individuals' employment and training needs. These specialized counselors work directly with disabled veterans in the provision of labor exchange services, securing appropriate training services and obtaining appropriate employment at a family sustaining wage. In addition, the JVSG allows for Local Veterans Employment Representatives to do employer outreach and promote veterans as job seekers who have highly marketable skills and experience.

BWPO is the State Workforce Agency (SWA) responsible for administering and staffing the JSVG grant position.

Employment and Training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant Act

These services are available within the PA CareerLink® System through local community action agencies or limited-purpose agencies (e.g. farm worker organizations). These services are provided by our Title I providers in the PA CareerLink® centers.

Employment and training activities carried out by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

Where applicable, employment and training activities are provided by the existing Housing Authorities through the PA CareerLink® System. Services include information on HUD-funded employment and training activities, housing assistance, and housing subsidies. They are not part of the resource sharing agreement.

Programs authorized under State unemployment compensation laws

In accordance with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), the Unemployment Compensation (UC) Program is responsible to provide meaningful assistance to individuals seeking assistance in filing an unemployment claim in PA CareerLink® sites. The meaningful assistance will be provided at PA CareerLink® sites by offering claimants dedicated access to UC service center staff as well as access to important UC information.

Staff from the Bureau of Workforce Partnership and Operations (BWPO) provide some direct assistance to UC claimants and employers at the PA CareerLink® sites. BWPO staff are required to keep records of time spent assisting UC claimants and employers and there are certain identified personnel services that BWPO staff provide that are reimbursed by the UC Program. The reimbursable services and requirements are defined in a separate document entitled Memorandum of Cooperation Between the Unemployment Compensation Programs and Workforce Development Within the Department of Labor & Industry. BWPO staff will continue their processes for referral with approved activities they conduct on UC's behalf. This would include opportunities for referral through partner collaboration.

The UC Board of Review utilizes space in certain PA CareerLink® sites for UC appeal hearings. For the UC appeal hearings, the PA CareerLink® sites shall provide a room with a minimum of 300 square feet, where that size exists within the site, provide access to a copier a networked computer and provide a telephone in the hearing room with conferencing and speaker capabilities. Additionally, UC Tax Services utilizes space in certain PA CareerLink® sites for UC Tax staff. Any change to physical PA CareerLink® sites utilized by the UC Board of Review or UC Tax must be communicated to the Deputy Secretary of UC no less than 90 days prior to any changes occurring including, but not limited to, PA CareerLink® closure, relocation, or proposed mobile concepts.

The cost of the space utilized for the UC courtesy telephones and computers (25 square feet for each device) and for the space utilized by the UC Board of Review, where applicable, will be negotiated and detailed in separate Resource Sharing Agreements. Invoices shall be submitted by the 15th day following the end of the quarter by email to the UC Program Fiscal Management Specialist. Each PA CareerLink® shall submit separate invoices for the phone, computer and UC Board of Review. Invoices will be processed upon UC Program approval.

Manner in which those services will be provided:

Assistance to individuals filing an unemployment claim will be provided by offering a courtesy telephone at PA CareerLink® sites which is dedicated to serving one-stop customers in a timely manner. In addition, a computer may also be provided to allow one-stop customers access to unemployment compensation services online along with informational UC postings, signs, pamphlets and forms for UC claimants and employers.

Physical accessibility of PA CareerLink® sites and services will be assured in collaboration with the local board. In addition to physical accessibility, UC provides programmatic accessibility through TTY on its dedicated courtesy telephones, as well as bilingual translation and sign language interpretation when needed. Partner collaboration locally will ensure all special populations can be served via referral to partner program supports.

Programs authorized under Title II of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (adult basic education and literacy training).

Bradford County Action (BCA) is the Title II provider in our region. Adult basic education provides assistance to those that are basic skills deficient. This includes a gamut of services, from literacy to activities that support post-secondary and career readiness goals. Services include English language acquisition when needed. As one of the leading service providers, BCA is aligned with Tech Prep, and youth initiatives.

They provide Adult Basic Education and General Equivalency Diploma (GED) services through PA CareerLink® centers through in-kind staff support.

Second Chance Act of 2007 Programs authorized under section 212. Reentry employment programs are being developed in partnership with the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections and offered through the PA CareerLink® System. They currently provide no financial contribution to the PA CareerLink® centers in the region.

4.3. How will the local board facilitate access to services provided through the one-stop service delivery system?

The Board will continue to facilitate access to services provided through the PA CareerLink® system as follows:

Strategically Located Centers. As discussed in the **response to 3.2 above**, the Board has established comprehensive Centers and affiliates in each county to provide easy access to all partner services. Comprehensive Centers offer a courtesy phone and UC computer to assist UC claimants obtain faster service in resolving any questions or issues.

Providing Access in Remote Areas. The Board will provide and expand services in the remote locations of the region through the following strategies:

The Title I providers have begun working within a “hub and spoke” concept in which staff travel and provide time at community facilities, like libraries, where they can meet with customers and provide services. Title I staff travel to the various sites. They will help job seekers register in the PA JobGateway® system. They will take both appointments and walk in during the times they are available. Staff will also assist with job search information and referral, resume development and provide education on the variety of programs and services available through the PA CareerLink® centers. Since we have implemented these services, we have seen a steady increase in traffic in our mobile locations. United Christian Ministries (local homeless shelter) in Tioga County is one of the outreach sites. We are also working with the Tioga-Bradford Housing and Redevelopment Authority to develop and implement mobile outreach services in their locations as well. There are many obstacles to utilizing technology remotely across the region. There are many areas that still lack broadband internet services, and many customers lack the skill set and confidence to participate online. We plan to provide a blend of staff assistance and technology through the area’s library systems.

The NTWDB also is exploring virtual workshops with our partners to increase service availability that includes both live training via teleconferencing, as well as developing a library of trainings available on

line.

Utilizing Case Management Systems. The system as a whole utilizes the Commonwealth Workforce Development System (CWDS) and JobGateway® to provide specific information to jobseekers and employers in their respective efforts to obtain employment and find the best employees. New customers watch an orientation to PA CareerLink® services. This is followed by registration in JobGateway®. Customers then meet with a Career Pathways Navigator who conducts an initial assessment of the individual to determine what their needs are and to make referrals. The role of the Career Pathway Navigator is to streamline the individual's initial experience at the PA CareerLink® ensuring everyone that walks through the door meets with a staff person. Career Pathway Navigators include both merit and non-merit staff. The Career Pathway Navigator remains the customer's main point of contact throughout the customer's experience utilizing PA CareerLink® services. The Career Pathways Navigator conducts follow up to make sure the customer is on track to receive the services they need, which also prevents duplication of service. A service under labor exchange is entered into the system after initial assessment. Depending on their needs, they may be sent to a WIOA information session, at which time eligibility for WIOA services would be determined. To promote the timeliness and accuracy of information, Career Pathway Navigators and BST personnel are required to enter information into the systems within 24 hours of customer interaction.

Coordinating with Adult Education. To ensure that individuals participating in basic education and English learning programs have direct connections to career pathways leading to high-quality jobs, the WDB will work with its Adult Education partners to identify strategies that improve access. For example, it will explore the creation of a cross-referral process as well as the development of coordinated outreach efforts.

Meeting the Needs of Individuals with Barriers to Employment. The PA CareerLink® management team continuously examines ways to align the PA CareerLink® service delivery system to more directly address issues involving underemployment, business services, and service to special populations. This population includes dislocated workers including displaced homemakers, TANF customers (EARN, Work Ready), veterans, minorities, women and those with additional barriers to employment including older individuals, ex-offenders, persons with disabilities and persons with limited English proficiency. The PA CareerLink® Management Team assists the LWDB in ensuring availability of employment and training services to these special populations. Services for these individuals are equal to any other including all of the PA CareerLink® workshops, one-on-one services with staff, testing, referral process, as well as online opportunities such as JobGateway®.

Improving Access to Services for English Language Learners and Individuals with Barriers to Hearing. As part of its service strategy, the Board requires that the PA CareerLink® Center to partner with community agencies that can provide ESL and interpretative services. Telephone-based translation services may be used for languages other than English, if necessary. Each PA CareerLink® is equipped with assistive technology for individuals with hearing barriers (TTY). On-site OVR personnel are available to assist individuals with other disabilities as needed.

Section 4.4

- 4.4. *How will entities within the one-stop service delivery system, including one-stop operators and the one-stop partners, comply with WIOA Sec. 188 (as applicable), and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101, et seq.) regarding the physical and*

programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities?

The Board requires that the PA CareerLink® centers and any affiliated sites are fully accessible to any individuals who may be interested in receiving employment and training services. Each site is certified annually for compliance with EO/ADA requirements by the Office of Equal Opportunity, PA Department of Labor and Industry.

Each PA CareerLink® site is certified by the Office of Equal Opportunity as being ADA Compliant and are examined by the local OVR Administrator to ensure accessibility. Staff are trained to operate Zoom text and JAWS software found on the ADA compliant computer in each career resource area. Sites have accessible restrooms, entrances and exits. OVR personnel conduct periodic training for PA CareerLink® staff regarding serving individuals with disabilities. The board's Equal Opportunity policy and complaint procedure is explained and distributed to all new WIOA participants.

PA CareerLink® staff host external job fairs and events in ADA compliant spaces only. All flyers and email notices about these events contain the message: "Auxiliary aids are available upon notice to individuals with disabilities. Equal Opportunity Employer."

Overall, the Board promotes full accessibility by requiring that its Operator, Partners, and Site Administrator:

- Conduct and participate in training of staff members and partner personnel regarding services to individuals with disabilities.
- Provide outreach and referral to agencies within the local area, including OVR that offer services to individuals with disabilities.
- Maintain an updated list of resources available within the local area for use by staff and customers in accessing needed services.
- Advocate for individuals with disabilities and barriers to employment by advising and informing them about resources available within the PA CareerLink® centers and throughout the local area and coaching them on how to apply for needed resources.
- Utilize a Limited English Proficiency policy, including providing access to language interpretation services when needed.
- Provide assistive technology items for persons with disabilities, such as adaptive keyboards and/or adjustable work stations.
- Conduct a physical inspection of all assistive technology/equipment to ensure functionality on a regular basis.
- Coordinate staff training on assistive technology and equipment to ensure that personnel are fully-trained in usage and application.
- Help individuals with disabilities who may require additional assistance with the registration process.
- Maintain required federal and state notices and postings.

Section 4.5

- 4.5. *Describe how the local board will ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers through the system and that such providers will meet the employment needs of local area employers, workers, and job seekers.*

The board and one stop partners regularly seek ways to improve and increase training opportunities for the region. Labor market information is used to align training needs to the area's industry needs and demands. The local board also participates in industry partnership discussions, Business Education Partnership meetings, employer meetings, business services, partner meetings, all of which revolve around meeting the needs of the employers, workers, and job seekers.

In accordance with WIOA Section 122 and Workforce System Guidance No. 02-2015, and in collaboration with the PA Department of Labor and Industry, the NTWDB solicits training providers within and outside of our local area to ensure a competitive market designed to promote consumer choice and achieve successful implementation of data-driven career pathways and sector strategies.

The WIOA Title I Contractor is Trehab, Inc. in Sullivan, Susquehanna, Tioga and Wyoming Counties. Bradford County Action is the WIOA Title I contractor in Bradford County. The contracts are awarded following a Request for Proposal (RFP) process, which is completed by staff and an ad hoc committee of the LWDB. The contracts with the contractors are for one year with the Northern Tier Workforce Development Board voting on a second year. The contractors meet with and report to the LWDB at every meeting and all statistics are presented in monthly reports.

