



December 18, 2017

Mr. Thomas Donohue, Chairperson  
Lackawanna County Workforce Development Board  
700 James Avenue  
Scranton, PA 18510

Dear Mr. Donohue,

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

- Lackawanna County Workforce Development Area
- Luzerne/Schuylkill County Workforce Development Area
- Pocono Counties Workforce Development Area

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](mailto:michwhite@pa.gov) or (717) 214-7173.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Eileen Cipriani".

Eileen Cipriani  
Deputy Secretary for Workforce Development

cc: The Honorable Patrick M. O'Malley, Chair of the Lackawanna County Board of Commissioners  
Ms. Virginia Turano, Lackawanna County Workforce Development Board Executive Director

Enclosure: Northeast Regional Plan & Lackawanna County Workforce Development Area Local Plan



December 18, 2017

Ms. Karen Kenderline, Chairperson  
Luzerne/Schuylkill Counties Workforce Development Board  
1504 Route 61 South  
Pottsville, PA 17901

Dear Ms. Kenderline,

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

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Eileen Cipriani  
Deputy Secretary for Workforce Development

cc: The Honorable Linda McClosky Houck, Luzerne County Council Chair  
The Honorable George F. Halcovage Jr., Schuylkill County Commissioner's Office Chairman  
Ms. Patricia Lenahan, Luzerne/Schuylkill Counties Workforce Development Board Executive Director

Enclosure: Northeast Regional Plan & Luzerne/Schuylkill Counties Workforce Development Area Local Plan



December 18, 2017

Mr. Craig Zurn, Chairperson  
Pocono Counties Workforce Development Board  
700 James Avenue  
Scranton, PA 18510

Dear Mr. Zurn,

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

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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Eileen Cipriani".

Eileen Cipriani  
Deputy Secretary for Workforce Development

cc: The Honorable Wayne E. Nothstein, Carbon County Board of Commissioners Chair  
Mr. Joseph Sebelin, Pocono Counties Workforce Development Board Executive Director

Enclosure: Northeast Regional Plan & Pocono Counties Workforce Development Area Local Plan

# **NORTHEAST**

*(Region 7)*

**WIOA MULTI-YEAR**

**PY 2017-2019**

**REGIONAL/LOCAL**

**PLANS**



## **PY 2017-2019 WIOA Multi-Year Regional Plan**

### **Northeast Pennsylvania Consortium of Workforce Boards**

October 27, 2017

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## PY 2017-2019 WIOA Multi-Year Regional Plan

Northeast Pennsylvania Consortium of Workforce Boards Effective Date: January 1, 2018

### 1.1. Identification of the region.

**Name of the Region.** The Northeast Pennsylvania Consortium of Workforce Boards (or “Northeast Region”)

#### **Local Workforce Development Areas in the Region.**

- Lackawanna Workforce Development Area – Lackawanna County
- Luzerne/Schuylkill Workforce Development Area – Luzerne and Schuylkill Counties
- Pocono Counties Workforce Development Area – Carbon, Monroe, Pike, and Wayne Counties

#### **Key Regional Committee Members and Organizational Affiliation.**

- Virginia Turano, Lackawanna Workforce Development Board
- Patti Lenahan, Luzerne/Schuylkill Workforce Investment Board
- Joe Sebelin, Pocono Counties Workforce Development Board

#### **Key Regional Committee Meeting Dates.**

- 1/5/17 Meeting to discuss regional workforce strategies
- 2/22/17 Meeting to discuss regional workforce strategies
- 3/10/17 Release of Request for Proposals to procure Regional and Local Planning Consultant
- 4/6/17 Meeting to discuss regional workforce strategies
- 4/20/17 Conference call to discuss key elements for inclusion in the Regional Plan
- 5/10/17 Meeting held during Pennsylvania Workforce Development Association (PWDA) Conference to further discuss needs and strategies
- 6/20/17 Meeting to discuss regional workforce strategies

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

**Overview.** The Northeast Region is comprised of the Lackawanna Workforce Development Area, Luzerne/Schuylkill Workforce Development Area, and Poconos Workforce Development Area. These Workforce Development Areas (WDAs) serve seven counties: Carbon, Lackawanna, Luzerne, Monroe, Pike, Schuylkill, and Wayne. Overall, the Region is home to 1,006,662 citizens<sup>1</sup>.

With a combined labor force of 495,600, the largest sector in the Northeast Region is Health Care and Social Assistance, which employs 65,756 workers, and represents 10% of the Gross Regional

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<sup>1</sup> Population estimates per Claritas

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Product (GRP), with average earnings of \$49,900. The next largest sectors are Government (including education and law enforcement) which employs 56,950 and represents 12% of the GRP, with average earnings of \$71,029 and Retail Trade which employs 52,714 workers, represents 7% of the GRP, and has average earnings of \$29,392<sup>2</sup>.

Location quotient (LQ) is a way of quantifying how concentrated a particular industry, cluster, occupation, or demographic group is in a region as compared to the nation. It can reveal what makes a region “unique” in comparison to the national average. An LQ of 1.0 means that a region has the same employment as the nation, while an LQ greater than 1.0 has a greater share of employment than the nation.

- In Lackawanna WDA the sectors with the largest LQs include Wood, Wood Processing and Publishing<sup>3</sup> (LQ=1.40) and Health Care (LQ=1.37).
- In Luzerne-Schuylkill WDA the sectors with the largest LQs include Logistics and Transportation (LQ=2.53) and Wood, Wood Processing and Publishing (LQ=1.66).
- In the Pocono Counties WDA the sectors with the largest LQs include Bio-Medical (LQ=2.14) and Hospitality, Leisure and Entertainment (LQ=1.71).

**Figure 1. Industry Cluster Statistics for the Northeast Region**

Industry Cluster Statistics for North East Total Region												
	AFP	AM	BC	BM	BSV	ED	ENGY	HC	HLE	LT	REFI	WWP
2015 Employment	14,012	29,928	22,814	4,667	29,260	37,592	8,080	65,263	47,983	24,450	14,111	8,550
Employment Growth (2010-2015)	1,224	841	318	(514)	980	(1,763)	443	381	2,017	4,371	(962)	(1,099)
2010 Employment	12,788	29,087	22,496	5,181	28,280	39,355	7,637	64,882	45,966	20,079	15,073	9,649
Percent Growth (2010-2015)	9.6%	2.9%	1.4%	-9.9%	3.5%	-4.5%	5.8%	0.6%	4.4%	21.8%	-6.4%	-11.4%
Lackawanna County Location Quotient	1.05	0.96	0.88	1.25	0.67	1.07	0.56	1.37	0.88	1.35	0.84	1.40
Luzerne-Schuylkill Location Quotient	1.30	1.18	0.90	0.40	0.67	0.91	1.36	1.16	0.76	2.53	0.65	1.66
Pocono Counties Location Quotient	0.40	0.80	0.98	2.14	0.37	1.17	0.64	0.95	1.71	0.86	0.52	1.15

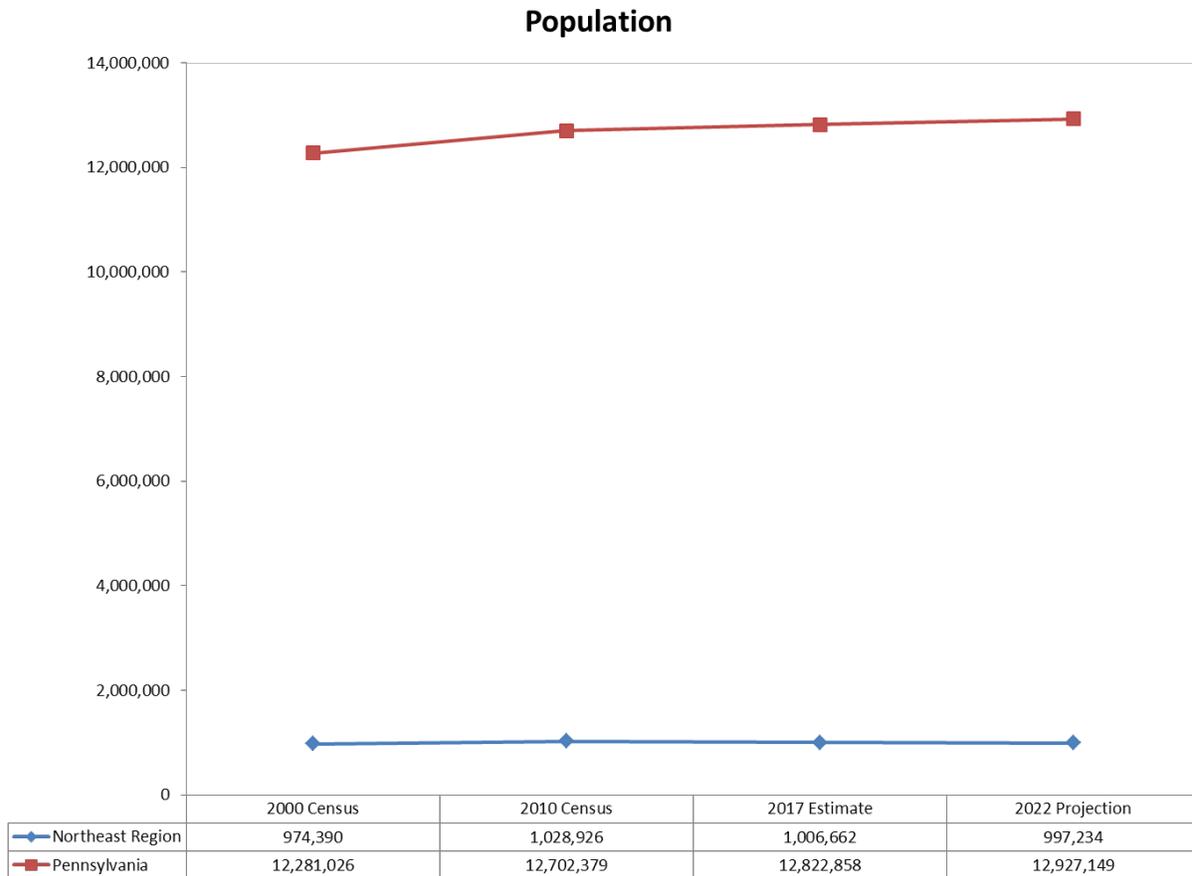
**Population.** The population in the Northeast Region has been decreasing since 2010, while Pennsylvania continues to increase. It appears the decrease in the Region is due to an aging population (see **Figure 3** below), resulting in fewer births.

**Figure 2** on the following page provides an overview of the population changes for the Region and the State.

<sup>2</sup> EMSI, 2017

<sup>3</sup> The Wood, Wood Products and Publishing cluster incorporates a supply line from raw material to finished product. It includes logging and lumber production, through the production of paper, to publishing of magazines and newspapers. Industries within this cluster include sawmills, truss manufacturing, stationery product manufacturing, printing machinery and equipment manufacturing, book stores and greeting card publishers.

**Figure 2. Population for the Northeast Region and Pennsylvania**



Source: Claritas

As shown in **Figure 3**, the current median age of citizens in the Northeast Region is 44.0, which is older than the State’s median age of 40.9.

**Figure 3. Age Information for Northeast Region and Pennsylvania**

	<b>Current Median Age</b>	<b>Average Age</b>	<b>Projected Median Age</b>
Northeast Region	44.0	42.6	44.8
Pennsylvania	40.9	41.0	41.6

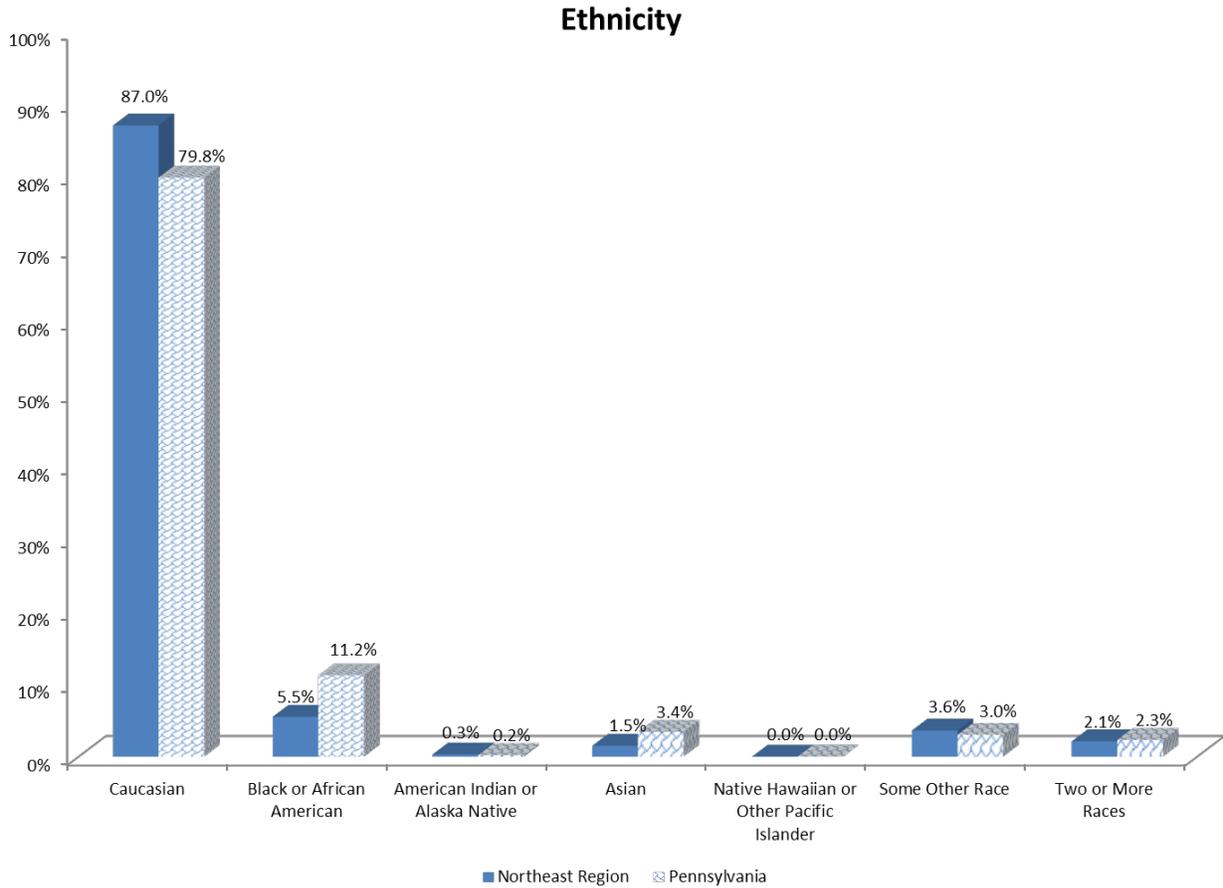
Source: Claritas

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The majority of residents in both the Northeast Region and Pennsylvania are Caucasian. However, 11.2% of the State’s population identifies as Black or African American, as compared to 5.5% in the Region. **Figure 4** provides additional information.

