

WORKFORCE SYSTEM POLICY: PROGRAM YEARS 2021 – 2024 WIOA REGIONAL AND LOCAL AREA PLANS

Local Workforce Delivery System

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Policy Owner: *Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry and State Agency Workforce System Partners*

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Purpose of the Policy

This policy, associated guide, fillable templates and other supporting documents provide information regarding the preparation, development, submission and approval of Program Years, or PY, 2021 – 2024 Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, or WIOA, regional and local area plans and subsequent review and modification, if applicable. WIOA plans promote integrated planning and system alignment, ensure compliance with applicable federal and state laws, regulations and policies, and support the vision, goals and strategies described in Pennsylvania’s *WIOA Combined State Plan*. This policy, associated guide, fillable templates and other supporting documents are based largely on WIOA Sections 106, 107 and 108 and their respective promulgating regulations.

Policy Statement

The local workforce development board(s), or local board(s), or LWDB(s), in partnership with the chief elected official(s), or CEO(s), for their respective designated region and local area, must develop and submit to the Governor, a comprehensive four-year regional plan if the region is deemed a planning region, and a corresponding local workforce development area, or local area, or LWDA plan. Regional plans must articulate how the respective planning region LWDBs will collaboratively achieve WIOA’s vision and goals, support and incorporate Pennsylvania’s WIOA Combined State Plan goals and strategies while realizing regional goals and strategies. Each LWDB, in collaboration with LWDA stakeholders, must produce a local area plan that embodies the vision, goals, objectives and strategies of WIOA, the PA WIOA Combined State Plan as well as certain administrative and operational elements or processes. WIOA regional and local area plans are subject to WIOA and its promulgating regulations, other applicable federal law and guidance, commonwealth law and directives, each program’s authorizing statute and its respective regulations as well as this policy.

Scope

This policy applies to employees of, as well as groups or individuals representing, all bureaus, division, boards, commissions, councils, agencies and business partners supported by the Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry, or L&I, allocated workforce development funds involved in the preparation, development, submission and approval of WIOA regional and local area plans.

Audience

Pennsylvania CEOs, LWDB members and local board staff, LWDA administrative entity staff, LWDA fiscal agent staff, executive decision-making officials of LWDA one-stop system program partners and any other entity or individual associated with the preparation, development, submission and modification of WIOA regional and local area plans must adhere to the conditions of use and specifications as outlined.

Related State Policies

WSP No. 121-04 PA CareerLink® System Operator

WSP No. 121-03 Memorandum of Understanding, or MOU, for the One-Stop Delivery System

WSP No. 01-2015 Pennsylvania's Workforce System of Record (Change 1)

Definitions

Chief elected official, or CEO, is the chief elected executive officer of a unit of general local government in a local workforce development area. By legislation, the CEO is financially liable for workforce funds allocated to a local workforce development area. The CEO is also responsible for appointing local workforce development board members, approving the local workforce development board budget and serving as the local grant recipient.

Commonwealth Workforce Development System, or CWDS, is the sole data-management and reporting system of record used for all data collection and reporting related to all WIOA Title-I and Title-III, Wagner-Peyser Act and Trade Act-related activity in Pennsylvania.

Core programs are the partner programs found in WIOA title I (Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth); title II (Adult Education); title III (Wagner-Peyser); and title IV (Vocational Rehabilitation).

Individuals with a barrier to employment is a member of one (1) or more of the following populations:

- A. Displaced homemakers;
- B. Low-income individuals;
- C. Indians, Alaska Natives and Native Hawaiians, as such terms are defined in WIOA Sec. 166;
- D. Individuals with disabilities, including youth who are individuals with disabilities;
- E. Older individuals (to mean an individual age 55 or older);
- F. Ex-offenders;
- G. Homeless individuals (as defined in section 41403(6) of the Violence Against Women Act of 1994 (42 U.S.C. 14043e-2(6)), or homeless children and youths (as defined in section 725(2) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11434(a)(2)));
- H. Youth who are in or have aged out of the foster care system;
- I. Individuals who are English language learners, individuals who have low levels of literacy, and individuals facing substantial cultural barriers;
- J. Eligible migrant and season farmworkers, as defined in WIOA Sec. 167(i);
- K. Individuals within two (2) years of exhausting lifetime eligibility under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 601 et. seq.);
- L. Single parents (including single pregnant women);
- M. Long-term unemployed individuals; and
- N. Such other groups as the Governor involved determines to have barriers to employment.

Local plan is a four-year action plan to develop, align, and integrate service delivery strategies and resources among the six WIOA core programs and partners in a specific local area. The local plan should support the achievement of the state's vision and goals, as outlined in the state plan.

Local workforce development area, or LWDA, also referred to as a local area, serves as a jurisdiction for the administration of workforce development activities and execution of adult, dislocated worker, and youth funds allocated by the state. Such areas may be aligned with a region identified in WIOA Sec. 106(a)(1) or may be components of a planning region, each with its own LWDB. The Governor must designate local areas for the State to receive adult, dislocated worker, and youth funding under title I, subtitle B of WIOA.