Only training programs that appear on the ETPL list and lead to a high priority occupation in the Northern Tier are funded with WIOA training dollars through ITA's (Individual Training Accounts). Through the ETPL list, customers can compare performance measures, program costs, and curriculum information from various schools to assist them in selecting the best training option in their selected field. Each training program on the ETPL list must meet the required performance measure levels, which ensures that workforce dollars yield the best possible results. The ETPL list is always adapting to workforce needs and trends with our customers and employers leading the change. If a customer or business requires a course not on the ETPL that leads to a HPO, the local board works with service providers to determine educational providers, explain the process to the providers and then review the application to ensure the training provider will produce positive outcomes.

The local board ensures continuing improvement with both fiscal and programmatic monitoring of Title I, EARN and PA CareerLink® offices. Quality outcomes and common measure attainment is expected for customers in individualized services and training services. Therefore, service providers are expected to continuously improve. Any areas in need of corrective action which are noted by the local board during monitoring need formal responses from service providers. The local board then requires additional steps to be taken or approves the action. If no improvement is made after this step, technical assistance is offered.

The High Priority Occupation list is reviewed annually with employers, industry partnership members and education. Feedback is shared with training providers to help them align their programs of study with needed employment skills and job openings in the current economy. The petition process is used to refine the initial High Priority Occupation list, adding occupations based on input from business and educators. This allows training providers to submit programs that meet local employer demand for a skilled workforce.

Section 4.6

- 4.6. *Provide a description and assessment of the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the local area.*

Every two to three years the board conducts an assessment of the type and availability of the Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs by managing a competitive request for proposal process. The Board regularly reviews the type of programs available to adult and dislocated workers in the local area including training services available through the Eligible Training Provider List as described in the **response to 4.5 on Page 63**. An RFP is advertised in the newspapers and online, proposals are received, scored by members of the NTWDB, approved by the full NTWDB and contracts are then negotiated.

This process is completed through an analysis of the WIOA, a review of current activities related to performance, surveys of local employers and their intermediaries, feedback from regional partner and industry partnership meetings, and a comparison of program delivery type/availability to peer best-in-class local workforce development areas both within the Commonwealth as well as in other states. Through this review, the Board identifies service gaps, confirms the need for specific services with employer and sector groups, and adjusts policies and programming to address identified needs as may be required.

The WDB provides access to workforce services at the PA CareerLink® Center. In addition to partner programs, it also competitively procures services as needed to meet local labor market needs.

Upon entry in the system, all individuals complete a customer information survey which serves as a common intake form and provides a brief assessment to establish service needs. Customers are then provided with an overview of PA CareerLink® services and meet with a Career Pathway Navigator (CPN). The CPN role is fulfilled by both Wagner-Peyser and WIOA staff. The CPN reviews the customer information survey and assesses the need with the customer to determine appropriate service. Individuals are directly referred to the specific services that best meet their needs. For example, interpretation and/or translation services may be utilized to assist customers who do not speak English well. The CPN will make referrals to both internal and external partners.

Adult and Dislocated Worker workforce activities are provided under the broad categories of Basic Career Services, Individualized Career Services, and Training Services. Basic Career Services are available to any customer, while Individualized Career Services and Training Services are reserved for individuals who meet WIOA eligibility requirements. If an individual is referred to Title I programs and requires individualized or training services, the NTWDB's priority of service policy applies as described in **section 3.3, page 49**.

WIOA eligible individuals are assigned a WIOA Career Advisor who will also make co-enrollment referrals or determinations. The Career Advisor, along with the participant, develop an Individual Employment Plan (IEP) which will identify career goals and career pathways needed to accomplish employment goals. This may include training services through an Individualized Training Account (ITA) or it may be the individual is best suited for work-based training such as transitional or on-the-job training opportunities.

With the implementation of WIOA, there is no longer a sequence of service requirement. Therefore, individuals who are determined eligible and suitable for Adult or Dislocated Worker services do not have to participate in any type of Individualized Career Service activity prior to being enrolled into Training Services.

Basic Career Services include:

- Information about services available through the PA CareerLink® Center
- Initial assessment of needs

- Referral to appropriate services
- Self-directed or staff-assisted job search
- Workshops, such as resume writing, interviewing skills, and job search
- Information:
 - Labor market
 - Training provider
 - Supportive service
 - Unemployment
 - Financial aid
 - Relocation assistance

Individualized Career Services include:

- Eligibility determination
- Comprehensive assessment
- Individual Employment Plan (IEP) defining the customer's specific goals and pathway for achievement
- Career counseling and planning
- Short-term prevocational services
- Internships and work experience
- Workforce preparation activities
- Financial literacy services
- Supportive services

Overall, the PA CareerLink® Center offers a wide variety of services to assist customers with job preparation and job search. Resource rooms offer computers with Internet access, as well as printing, mailing, phone and fax services during regular business hours. Further assistance is available through resume and cover letter development, mock interviewing, job postings and job search tip sheets. Jobseekers can meet with employers conducting on site interviews and also sign up for job readiness workshops. Specialized information is available on high school equivalency attainment, Unemployment Compensation, Youth programs, and career services for Veterans, persons aged 55 and over, and individuals with disabilities.

Supportive services include activities designed to eliminate barriers to employment, such as assistance with transportation, work-related tools or clothing, and child care.

Training Services include:

- ITA
- OJT
- Customized training
- Job readiness training
- Workplace training/co-op programs
- Skills upgrading and retraining
- Pre-apprenticeship / Apprenticeship

- Transitional jobs
- Incumbent worker training

To be enrolled into a Training Service activity, individuals must meet programmatic eligibility requirements and must also be identified as unlikely to obtain or retain self-sufficient employment or higher wages, need training to obtain or retain self-sufficient employment or higher wages, and have the skills and qualifications to participate in training (i.e., appropriateness for training).

Training must be directly linked to an in-demand industry sector or High Priority Occupation, or a sector that has a high potential for sustained demand or growth. Such training may be delivered via an ITA, training contract, or a combination of both. Training providers are found through the Eligible Training Provider List which establishes eligibility and provides information about training institutions and their programs. Additionally, work-based training opportunities are used to provide jobseekers with the valuable hands on training needed to obtain a self-sustaining wage. Examples of these work-based trainings would be an OJT or transitional training opportunity.

We are focusing on the population(s) who lack transportation, have criminal backgrounds and/or poor work history and/or history of domestic violence, and/or those with low income and/or are skills deficient or have disabilities. Out of school youth are eligible for ITA's, OJT's, paid/unpaid work experience, internships, job shadowing, incumbent worker training and pre-apprenticeship/apprenticeship. OSY can also be co-enrolled in the adult program.

Most PA CareerLink® required partners, with some exceptions, provide basic career services to our customers. At a minimum, required partners contribute staff to PA CareerLink® Resource Centers, conduct workshops or initial assessments and referrals. These services are universally accessible to all customers. PA CareerLink® sites are certified as ADA compliant annually and materials in alternative format for persons with disabilities are available. Interpretive services are also made available for persons with limited English proficiency. Efforts are made to ensure that persons with disabilities are afforded access to all services provided within the PA CareerLink® sites.

The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) provides services to individuals with disabilities to help them secure and maintain employment and independence. These services are designed to prepare OVR customers to become qualified trained members of the workforce increasing regional workforce disability and the overall number of skilled workers available to business in the region.

The OVR plays a significant role in recruitment and outreach to populations with disabilities. OVR serves on the Northern Tier NTWDB, further ensuring that service barriers for persons with disabilities are identified and eliminated. Financial resources of the PA CareerLink® sites and OVR are coordinated in order to cover shared customer training and supportive service costs. In addition, the PA CareerLink® utilizes customer assessments conducted by OVR.

The Northern Tier has funded and continues to support sensitivity training for PA CareerLink® staff. Monthly PA CareerLink® staff meetings provide an open forum for all partnering staff to discuss solutions in the provision of service. Front line staff participate in cross-training to educate each other about the specific populations they focus on from a programmatic standpoint offering insight for appropriate referrals. As with all customer groups, referrals are also made to non-PA CareerLink® partner service agencies in an effort to bridge service gaps. PA CareerLink® staff work with OVR partner staff on an on-going basis to take a proactive approach to ensure that the one-stops retain their ADA compliance status with its adaptive technologies, the TTY line, and the availability of

resource materials in alternative formats (Braille, large print). A region-wide inventory has recently been completed to ensure the most up to date resource materials are made available in each of our centers.

Section 4.7

4.7. *How will training services be provided through the use of individual training accounts (ITA) that fund programs of study, or through the use of contracts for training services that fund work-based trainings.*

Training Services Overview. Historically, the Board has primarily used ITAs to fund occupational skills training activities for its customers. Based on a customer's specific needs and circumstances, he or she may choose to enroll in training activities using an ITA or a work-based learning program. Moreover, an ITA-funded training may also be completed in conjunction with work-based learning activities, such as OJT, customized training, and internships. Such coordination will be clearly identified in the customer's IEP.

Each customer will be given the option of selecting the training provider that best meets his or her particular needs from any of the entities that are included on the Local Training Provider List (LTPL) as well as any organizations that have been deemed suitable for work-based learning activities. An overview of the Board's ITA and work-based learning policies is provided below:

ITAs. The Board may enroll individuals who are determined eligible and suitable for training services into occupational skills training programs utilizing an ITA. It has adopted the following policies for the provision of ITAs.

The following criteria must be met in order to receive an ITA:

- Must be a resident of Bradford, Sullivan Susquehanna, Tioga or Wyoming County.
- Must meet the WIOA eligibility requirements, have received at least one basic or individualized career service and have been determined to be unable to obtain or retain employment through such services.
- *Score at a proficient level on the WorkKeys® Assessment for the occupational profile for which they are requesting training.
- Do not already possess a **marketable** degree. Prior approval from NTRPDC must be obtained for customers that have a degree but may be in need of additional training to obtain employment (See *ITA Approval Request Form*).
- Are unable to obtain grant assistance from other sources to pay the cost of training including DHS program funds, TAA, and PELL, or require WIOA assistance in addition to other sources of grant assistance.
- Have selected a training program that appears on the Pennsylvania Eligible Training Provider List of training programs and is considered a high priority occupation for the Northern Tier Region.
- For occupations in contiguous areas, an ITA may be granted if there is a proven demand, occupation provides a sustainable wage and the customer has expressed a willingness to relocate or commute (see *ITA Approval Request Form*).
- The individual has not received WIOA funded training in the past.
- The individual has not defaulted on a student loan. The customer must have the default

status removed prior to the approval of ITA funding.

- All eligible youth must receive their GED or diploma prior to receiving training funds.
*Note: In addition to taking the WorkKeys® assessment, all OSY must be TABE tested per WIOA program guidelines.

ITA Policy:

The Northern Tier Workforce Director may waive conditions contained in this policy under extraordinary circumstances and/or funding considerations for best utilization of training funds.

ITA funding is not a guarantee to any participant and is contingent on funding availability.

The maximum amount of an Individual Training Account (ITA) is \$6,000 per customer for a maximum of two years. Trainings lasting more than two years from start of WIOA funding to completion of training must be submitted to the Northern Tier Workforce Board for approval prior to granting funding request.

Registered Apprenticeships on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) qualify for ITA funding.

Expenses covered include tuition, fees, books and school supplies if required by the school for course completion.

The PA CareerLink® Staff must track all ITA expenditures and obligations on the *ITA Calculation Sheet*. Note: The *ITA Calculation Sheet* does not take the place of the cost sheet included in the ITA packet.

All ITA's are limited to funding for (1) training provider and (1) training program. Should subsequent training be required, or if special circumstances require that the customer change training providers, prior approval must be received from the Northern Tier Workforce Development Board.

All other forms of Federal, State or local aid (Title IV, PELL, PHEAA, SEOG, etc.) will be used first to offset the cost of the ITA. The Northern Tier Workforce Development Board will neither duplicate, nor pay in addition to, Title I funds that have been awarded by another Workforce Development Area.

The WIOA Title I provider will issue a contract with the training institution for all customer approved training. The training institution will invoice the WIOA Title I provider for amount of tuition in contract minus expenses covered by other funding sources. Should the customer not complete the program for any reason, the standard refund policy of the provider institution will apply.