**Figure 4. Ethnicity for Northeast Region and Pennsylvania**

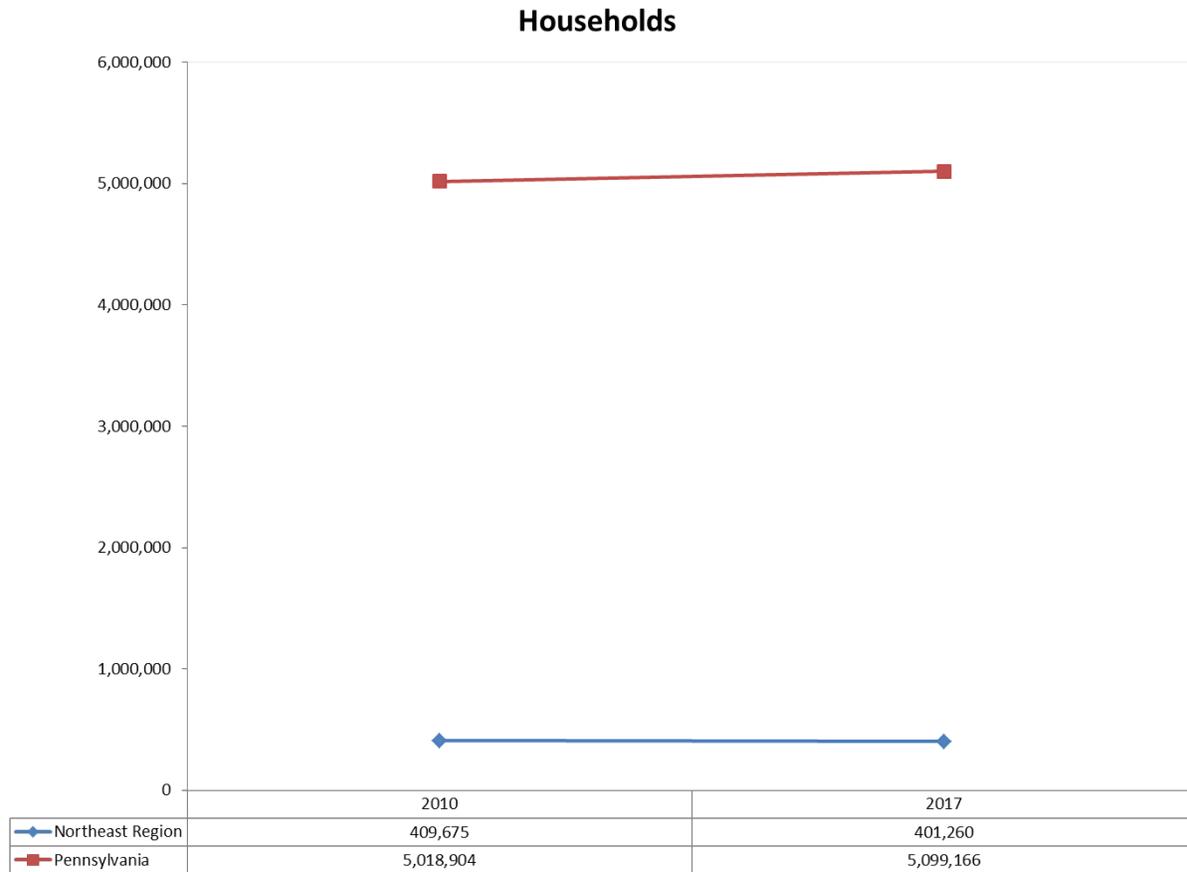


Source: Claritas

**Households.** Coinciding with the declining population, the number of households<sup>4</sup> in the Northeast Region is also declining. **Figure 5** provides an overview of household information for the Region and for the State.

<sup>4</sup> As defined by the US Census Bureau, a household is composed of one or more people who occupy a housing unit

**Figure 5. Number of Households in the Northeast Region and Pennsylvania**

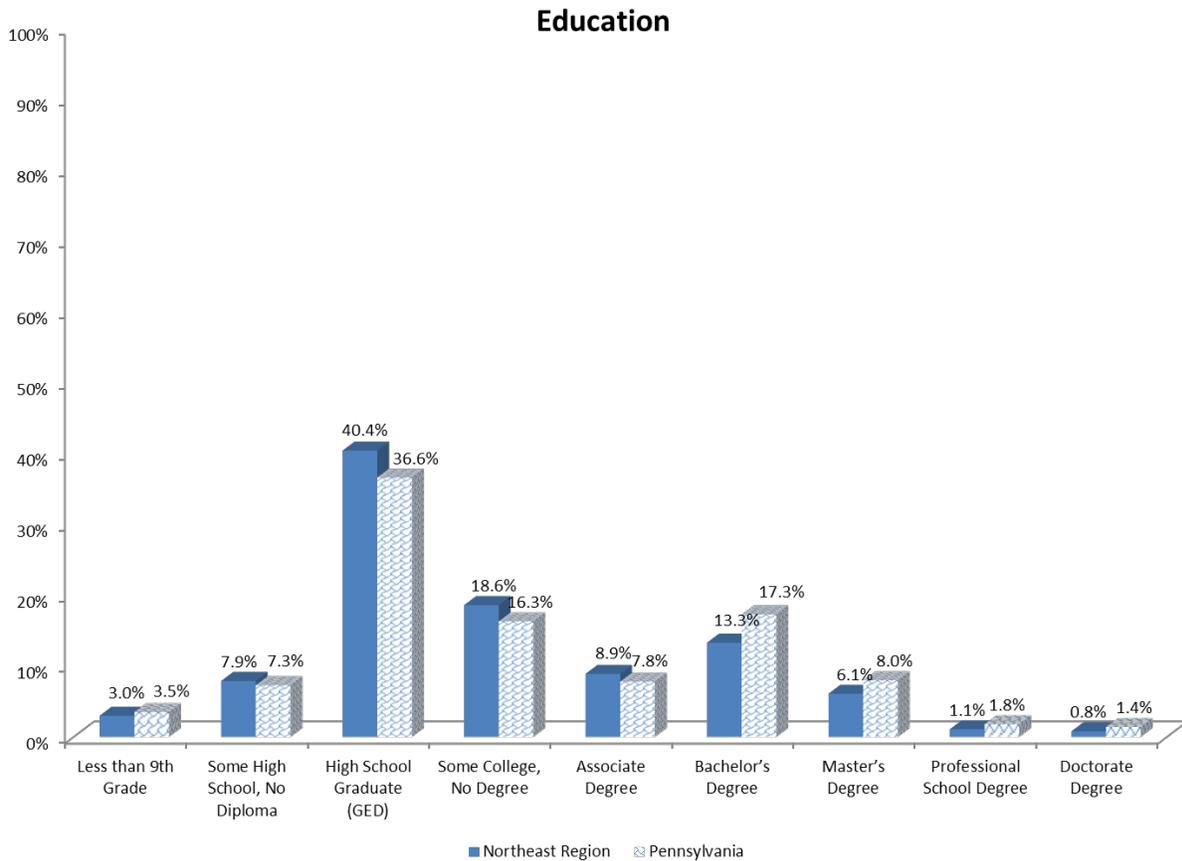


*Source: Claritas*

**Education.** Approximately one in five residents over the age of 25 in the Northeast Region (21.3%) have attained a Bachelor’s Degree or higher which is lower than the State (28.5%). One in ten residents (10.9%) in the Region did not complete high school, which is comparable to the State (10.8%).

**Figure 6** on the following page shows the education levels for the Region and the State.

**Figure 6. Education Levels for the Northeast Region and Pennsylvania**



*Source: Claritas*

**Income.** In 2017, the average household income for the Region is estimated to be \$65,892, which is lower when compared to the State’s estimated average of \$77,812. Over the next five years, the average for the Northeast Region is projected to increase approximately 7%, to \$70,571 while Pennsylvania is projected to increase about 8%, to \$84,180.

**Housing.** Nearly three-fourths (72.6%) of the dwellings in the Region are estimated to be Owner-Occupied for the current year, which is higher when compared to the State (69.5%). One-third (30.6%) of the Northeast Region’s housing is estimated to have been built between 1939 or earlier, which is slightly higher than the State’s estimate of about one-fourth (25.7%).

**Employment.** As shown in **Figure 7** there are more people in the Northeast Region who are not in the labor force (40.7%) as compared to the State (37.3%).

**Figure 7. Employment Status of Individuals Over Age 16 in the NE Region and Pennsylvania**

	<b>Employed Citizens</b>	<b>Unemployed Citizens</b>	<b>Not In Labor Force</b>
Northeast Region	54.1%	5.2%	40.7%
Pennsylvania	57.5%	5.0%	37.3%

*Source: Claritas*

A slightly higher percentage of workers in the Northeast Region hold Blue Collar occupations (25.4%) when compared to the State (21.3%). The highest percentage of workers in the Region and State are employed in Office and Administrative Support (14.5% and 13.8%, respectively) and Sales and Related Services (10.0% and 10.3%, respectively).

**Figure 8. Occupational Classifications for the Northeast Region and Pennsylvania**

	<b>Blue Collar</b>	<b>White Collar</b>	<b>Service and Farm</b>
Northeast Region	25.4%	55.5%	19.1%
Pennsylvania	21.3%	60.0%	18.1%

*Source: Claritas*

**Commuting Patterns.** Commuting patterns reveal how workers travel from their home counties to their work counties. The specific reasons for commuting may be unknown; however, it may be reasoned that workers travel to other areas for job opportunities that are not found within their home counties. Or, they may choose to live in their home counties due to housing, schools, or entertainment preferences.

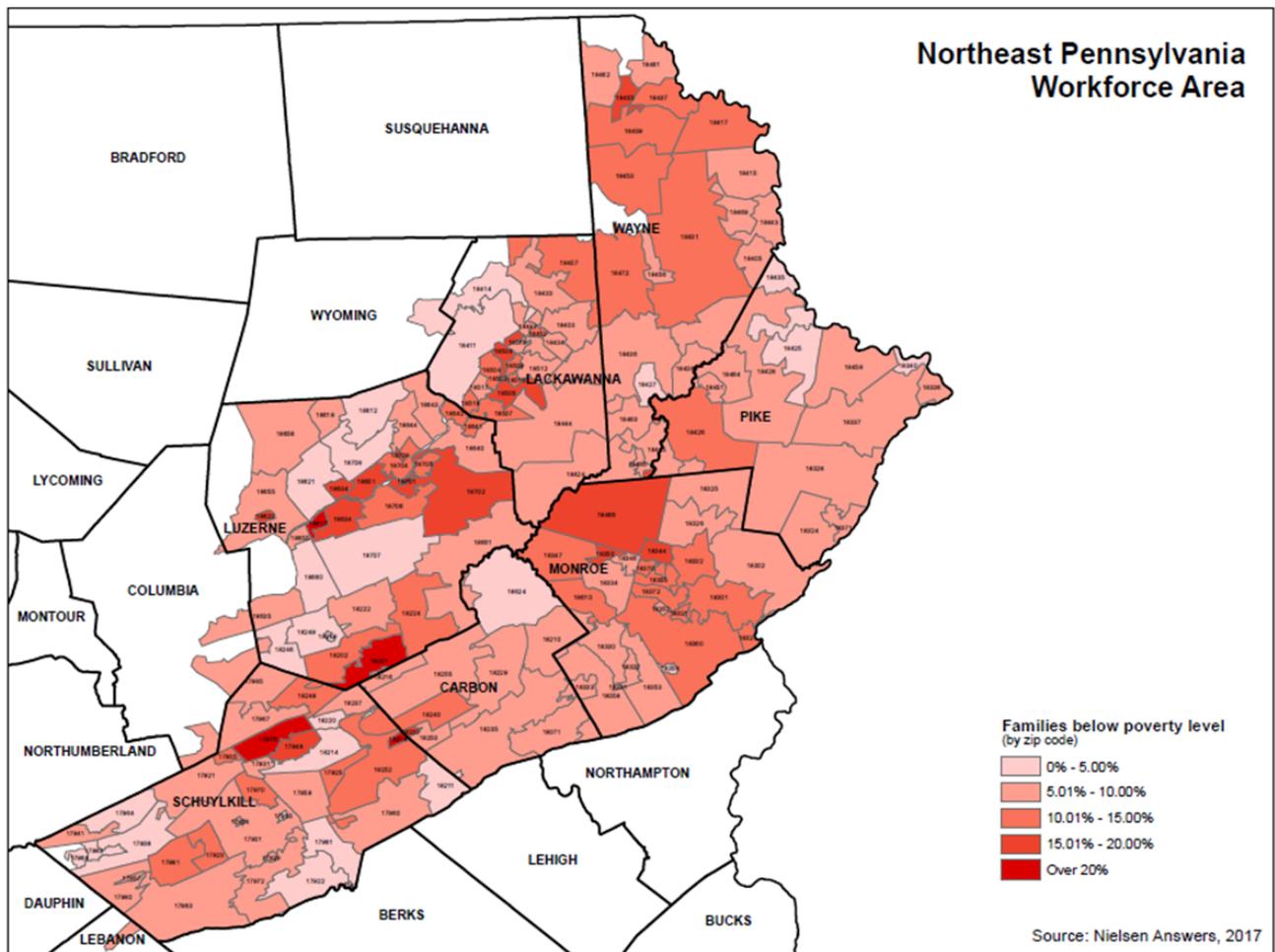
Both the Luzerne-Schuylkill and Pocono Counties WDAs have a higher number of out-commuters, meaning more people are traveling outside these areas for work than are traveling in for employment. The Lackawanna WDA, on the other hand, has a higher number of in-commuters.

Overall, in the Northeast Region, 80.8% of the employed population drives alone to work with an average travel time of 28 minutes. These statistics are very similar to the State’s averages of 76.5% driving alone to work with a travel time of 29 minutes.