Local areas are also the areas within which LWDBs oversee their functions, including strategic planning, operational alignment and service delivery design, and a jurisdiction where partners align resources at a sub-state level to design and implement overall service delivery strategies.

Local workforce development board(s), or LWDB, are regional entities created to implement the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA), which authorizes and funds employment and training programs in the United States. The LWDB's main role is to direct federal, state, and local funding to workforce development programs. Every community in Pennsylvania is associated with a LWDB. LWDBs develop workforce and regional strategies, as well as conduct and publish research on the needs of their regional economy. LWDBs also provide oversight and coordination of the workforce services provided in their region and the overall operation of the storefront delivery of these services at PA CareerLink® locations.

For each LWDB, a chief elected official (a county commissioner or the mayor of a major city) appoints members to sit on the LWDB. These appointed positions are unpaid. A majority of a LWDB's membership must come from private businesses. There are also designated seats for representatives of labor and educational institutions, such as community colleges.

Partnerships for regional economic performance, or PREP, is the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development's, or DCED, designated ten (10) regions designed for the purpose of long-term strategic economic development planning and investment throughout the commonwealth.

Pennsylvania CareerLink®/PA CareerLink® is the registered trademarked name of Pennsylvania's one-stop workforce development service-delivery system, including each one-stop center and public-facing aspects of the online job matching system used by individuals, job seekers, employers, program partners and providers, training providers and other stakeholders.

Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry, or L&I, is legally designated by the governor to serve as the state workforce agency.

Regional plan is a four-year action plan to develop, align, and integrate service delivery strategies and resources among the multiple local workforce development areas in the planning region. Regions are identified by the state, according to the requirements of WIOA Sec. 106(a) and 20 CFR 679.510, in order to align workforce development activities and resources with larger regional economic development areas and available resources. The regional plan must be consistent with the vision and goals of the state plan.

Required and additional partners are the entities that administer required programs or activities as described in WIOA Sec. 121(b)(1)(B) and 20 CFR 678.400, or the additional programs as described in WIOA Sec. 121(b)(2)(B) and 20 CFR 678.410 in a local area. Required programs and activities are mandated to be made available in the PA CareerLink® delivery system while additional programs may be made available if approved by the CEO and the LWDB. All partners must enter into a MOU with the LWDB.

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, or WIOA, superseded the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA) and amended the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, the Wagner-Peyser Act and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. To help businesses and job seekers meet their needs, the workforce system established under WIOA is integrated by design. WIOA envisioned connecting businesses with job seekers, through meaningful partnerships among workforce, education, human services and economic development entities ensuring optimum results and resource leveraging. The law addresses job seekers' needs by establishing a workforce system delivering access to employment, education, training and support services to succeed in the labor market. Through the PA

CareerLink® one-stop system, WIOA addresses employers' needs by connecting them with skilled workers able to compete in the global economy.

Procedures

Regional and Local Area Planning Overview

Regional and local area plans provide the framework in defining how a designated area's workforce development system will achieve the purposes of WIOA. Preparation, development and submission of both plans occur every four years with subsequent review and modification, if applicable, two years after the plan's respective effective date as detailed in WIOA sections 102(c)(3) and 108(a). Original and modified regional and local area plans will be reviewed and recommended for the Governor's, or designee, approval based upon the requirements outlined in this policy, associated guidance and supporting documents. **The effective date of the PY 2021-2024 WIOA regional and local area plans is July 1, 2021.**

All regional and local area plan packages must be submitted electronically by a regionally designated single point of contact, or POC, to the Bureau of Workforce Development Administration's, or BWDA, Policy Coordination Services unit's resource account at RA-LI-BWDA-Policy@pa.gov. A copy of the email must be sent to all LWDB chairpersons and CEOs within a region or local area and contain the subject line "[Region Name] WIOA Regional Plan" by close of business on the deadline indicated in this policy.

Regional and local area plan packages will be reviewed upon receipt. BWDA will notify the submitting LWDB's POC when the original plan or plan modification, if applicable, submission is received. BWDA may request clarifying information or provide feedback to revise the plan. If the plan/modification(s) is approved, the submitter will be directed to provide a "clean" version of the approved plan to BWDA so that it may be included with the approval letter. BWDA will email a letter notifying the submitting LWDB Executive Director, CEO and LWDB Chair of the disposition of the plan and/or modification (approval/denial). Refer to the associated guidance for additional direction.

The submission deadline for the PY 2021-2024 WIOA plans is April 2, 2021.

Resources

Fillable templates and other supporting documents required to be attached to the WIOA Local Plan are found at the L&I website <https://www.dli.pa.gov/Businesses/Workforce-Development/Pages/Pennsylvania's-Workforce-System-Directives.aspx>, below the posting of this policy.