Customer Responsibility:

The customer must submit a completed *Application for Individual Training Account* at least two (2) weeks prior to the start of classes. This application includes:

- A written justification for the training
- Documentation of employment opportunities in the local area
- A listing of total cost of training, including tuition, fees, supplies, tools, books, etc.

The customer must obtain the minimum WorkKeys® scores required by their occupational choice. If the customer does not obtain required scores, he/she will be scheduled for remediation.

Remediation can be offered through WIN software, one-on-one instruction or other appropriate remediation tools. If the Career Advisor determines that TABE testing may be more appropriate for the individual a waiver for WorkKeys® may be requested in writing to the Northern Tier Workforce Development Board. In addition to taking WorkKeys®, all Out of School Youth must be TABE tested as per WIOA guidelines.

Customers **must** apply for the federal Title IV (PELL) grant program by completing a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), given that the training is grant eligible. Customer must provide a copy of their Student Aid Report (SAR) to their Career Advisor. If unavailable, verification must first be received from the training institution. Grant awards will be applied prior to the use of WIOA funds.

The customer must maintain at least a 2.0 GPA on a 4.0 scale or meet the training institutions minimum requirement (if stricter). Academic probation will suspend the ITA until such time that the student is no longer on academic probation.

The customer must agree to contact the PA CareerLink® Career Advisor a minimum of once per month and provide school time and attendance records, grades, progress reports, and verification of diploma or certificate upon training completion. Failure to do so may result in the discontinuation of funding.

The customer is responsible for repayment of the ITA should Title IV aid (or other state/local aid) be received after the disbursement of ITA funds.

Work-Based Learning. The Board has historically encouraged work-based learning programs as part of the OJT (on the job training) support, such as work experience, internships, co-op programs, apprenticeships, and transitional jobs to meet any unique/specific skill needs of employers in the area. Future strategies to promote these efforts may include:

- Targeting high-growth industries for potential work-based learning opportunities.
- Educating employers, including chambers and industry associations, about how work-based training can enhance their businesses by decreasing turnover and improving productivity.
- Assisting businesses by streamlining work-based learning paperwork requirements.
- Assessing job candidates to determine their eligibility and suitability for work-based learning opportunities.
- Identifying career pathways in the targeted sectors that align with work-based learning activities.
- Including work-based learning as part of its agendas and topics of discussion during business forums and summits
- Requiring the Business Services Team to actively promote work-based learning as key service for local businesses.
- Establishing time periods and caps for work-based learning activities.

Board policies related to OJTs include: On-the-Job Training Activities will be provided in accordance with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and accompanying regulations. On-the-Job Training Activities can only be provided for customers meeting the priority service guidelines established by the Northern Tier Workforce Development Board.

On-the-Job Training will be used as a mechanism for providing eligible adults and dislocated workers with the means to obtain training in order to receive full-time, self-sustaining unsubsidized employment.

On-the-Job Training can be used only after the participant has been unable to attain employment through basic and individualized career services.

SVP and DOT Codes will be used to determine the duration of the OJT. **An OJT cannot be provided for positions that pay less than \$8.00 per hour.** It is the Northern Tier Workforce Development Board's Policy to reimburse up to 50% of the wage of the participant for positions paying \$8.00 an hour or more. In addition, no OJT will be written for more than 26 weeks in duration regardless of the SVP level.

If an OJT is being used in addition to an ITA, the amount of the OJT and ITA combined shall not exceed the maximum allowable ITA amount of \$6,000. Amounts exceeding \$6,000 will result in disallowed costs unless prior approval from NTRPDC is given.

OJT Length— Employers are paid only for the extraordinary costs they are assumed to incur in training a participant. OJT shall be limited to a period not in excess of that generally required for the acquisition of skills needed for the position within a particular occupation. A participant could also start and stop training under a training plan to accommodate cyclical or seasonal needs. SVP and DOT Codes will be used to determine the duration of the OJT. DOT codes and SVP levels can be accessed at www.onetonline.org. **It is the Northern Tier WIB's policy that no OJT will exceed a 26-week training period, regardless of SVP level.**

On- the- Job training may be linked with classroom training, either concurrently or sequentially. If the employer provides the related classroom instruction, he/she may be reimbursed for the actual costs incurred, as long as it is over and above the training that would be provided to regular employees. Time spent in the classroom may count against the OJT maximum compensable training depending on the structure of the training schedule. This also affects the time available for OJT and should be taken into account in developing the training plan.

- Generally, each occupation will be identified by referring to the Dictionary of Occupational Titles, the appropriate 9-digit DOT code will be assigned to the training occupation in the OJT contract.
- By using the assigned DOT code, the occupation will be assigned a vocational preparation (SVP) level by using the selected characteristics of occupations as defined in the Dictionary of Occupational Titles.
- The SVP level will be converted into the maximum allowable training time using the attached chart.
- The length of an OJT can increase or decrease based on special circumstances or the background of the individual. Such circumstances could include a disability, which could require a longer training time, or prior experience of familiarity with the job which would allow the training time to be shortened.
- Reasons for significant adjustments to the standard training time for a given occupation, especially where the participant has had some prior experience with the job, will be documented on the participant's ISS (Individual Service Strategy). The ISS will include a justification in each case where the length of training exceeds that normally provided, as well as the suitability of the OJT itself. Any participant requiring more than the pre-determined length of training by using the method described above, will require NTRPC approval. Request for approval must be submitted to NTRPDC in writing.

Section 4.8

- 4.8. *Provide a description and assessment of the type and availability of youth workforce investment activities in the local area.*

The Northern Tier Workforce Development Board acts in several ways to provide activities beneficial to all youth and young adults of the region. There is and will continue to be promotion of an intensive network of services to address the special educational and employment needs of persons on the margins of the mainstream workforce (dropouts, those with disabilities, persons reentering the workforce after long absences). The workforce system will provide the emerging workforce with adequate career guidance that leads to a successful school-to-work transition.

The NTWDB works with ISY and OSY in a number of ways. Recruiting and outreach to OSY has become a priority for the Northern Tier region. Title 1 providers have started mobile services to reach those in outlying areas who may not have consistent transportation to PA CareerLink® offices. Currently, the Summer Program provides participants work experience, soft skills, career exploration activities and academic enrichment. This program is made possible by a number of community partnerships and collaboration in each of the five counties that it operates in. Title 1 providers are currently working on expanding this program to include year-round work experiences for all participants. Each county intends to have 1-2 employers who will rotate youth participants through work experiences throughout the year. They are also building a list of employers who will allow interested ISY and OSY to intern and job shadow throughout the year. TANF funding is leveraged to provide more eligible youth with paid work experiences during the summer months.

Through the Business Education Partnership, the local WDB has been fostering relationships with local high schools and has linked numerous youth with businesses in the Northern Tier to educate our students about employment opportunities available to them in their own areas. The Business Education Partnership (BEP) seeks to provide career education and exploration activities in collaboration with local guidance departments to ensure students learn important soft skills and other career information before entering the workforce. Through the BEP, the local board has five career coaches in 16 high schools and CTC's throughout the region. Currently, the local board is working with one of our local school districts to determine the feasibility of implementing a CTE program or three specific career pathways through a newly procured "mini grant." The school currently has no technical education programming.

The NTWDB and Youth Committee distributes labor market information regularly to local school districts, parents, and it is shared with program participants. Youth and young adults are exposed to career and training opportunities throughout their program participation. Employer visits, career fairs, trips to post-secondary trainers and speakers from local industry are provided to educate youth on in-demand occupations. Both the LWDB and Youth Committee will continue to provide ongoing labor market information and look to increase efforts by reaching out to churches and other community based organizations that serve youth and young adults. The committee will begin to evaluate and revamp existing programs to stay current with employment trends and employer needs. The Northern Tier Youth Committee is comprised of a number of youth experts from around the region. The Chair of the committee is the Business and Community Liaison at Red Rock Job Corps. Other members include an OVR Counselor, directors from local CTCs, a prior participant, school counselors and several others. Input is always relevant and helps improve programming.

Collaboration between workforce staff, the Youth Committee, local school districts, OVR, welfare and many human service agencies ensure that youth and young adults most in need of services are identified and provided with the activities and support needed to achieve employment success. Building a strong relationship between participants and their career advisors is an important part of the overall strategy to keep youth and young adults engaged in the program long enough to attain their goals. Using the Individual Service Plan (ISP) as a roadmap to achieve their goals, the youth/young adult participates in a wide variety of activities designed to prepare them for a career success. Bradford County Action, Inc., Trehab (Title I Providers) and WDB staff currently participate in a career pathways group that meets quarterly to discuss educational needs and trends of the region. Others participating in the group include local CTCs, postsecondary education, Title II provider and PA CareerLink® staff.

Recognizing that students with disabilities are too often unprepared to transition into post-secondary education or employment, OVR has started to provide a pool of services called Pre-Employment Transition Services (PETS) to better prepare these students for life after high school. These skills gains will help to meet one of the intentions of WIOA, to better prepare students with disabilities to graduate high school and work toward meaningful careers. Both the local OVR counselors and the Youth Program Manager sit on Transition Councils for schools in our region. We have discussed PETS and service providers who employ them in each county. Students have been referred to OVR from workforce staff to these services.

Customer Experience

Career Advisors meet with potential participants to explain the program and provide information before the enrollment process begins. All policies, requirements and services are discussed before enrollment occurs. Career Advisors let potential candidates know of eligibility requirements and what documents they need to provide for verification. After eligibility is determined, a youth meets with their career advisor to develop an Individual Service Strategy (ISS). They work together to identify strengths, goals, talents, etc. From there, a specific plan is formed for each individual.

The key steps and milestones of the program design include:

1. A *Customer Tracking Form* is completed by the customer and reviewed by staff. The *Customer Tracking Form* captures information to initially identify young adults in need of services.
2. The next step is the determination of program suitability. The *Suitability Determination Form* is used to document the client's barriers including help with education; language; lack of work experience; work maturity issues; child care; transportation; emotional or mental disabilities; drug/alcohol; legal concerns; housing; domestic concerns; physical limitations/disabilities; or medical issues. If it is determined that the services provided through WIOA are not suitable for the customer at this time, referrals to appropriate agencies are documented on the *Suitability Determination Form*.
3. Once suitability has been determined, the *Customer Agreement Form* will be reviewed with the participant, signed and placed in the customer file.
4. An appointment is made to determine program eligibility. Eligibility is the process to determine whether the customer meets program barrier in income (in certain cases) guidelines.

5. Once it has been determined that the customer meets WIOA program Eligibility, a supervisor must review the eligibility determination using the *Eligibility Determination Review* form. The supervisor's review must be done prior to the customer receiving a WIOA funded service. The registration can then be completed in CWDS. All supporting documentation will be maintained in the customer file.
6. Young adults (ISY and OSY with barriers C or I) that do not meet income eligibility may be enrolled under the 5% eligibility exception if participant enrollments for the year will allow. The determination to allow a young adult into the WIOA program under the 5% eligibility exception rule can only be made by the NTRPDC Workforce Program Manager. Eligibility exceptions can be requested using the *5% Exception Form*.
7. The customer is assigned to a Career Advisor.
8. The customer is scheduled for an Objective Assessment using TABE.
9. ONET will be used to measure aptitude and career interests.
10. All Out-of-School Youth (OSY) must be pre-tested using TABE 9 & 10, no later than 60 days following the date of participation. The date of participation is the first day the client receives a WIOA funded service. Youth with disabilities are to be provided with reasonable accommodations as appropriate.
11. All OSY that are Basic Skills Deficient must be post-tested (using TABE 9 & 10) at a minimum of every 60 days following the pre-test until post-educational functioning levels of above 8.9 are attained for the participation year. Individuals may still receive basic skills remediation services as determined by the Career Advisor after the EFL levels of above 8.9 are achieved.
12. In-School-Youth (ISY) may be TABE tested when the Career Advisor is unable to obtain information on the students' academic levels.
13. The customer is scheduled for an individual meeting with their Career Advisor to develop an *Individual Service Strategy (ISS)*.
14. All fourteen required program elements under WIOA must be available and provided as appropriate.
15. The ISS is completed and updated per the Northern Tier ISS Policy.
16. WIOA program services will be entered in to the PA CWDS system no later than 30 days of the action (e.g. service start date/end date, hold date, exit date). Program participation begins the date the customer receives a value-added service funded by the program.
17. Support Services can be provided and are based on significant need, as demonstrated as an inability to attend activities without such services. *The Northern Tier Supportive Services Policy* guidelines must be followed. If services are given, the *Support Services Determination Form* must be completed.
18. At a minimum, quarterly meetings and activities will be provided to ISY 9-11th grade. Career Advisors will meet with high school seniors and all OSY at least monthly. All customer contacts, activities, supportive services, incentives, customer progress, etc. must be documented in the case notes.
19. Customers wishing to enroll in advanced training/occupational skills training through an Individual Training Account (ITA) must meet the eligibility criteria under the *Northern Tier Individual Training Account Policy*. All ITA policy and procedures must be followed.
20. Incentives are available for young adults and will be awarded in accordance with the *Northern Tier Incentive Policy*.