**Population 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 Northeast Region, one in ten (10.1%) families are living in poverty. Additionally, as shown in the map in **Figure 9** on the following page, there are a number of pockets of high poverty in Luzerne County (Glen Lyon and part of Hazleton) and Schuylkill County (Shenandoah and Coaldale) where rates exceed 20%. Single parents are more likely to be living in poverty, with 13.0% of households in the Region considered single parent households.

Figure 9. Northeast Pennsylvania Poverty Level



According to the Urban Institute <sup>5</sup>, most individuals released from prison held some type of job prior to incarceration and want legal, stable employment upon release. Research also suggests that 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.

<sup>5</sup> Urban Institute is a nonprofit 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](http://www.urban.org)).

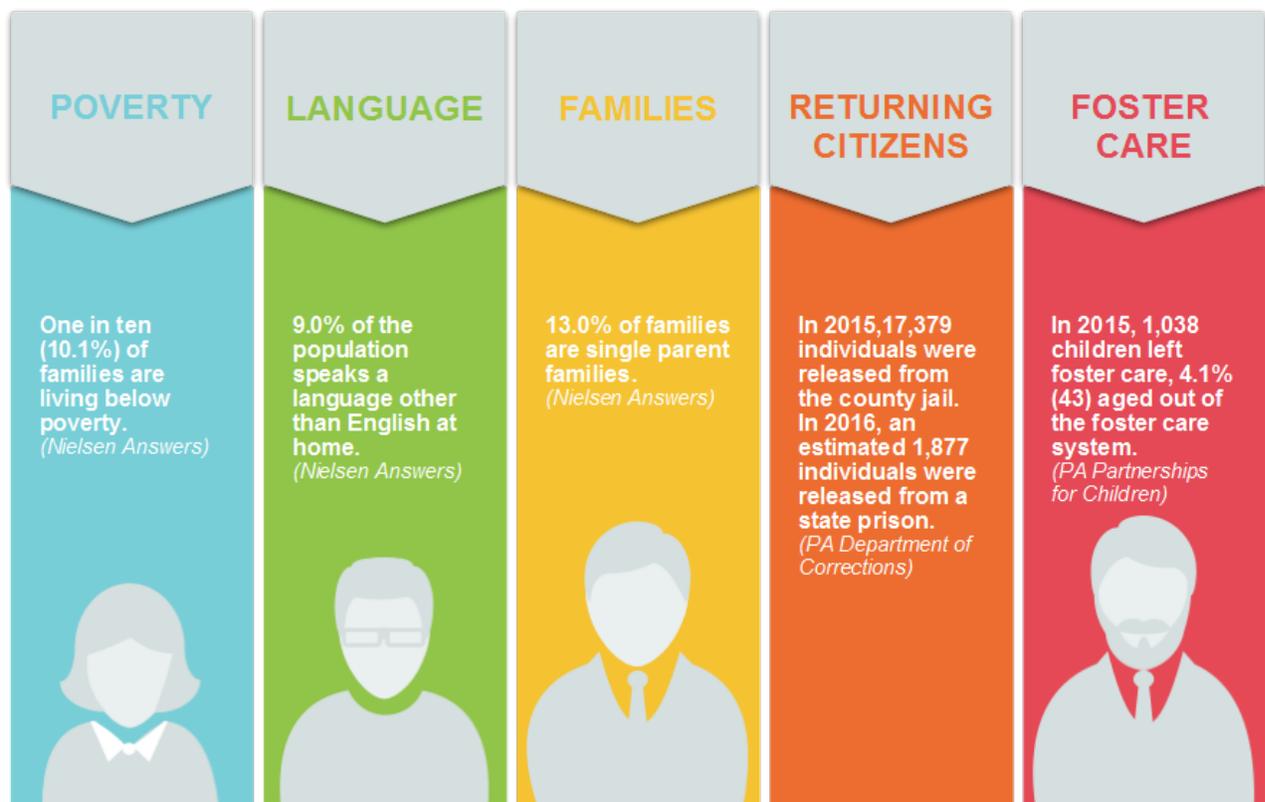
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In the Northeast Region, in 2015 there were 17,379 individuals released from the county jail and in 2016 there were 1,877 individuals released from a state prison, if considering releases from county or federal prisons this number would only increase.

Research obtained from Children's Rights<sup>6</sup> 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 equivalency compared to 94% in the general population. By age 26, 4% of youth who aged out of foster care had earned a four-year college degree, while 36% of youth in the general population had done so. In the Northeast Region, approximately 43 children age out of foster care each year.

Figure 10. Overview of Population with Barriers in the Northeast Region



According to the Division for Social Policy and Development<sup>7</sup>, 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

<sup>6</sup> Children's Rights is a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the child welfare system to ensure the rights of children in foster care are upheld ([www.childrensrights.org](http://www.childrensrights.org)).

<sup>7</sup> 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](http://www.un.org)).

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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 Northeast Region, 6.0% of those employed have a disability, while 14.5% of those unemployed have a disability. Unemployment is 108.0% higher for those with a disability (16.7%) as compared to those without a disability (8.0%).

There are also 14,891 students receiving services through the local Intermediate Units, with 56.2% of those students having a learning disability, 7.7% have an intellectual disability, 0.8% have a speech/language impairment, 10.5% have emotional disturbances, 16.7% have health implications, and 7.5% have autism.

According to Youth. Gov<sup>8</sup>, 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. Specifically:

- By age 22, approximately 50% of teen mothers have received a high school diploma and only 30% have earned high school equivalency certificate, whereas 90% of women who did not give birth during adolescence receive a high school diploma.
- Approximately 10% of teen mothers complete a two- or four-year college program.
- Teen fathers have a 25 to 30% 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.

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<sup>8</sup> Youth.Gov is the U.S. government website that helps to create, maintain, and strengthen effective youth programs ([www.youth.gov](http://www.youth.gov)).

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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 attendance and performance in school.

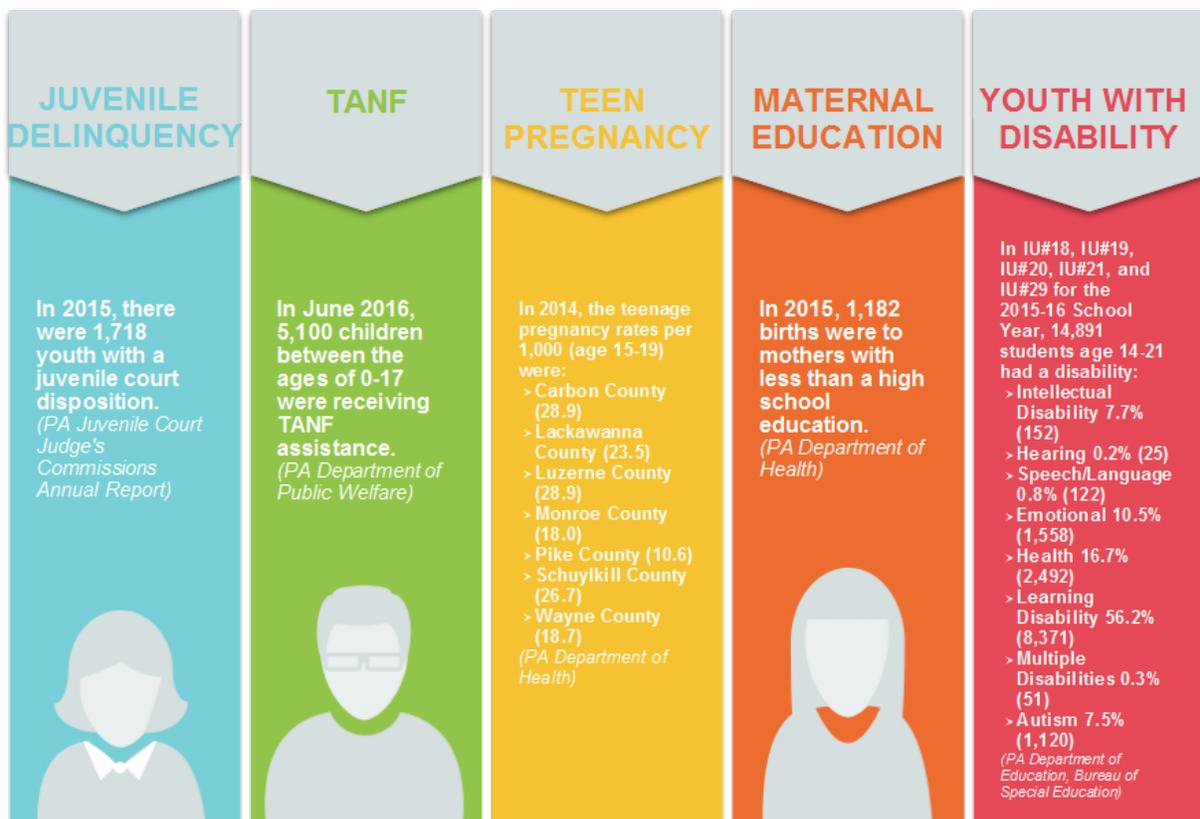
Teen pregnancy costs US taxpayers about \$11 billion per year due to increased health care and foster care, increased incarceration rates among children of teen parents, and lost tax revenue because of lower educational attainment and income among teen mothers. Some recent cost studies estimate that 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.

In the Northeast Region, there were 5,100 children between the ages of 0 and 17 receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) in 2016. Additionally, 1,718 youth had a juvenile disposition in 2015, and there were 1,182 births to mothers with less than a high school education.

According to the Department for Health in 2014, the teenage pregnancy rate per 1,000 youth aged 15-19 for the Counties of Monroe (18.0) and Pike (10.6) were significantly lower when compared to the State (27.2).

However, teenage pregnancy rates for Carbon County (28.9), Luzerne County (28.9), Schuylkill County (26.7) and Wayne County (18.7) were comparable to the State (27.2).

**Figure 11. Overview of Youth with Barriers in the Northeast Region**



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The following Intermediate Units are in the Northeast Region

- IU#18 includes: Luzerne and Wyoming Counties
- IU#19 includes: Lackawanna, Susquehanna, and Wayne Counties
- IU#20 includes: Monroe, Northampton, and Pike Counties
- IU#21 includes: Carbon and Lehigh Counties
- IU#29 includes: Schuylkill County

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 the number of sheltered and unsheltered homeless persons on a single night in January. HUD requires that Continuums of Care perform the PIT annually to determine the number 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 840 individuals counted in the Northeast Region.

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.)
- ! Children living in "cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations".

In 2016, there were 918 students in the Northeast Region who met the McKinney-Vento definition of homeless.

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Figure 12. Additional Information Regarding Individuals with Barriers in the Northeast Region



**Labor Market Trends.** The overall unemployment rate in the Northeast Region in 2016 was 6.2% with a labor force of 495,600. The unemployment rate during the first few months of 2017 has fluctuated between 5.3% and 6.0%.

Figure 13. Average Labor Force Statistics for 2016 and Seasonally Adjusted Statistics for 2017

**Annual Average Labor Force Statistics, 2016**

Annual Average	Labor Force	Employed	Unemployed	Unemployment Rate
2016	495,600	464,900	30,500	6.2%

**Seasonally Adjusted Labor Force Statistics, 2017**

Month	Labor Force	Employed	Unemployed	Unemployment Rate
January	488,000	461,900	26,100	5.3%
February	490,600	462,400	28,200	5.7%
March	490,300	462,300	28,100	5.7%
April	493,500	463,900	29,700	6.0%

Source: Center for Workforce Information and Analysis

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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 Region is expected to grow by 5.8%. This growth rate is lower than the Commonwealth’s projection of 7.7%.

Construction is projected to experience the greatest percentage increase (16.5%) while Information is projected to experience the greatest decrease (-8.7%).

At 11,070 jobs, Education and Health Services accounts for almost half of the projected employment growth of 23,930 jobs.

**Figure 14. Long-Term Industry Projections for the Northeast Region**

Industry	Employment (2014)	Projected Employment (2024)	Employment Change (2014-2024)	
			Volume	Percent
Total Jobs	414,990	438,920	23,930	5.8%
Goods Producing Industries	60,210	60,840	630	1.0%
Agriculture, Mining & Logging	2,330	2,260	-70	-3.0%
Construction	13,070	15,230	2,160	16.5%
Manufacturing	42,880	41,450	-1,430	-3.3%
Services-Providing	330,980	353,640	22,660	6.8%
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	87,590	92,310	4,720	5.4%
Information	5,420	4,950	-470	-8.7%
Financial Activities	15,430	15,620	190	1.2%
Professional & Business Services	33,390	37,140	3,750	11.2%
Education & Health Services	95,730	106,800	11,070	11.6%
Leisure & Hospitality	42,890	46,270	3,380	7.9%
Other Services, Except Public Admin.	16,940	17,500	560	3.3%
Federal, State & Local Government	29,800	29,200	-600	-2.0%

*Source: Center for Workforce Information and Analysis*

As shown in **Figure 15** on the following page, the occupations projecting the greatest volume growth are Healthcare Practitioners, Technicians and Support and Protective, Food, Building and Personal Service. Occupations in Farming, Fishing, and Forestry, as well as Production are expected to decline.