- WIOA Regional and Local Area Plan Guide
- Appendix A: Supporting Information and Planning References
- Appendix B: WIOA Regional Plan Instructions
- Appendix C: WIOA Local Area Plan Instructions
- Appendix D: WIOA Regional Plan template
- Appendix E: WIOA Local Area Plan template, including Attestations
- Appendix F: Epilogue
- Required Supporting Documents:
 - WIOA Plans Submission Checklist
 - Submission Cover Letter template
 - WIOA Plan Modification Forms
 - Attachment 1 - Local Area WIOA Title I Programs Performance Accountability template
 - Attachment 2- Local Workforce Development System Organizational Chart model

- Attachment 3 - Local Workforce Development System Program Partner-Provider List template
- Attachment 4 – Local Workforce Development System Supporting Data template

Supporting Information

Appendix A is a list of references used in the development of this policy and associated guidance which may provide additional information for implementation.

Policy History

WIOA sets parameters for state’s regional and local workforce development systems throughout the country, mandating resource sharing and alignment of priorities across multiple systems, programs, partners and providers to ensure a skilled workforce today and in the future. As described in Pennsylvania’s *WIOA Combined State Plan*, workforce development systems in Pennsylvania invest in innovation, employer engagement, accountability structures and improved data to create a comprehensive workforce development system consistent with the governor’s strategic vision. Collaboratively developed plans are best positioned to accomplish PA’s goals and transcend the fragmentation of workforce development programs.

The regional and local area plans develop, align and integrate the area’s job-driven workforce development systems, and provide the platform to achieve the area’s vision, strategic goals and operational deliverables. A plan is only as effective as the partnerships that implement it. These plans require a shared understanding of an area’s workforce development needs, a shared vision of how the public workforce development system can be designed to help meet those needs and a shared agreement on the key strategies to realize this vision. While both plans identify and describe related subjects, WIOA regional and local area plans do so from different vantage points.

Summary of Changes

Revision Date	Author	Description
1/28/2021	L&I’s BWDA	All responses to public comment incorporated and corresponding content changes made.
10/27/20	L&I’s BWDA	Structure exception clarification was added to prompt L3.1 in Appendix C: Local Area Plans Instruction. Attestations were updated to reflect the local area plan effective date and to ensure Attestation components and documents, including local workforce system policies, are reviewed and revised as to be aligned with WIOA for the current planning cycle.
6/8/2020	L&I’s BWDA	Minor typographical and grammatical errors were corrected. The entire policy was reformatted; most content remained the same however was reorganized and separated into policy and guidance. Clarification was added in the policy, guide and modification forms that areas designated as <i>a single local area region</i> are excluded from submitting a regional plan. Former Appendices B and C were renamed to D and E. Former Appendices E, F and G were renamed to Attachments 1, 2 and 3. Attachment 4: <i>Supporting Data</i> template was added to reformat submitted local area plans. Supporting documents: <i>WIOA Plans Submission Checklist</i> and <i>Submission Cover Letter</i> template were added to provide LWDBs with additional direction and clarification. The WIOA Plan Modification Forms were revised to provide usage clarifications to LWDBs. Additional regional and local plan prompts were added due to

		internal stakeholders' requests, to clarify the change of plan submission requirements for <i>single local area regions</i> as detailed above, to incorporate the annual TANF plan narrative into local area plans, or to reflect changes to Pennsylvania's WIOA Combined State Plan.
6/4/2019	L&I's BWDA	<i>Summary of Changes</i> was added to reflect changes from the original policy. Section III (previously section VI), <i>Background</i> , indicated: Pennsylvania's PY 2020 – 2023 WIOA Combined State Plan information; the Governor's decision to offset PY 2020 - 2023 WIOA regional and local area plans by one year; and explanation of WIOA regional and local area plans modifications. Section IV (previously Section V), <i>Deadline</i> , was revised to include required WIOA modifications. Section V (previously Section VI), B. <i>Plan Components</i> , was revised. Section VII (previously Section VIII), A. <i>Regional Plans</i> and B. <i>Local Area Planning</i> , contained an added bullet: "At a minimum, review the regional (or local) plan two years after its effective date and submit a plan modification as described herein." Section XI (previously Section XII), <i>Plan Extension and Modification</i> , was enhanced. L&I's <i>WIOA Regional or Local Plans Modification Form</i> was updated and posted with the policy. Section VIII, <i>Public Comment Period</i> , was modified to include public notice requirements. Section IX, <i>Plan Submission and Approval</i> , added "Public Posting of Approved Plan".
5/17/2017	L&I's BWDA	Provided initial instruction and technical guidance regarding preparation, development, submission and approval of regional and local area plans.

Public Comment

L&I, in collaboration with the Pennsylvania Workforce Development Board, commonwealth agency partners and local workforce system stakeholders developed this policy. This policy was made available for public review and comment by LWDBs, authorized administrators of WIOA partner programs and service providers, system stakeholders and the general public at large effective December 9th, 2020 until January 11th, 2021. Refer to *Appendix F: Epilogue* for public comments received and L&I responses