21. Career Exploration is mandatory for all young adults.
22. Program exit occurs when the customer has not received any services funded by the program or a partner program for 90 consecutive calendar days and has no planned gap in service and is not scheduled for future services.
23. Follow-up services must be provided to all customers after they exit the program. The *Northern Tier Follow-up Services Policy* must be followed.

WIOA youth and WIOA young adult's awareness of career pathways Youth participants are offered career exploration workshops. If they are interested in training opportunities. We explain the career pathway. All participants are ONET tested as part of the assessment process.

Work-based learning opportunities are provided, as identified in the Individual Service Strategy, and arranged by the scheduling of the summer employment experience, work experience, job shadowing, and On the Job training (OJT). 20% of WIOA funds must be for work experiences for youth.

Work readiness training program curriculum and competencies. All youth participating in work experiences are assessed for work readiness at the beginning and end of their work experience. Depending on the skill levels during the initial assessment, the career advisor and worksite supervisors mentor youth on those competencies that still need to be developed.

Financial literacy education is one of the new WIOA elements and is centered on education awareness from financial aid to budgeting and financial life skills. Youth participating in the program who are determined to be in need of financial literacy education will be exposed to partner banking institutions to learn about financial products, credit, credit reports, identity theft and others to help them make informed financial decisions.

Program measurement and continuous improvements will be monitored on a regular basis as mentioned through youth staff meetings and the Youth activity report presented to the Workforce Development Board and Youth Council each quarter. Included in the report are success stories highlighting the activities throughout the program year, barriers to employment and caseloads. Programmatically, each youth has an Individual Service Strategy plan that is a live and ongoing document capturing services and may be modified at any point to reflect the interest and changes to assist the youth to be successful.

Youth and young adult preparation to training or post-secondary education begins with the development of the ISS. Employability Counselors will open discussion with the youth and young adults regarding their education and employment goals. Recognizing many youth maybe unsure or unaware to the options and opportunities, Career Exploration workshops will provide the background and competencies for youth to research career interest and occupational skills information to make an informed choice. Youth and young adults will have the opportunity to speak with people in the respective career fields, job shadow, company tours, and use web based sites to review a variety of information from an interest inventory to High Priority Occupations and skill requirements. Determined by need, youth and young adults will have the opportunity through the summer employment experience and work experience placement to be exposed to the world of work.

Education and training programs may include the Northeast PA Industrial Resource Center (NEPIRC), Individual Training Accounts (ITAs), On-The-Job Training (OJT), summer employment, work

experience, and job shadowing to explore career interest and/or exposure to the world of work. Each provides training or experiences that will prepare the youth for mapping their career choice or securing unsubsidized employment. Recognizing the limits on funding, the focus is on work experience. Additionally, many of the young adults may be dual enrolled with other WIOA programs accessing financial aid for schooling or employer based contracts for employment. Job shadowing on site with various employers will expose the youth and young adults to job profiles and have the opportunity to speak with employees in jobs of interest. All of these activities are captured in the youth's ISS. OSY (Out of School Youth) are eligible for ITA's. (ITA and OJT policies are located on pages 68-71.)

Education and training program may lead to employment through the linkage with the role of the Business Service Representative and networking with additional partners in the function of job development and job placement. This is provided following the region's OJT policies.

Support Services

Support services will be addressed through the collaboration with partner organizations and appropriate referrals to the relevant organization. As mentioned, transportation, lack of family support network, housing, child care cost, and lack of work experience or lack of a high school diploma/GED are significant barriers to not only employment but in many cases the partner services needed to prepare a youth for education and employment opportunities. Employability counselors commit a significant amount of time coordinating referrals and partner services prior to and in concert with the Individual Service Strategy leading to training and employment. In many cases staff collaborating with a housing authority or additional human services is necessary prior to enrolling a youth into Job Ready workshops, GED preparation, or work experience opportunities.

Supportive services are available to customers attending training services for child care and transportation needs. ISY and OSY are also eligible for support services while active in the program and during follow up. Such support service can include work related supplies, transportation costs, etc. These services are evaluated at an individual level for each customer and can include a number of other services. In order to help determine which support services are most effective in our area, monthly support service reports are generated by the WIOA provider. NTWDB staff review reports monthly to ensure appropriateness of services, trends and cost analysis to determine if change to current policy is needed. Economic conditions and availability of funding are also a determining factor. Information is provided to the NTWDB and any change in policy must have NTWDB approval prior to implementation. Customers are also eligible for a gas stipend based on attendance for training services to offset the travel costs. The NTWDB continually evaluates supportive service and needs-based payment policies to determine whether the current policies are sufficient for the economic conditions.

Performance, Administration, and Project Management

Northern Tier Workforce Development's focus is on building partnerships that prepare today's youth to be tomorrow's productive citizens through education and employment opportunities driven by linkages with the PA CareerLink® system and its partners. Monitoring and tracking youth performance measures begins with the Commonwealth Workforce Development System (CWDS) which is the State's database of record for any agency serving WIOA customers. Title 1 provider staff use the CWDS database for all eligibility determination, entry of services and tracking performance measures. In addition, the enrollment goals, demographics, support service awards, work experience

slots and expenditures, and WIOA performance measures are tracked weekly through an internal spreadsheet. The Youth report and success stories are presented each quarter to the Youth Committee.

Compliance and proper documentation begins with all eligibility determination and enrollment documentation upon completion being sent to the Administrative office for filing. Our youth program manager does programmatic monitoring of programs and subcontractors. There are ongoing coordination meetings with front line staff. Career Advisors meet with potential participants to explain the program and provide information before the enrollment process begins. All policies, requirements and services are discussed before enrollment occurs.

The Northern Tier provides youth with effective and comprehensive activities that encourage school completion, improving educational attainment, and promoting effective linkages to employers. Because of the strong connections that exist between our program providers, CAO's, school districts, training providers, OVR, PA CareerLink® and numerous human service agencies, youth and young adults most in need of services are identified and provided with activities and support needed to achieve academic and employment success.

Youth program services are designed to facilitate academic and employment success. Activities and services are provided that help youth and young adults build their employment potential by increasing skills employers seek and setting them on the path toward a career that leads to independence and self-sufficiency. Dropout prevention is a priority and services are provided to help youth stay in school and obtain their high school diploma. GED instruction is provided for OSY that lack a diploma and is the first step in helping them with their employment and career goals. Additional services are available to help youth further their education or connect them to a job. Working closely with the participant, OVR, parents and school staff, we can determine special needs of our youth with disabilities and work together to help them overcome barriers to their future careers. Recently, Trehab Inc. worked directly with OVR in Tioga County to eliminate barriers for a youth with disabilities during the Academic Enrichment portion of the Summer Employment Program. Working together with OVR and Trehab, Inc. staff, the youth was able to overcome barriers in the classroom with the help of an aide to successfully complete that portion of the Summer Employment program. Other participants have utilized aides while participating in work experiences to overcome their individual barriers while on the job.

Potential program participants are required to complete a common application which helps the Career Advisors identify eligible participants and the services they may need. An interview with the youth/young adult and their parents/guardian (if under 18 years old) is the next step in determining program eligibility, and to explain the services available through the program. Once program eligibility has been determined it must be verified with required documentation. Such documentation includes information to verify family size, family income in the previous 6 months, residence, citizenship or eligibility to work in the US, disability status, age, barrier status, and Selective Service Registration status (if applicable). After program eligibility is determined by the Youth Career Advisor, it is reviewed and verified by WIOA Title I Supervisor before program services are provided.

The Career Advisor will perform an assessment of the individuals' academic levels, skill levels, and service needs to develop an Individual Service Strategy (ISS) for the client. The ISS is a detailed, unique, individual strategy for each youth participant that is the basis for the overall case management strategy. A successful case management approach includes assessing and interpreting

needs; developing, strategies to help reach educational, training and employment goals; providing tools and resources to help overcome personal barriers; documenting youth participation, referral outcomes, service decisions, summaries of one-on-one meetings and achievements; and providing follow-up services. Case management provides an opportunity for staff to build a working relationship with the participant and with key organizations in order to assist youth in meeting their objectives.

All program elements are designed to permit access and appropriate activities for youth with disabilities. These elements assist all youth in attaining academic and employment success. LWDB staff will monitor program systems to ensure that the required program elements are being offered and that program eligibility requirements are followed.

1. Tutoring, study skills training, instruction and evidence-based dropout prevention and recovery strategies leading to secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent or for recognized post-secondary credential

Youth Career Advisors work closely with high school guidance staff and are notified when a student has dropped out of school or if a student may be in danger of dropping out. Activities intended to educate students on the advantages of staying in school are offered. ISY found to be in need of additional academic assistance are enrolled in a tutoring program for more intensive, individual academic services where they receive one-on-one tutoring. OSY in need of a high school diploma attend GED instruction, or are assisted in re-entering high school.

2. Alternative Secondary School Services or drop-out recovery services as appropriate

Services are coordinated with school districts that have alternative school services within their curriculum. Career Advisors will work closely with clients who may need alternative secondary school services. Career Advisors meet with potential participants to explain the program and provide information before the enrollment process begins. All policies, requirements and services are discussed before enrollment occurs.

3. Paid and unpaid work experiences that have academic and occupational education as a component of the work experience which may include the following types of work experiences:

- a. Summer employment opportunities and other opportunities available throughout the school year**
- b. Pre-apprenticeship programs**
- c. Internships and job shadowing**
- d. On the job training opportunities**

Work experiences such as participation in pre-apprenticeship programs, OJT's, internships and job shadowing are planned structured learning experiences that take place in a work environment for a limited period of time. These experiences are offered throughout the program year in the private for profit sector, the non-profit sector or the public sector. They are designed to enable youth to gain exposure to the working world and its requirements. Work experiences help youth acquire the personal attributes, knowledge and skills needed to obtain a job and advance in employment. The purpose is to provide the youth/young adult with the opportunities for career exploration and skill development.

Work experiences may be subsidized or unsubsidized. Summer experiences are part of the year-round comprehensive strategies for addressing the youth/young adult's employment and training

needs. The program allows young people to earn a paycheck while exposing them to the real world of working. When possible, summer employment opportunities are directly linked to academic and occupational learning. In addition to working, they participate in career readiness activities such as instruction on resumes and job interview skills, labor market information, job search techniques and visits to employers and post-secondary schools. Both participants and employers involved in a work experience activity are surveyed on the overall effectiveness of the program and provide input on any changes that they feel may be beneficial. Assessment tools are used to measure foundation and worksite specific skills. Incentives are awarded for successful completion of the summer employment component.