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**Figure 15. Long-Term Occupational Projections for the Northeast Region (2014-2024)**

Occupational Title	Employment (2014)	Projected Employment (2024)	Employment Change (2014-2024)		Total Openings
			Volume	Percent	
Total, All Occupations	414,990	438,920	23,930	5.8%	12,894
Management, Business & Finance	31,560	33,070	1,510	4.8%	872
Computer, Engineering & Science	11,520	12,170	650	5.6%	307
Education, Legal, Social Service, Arts & Media	38,800	41,010	2,210	5.7%	1,085
Healthcare Practitioners, Technicians & Support	40,520	46,640	6,120	15.1%	1,518
Protective, Food, Building & Personal Service	78,010	84,170	6,160	7.9%	2,870
Sales & Related	44,500	45,130	630	1.4%	1,512
Office & Administrative Support	64,240	64,670	430	0.7%	1,541
Farming, Fishing & Forestry	2,180	2,100	-80	-3.7%	59
Construction & Extraction	16,030	17,750	1,720	10.7%	440
Installation, Maintenance & Repair	17,220	18,440	1,220	7.1%	537
Production	31,280	30,850	-430	-1.4%	823
Transportation & Material Moving	38,540	42,260	3,720	9.7%	1,309

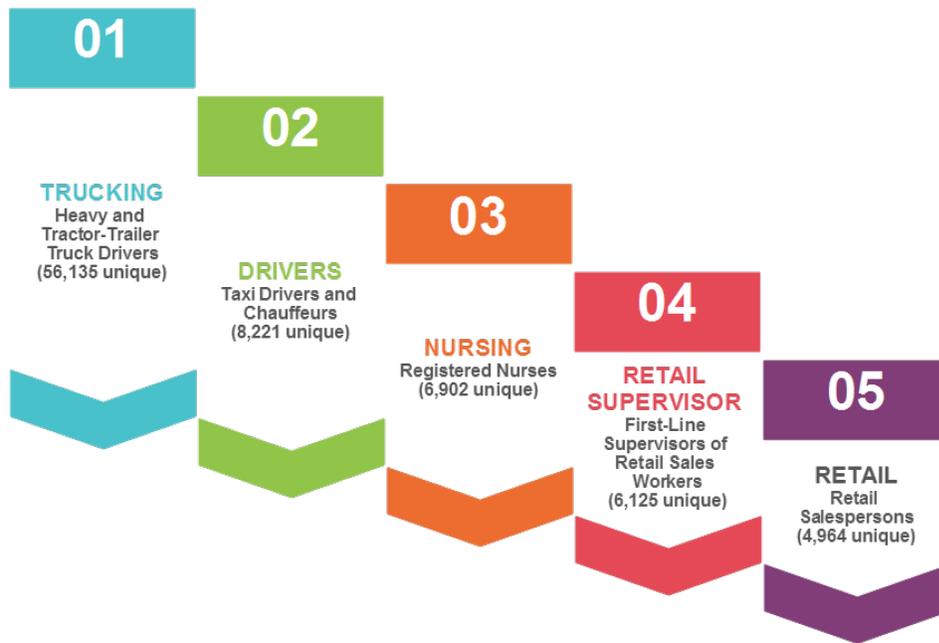
Source: Center for Workforce Information and Analysis

During the current year, the most frequent job postings in the Northeast Region have been for Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers (56,135 postings). Information for other frequent postings is found in **Figure 16** on the following page.

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Figure 16. Frequent Job Postings in the Northeast Region



Source: EMSI, 2017

**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 Northeast Region that only require a high school diploma.

Figure 17. Opportunity Occupations in the Northeast Region

SOC	Description	2016 Jobs	2021 Jobs	2016 - 2021 Change	2016 - 2021 % Change	Annual Openings	COL Adjusted Avg. Hourly Earnings	Typical Entry Level Education
11-3071	Transportation, Storage, and Distribution Managers	366	394	28	8%	15	\$43.22	High school diploma or equivalent
15-1152	Computer Network Support Specialists	333	346	13	4%	7	\$26.60	Associate's degree
19-4051	Nuclear Technicians	169	176	7	4%	9	\$36.50	Associate's degree
29-2021	Dental Hygienists	541	568	27	5%	15	\$26.98	Associate's degree
29-2032	Diagnostic Medical Sonographers	165	172	7	4%	5	\$31.90	Associate's degree
33-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Correctional Officers	188	190	2	1%	6	\$34.54	High school diploma or equivalent
41-1012	First-Line Supervisors of Non-Retail Sales Workers	807	815	8	1%	14	\$28.74	High school diploma or equivalent
41-4012	Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Except Technical and Scientific Products	3,557	3,607	50	1%	89	\$28.30	High school diploma or equivalent
49-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Mechanics, Installers, and Repairers	1,235	1,251	16	1%	29	\$30.26	High school diploma or equivalent
49-9012	Control and Valve Installers and Repairers, Except Mechanical Door	65	74	9	14%	5	\$26.99	High school diploma or equivalent
51-8011	Nuclear Power Reactor Operators	79	83	4	5%	4	\$40.10	High school diploma or equivalent
51-8013	Power Plant Operators	109	112	3	3%	5	\$29.74	High school diploma or equivalent
53-1031	First-Line Supervisors of Transportation and Material-Moving Machine and Vehicle Operators	833	870	37	4%	35	\$28.63	High school diploma or equivalent
53-2012	Commercial Pilots	112	135	23	21%	8	\$40.39	High school diploma or equivalent

Source: EMSI, 2017

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One way to measure the skill gap is to compare the current educational attainment with the projected employment growth by educational level.

As shown in **Figure 18**, there are projected to be 74,790 jobs that require a Bachelor’s Degree or higher in the Region in 2024. Data from **Figure 19** shows that there are currently 153,419 individuals that have achieved this educational level. Therefore, it appears that there are more than enough potential workers to meet the projected demand.

At the same time, **Figure 18** shows that there are expected to be 308,310 jobs that will require some level of on-the-job training, long-term training, or postsecondary education or experience. As shown in **Figure 19**, within Region there are currently 134,293 persons who have some level of college with no degree and another 290,909 that have achieved a high school diploma. Thus, these two groups may be able to fulfill the projected demand if they are able secure the required skills via additional education and/or training.

**Figure 18. Employment Growth Rates by Educational Attainment Level for the NE Region**

<b>Educational Grouping</b>	<b>Employment (2014)</b>	<b>Projected Employment (2024)</b>	<b>Percent Change (2014-24)</b>
On-the-job training	210,470	220,860	4.9%
Long-term training	18,500	19,970	7.9%
PS education or experience	62,890	67,480	7.3%
Associate degree	5,830	6,330	8.6%
Bachelor's degree	56,980	60,720	6.6%
Advanced degree	12,710	14,070	10.7%

*Source: Center for Workforce Information and Analysis*

**Figure 19. Estimated Population Age 25+ by Educational Attainment for the Northeast Region**

<b>2017 Est. Pop Age 25+ by Edu. Attainment</b>	<b>720,883</b>	
Less than 9th grade	21,730	3.01%
Some High School, no diploma	56,596	7.85%
High School Graduate (or GED)	290,909	40.35%
Some College, no degree	134,293	18.63%
Associate Degree	63,936	8.87%
Bachelor's Degree	95,767	13.28%
Master's Degree	44,150	6.12%
Professional School Degree	7,928	1.10%
Doctorate Degree	5,574	0.77%

*Source: Claritas based on 2017 estimates*

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Looking at on-line postings provides insight into skills and certifications that employers are seeking. The top requested hard skills in the Northeast Region include recruitment, training and driving. The top soft skills are scheduling, leadership, and leading. The most requested certifications are Commercial Driver’s License, Registered Nurse, and Licensed Practical Nurse.

**Figure 20. Top Hard Skills for Northeast Region**

**Top Hard Skills**

Skill	Postings with Skill
Recruitment	76,013
Training	58,883
Driving	53,261
Management	51,539
Sales	50,438
Customer Service	45,415
Insurance	42,807
Retailing	40,772
Cargos	32,642
Health Care	29,184

*Source: EMSI, 2017*

**Figure 21. Top Soft Skills for Northeast Region**

**Top Soft Skills**

Skill	Postings with Skill
Scheduling (Project Management)	64,532
Leadership	16,424
Leading	14,840
Learning	8,511
Listening	5,953
Ethics	5,662
Cleanliness	5,501
Coordinating	5,298
Mental Health	3,670
Creativity	2,990

*Source: EMSI, 2017*

**Figure 22. Top Certifications for Northeast Region**

<b>Top Certifications</b>	
Certification	Postings with Certification
Commercial Driver's License (CDL)	78,248 !
Registered Nurse	13,505 !
Licensed Practical Nurse	6,054 !
Nurse Practitioner	2,537 !
Board Certified	1,997 !
Certified Nursing Assistant	1,626 !
Licensed Vocational Nurses	1,309 !
Certified Global Meeting Planner	1,169 !
Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC) ! Card !	1,154
Certified Benefits Professional	1,070 !

*Source: EMSI, 2017*

**Key Sectors.** The following sectors account for the largest amount of jobs in the Northeast Region.

**Figure 23. Key Sectors in the Northeast Region**



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### **Health Care and Social Assistance**

- ! Employs the highest number of jobs and is projected to continue to grow (currently employs 24% above the national average and pays almost \$5,000 less on average)
- ! Registered Nurses is a top occupation in the Region and a top job posting
- ! Employs the highest paying occupations
- ! Personal Care Aides, Registered Nurses and Home Health Aides are among the fastest growing occupations
- ! Registered Nurse, Nurse Practitioner, Licensed Practical Nurse, Licensed Vocational Nurse, and Certified Nursing Assistant are among the top certifications requested by employers
- ! With the exception of Lackawanna, individuals in these jobs are likely to commute outside of their county of residency and/or region for employment

### **Government**

- ! One of the largest employing industries in the Region and is projected to decline over the next several years (currently employs 13% below the national average, although average pay is approximately \$1,000 more)
- ! Teaching, Military and Law Enforcement occupations make up the majority of employment opportunities in this sector
- ! Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education, and Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education are declining occupations
- ! Accounts for the largest amount of the Region's imports and exports
- ! Monroe, Lackawanna, and Luzerne are likely to have residents filling teaching occupations, while the other counties and the Region overall have more commuters
- ! There are more qualified candidates graduating from education programs than are needed to meet the regional demand

### **Retail Trade**

- ! Has been remained stagnant but is projected decline over the next few years, (currently employs 19% above the national average, with wages approximately \$5,000 less)
- ! Retail Salespersons, Cashiers and Stock Clerks and Order Fillers are among the largest occupations
- ! Retail Salespersons, First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers, Customer Service Representatives, Cashiers and Stock Clerks and Order Fillers are among the top posted positions
- ! Sales, Customer service, and retailing are among the top skills employers look for
- ! General Warehousing and Storage is a growing industry
- ! While this industry tends to hire large numbers of employees and positions are accessible to those with minimal education, they do not offer family sustaining wages

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**Manufacturing**

- Wages are, on average, \$13,000 less when compared to the nation
- Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand is a growing occupation
- Most entry level occupations require a high school diploma or equivalent
- Manufacturing has the greatest economic impact on the Region
- Several types of manufacturing are available within the Region

There is employer demand within the following industries where regional training opportunities either do not exist or are currently not meeting the employer demand: Retail, Home Health, Allied Health, Sales and Marketing, Food Service/Food Preparation, and Floriculture/Floristry.

The following table shows the number of students graduating regional training programs for areas with 300 or more openings. With the exception of Registered Nurses and Business Administration, there are not enough candidates completing regional training programs to meet employment demand.

**Figure 24. Education Program Completions as Compared to Occupational Openings**

	<b>Program</b>	<b>Regional Completions (2015)</b>	<b>Regional Openings (2015)</b>	<b>Median Hourly Earnings</b>	<b>Regional Jobs (2015)</b>	<b>Regional Jobs (2016)</b>
52.1803	Retailing and Retail Operations	0	1,574	\$11.49	40,414	40,356
51.0000	Health Services/Allied Health/Health Sciences, General	73	1,473	\$24.21	37,967	38,303
52.1804	Selling Skills and Sales Operations	0	1,101	\$13.29	24,670	24,866
12.0500	Cooking and Related Culinary Arts, General	25	794	\$11.54	16,450	16,871
12.0507	Food Service, Waiter/Waitress, and Dining Room Management/Manager	0	738	\$9.10	10,982	11,107
12.0505	Food Preparation/Professional Cooking/Kitchen Assistant	2	723	\$9.30	16,721	16,867
52.1801	Sales, Distribution, and Marketing Operations, General	0	712	\$14.06	19,364	19,335
12.0508	Institutional Food Workers	0	637	\$9.34	15,108	15,250
01.0608	Floriculture/Floristry Operations and Management	0	625	\$12.18	17,983	17,900
52.0408	General Office Occupations and Clerical Services	0	614	\$15.56	19,771	19,853
51.2602	Home Health Aide/Home Attendant	0	586	\$10.72	9,946	10,354
52.0201	Business Administration and Management, General	885	501	\$37.08	12,130	12,306
51.3899	Registered Nursing, Nursing Admin., Nursing Research and Clinical Nursing, Other	7	484	\$31.03	12,080	12,246

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	<b>Program</b>	<b>Regional Completions (2015)</b>	<b>Regional Openings (2015)</b>	<b>Median Hourly Earnings</b>	<b>Regional Jobs (2015)</b>	<b>Regional Jobs (2016)</b>
51.3822	Women's Health Nurse/Nursing	0	482	\$31.11	12,049	12,214
51.3816	Emergency Room/Trauma Nursing	0	479	\$30.76	11,989	12,153
51.3819	Palliative Care Nursing	0	479	\$30.76	11,989	12,153
51.3821	Geriatric Nurse/Nursing	0	479	\$30.76	11,989	12,153
52.0406	Receptionist	0	476	\$13.42	10,535	10,729
51.1199	Health/Medical Preparatory Programs, Other	0	466	\$34.67	11,023	11,171
51.1105	Pre-Nursing Studies	1	465	\$26.26	11,263	11,414
52.0101	Business/Commerce, General	103	437	\$39.98	10,554	10,709
52.9999	Business, Management, Marketing, and Related Support Services, Other	0	432	\$23.28	13,161	13,230
13.0101	Education, General	14	419	\$29.47	16,387	16,224
51.3818	Nursing Practice	44	406	\$29.61	9,273	9,426
49.0205	Truck and Bus Driver/Commercial Vehicle Operator and Instructor	194	400	\$17.61	14,079	14,151
52.0212	Retail Management	0	389	\$32.80	11,331	11,408
51.3805	Family Practice Nurse/Nursing	35	384	\$31.76	8,710	8,854
51.3808	Nursing Science	0	376	\$29.42	8,484	8,629
51.3812	Perioperative/Operating Room and Surgical Nurse/Nursing	0	375	\$29.62	8,478	8,621
51.3809	Pediatric Nurse/Nursing	0	373	\$29.18	8,424	8,567
46.0000	Construction Trades, General	0	372	\$20.75	12,862	12,766
19.0501	Foods, Nutrition, and Wellness Studies, General	0	372	\$11.12	6,925	7,211
51.3803	Adult Health Nurse/Nursing	1	371	\$29.02	8,393	8,536
51.3806	Maternal/Child Health and Neonatal Nurse/Nursing	0	371	\$29.02	8,393	8,536
51.3810	Psychiatric/Mental Health Nurse/Nursing	0	371	\$29.02	8,393	8,536
51.3811	Public Health/Community Nurse/Nursing	0	371	\$29.02	8,393	8,536
51.3813	Clinical Nurse Specialist	0	371	\$29.02	8,393	8,536
51.3814	Critical Care Nursing	0	371	\$29.02	8,393	8,536
51.3815	Occupational and Environmental Health Nursing	0	371	\$29.02	8,393	8,536
51.3820	Clinical Nurse Leader	0	371	\$29.02	8,393	8,536
52.0411	Customer Service Support/Call Center/Teleservice Operation	0	361	\$14.03	7,088	7,268
51.3801	Registered Nursing/Registered Nurse	546	355	\$28.48	8,140	8,274

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	<b>Program</b>	<b>Regional Completions (2015)</b>	<b>Regional Openings (2015)</b>	<b>Median Hourly Earnings</b>	<b>Regional Jobs (2015)</b>	<b>Regional Jobs (2016)</b>
51.3999	Practical Nursing, Vocational Nursing and Nursing Assistants, Other	44	355	\$28.48	8,140	8,274
44.0000	Human Services, General	64	331	\$19.56	8,059	8,176
44.0401	Public Administration	4	320	\$41.11	7,630	7,760
13.1207	Montessori Teacher Education	0	319	\$27.89	12,704	12,540
13.1208	Waldorf/Steiner Teacher Education	0	319	\$27.89	12,704	12,540

EMSI

**Industry Partnerships.** Based on the analysis of the skills and educational levels of the existing and emerging labor force in the Northeast Region, as compared to the area’s current and projected occupational demands, the Northeast Pennsylvania Consortium of Workforce Boards has identified five primary Industry Partnerships that drive its workforce development activities: **advanced materials /diversified manufacturing, food production, logistics and transportation, healthcare, and energy.**

**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 Northeast Region knows that growth in a regional economy comes from a combination of economic development, workforce development, and community development; and it understands that workforce development is instrumental in reducing the number of people who are unemployed.