4. Occupational skill training, which includes priority consideration for training programs that lead to recognized post-secondary credentials that align with in-demand industry sectors or occupations in the Northern Tier

Individualized Training Accounts are used as a mechanism for providing eligible OSY with the means to finance and obtain occupational skills training in order to obtain unsubsidized employment. The training program must lead to a high priority occupation in the Northern Tier Region and the training program must appear on the ETPL. The Career Advisor provides information and counseling that allows the young adult to make informed decisions. They also advise the young adult by suggesting choices relevant to their assessed needs and the goals determined appropriate.

5. Education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster

Career Advisors will evaluate pathways for youth/young adult participants and offer education opportunities for specific occupations or occupational clusters along with workforce preparation activities for the chosen occupation or cluster. Our program service providers' work in partnership with local CTC's to offer classes such as basic computer skills or remedial math to those that may benefit prior to enrolling in post-secondary education/training.

6. Leadership development opportunities, including community service and peer-centered activities encouraging responsibility and other positive social and civic behaviors

Leadership development opportunities are provided for the youth through team building activities, peer tutoring, community service activities and linkages with other youth programs. Youth have participated in community beautification projects, wrapped presents for Toys for Tots, volunteered at a food pantry and other various non-profit organizations.

7. Supportive Services

Linkages to community service programs, assistance with transportation costs, assistance with childcare costs, referral to medical services and assistance with uniforms (including items need for on-the-job safety) and work related tool costs are provided.

8. Adult mentoring for a duration of at least 12 months that may occur both during and after program participation

Adult mentoring is offered during and after program participation. We have limited access to

approved mentors in our region. Career Advisors can act as a mentor as long as the services provided are not part of normal case management and are individualized for the participant and targeted toward that participant's program goals.

9. Follow up services for not less than 12 months after the completion of participation

Follow-up services are provided for not less than 12 months after the youth/young adult completes program participation and are based on the needs of each individual. Follow-up services can include: 1) support and case management that encourages job retention; 2) supportive services as needed; 3) PA CareerLink® workshops; 4) regular contact with the youth/young adult customer's employer including assistance in addressing work related problems as they arise; 5) assistance in obtaining better paying jobs; 6) career development and further education; 7) adult mentoring 8) tracking progress of youth in employment after training.

10. Comprehensive guidance and counseling, which may include drug and alcohol abuse counseling as well as referrals to counseling as appropriate to the needs of the individual youth

Guidance and counseling is provided on an on-going basis through the Youth Career Advisor, linkages with school guidance counselors and referrals to outside counseling needs when appropriate.

11. Financial literacy education

Career Advisors will utilize existing curricula, such as GCF Learn Free's Everyday Life Money Module, to provide financial literacy education. They will also reach out to area banking institutions to schedule workshops for presentations throughout the year.

12. Entrepreneurial skills training

Career Advisors will utilize existing information such as beresource.com, information on the SCORE websites, etc. to provide entrepreneurship training to interested youth/young adults. They will also work to engage local entrepreneurs in presentations and possibly mentoring for those interested participants.

13. Services that provide labor market and employment information about in-demand industry sectors or occupations available in the Northern Tier Region such as career awareness, career counseling and career exploration services

Career Advisors ensure that youth are counseled on occupational trends, skill levels needed for jobs as well as other Labor Market Information. Youth/young adults also receive information and counseling on High Priority Occupations of the Northern Tier.

14. Activities that help youth prepare for and transition to post-secondary education and training

Our program service providers work in partnership with local CTC's to offer classes such as basic computer skills or remedial math to youth that may benefit prior to enrolling in post-secondary education. Assistance with researching and applying for financial aid and scholarships is also provided.

Other services that may be provided to OVR in-school youth with disabilities include:

- Counseling and guidance from professional vocational rehabilitation staff to explore career

and training options as well as understand VR services. Independent Living Skills training will allow students to gain knowledge to perform the daily tasks essential for maintaining or obtaining independence. Independent Living Skills can include the following: household budgeting and financial management; utilizing public transportation; navigating through the social services system.

- Self-Advocacy Training to assist students with disabilities to gain knowledge on opportunities to participate in pre-employment transition services, disability awareness, advocating during an IEP process, understanding transition processes and advocating for themselves in post-secondary education, employment, and coordinating social services.
- Workplace Readiness Training will provide students with knowledge needed to find and maintain competitive integrated employment. Curriculums can include soft skills training, interview skills, job readiness, job-seeking skills, HR practices, and other skills needed to become “workplace ready”.
- Job Shadowing will provide students with disabilities a one to five-day job shadowing experience, for a maximum of 25 hours per school year, in an occupation of interest within a community integrated setting. Students will be provided an opportunity to shadow employees and obtain an overview of the knowledge, tasks, and abilities needed to work in this field.

Criteria for youth that requires additional assistance to enter or complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment to employment include:

Northern Tier WDB

Additional Assistance Barrier Criteria Policy

For Out of School Youth (OSY) and In School Youth* (ISY) defined as meets one of the following:

Employment

- Has no history of unsubsidized work
- Has been unable to maintain unsubsidized employment with the same employer for six months or more
- Has been actively seeking employment for at least two months but remains unemployed

Transportation

- Lack of consistent and available public and/or personal transportation as identified in their Individual Service Strategy (ISS)

At-Risk Youth

- Has an incarcerated or deceased parent(s)

* Not more than 5 percent of the ISY assisted may be eligible based on paragraph (1)(C)(iv)(VII), which refers to the barrier for an ISY who requires additional assistance to complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment.

When an ISY is enrolled under the additional assistance barrier, written notice must be given to local board staff from the service provider. The Youth Workforce Program Manager will monitor the number of ISY enrolled under the additional assistance barrier to ensure that our area does not exceed 5%.

Section 4.9

- 4.9. *How will the local board coordinate workforce investment activities and ensure they are carried out in the local area with statewide rapid response?*

The Northern Tier region has had a unified strategy/approach to the integration of Rapid Response, Dislocated Worker and Trade services. PA CareerLink® staff and the LWDB have worked closely with the Rapid Response Coordination Services of the Bureau of Workforce Partnership and Operations in organizing Rapid Response events and in continuously developing service strategies to best suit the needs of displaced workers. Efforts include creating a unified system and sharing duties to provide services to dislocated workers, including initial assessments, determining training needs, career guidance, case management to job development, support services and on-site customized workshops.

The process begins at the local level. The local rapid response team consists of staff from both job seeker and business services and includes both merit and non-merit staff. If there is notification of a potential layoff or closure the local rapid response team contacts our Rapid Response Coordinator. The coordinator then reaches out to the affected company and schedules a fact-finding meeting. During these meetings information about the current workforce is obtained along with details about the layoff or closure from the company management representatives. The local rapid response team along with the coordinator and often an unemployment compensation representative will provide a rapid response session with the displaced workers at the worksite (when possible) to discuss the many services available to them through the PA CareerLink® system. During this session, if not before, displaced workers are asked to complete a survey to help determine their needs. For example, an individual may need help with resume building or need to obtain a GED or training assistance. The surveys are then reviewed by the local rapid response team so they can ensure those needs are being met through available workshops, referrals, etc.

Benefits Rights Interviews (BRI's) are conducted for individuals whose companies are affected by Trade. These sessions help the individual to understand benefits that are available to them under the Trade Act.

Often times, the local rapid response team will offer employability workshops on-site to workers if permitted by the company. In some cases, employers, will allow an on-site job fair to give other employers in the area an opportunity to meet with their workforce.

The local team works with other employers throughout the region that require the same set of skill sets possessed by the displaced workers in an effort to connect the two.

Section 4.10

- 4.10. *How will the local board coordinate relevant secondary and postsecondary education programs and activities with workforce investment activities to support strategies, enhance services, and avoid duplication of service(s).*

To connect and coordinate workforce programs with relevant secondary and postsecondary education offerings and to avoid duplication of efforts, the WDB has agreements with the Title II Provider to deliver Adult Career Education classes to increase academic skills and personal development skills. The Board further supports local Career and Technical Centers and secondary

schools through dual enrollment programs. Additionally, it utilizes Chapter 339 Career Guidance Plan Development as a coordinated effort for college and career readiness. The Board provides access to postsecondary opportunities and financial aid information through the PA CareerLink® system, and its statewide list of approved training providers. The board shares information gathered from employer interaction in order to provide additional input to the schools. The board also assists the educational providers as they work through the ETPL process and add courses to the training lists. All of the efforts combined have the goal of supporting the strategies of the Commonwealth and the local board.

4.11. Describe the plans, assurances, and strategies for maximizing coordination, improving service delivery, and avoiding duplication of Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 49 et seq.) services and other services provided through the one-stop service delivery system.

The language in the Resource Sharing Agreement outlines specifically how PA CareerLink® staff work with OVR and other partner staff to ensure integrated service delivery throughout the local workforce system. Throughout the region, Title I WIOA staff work together with BWPO, OVR and SCSEP staff to provide a seamless array of services to support both job seekers and employers. Examples include the development of the customer information survey which was created as a joint effort between partner staff to develop one initial assessment to be used with a customer at point of entry, the development of a PA CareerLink® orientation so that the same initial information is given to each new customer, all partners contribute the staffing of the career resource center, the Career Pathway Navigator role is filled by both Wagner-Peyser and WIOA staff, both of which enter labor exchange services in CWDS. The Northern Tier region continuously strives to provide a seamless, integrated system for our customers. All partner staff are encouraged to provide input and strategies for the improvement of service delivery. Business service teams are made up of Wagner-Peyser including TAA and Veterans staff, OVR and WIOA who work together to provide service to local businesses through the region.

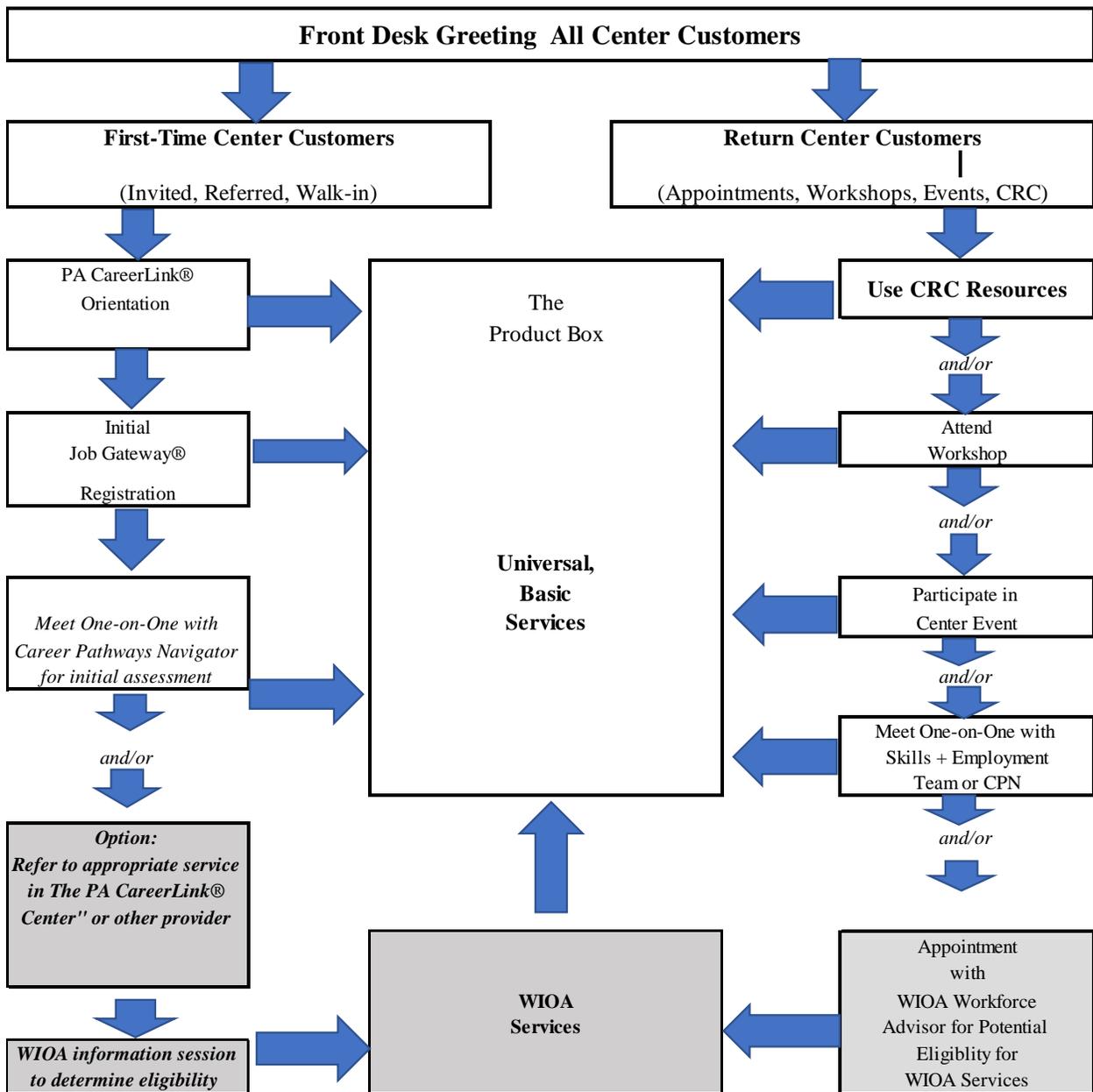
In addition to monthly staff meetings, PA CareerLink® management and partner meetings also take place to ensure the strategies for maximizing coordination are effective. PA CareerLink® Operators also report out at each LWDB meeting.

The one-stop operator provides functional supervision of the PA CareerLink® Center Site Administrators who acts as a functional leader within the one-stop. In that role, they have the authority to organize and supervise partner staff in order to provide the best services to customers without duplicating functions. Key responsibilities of the Site Administrator include:

- Integrate systems and coordinate services for the center and its Partners, placing priority on customer service.
- Integrated Workforce Service Delivery, as defined by WIOA, which includes organizing and providing services by function (not by program), when permitted by a program's authorizing statute and as appropriate, and by coordinating policies, communication, outreach, service and training efforts to ensure the best possible customer experience
- Service integration focusing on serving all customers seamlessly (including targeted populations with barriers to employment) by providing a full range of services staffed by cross-functional teams, consistent with the purpose, scope, and requirements of each program.
- Ensuring ease of access, that programs are easy to enroll and navigate, and there is a smooth flow to the menu of services available through the workforce system.

There is an on-going evaluation and all efforts are taken to have a proactive approach to ensure that the staff enhance the services to individuals with disabilities. This includes the maintenance of the Career Resource Area, with its adaptive technologies, the TTY line, and the availability of resource materials in alternative formats (Braille, large print). OVR staff also sits in on PA CareerLink® offices monthly meetings to discuss service strategies and participates in cross training of front line staff to discuss program specific services and appropriate referrals. OVR now has an employer representative that sits on our Business Services Team. Our OVR representative has partnered with other staff to provide employer workshops throughout the region.

The process flow for all first time and returning customers is as follows:



All staff, regardless of partner affiliation work together to provide appropriate services.

Section 4.12

4.12. How will the local board coordinate WIOA title I workforce investment activities with adult education literacy activities under WIOA title II?

Currently, our Title II provider is the same as our Title I provider. The staff and management team have been integrally involved in this planning process. There have been four face to face meetings discussing the strategy and direction of this plan. Title II staff members have been invited to participate in our input survey as well. The local board, through its local plan, provides information relevant to local goals and strategies.

Representation of Title II Adult Education and Literacy exists within the system. Regular communication and active participation is necessary on both Title II and the Board's part for smooth and integrated services of its customers. Title I and Title II discussions, feedback, strategic planning, operational planning occur simultaneously. The Board invites the Title II Adult Education and Literacy providers to present updates at both a PA CareerLink® staff meetings as well as at Board meetings. All WIOA, EARN and TANF customers are referred to Title II in the same way, when appropriate.

Section 4.13

4.13. What services, activities, and program resources will be provided to participants, including those outlined at WIOA Sec. 3(24), Individuals with a Barrier to Employment, in the local area?

As outlined in the flowchart **Section 4.12 on Page 84**, all individuals who present in one of our region's PA CareerLink® centers are greeted by a staff member provided by the Aging Services. After their initial greeting, customers watch a 5-minute Prezi presentation, that provides a quick orientation to the programs and services available in the PA CareerLink® center. This is followed by a discussion with a Career Pathways Navigator, who conducts an assessment of the individual's needs and competencies and potential barriers to employment that may be faced. The navigator also gives them an overview of the various career pathways available in the industries throughout the region and explains the knowledge, skills and abilities required for the high priority occupations where there are job opportunities. Referrals to appropriate services and/or agencies are then made as needed by the job seeker.

If appropriate, individuals are referred to a WIOA informational session that explains the various programs and services available. During this presentation, WIOA eligibility is assessed and individuals are then referred to appropriate training and/or supportive services.

Returning customers can continue to meet with a Career Pathways Navigator who can help them link to employment.

Section 4.14

4.14. What services, activities, and program resources will be provided to businesses and employers, in the local area?

We have a regional BST that meets on a quarterly basis that is comprised of Wagner-Peyser, Veterans,

Title I, including Rapid Response Team members, and OVR staff to discuss what is going on in the area and to align services in the region. The regional staff talk about the sectors that are growing and identify target sectors and/or employers for outreach.

Each county has BST representatives that conduct outreach with specific employers in specific counties. BST representatives will visit any new employers that are identified by the Chambers or PREP partners. Our BST representatives use the Executive Pulse system, the system of record for the economic development partners. This allows our BST staff to both collect and provide information on referrals to other partners in the region. Our Local Veterans' Employment Representative is the chairman of the regional team and conducts many of the outreach activities personally. They also go into the CWDS system to identify which employers in the system have not had a service in the past year. These employers will be a priority for a visit.

They also organize employer events and participate in job fairs. They coordinate with Career Advisors to serve job seekers by communicating information about employee openings available through local employers and encouraging employers to post job openings in the CWDS system. They also provide education to employers on how to most effectively utilize CWDS.

Rapid Response team members, also representative of BST, participate in Rapid Response sessions with local employers which may be reducing their workforce or closing down operations. These team members help both the jobseekers and employers navigate the workforce system. Assistance can include outreach to other local employers that may be looking for the same skill set as the displaced workers.

Specialized services offered by OVR to employers include pre-screened, qualified job candidates with disabilities. Support for new hires may include reasonable accommodation consultation, OJT, tax credits or deductions and consultation on the Americans with Disability Act (ADA) accessibility standards.

Unemployment Compensation is represented at Rapid Response sessions providing both jobseekers and employers the information they need to proceed during layoffs or closures. Services provided to employers also include seminars on unemployment compensation topics informing employers of rights and responsibilities.

Section 4.15

4.15. How will the local board coordinate WIOA title I workforce investment activities with the provision of transportation and other appropriate supportive services in the local area?

The transportation issues related to workforce development revolve around the lack of a local or regional transportation system. The system that does exist visits most communities twice daily at most. Any workforce customer without a vehicle or driver's license must rely on others for a ride, or face extremely restrictive windows to get to the PA CareerLink®, training, or employment. While the system provides the best service possible under the circumstances, the financial hurdles and lack of demand makes expanding these systems extremely cost prohibitive. There is a ride-share, low-income, and senior transportation program which serves Bradford, Tioga and Sullivan Counties. All transportation providers are partners with the system.

The area plans to address the issue with an increase in the hub and spoke concept, which will send staff to other community partners on a regular basis that will extend the services without bricks and mortar. The Title I providers have begun traveling to community facilities, like libraries, where they can meet

with customers and provide services. Referrals are made by Title I service provider staff when individuals come in to these roving locations and have barriers better served by other providers or agencies.

Information is readily available and referrals are made to community partners to address a variety of needs such as child care, child support, dependent care, housing, Medicaid, CHIP, SNAP, TANF, transportation and counseling services. Referrals are made to a variety of community partners including the Social Security Administration, County Assistance Office, Drug and Alcohol services, BeST Transit, Literacy, Child Support, Housing Authority, Homeless shelters, community churches, food pantries, Domestic Relations – child support, mental health providers, abuse and rape crisis centers, legal services, credit counseling and veteran’s services.

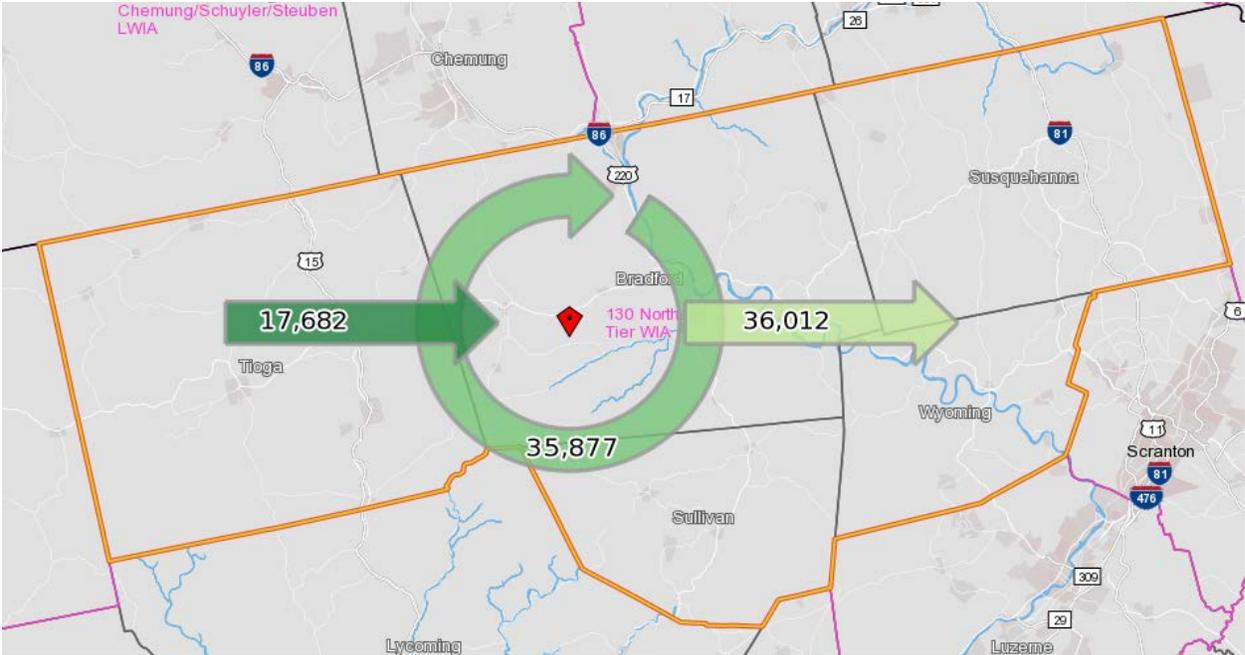
While the issues revolve around a lack of transportation opportunities, the following data and map outline the commuter patterns for the Northern Tier.

Inflow/Outflow Report, Northern Tier WDA, 2014

	Count	Share
Employed in the WDA	53,559	100.0%
Employed in the WDA but Living Outside	17,682	33.0%
Employed and Living in the WDA	35,877	67.0%
Living in the WDA	71,889	100.0%
Living in the WDA but Employed Outside	36,012	50.1%
Living and Employed in the WDA	35,887	49.9%
Net Commuting In/Out*	-18,330	

*A positive number indicates the number of individuals working in the WDA but living outside is higher than the number of individuals living in the WDA but employed outside. A negative number indicates the opposite.

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5. COMPLIANCE

Section 5.1

- 5.1. *Describe the cooperative agreements that define how all local area service providers will carry out the requirements for integration of and access to the entire set of services available in the local area one-stop delivery system.*

The new Memoranda of Understanding that are currently under development between the Board and the PA CareerLink® partners will define the expectations, service levels, and resource contributions of each organization.