Its vision is to ensure a world-class trained, readily available workforce, which is the impetus for the enticing of new business ventures and the growing or retooling of existing industry, addressing the needs of all local workers is primary to stimulate progress within Northeastern Pennsylvania. To support this vision, it has established the following goals that consider the workforce and economic development priorities within the Region, including the coordination of services and providers.

- Increase the skill level of the Region's labor force through an innovative, integrated workforce infrastructure system that links labor demand and supply to meet the current and future workforce needs of the Region’s businesses
- Utilize the expertise of educational institutions and training providers within the Region to develop training programs and services which are based upon clearly defined opportunities and needs, and supported by research within specific industry sectors
- Enhance linkages between workforce development and economic development delivery organizations with private industry in a collaborative manner that promotes high skill and high wage jobs

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

The Northeast Region relies on both workforce development and economic development initiatives to engage businesses throughout the seven-county area. The role of workforce development is to support the expansion and development of local talent and to assist employers with their workforce needs. Economic development is closely related in that it helps communities with business attraction, supports programs for workforce development, and promotes small business development and new business startups.

The Northeast Region's strategies and activities are overseen by the three local boards of the Northeast Consortium of Workforce Boards as discussed in the **response to 1.1**. They have well-established working relationships, and are also closely aligned with the Northern Tier Workforce Development Board that is responsible for similar activities for Bradford, Sullivan, Susquehanna, Tioga, and Wyoming Counties.

To promote regional workforce efforts, the group meets bi-monthly. Formal agendas and minutes are recorded to document activities, progress, and outcomes. Some examples of regional best practices that have been implemented include alignment of Individual Training Account (ITA) levels, standardized operational forms, and a consistent approach to PA CareerLink® customer service. The Boards also work collaboratively to secure ancillary grants to further leverage and supplement regional sector initiatives.

Within the Northeast Region, each PA CareerLink® has a Business Services Team (BST) that works directly with employers. They identify needs and match them to qualified candidates to fill open positions. As needed, they help employers maximize job postings on the JobGateway® system. Additionally, they establish on-the-job training (OJT), customized training, or incumbent worker training programs to help businesses develop workers.

BSTs also use labor market information to help businesses determine appropriate compensation levels and related benefits packages to remain competitive in the Northeast Region. Further, to avoid duplication of efforts, BST staff members communicate and collaborate with the partner organizations that are a part of the PA CareerLink® system. Moreover, each local area's BST members convene at least one each quarter on a regional basis to share best practices and identify emerging trends and needs.

The Region's economic development activities complement and support its workforce development initiatives. Specifically, business financing, government contracting assistance, international trade assistance, non-profit assistance, transportation planning, research and information and local government services are coordinated across the Region through the Partnership for Regional Economic Performance (PREP). The Northeast Region PREP partners include:

- Local Development District: The Northeast Pennsylvania Alliance (Lead Organization)
- Small Business Development Centers at the University of Scranton and Wilkes University
- The Northeastern Pennsylvania Industrial Resource Center located in Hanover Township
- The Manufacturers Resource Center headquartered in Bethlehem

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- The Northeast Pennsylvania Manufacturing and Employers Association located in Pottsville
- Local Industrial Development Organizations: Berwick Industrial Development Association, CAN-DO Inc. (Hazleton), Carbon County Economic Development Corporation, Monroe County Industrial Development Authority, the Pike County Economic Development Authority, Schuylkill County Economic Development Corporation, Scranton-Lackawanna Industrial Building Company, and the Wayne Economic Development Corporation.

These PREP partners provide a powerful network of regional experts to help business owners address challenges facing their companies. Additionally, the network also helps businesses access critical state and federal resources, such as loans, grants, technical assistance, and other support. PREP partners provide services to local businesses and also to individual residents who may be interested in business start-up and management. Of key significance, many of the PREP partners serve on Local Workforce Development Boards in the Northeast Region.

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

The Northeast Region has attempted to conduct two meetings with its economic development partners and key industries as part of its Next Generation (Next Gen) Sector Partnership efforts. However, due to the large geographic footprint of the region, it has been very difficult to get business representatives to actively participate in, or even attend the sessions.

The Northeast Region has listened to the concerns voiced by the sector representatives about travel time and the appearance of duplicative efforts with the Industry Partnerships. As a result, the Consortium has determined that it needs to change its approach if it is to truly get industry participation and buy-in.

At this time, it has determined that the best method is to continue to focus its sectoral efforts on its successful Industry Partnerships primarily through its relationship with the NEPA Alliance, a regional community and economic development agency that serves the seven counties of the Northeast Region. Collectively, NEPA Alliance partners provide a powerful network of regional experts who help business owners address nearly every type of challenge facing their companies, including workforce development issues.

Currently, as discussed in the **response to 1.6 below**, the Northeast Region is focusing workforce development efforts within the region on the key sectors of **advanced materials/diversified manufacturing, healthcare, food processing, logistics and transportation, and energy.**

As regional opportunities arise, the Consortium will convene groups to discuss the strategies and actions that are required to address specific needs. The Region believes that by taking incremental steps, and building upon the strong foundation of its existing Industry Partnerships, it will be able to gather the momentum that is required to gain commitment from sector representatives for Next Gen activities.

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### **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.**

The Northeast Region continues to utilize the State-approved High-Priority Occupational List and Eligible Training Provider List to connect jobseekers, including those with barriers to employment, with occupational demands across the region. Industry Partnership grants identified workforce needs in **advanced materials/diversified manufacturing, healthcare, food processing, logistics and transportation, and energy.**

The services provided through the PA CareerLink® centers and satellite locations are designed to assist individuals who are actively seeking employment, or who are interested in improving their current skills. Overall, the Northeast Region strives to ensure that at least 51% of enrolled participants are individuals with barriers to employment, such as veterans, recipients of public assistance, low-income individuals, individuals who are basic skills deficient, and out-of-school youth. The following strategies promote the achievement of this goal.

Title I staff within the PA CareerLink® system work closely with Local Veterans Employment Representatives (LVERs). Priority of service is given to veterans at PA CareerLink® offices (a veteran or qualified spouse receives priority access to services and training opportunities).

Individuals on public assistance and low income individuals are identified at reception in the PA CareerLink® centers. They are informed of their right to receive priority of service. Strong partnerships are established among title I Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and Employment, Advancement, and Retention Network (EARN) providers to integrate services and offerings.

PA CareerLink® staff identify individuals who are basic skills deficient through an intake process, then refer them as needed to literacy programs, including high school equivalency review classes, English as a Second Language (ESL), and remediation courses. Co-enrollment with title II Adult Basic Education and title I services is encouraged for individuals with basic skill deficiencies.

Of key significance, the Northeast Pennsylvania Consortium's regional strategies go beyond its borders. The three Northeast Region WDBs (Lackawanna, Luzerne-Schuylkill, and the Pocono Counties) recently partnered with the Northern Tier Region to secure a Strategic Innovation Grant to fund two rounds of training under its NEPA Pre-Apprenticeship Initiative to train up to 50 young adults, dislocated workers, and underemployed adults. The purpose of the NEPA Pre-Apprenticeship Initiative is to provide qualified applicants to fill the openings in the Trades and Manufacturing Apprenticeships.

Trainees are exposed to career pathways, the PA CareerLink® centers and all of their valuable employment and training resources, career and technical education, and other opportunities to increase skill levels. During the 8-12 week program that is comprised of five pre-apprenticeship training classes, individuals learn the necessary math, computer, work readiness, and basic construction skills to prepare them for the apprenticeship exam, and to enter into an Apprenticeship Program. Stackable credentials are also offered to assist with employment, forklift, flagger, and ladder safety training.

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The Northeast Pennsylvania Consortium will continue to discuss additional opportunities for expanding services on a regional basis and to leverage the best practices learned through the collective impact model in the local areas.

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

As discussed, the Northeast Region includes three local workforce boards covering seven counties. Taking into consideration the geographical nuances that impact overall regionalization efforts, they work cooperatively to coordinate and collaborate their strategies, services, and delivery methods to maximize services for businesses and job seekers.

Using information from the 2015 Northeast Pennsylvania Regional Skills Gap Analysis prepared by NC3T (National Center for Career and Technical Colleges) under the Northeast PA Jobs 1st Initiative, the Boards identified primary supportive service needs. They established coordinated spending caps, similar priority of service policies, and key sector initiatives (i.e., industry partnerships, community-based grants, sector partnership grants, and other regionally-awarded grants) to promote consistency and provide systemic stability.

Access to public transportation is a principal impediment for many of the Region's jobseekers. Overall, the Northeast Region encompasses nearly 4,400 square miles that is connected by both Interstate highways and rural roads. Additionally, many residents commute to work outside of the local area, including to Lehigh Valley, Scranton, Berks County, New Jersey, and New York. Commuting is largely in personal, motorized vehicles with public and private transit providing a much smaller share.

As indicated in the **response to 1.1**, both the Luzerne-Schuylkill and Pocono Counties WDAs have a higher number of out-commuters, meaning more people are traveling outside these areas for work than are traveling in for employment. The Lackawanna WDA, on the other hand, has a higher number of in-commuters.

Overall, in the Northeast Region, 80.8% of the employed population drives alone to work with an average travel time of 28 minutes. These statistics are very similar to the State's averages of 76.5% driving alone to work with a travel time of 29 minutes.

The public bus transportation services that are available in the more urban areas of the Northeast Region are not well coordinated with the needs of business and industry. Services are restricted to traditional day-time hours with limited service on Saturdays, and no service on Sundays. Moreover, many individuals in the Region seek employment in the bordering States of New York and New Jersey. However, public transportation to these areas consists of a daily bus run from Wilkes Barre through Scranton, through the Poconos, and onto New York City.

The Northeast Region is very interested in improving public transportation options. For example, many of its counties are linked to Commuter Services of Pennsylvania, an organization that works to reduce traffic congestion by helping commuters find alternatives other than driving alone and by reaching out to employers so they can help their workforce find those options.

Additionally, NEPA Alliance, the Lead Organization for the Northeast Region's PREP, coordinates the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) that works in conjunction with the PA Department

## PY 2017-2019 WIOA Multi-Year Regional Plan

**Northeast Pennsylvania Consortium of Workforce Boards Effective Date: January 1, 2018**

of Transportation and County officials to coordinate transportation planning and programming. TAP projects are intended to build pedestrian and bicycle facilities, improve access to public transportation, create safe routes to schools, preserve historic transportation structures, provide environmental mitigation, create trails projects that serve a transportation purpose, all while promoting safety and mobility. The Executive Directors of the three local workforce boards attend NEPA Alliance meetings, and Mr. Joseph Sebelin, Executive Director of the Pocono Counties Workforce Board is a member of the NEPA Alliance Board where transportation topics are explored and discussed.

Finally, at an Employer Forum meeting held in the fall of 2016, the local Transportation Authority offered information regarding Commuter Spending Accounts (CSA) to assist workers with transportation hurdles. CSAs enable individuals through their employers to utilize pre-tax dollars to pay for public transportation and parking expenses incurred getting to and from work. Examples of eligible expenses include bus passes and parking fees, including parking meter fees. The Northeast Region will explore establishing a strategic working relationship with the listed entities so that it continues to improve transportation options for its residents.

**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 Northeast Region does not pool administrative funds. The Lead Applicant is the designated Fiscal Agent for regional grants and receives the administrative dollars.

When securing regional grants, the Boards utilize a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) agreement to identify the specific breakdown and eligibility requirements for the funding the workforce has access to. The funds are typically divided equally among the workforce boards (less administrative dollars) and remain in the control of the designated Fiscal Agent.

If, prior to the last quarter of the funding period, a Board has not expended its allocated portion, then its balance may be re-allocated to one or more of the other areas, typically on a first-come, first-serve basis.

**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 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.**

A review of the Common Measures Performance Goals and Performance Levels for the past three years, indicates that the Boards that comprise the Northeast Regional Planning Area have had similar performance goals, as well as similar results.

The highest deviation rate was for the Average Quarterly Earnings, which is to be expected since the Lackawanna and Luzerne/Schuylkill local areas include more urban labor markets as compared to the rural nature of the Pocono Counties.

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Additionally, the variation in the Youth outcomes were also significant; primarily due to both the differences within the regional labor markets, as well as program design differences.

Using these historical outcomes, the Boards plan to negotiate regional performance goals in a manner which will result in a deviation of no more than +/- 15% from each other's negotiated performance goals. The submission of this Regional Plan will serve as a MOU to coordinate the performance level negotiations to achieve this goal.