Additionally, with respect to the provision of services to individuals with disabilities, the Board will utilize Office of Vocational Rehabilitation's (OVR) expertise regarding assessment, career pathways development, education training and placement services. OVR has a very effective professional development program that will assist in assuring proper cross training of staff, technical assistance and sharing information. The Board will encourage the sharing of CWDS information that can assist in serving mutual clients.

The Northern Tier Workforce Development Board (NCWDB), and our PA CareerLink® partners ensure continued compliance with WIOA Section 188, applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and "The ADA Standard For Accessible Design." We are committed to following and adhering to all provisions of the U.S. Department of Labor Rule: "Implementation of the Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity provisions of the WIOA" and, the "State Nondiscrimination Plan." Dissemination of information related to those topics previously listed as well as compliance accordingly is under the charge of the LWDA's designated Equal Opportunity Officer. Our EOO officer works with individuals appointed in each PA CareerLink® center, referred to Equal Opportunity Liaisons to ensure that customers are aware of their rights and to report any incidents related to potential discrimination or accessibility. Through mutual efforts those identified above utilize the PA Department of Labor and Industry, Office Equal Opportunity (OEO) "State Employment Security Agency (SESA) Technical Assistance (TA) Training Manual, which requires the use of the nondiscrimination and EO Self-Evaluation Guide." Training to support the liaisons and EOO Officer as well as technical assistance is provided by the Office of Equal Opportunity.

In addition to and in accordance with Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 37-14, board staff will coordinate with the Equal Opportunity Officers in each of the PA CareerLink® centers in our region to ensure the following:

- Use this TEGl and attachments when reviewing our existing policies and procedures and make any changes necessary to implement the guidance discussed in the directive.
- Ensure that workforce staff are familiar with Attachment I to this TEGl – "Key Terminology for Working with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Persons." to assist with more effective communication with LGBT customer and employees of the workforce system.

The EO officer for the Bradford site is Allen Hubler, PA CareerLink® Site Supervisor, BWPO, ahubler@pa.gov. Tioga site is Joe Brelo, PA CareerLink® Site Supervisor, BWPO, jbrel@pa.gov.

Section 5.2

5.2. *What is the process the local board uses to ensure the collection of the debts of lower-tier sub-recipients, as a result of audits?*

In accordance with WIOA Section 184(c); 20 CFR 683.750, issuance of a final determination completes the audit resolution process. A debt is established when that final determination disallows any costs questioned in the audit. The collection of that debt is a separate process with specified time frames and procedures. The final determination contains the first official demand for repayment of the debt. Please refer to the flow chart at the end of this chapter.

Following issuance of the final determination, the audited entity will have 30 days from issuance to submit an appeal. That appeal will be a request for a formal review of the final determination before an impartial hearing officer of the Department. The debt collection process will be stayed pending a decision regarding the appeal. However, the debt becomes delinquent on the first day following issuance of the final determination, whether or not an appeal has been filed.

Interest on the delinquent debt will begin to accrue at that time according to the prevailing rate determined by the U.S. Treasury and will accrue during the entire time of the appeal process. This interest is waived if the debt is paid before the 31st day following issuance of the final determination. If the appeal is upheld, all interest will also be waived. However, if the appeal results in any disallowed costs, interest will be assessed on the amount disallowed.

If no appeal of the final determination is filed, a lump-sum repayment from non-federal funds is due to BWDA within 30 days after issuance of the final determination. The commonwealth, at its discretion, may negotiate short-term installment agreements in lieu of lump-sum payment.

In general, the options available are as follows:

Option 1: The Grantee pays the full amount in a lump sum by sending a cashier's check, drawn on non-federal funds and payable to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania;

Option 2: The Grantee may contact the Department to negotiate a short-term installment agreement (generally executed over a period of three years or less) in lieu of a lump-sum payment; or

Option 3: In rare instances, a local workforce development area may request an offset/deduction as outlined in WIOA Sec. 184(c). An offset/deduction may only be applied if misexpenditures were not part of a pattern of misexpenditure and not due to willful disregard of the requirements of WIOA regulations, gross negligence, and failure to observe accepted standards of administration. In addition, an offset/deduction may only be applied if WIOA Sec. 184(c) has been fulfilled. If an offset/deduction is granted, the Department must deduct an amount equal to the misexpenditures from the Local area/fiscal agent's subsequent year's allocation from funds available for administrative costs.

Upon full repayment of the outstanding debt, the commonwealth will issue a satisfactory resolution letter acknowledging receipt of repayment, closing the audit process. However, the commonwealth reserves the right to reopen the audit in the event the USDOL disagrees with the final resolution.

Should repayment not be received within the 30-day period, a second notice will be sent by certified mail. This notice will state that repayment must be submitted within 30 days of issuance of the letter. It will also state that interest on the outstanding debt began to accrue on the first day following issuance of the final determination.

If repayment of the outstanding debt is not received within 30 days after issuance of the second notice, a final notice will be sent by certified mail. The final notice will state that the Department must receive repayment within 10 days of issuance. It will also list the amount of accrued interest due on the debt. The notice will also state that should repayment of the debt and interest not be received, appropriate legal and/or programmatic sanctions may be instituted. These sanctions may include the following:

- Withholding a percentage of payments until the audit is resolved satisfactorily;
- Withholding or disallowing administrative costs;
- Withholding the federal funds until the audit is resolved;
- Determination of ineligibility, suspension, or debarment through the commonwealth's Contractor Responsibility Program; and
- Referral to the Office of the Attorney General for collection.

Section 5.3

5.3. Which actions(s) is the local board taking (or will take) towards becoming or remaining a high-performing board?

The board continually monitors its performance and the overall performance of the local system. This includes continually monitoring labor market information and gathering input from regional employers along with developing new programs and partnerships to meet the needs of the region. Some examples implemented over the past year include mobile services, and the Fit 4 Work program. By continually monitoring its performance measures, the board is constantly evaluating its performance and seeking input from stakeholders.

Every few years, the board also conducts a Board Self-Assessment of its performance as a board. The board also plans to complete another evaluation before the end of the next fiscal year.

The board also ensures that it maintains high performance by conducting periodic board planning retreats and updating the region's strategic plan. Over the next year, the board will also consider additional governance training (offered by the PA Association of Nonprofit Organizations or another provider) as well as a self-evaluation process to continue its effectiveness.

Section 5.4

5.3. *What is the process the local board uses to provide an opportunity to have input into the development of the local plan, particularly for representatives of business, education, labor organizations, program partners, public agencies, and community stakeholders?*

In the spring of 2017, the board held several meetings with local partners and stakeholders to gather their input and discuss methods to continue to enhance the local and regional workforce system. These meetings included:

April 12 – WDB, Youth Committee

April 21 – NTRPDC Executive Committee – Commissioners

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- April 25 – PA CareerLink Management Team
- May 22- Susquehanna County Outreach meeting – stakeholders
- May 23 – Bradford County Outreach meeting – stakeholders
- May 24- Wyoming County Outreach meeting – stakeholders
- May 24 – Youth Coordination meeting - staff
- May 25 – Sullivan County Outreach meeting – stakeholders
- June 1 – Tioga County Outreach meeting – stakeholders
- June 2 – PREP Meeting - stakeholders
- June 14 – WDB, Youth Committee
- June 16 – Executive Committee
- June 28 – Adult/DW Coordination meeting – staff

In June of 2017, a regional stakeholder/employer survey was conducted in order to gather information around specific strategic questions related to this plan. A total of 128 local employers and stakeholders participated in the survey. The top priorities from the survey were in-line with the goals and strategies underway and planned by the local board.

Respondents included:

Affiliation	Responses	
Private Sector	14.84%	19
K-12 Education	14.84%	19
Post-Secondary Education	6.25%	8
Government	32.03%	41
Economic Development	7.03%	9
CareerLink Partner	6.25%	8
Not For Profit	10.94%	14
Utilize Public Workforce System	0.78%	1
Other	7.03%	9
	Answered	128

Source: 2017 Northern Tier Stakeholder Survey, Strategy Solutions/Community Workforce Advancements

County	Responses	
Bradford	39.84%	51
Sullivan	17.97%	23
Susquehanna	28.13%	36
Tioga	28.91%	37
Wyoming	18.75%	24
Other (please specify)	12.50%	16
	Answered	128

Source: 2017 Northern Tier Stakeholder Survey, Strategy Solutions/Community Workforce Advancements

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Strategies to better connect labor force requirements and occupational demands with regional labor force:	Weighted Average
Promote awareness of employment opportunities	6.35
Continue to work with career and technical schools and other local educational providers	6.31
Support existing Business-Education Partnerships in the local area.	6.23
Encourage job shadowing and internships	6.19
Support work-based training. This option gives workers the opportunity to gain skills and competencies while earning a wage.	6.04
Engage out-of-school youth in industry recognized credentials, apprenticeship training.	5.98
Identify focus industries to target in the schools	5.87
Build a more integrated career pathway model that includes a job shadowing component (so that people can see what they are learning and how it works in real life)	5.87
Explore career ready pathway systems. Main elements include stackable credentials, easy entrance and exit points. Career pathway requires collaboration between employers and education.	5.77
Support educator professional development for career planning	5.76
Engage Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Partners to invest in basic skills improvement referred to as employability or soft skills	5.76
Create awareness of employment barriers among the employers and throughout the community.	5.65
Do a better job of using social media to connect to the public	5.62
Focus on early education and encourage staying in region	5.58
Connect supportive service needs of priority population with barrier-to-employment with the broader human service sector (and to connect individuals in training programs with employers)	5.42
Connect to students who drop out of college after the first semester or two	5.39
Target self-employment as pathway. Explore the need and opportunity for entrepreneurial training in the local area.	5.34

Source: 2017 Northern Tier Stakeholder Survey, Strategy Solutions/Community Workforce Advancements

“Other” responses included:

- Encourage communication between Superintendents of area schools and business leaders to assess gaps in employability skills.
- First, we need to get meaningful jobs in Sullivan County to keep our youth here.
- Develop communication with all the government and private sector to communicate the short and long term needs of business. Not just large but small employers also.
- Engage parents in discussions about employment opportunities and employer needs
- I think it extremely important that we start educating Elementary level students on the job opportunities in our area!! Never to vision! They should be encouraged to understand how valuable our area is to the world around us!! We are truly blessed!!
- Need for Public transportation

- Support Youth Apprenticeship with NTIEC

Sector Initiative Strategies	Weighted Average
Link students to technical training and employers who will support their continued education and skill training	6.36
Strengthen links among career/tech education, universities, and continuing education.	6.15
Address immediate skill shortages and develop a talent pipeline for future needs	6.15
The Workforce Development Board will continue to engage local sector leadership to participate and lead industry partnerships that organize (public and private) to deliver training that is focused on industry related workforce needs.	5.86
Promote industry-led development curriculum for middle skilled occupations as the foundation for new training programs in post-secondary education.	5.84
Combine business outreach to regional economic development activities.	5.74

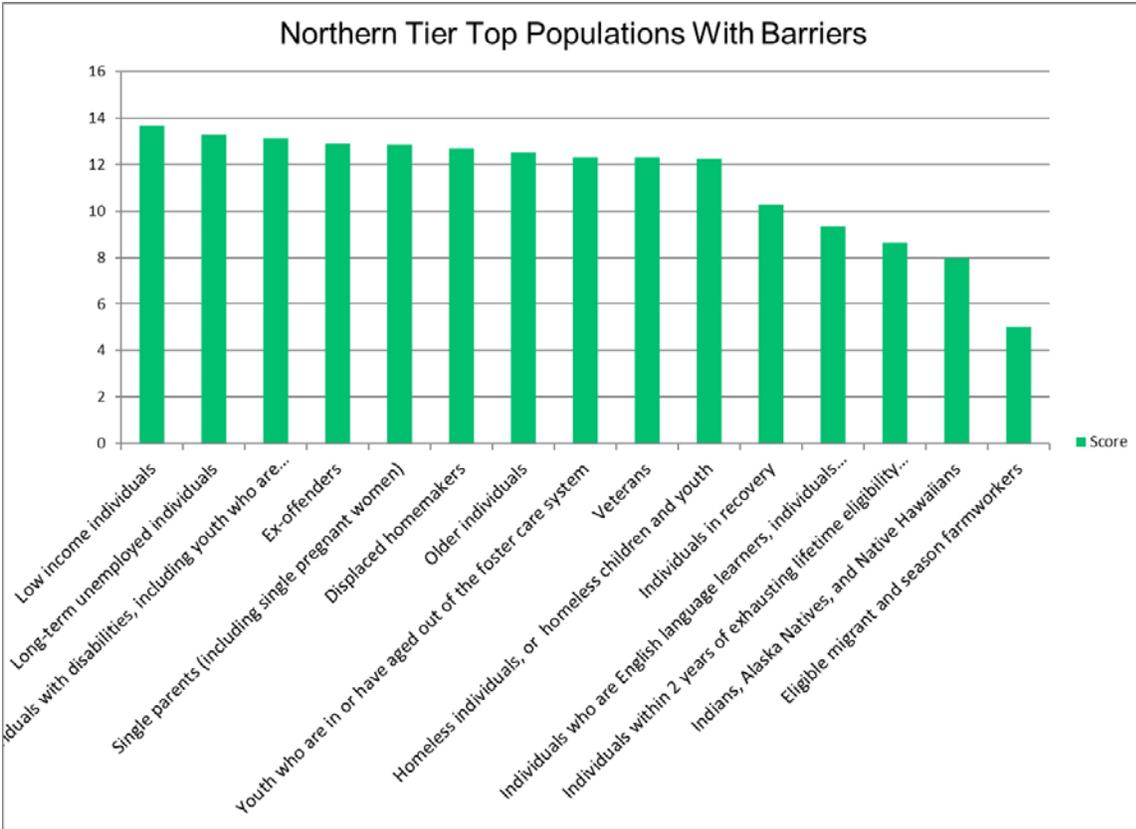
Source: 2017 Northern Tier Stakeholder Survey, Strategy Solutions/Community Workforce Advancements

“Other” responses included:

- Encourage new businesses to the area
- Incarcerated individuals
- Working directly with our career centers. Very important that business gets involved in the areas of studies at all these centers. They may offer different area of study that could eventually lead to better paying opportunities!

Industry Sector Priorities	Weighted Average
Technology	6.3
Health Care and Social Assistance	6.25
Energy	6.25
Manufacturing	6.13
Logistics and Transportation	6.08
Natural Gas	5.91
Agriculture	5.64
Accommodation and Food Service	5.12
Retail Trade	4.95
Government	4.59

Source: 2017 Northern Tier Stakeholder Survey, Strategy Solutions/Community Workforce Advancements



Source: 2017 Northern Tier Stakeholder Survey, Strategy Solutions/Community Workforce Advancements

Section 5.5

5.4. *What is the process the local board uses to provide a 30-day public comment period prior to submission of the plan?*

To ensure an open opportunity for public comment, the Board published the Northern Tier Local WIOA Plan as well as the Northern Tier Regional WIOA Plan on its website for the 30-day period beginning on **July 28** and ending **August 28**. Additionally, notification of the availability of both the Local and Regional WIOA Plans for public comment was also directly distributed via email to stakeholders across the region.

No comments were received.

ATTESTATIONS

By checking the box adjacent to each line item, the local board attests to ensuring the compliance components/documents listed are (or will be) in place and effective prior to December 31, 2017.

Each of the following components/documents should be current and available to the Department at any time during the planning process and/or monitoring or auditing processes. At this time, the Department is not requiring copies of such documents be attached to regional or local area plans.

x Agreement between all counties and other local governments, if applicable, establishing the consortium of local/chief elected officials.

x Agreement between the chief elected official(s) and the fiscal agent, if a fiscal agent is designated.

x Agreement between the local area elected official(s) and the local workforce development board.

x Local workforce development board policy and process that provides for nomination, appointment and removal of board members; resolutions; bylaws; code of conduct; and conflict of interest.

x Financial management policy and process including cost allocation plan; internal controls; cash management; receipts of goods; cost reimbursement; inventory and equipment; program income; travel reimbursement; audit requirements and resolution; annual report; property management; debt collection; and allowable costs.

x Local area procurement policy – Must describe formal procurement procedures.

x Program management policies and processes addressing, at a minimum, layoff assistance; equal opportunity for customers; complaints and grievances; supportive services; needs related payments; incentives; file management; eligibility determination and verification; self-sufficiency criteria; self-attestation/certification random sampling; priority of service; stipends; training verification/refunds; individual training accounts; contracts for training services; statewide training providers list and eligibility verification; local area training provider list and eligibility criteria and process; “additional assistance” definition; transitional jobs thresholds; documentation for training expenditure targets; incumbent worker training.

x Risk management policy and process including records retention and public access; public records requests; monitoring, grievance; incident; and disaster recovery plan.

x Human resources policy and process including employee classification; benefits; holidays and PTO; recruitment and selection; employee development; discipline; layoffs, terminations and severance; sexual harassment; and equal opportunity/non-discrimination.

x Professional services contract(s) for administrative services such as staffing and payroll, if applicable.

Attachments

Attachment A: Performance Measures Template Name of local workforce development area:

WIOA Performance Measures	Local Area PY17 Performance Goals
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	Negotiated Goals
Adult	59%
Dislocated Worker	67%
Youth	58%
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	Negotiated Goals
Adult	58%
Dislocated Worker	63%
Youth	57%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)	Negotiated Goals
Adult	5,000
Dislocated Worker	6,300
Youth	2,100
Credential Attainment Rate	Negotiated Goals
Adult	68%
Dislocated Worker	71%
Youth	60%
Measurable Skill Gains	Negotiated Goals
Adult	48%
Dislocated Worker	48%
Youth	48%
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Negotiated Goals
Adult	25%
Dislocated Worker	25%
Youth	25%

PY 2017-2019 WIOA Multi-Year Local Area Plan

Local Workforce Development Area name: Northern Tier

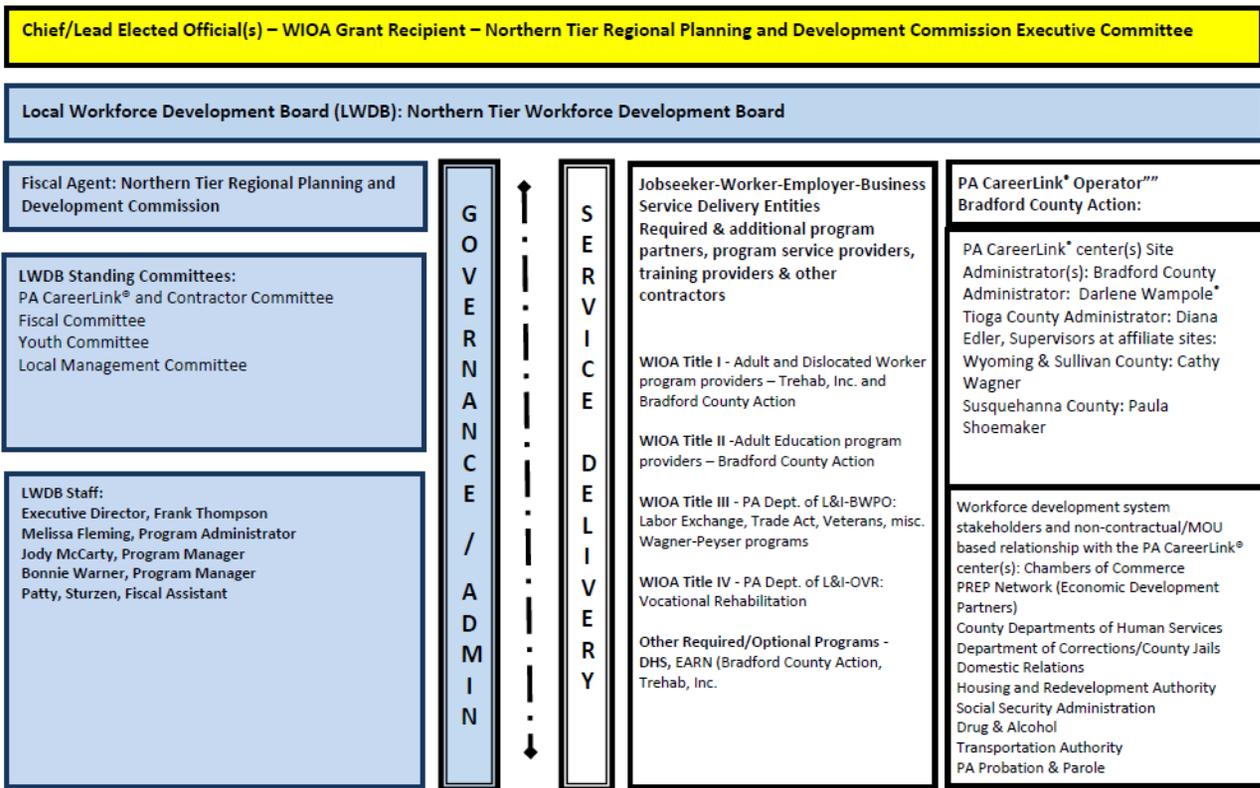
Effective Date: January 1, 2018

Attachment B: Organizational Chart

**PY 2017-2019 WIOA Multi-Year Regional/Local Area Plan:
Local Workforce Development Area Workforce System Organizational Chart**

Local Workforce Development Area name: Northern Tier

Effective Date: July 1, 2017



PY 2017-2019 WIOA Multi-Year Local Area Plan

Local Workforce Development Area name: Northern Tier

Effective Date: January 1, 2018

Attachment C: One Stop Location Program Services Template

Program Name		Local Area Partner/Provider
POC address	POC telephone	POC website/email
Adult, Youth, Dislocated Worker Employment and Training Activities, Employment Advancement Retention Network (EARN), TANF Youth		Bradford County Action
500 William St, Towanda PA 18848	Penne Watkins 570.265.4344	www.Bradfordcountyaction.org p Watkins@bradfordcountyaction.org
Adult, Youth, Dislocated Worker Employment and Training Activities, Employment Advancement Retention Network (EARN), TANF Youth		Trehab Inc
36 Public Avenue, Montrose, PA 18801	Phil Smiley 570.278.5248	www.Trehab.org psmiley@trehab.org
Wagner-Peyser, Trade Act, Jobs for Veterans		PA Department of Labor & Industry, BWPO
75 North Laurel Street, Hazelton, PA 18201	Elaine Stalfa 570-459-3895	www.dli.pa.gov estalfa@pa.gov
Vocational Rehabilitation		PA Department of Labor and Industry, Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR)
300 G Laird Street, Wilkes Barre, PA 18702	Heather Nelson 570-826-2011	www.dli.pa.gov hnelson@pa.gov
Job Corps		Red Rock Job Corps, ResCare
Rte 487 North, Lopez, PA 18628	570-477-2221	www.redrockjobcorps.gov
State Unemployment Compensation Program (UC)		PA Department of Labor & Industry
651 Boas Street, Room 625 Harrisburg, PA 17121	Barbara A. Mourer, 717.787.4127	www.uc.pa.gov bmourer@pa.gov
Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy		Department of Education, Bradford County Action
500 William Street, Towanda, PA	Penne Watkins 570.265.4434	www.Bradfordcountyaction.org p Watkins@bradfordcountyaction.org
Community Services Block Grant (CSBG)		PA Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED), Trehab Inc
36 Public Avenue, Montrose, PA 18801	Dennis Phelps 570.278.5248	www.trehab.org dphelps@trehab.org

Attachment D: Comments and Local Board Responses

There were no comments received during the 30-day Public Comment Period.