**LACKAWANNA COUNTY  
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD**

**WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREA NE 055**



**MULTI-YEAR LOCAL PLAN**

**Program Year 2017 → Program Year 2019**

Public Comment Period: July 26, 2017 – August 25, 2017

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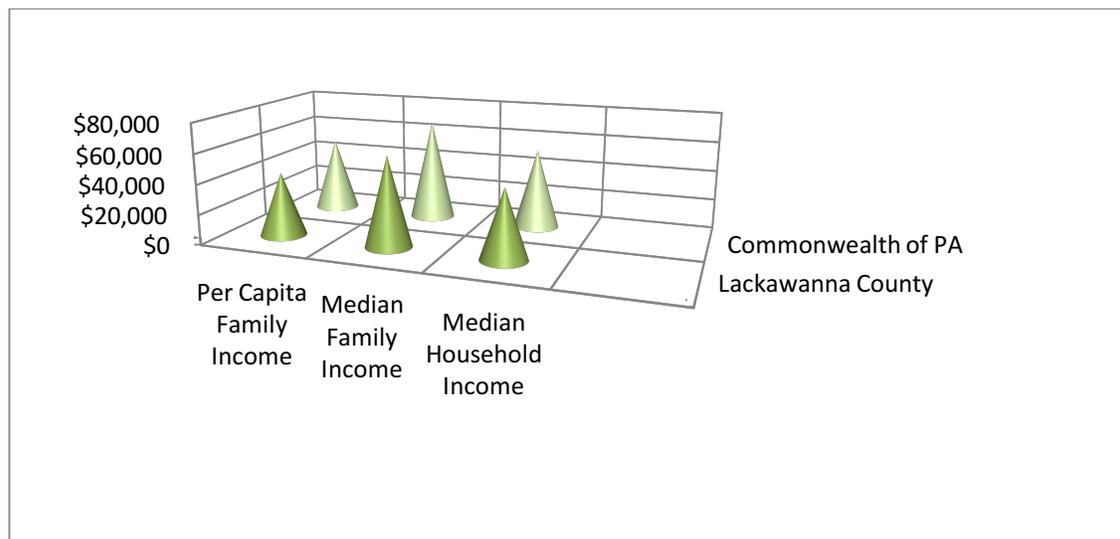
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## Section 1: Local Area Workforce and Economic Analysis

### Section 1.1: Identify the composition of the local area's population and labor force.

Lackawanna County sits in the far Northeast corner of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania bordered by Luzerne, Monroe, Susquehanna, Wayne, and Wyoming counties. Predominantly urban in nature with two city centers (Scranton and Carbondale), there are many small towns and boroughs as well as pockets of rural landscape across the 465 square mile<sup>1</sup> land area. As of April, 2017, the total population was 213,459 with a civilian labor force totaling 105,500 and a current unemployment rate (seasonally adjusted as of February, 2017) of 5.4%<sup>2</sup>. The Per Capita Personal Income is \$42,662. Median Household Income (2015 adjusted dollars) is \$46,271, and Median Family Income (2015 adjusted dollars) is \$59,955<sup>3</sup>.

In comparing Lackawanna County's per capita personal income, median household income, and median family income with that of the Commonwealth of PA, it is apparent that the local area lags somewhat behind which substantiates an historical pattern and can also be attributed to the fact that business regrowth, following the recession of 2008-2010, is just now starting to substantially rebound.



In 2017, the median age for the Lackawanna WDA is 42.6, while the average age is 42.2. Five years from now, the median age is projected to be 43.3. The median age for the Northeast Region is slightly higher 44.0, while the average age is 42.6. Five years from now, the median age is projected to be 44.8. That said, it can be deduced that a somewhat middle-aged population will continue to comprise the majority of the local employment base

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Census Bureau

<sup>2</sup> PA Department of Labor and Industry (L & I), Center for Workforce Information & Analysis (CWIA)

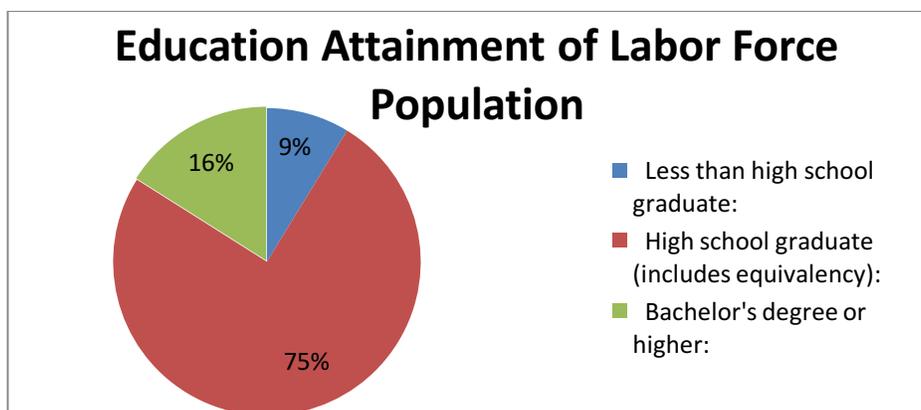
<sup>3</sup> PA Dept. of L & I, CWIA

An important factor for consideration in a thorough review of an economic climate is the education and skill level of the current workforce which will, in turn, dictate the types of training and educational opportunities that must be made available to ensure a sizeable pipeline of workers to sustain economic growth.

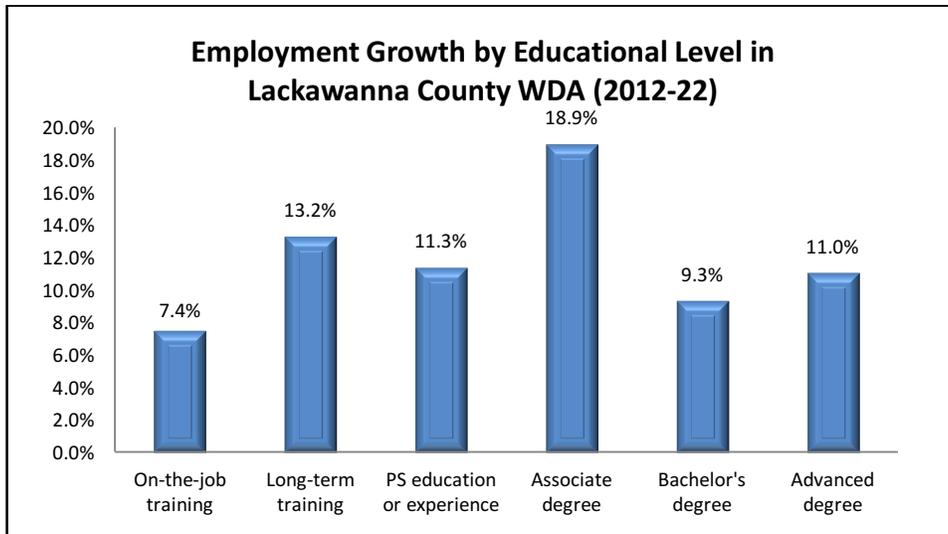
- 21,094 of 16+ year olds live below the poverty level
- 7,826 of the total population speaks English less than “very well”
- 29,568 of 16+ year olds have a disability

These statistics represent significant barriers faced by potential workers; however, they do not preclude motivated individuals from migrating career ladders within specific industries. Here is where the one-stop system exhibits its usefulness within the workforce arena. Those job seekers or underemployed in need of services or training to begin or continue their upward migration on the ladder to success, which then promotes receipt of both self and/or family sustaining wages, must just visit the local PA CareerLink® Center for access to assistance in reaching their goals. The collaboration of one-stop partners and leveraging of community resources enhances this process.

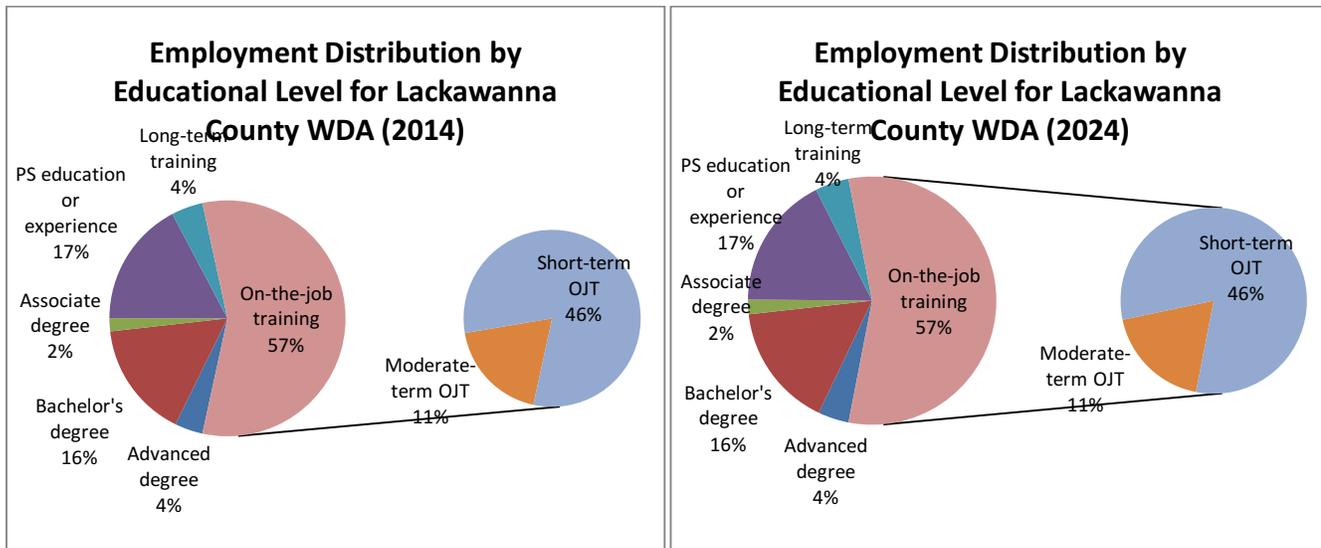
From an educational standpoint, the chart below reflects that the majority of employable individuals within the local WDA fall into the category of high school graduate with some or no post-secondary education:



In correlation, the type and numbers of jobs that are available in the local area tend to lean more to a skilled and semi-skilled workforce. Analyzing the information below, predictions indicate that the highest job growth will be supported by individuals with an Associate degree followed by occupational skilled training and life-long learning.



Further, this can be translated to actual on-the-job learning which comprises a larger population than would be expected.



A concern that then comes to light is the brain drain of Bachelor-degreed or higher individuals migrating out of the County due to somewhat of a lack of applicable positions. A strong economy must be supported by a wide variety of types of job openings to sustain its workers. An inward migration of business and industry is needed to engage those exiting four year colleges and universities to not only reduce quality out-migration but also to encourage the return of those who have left for better positions.

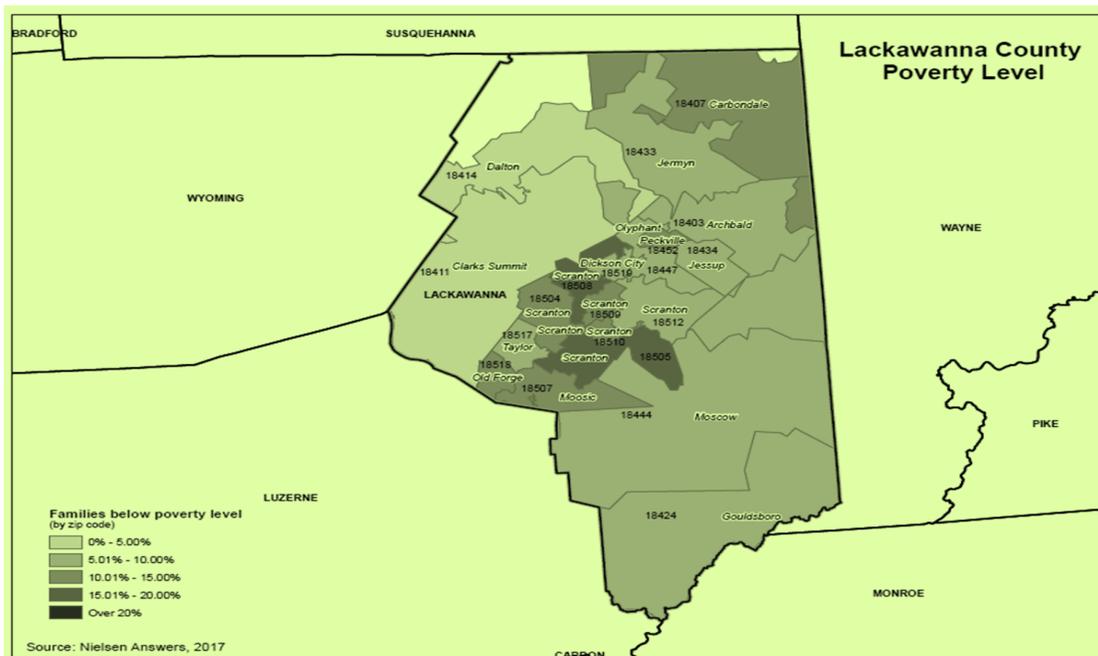
Most of the Lackawanna WDA's current year estimated population are White Alone (89.3%), 3.1% are Black or African American Alone, 0.2% are American Indian and Alaska Nat. Alone, 2.5% are Asian Alone, 0.0% are Nat. Hawaiian and Other Pacific Isl. Alone, 2.8% are Some Other

Race, and 2.0% are Two or More Races. Lackawanna’s current estimated Hispanic or Latino population is 7.1%, which is lower than the region (9.1%)<sup>4</sup>. Comparison across the Northeast Region of PA shows a bit more diversity: 87.0% are White Alone, 5.5% are Black or African American Alone, 0.2% are American Indian and Alaska Nat. Alone, 1.5% are Asian Alone, 0.0% are Nat. Hawaiian and Other Pacific Isl. Alone, 3.6% are Some Other Race, and 2.1% are Two or More Races.

The number of households in the Lackawanna WDA is estimated to have declined from 87,226 in 2010 to 85,980 in 2017, resulting in a decrease of 1.4%. Over the next five years, the number of households is projected to decrease by 0.6%. This decrease could, in turn, shift the percentage of available workers in five years.

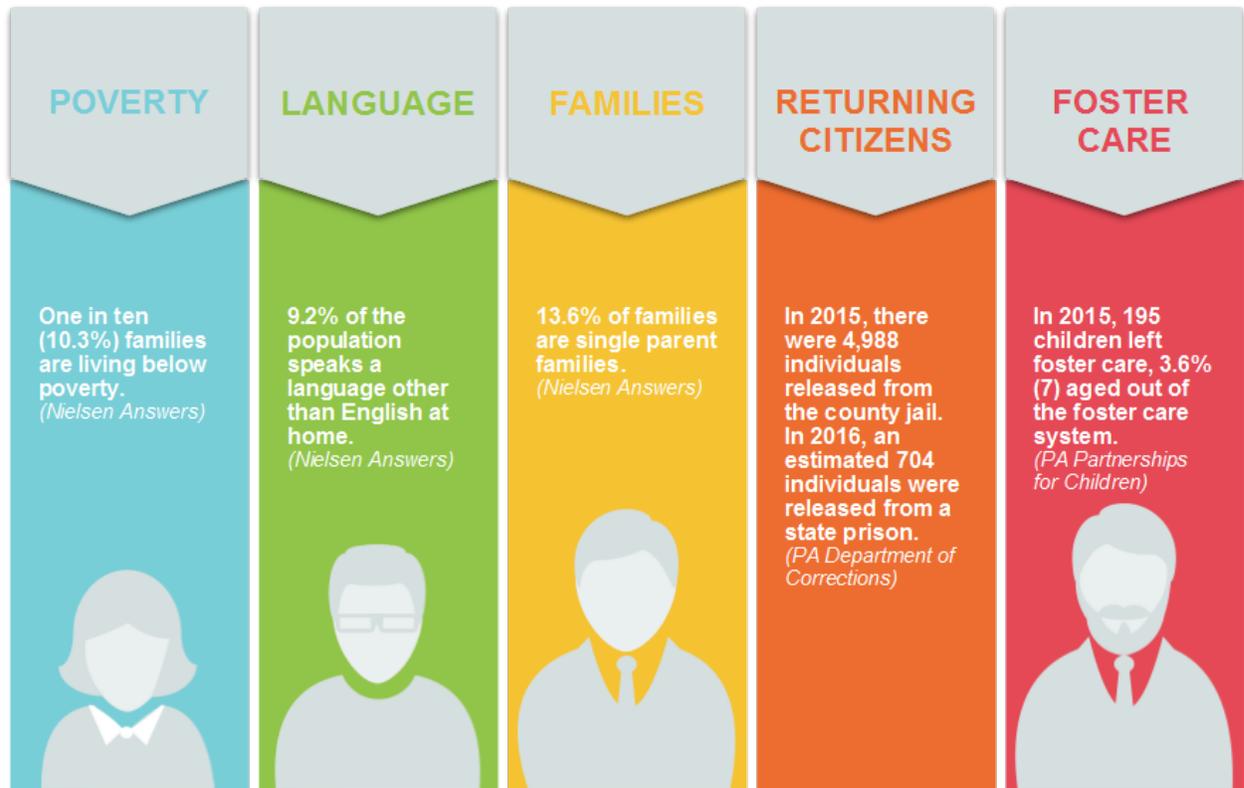
Most of the dwellings in the WDA (66.0%) are estimated to be Owner-Occupied for the current year, which is lower than the region (72.6%). Over one third of housing units in this area (39.5%) are estimated to have been built between 1939 or earlier for the current year, which is higher than the region (30.6%). Not really a factor within a workforce/economic development analysis, this statistic is presented to depict the stability of the population.

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 Lackawanna County, one in ten families (10.3%) are living in poverty. Single parents are more likely to be living in poverty, with 13.6% of households in the county considered single parent households.



<sup>4</sup> EMSA, 2017

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 Lackawanna County, approximately 7 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 Lackawanna County, 5.3% of those employed have a disability, while 14.1% of those unemployed have a disability. In Lackawanna County unemployment is 131% higher for those with a disability (14.8%) compared to those without a disability (6.4%). There are also 2,505 students receiving services through the local Intermediate Unit, with over half (56.6%) of

those students having a learning disability, 8.0% have an intellectual disability, 12.9% have emotional disturbances, 15.2% have health implications and 7.1% have autism.

According to Youth. Gov., the high social and economic costs of teen pregnancy and child-bearing 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.

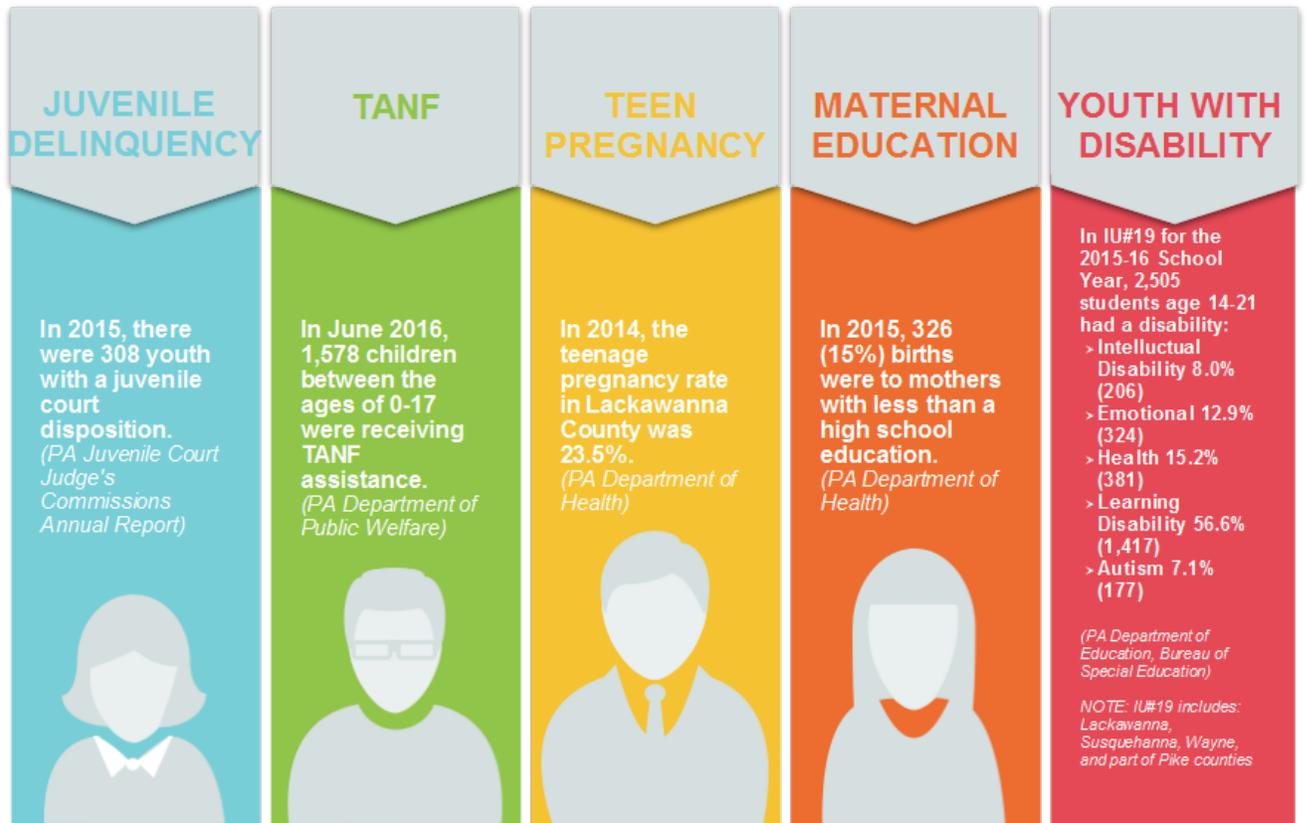
- By age 22, only around 50 percent of teen mothers have received a high school diploma and only 30 percent have earned a General Education Development (GED) certificate, whereas 90 percent of women who did not give birth during adolescence receive a high school diploma.
- Only about 10 percent of teen mothers complete a two- or four-year college program.
- 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.

In Lackawanna County there were 1,578 children between the ages of 0 and 17 receiving TANF Assistance in 2016, 308 youth had a juvenile disposition in 2015, and there were 236 births to mothers with less than a high school education. According the PA Department of Health, in 2014 the teenage pregnancy rate in Lackawanna County was 23.5%, the rate in the state was 27.2%.



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 233 individuals counted in Lackawanna 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"

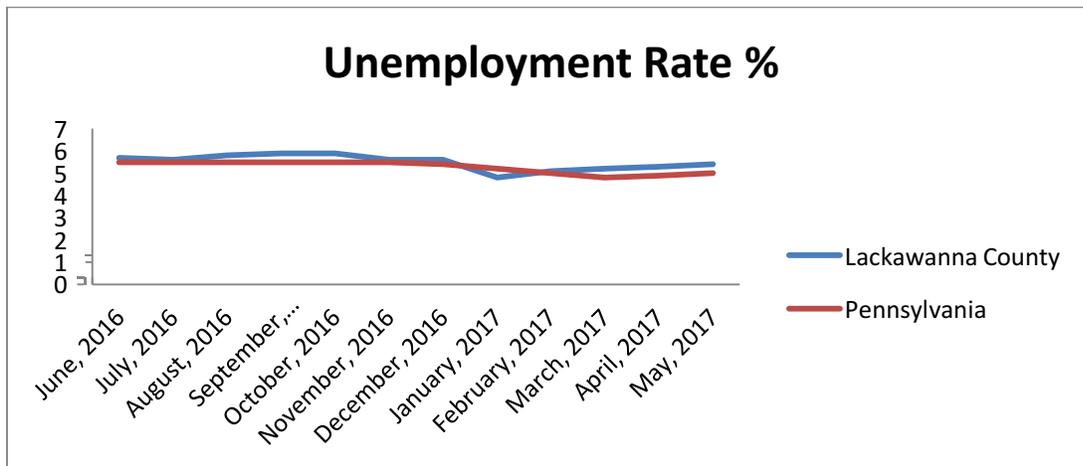
- ! Children whose primary nighttime residence is not ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation (e.g. park benches, etc.)
- ! Children living in "cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations".

In 2016, there were 167 students in Lackawanna County who met the McKinney-Vento definition of homeless.



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 Lackawanna County, in 2015 there were 4,988 individuals released from the county jail and in 2016 there were 704 individuals released from a state prison.

The downsizings and closings that resulted during the recession, most notably, across the local manufacturing and health care sectors, resulted in the displacement of hundreds of skilled, semi-skilled, and non-skilled workers that, in turn, escalated the local unemployment rate to record highs where it remained for 5+ years. Hovering for many months at over 9%, the local economy struggled but has now, as of May, 2017, recovered to a rate of **5.4%**. The slow turn-around was due, primarily, to the reluctance of local businesses/companies to rapidly expand their workforces in an unsettled economic climate. That said, the employment market has since opened-up significantly but is still somewhat weak compared to the U.S. and Pennsylvania overall.

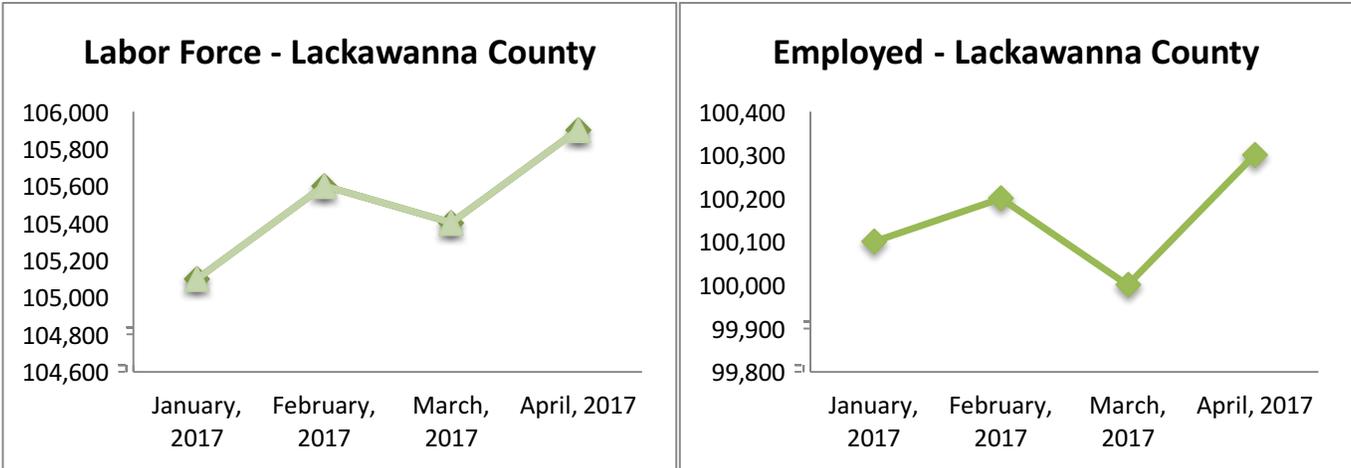


As can be seen by the chart above, Lackawanna County’s unemployment rate has fluctuated only slightly over the past 12-month period<sup>5</sup>. This consistency has allowed for a period of stabilization across the workforce community. The slight dip in January to 4.8% was due primarily to a surge in job opportunities at the onset of 2017.

Taking into consideration all of the demographic information presented and, following 5+ years of a lethargic economy, it can be deduced that job regrowth in Lackawanna County is rebounding. This is evidenced in a review of the labor force and employment numbers over the first 4-month period of 2017<sup>6</sup>. As is pictured in the following charts, the number of people calculated in the local labor force in comparison with the actual number of those individuals that are employed follows the same pattern. Where the labor force numbers spike, so do the numbers of individuals that are filling jobs which, in turn, promotes a healthy economy.

<sup>5</sup> CWIA

<sup>6</sup> CWIA



There are fewer civilians who are unemployed in the Lackawanna WDA (3.9%) than in the region (5.2%). For the WDA, the employment status of the population age 16 and over is as follows: 0.1% are in the Armed Forces, 54.7% are employed civilians, 3.9% are unemployed civilians, and 41.4% are not in the labor force. For the region, the employment status of the population age 16 and over is as follows: 54.1% are employed civilians, 5.2% are unemployed civilians, and 40.7% are not in the labor force.

Employed individuals in the Lackawanna WDA are more likely to hold white collar occupations (58.8%) when compared to the Northeast Region (55.5%). The occupational classification for WDA are as follows: 23.1% hold blue collar occupations, 58.8% hold white collar occupations, and 18.1% are occupied as service & farm workers. The occupational classification for the region are as follows: 25.4% hold blue collar occupations, 55.5% hold white collar occupations, and 19.1% are occupied as service & farm workers.

When looking at the highest areas of employment in both the WDA and region, workers are most likely employed in Office and Administrative Support (14.6% WDA, 14.5% region) or Sales and Related Services (10.4% WDA, 10.0% region) occupations.

For the civilian employed population age 16 and over in the WDA, it is estimated that they are employed in the following occupational categories: 1.2% are in Architecture and Engineering, 1.2% are in Arts, Entertainment and Sports, 3.9% are in Business and Financial Operations, 2.0% are in Computers and Mathematics, 6.7% are in Education, Training and Libraries, 7.2% are in Healthcare Practitioners and Technicians, 2.8% are in Healthcare Support, 0.5% are in Life, Physical and Social Sciences, 7.6% are in Management, 14.6% are in Office and Administrative Support, 2.6% are in Community and Social Services, 6.0% are in Food Preparation and Serving, 1.0% are in Legal Services, 2.4% are in Protective Services, 10.4% are in Sales and Related Services, 3.4% are in Personal Care Services, 3.4% are in Building and Grounds Maintenance, 4.7% are in Construction and Extraction, 0.2% are in Farming, Fishing and Forestry, 3.2% are in Maintenance and Repair, 6.9% are in Production, and 8.3% are in Transportation and Moving.

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 Lackawanna WDA is projected to grow by 6.1% or 6,280. This is at a rate higher than the region (5.8%) but lower than the state (7.7%). Construction and Professional and Business Services are projected to experience the greatest percentage increase. Education and Health Services are projected to experience the greatest volume increase and account for approximately half of the total growth.

**Long-Term Industry Projections for Lackawanna County WDA (2014-24)**

Industry	Employment (2014)	Projected Employment (2024)	Employment Change (2014-2024)	
			Volume	Percent
Total Jobs	102,860	109,140	6,280	6.1%
Goods Producing Industries	13,650	13,880	230	1.7%
Agriculture, Mining & Logging	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Construction	3,700	4,270	570	15.4%
Manufacturing	9,520	9,200	-320	-3.4%
Services-Providing	85,160	91,070	5,910	6.9%
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	17,460	18,020	560	3.2%
Information	1,530	1,420	-110	-7.2%
Financial Activities	5,200	5,300	100	1.9%
Professional & Business Services	10,530	11,850	1,320	12.5%
Education & Health Services	27,180	30,330	3,150	11.6%
Leisure & Hospitality	9,250	10,040	790	8.5%
Other Services, Except Public Admin.	4,390	4,550	160	3.6%
Federal, State & Local Government	5,840	5,710	-130	-2.2%

Source: Center for Workforce Information and Analysis

Looking at Help Wanted On-Line postings provides insight into the current employment needs of our employers. Over the past year there has been an increase in postings from Home Health Care Services, All Other Outpatient Care Centers, Nursing Care Facilities and Vending Machine Operators. The occupations with an increase in postings include Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers, Customer Service Representatives, and Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses.

**Top 10 Help Wanted On-Line Job Postings by Industry, May 2016 & 2017**

Industry Title	NAICS	May-2016	May-2017
Temporary Help Services	561320	259	181
Home Health Care Services	621610	197	268
All Other Miscellaneous Ambulatory Health Care Services	621999	197	199
General Medical and Surgical Hospitals	622110	91	31
All Other Outpatient Care Centers	621498	83	97

Employment Placement Agencies	561311	81	45
Nursing Care Facilities	623110	46	50
Commercial Banking	522110	46	40
Insurance Agencies and Brokerages	524210	46	34
Vending Machine Operators	454210	45	129

Source: Center for Workforce Information and Analysis

### Top 10 Help Wanted On-Line Job Postings by Occupation, May 2016 & 2017

Occupation	SOC	May-2016	May-2017
Registered Nurses	29114100	394	270
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	53303200	267	298
Retail Salespersons	41203100	126	105
Customer Service Representatives	43405100	117	124
First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	41101100	115	80
First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers	35101200	66	64
First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers	51101100	65	59
Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	29206100	60	62
Security Guards	33903200	57	30
Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	49907100	51	45

Source: Center for Workforce Information and Analysis

Looking at the fastest growing industry projections allows training providers to prepare workers who can meet employment needs within those sectors. Individual and Family Services along with Employment Services are projected to experience the greatest volume increase while Outpatient Care Centers and Utility System Construction will experience the greatest percent increase.

### Fastest Growing Industries in Lackawanna County WDA (2014-24)

#### By Volume Change:

Industry Title	Employment Change (Volume)
Individual & Family Services	650
Employment Services	520
Restaurants & Other Eating Places	450
Outpatient Care Centers	430
Colleges, Universities & Professional Schools	360
Offices Of Physicians	310
Utility System Construction	230
Other Ambulatory Health Care Services	220

#### By Percent Change: (min. employment of 250)

Industry Title	Employment Change (Percent)
Outpatient Care Centers	40.6%
Utility System Construction	33.8%
Other Ambulatory Health Care Services	31.0%
Individual & Family Services	29.8%
Facilities Support Services	25.0%
Computer Systems Design & Rel. Services	23.3%
Home Health Care Services	22.7%
Nonresidential Building	21.6%

Warehousing & Storage	210	Construction	
Management & Technical Consulting Services	190	Employment Services	20.5%
Residential Mental Health Facilities	190	Offices Of Other Health Practitioners	17.9%
Home Health Care Services	170	General Freight Trucking	17.6%
General Freight Trucking	160	Management & Technical Consulting Services	15.8%
Other Amusement & Recreation Ind.	140	Offices Of Dentists	15.7%
Services To Buildings & Dwellings	130	Other Amusement & Recreation Ind.	15.2%
Offices Of Other Health Practitioners	120	Residential Building Construction	15.2%
Offices Of Dentists	110	Services To Buildings & Dwellings	14.8%
Nursing Care Facilities	110	Offices Of Physicians	14.5%
Other Miscellaneous Store Retailers	90	Other Professional & Technical Services	14.3%
Management Of Companies & Enterprises	90	Architectural & Structural Metals Mfg	14.0%
		Other Specialty Trade Contractors	14.0%

Source: Center for Workforce Information and Analysis

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 area that only require a high school diploma; although most are part of an apprenticeship program or require on the job training and experience.

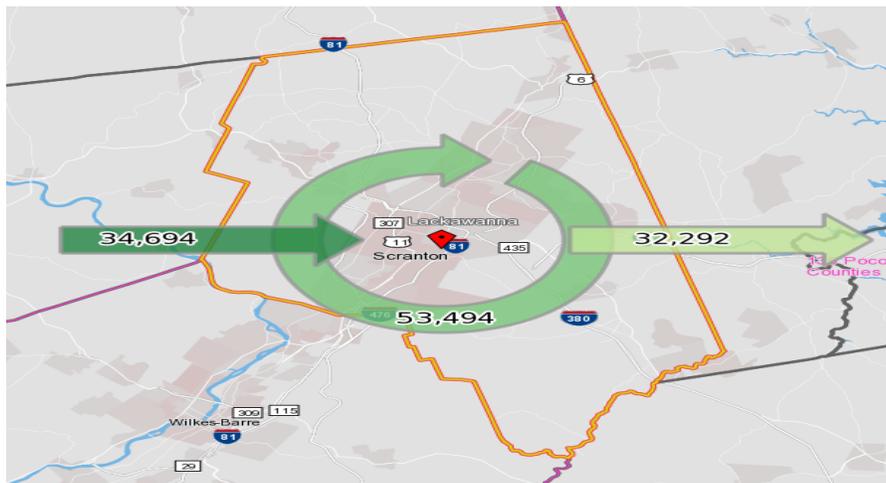
Further, the following top 10 current employers in Lackawanna County by employment in Q3 of 2016<sup>7</sup> verifies that the current industry base centers around the health care, government, customer service and education sectors:

Allied Services Foundation  
 State Government  
 Community Medical Center  
 Scranton School District  
 Lackawanna County  
 TMG Health Inc.   
 The University of Scranton  
 Federal Government  
 Wal-Mart Associates Inc.   
 Scranton Quincy Hospital Co LLC

<sup>7</sup> Lackawanna County Profile, April 2016

It is interesting to note here that, since the preparation of this local area’s 1-Year Transitional Plan in the Spring of 2016, the major change in the top ten employer list was the removal of Bank of America Na and the inclusion of Wal-Mart Associates Inc. which indicates a switch in the type of customer service positions currently trending in Lackawanna County. All other employers remain the same; however, there has been some upward/downward movement with TMG Health and the University of Scranton as well as a jump in federal government employees over Scranton Quincy Hospital Co LLC with Wal-Mart sandwiched in-between. Thus, then, in comparing the current employment base with projected emerging industries, it can still be deduced that health care is the major industry in the County with the most growth potential.

In conducting a thorough review of the workforce condition within any given area, the migration of workers must be taken into consideration. For the Lackawanna County Workforce Development Area, statistics provided by the PA Center for Workforce Information and Analysis (CWIA) provides a picture of this migrating pattern:

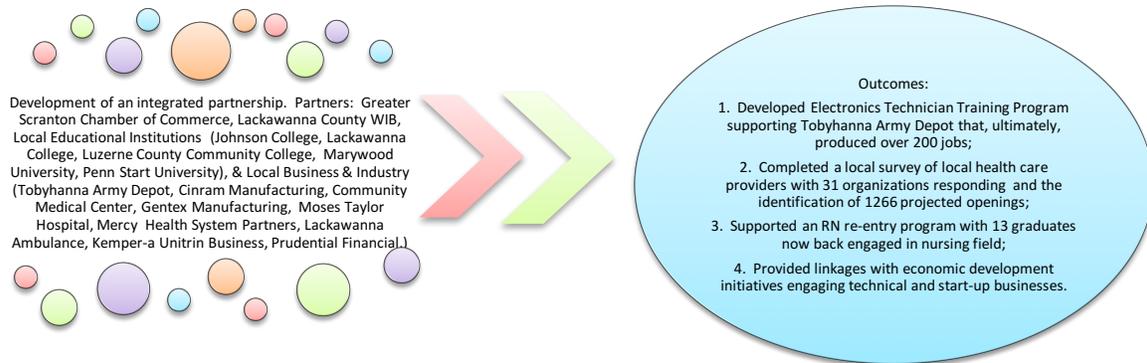


Specifically, the most recent inflow/outflow pattern (2014), based on a total of 88,188 (100% share) individuals employed in the WDA, 34,694 (39.3%) were migrating in from a surrounding County or area while 32,292 (37.6%) lived within the boundaries of Lackawanna County and leave the County for work. The number of those living and working within Lackawanna County is 53,494, 60.7% of in migration and 62.4% of outmigration). What can be deduced from these statistics is that the workforce base remains predominantly consistent based on the numbers going out and coming in and these patterns should not significantly affect (either positively or negatively) the workforce base.

Most of the employed population in Lackawanna WDA (79.5%) and the Northeast Region (80.8%) drives alone to work with an average travel time of 22 minutes for the WDA and 28 minutes for the region.

**Section 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 the region/local area?

Supporting the concept that a demand-driven workforce significantly promotes an area’s long-term growth potential, it is recognized that local business must be guiding the development of initiatives and providing the specifications for re-alignment of local educational opportunities for in-demand jobs. The Lackawanna County Workforce Development Board has been strategically teamed with the Greater Scranton Chamber of Commerce who, for many years, has spearheaded initiatives, to accomplish this goal. Past initiatives have included the following:



Those initiatives served as a catalyst for industry participation in the design of training curriculums specifically targeting projected needs. As appropriate, and to spur direct industry involvement, meetings were held not only at the Greater Scranton Chamber of Commerce but also, as appropriate, on-site at industry locations which allowed for increased management participation and tours of facilities by partner staff, thus, increasing the awareness of actual operations and company needs.

One way to look at the skill gap is to look at current educational attainment levels compared to expected employment growth by education level. Employment opportunities requiring an Associate Degree or Advanced Degree are projected to experience the greatest increase over the next several years. Currently there are enough citizens with the educational levels needed to meet projected employment demand.

2017 Est. Pop Age 25+ by Edu. Attainment	149,277	
Less than 9th grade	3,935	2.64%
Some High School, no diploma	10,673	7.15%
High School Graduate (or GED)	56,325	37.73%
Some College, no degree	26,527	17.77%
Associate Degree	13,318	8.92%
Bachelor's Degree	24,146	16.18%
Master's Degree	10,740	7.19%
Professional School Degree	2,265	1.52%
Doctorate Degree	1,348	0.90%

Source: Claritas

**Employment Growth Rates by Educational Attainment Level for Lackawanna County WDA**

<b>Educational Grouping</b>	<b>Employment (2014)</b>	<b>Projected Employment (2024)</b>	<b>Percent Change (2014-24)</b>
On-the-job training	52,610	55,170	4.9%
Long-term training	4,000	4,320	8.0%
PS education or experience	15,960	17,120	7.3%
Associate degree	1,670	1,870	12.0%
Bachelor's degree	14,780	15,900	7.6%
Advanced degree	3,570	3,950	10.6%

*Source: Center for Workforce Information and Analysis*

Looking at the projected knowledge and work activities needed in the workforce helps training providers ensure they are preparing the future labor force to meet the needs of employers. Knowledge of the English Language is at the top of the list. Currently, 9.2% of the households in the Lackawanna WDA speak a language other than English at home. Workers also need to be knowledgeable in Customer and Personal Service as well as Administration and Management. The work activities that are most needed included getting information, communicating with supervisors, peers, or subordinates.

**Top 20 Knowledge Area and Projected Needs, 2014-2024**

<b>Knowledge Area</b>	<b>Number of Occupations</b>	<b>Total Annual Openings Needing this Skill</b>	<b>Growth Annual Openings Needing this Skill</b>	<b>Replacement Annual Openings Needing this Skill</b>
English Language	311	2,776	620	2,156
Customer and Personal Service	290	2,631	599	2,032
Administration and Management	251	2,130	543	1,587
Mathematics	248	2,130	435	1,695
Public Safety and Security	198	1,725	472	1,253
Education and Training	221	1,604	454	1,150
Computers and Electronics	227	1,527	335	1,192
Clerical	208	1,526	329	1,197
Psychology	128	1,149	308	841
Sales and Marketing	103	1,143	160	983
Law and Government	135	945	255	690
Production and Processing	135	944	166	778
Personnel and Human Resources	120	939	246	693
Communications and Media	107	762	165	597

Therapy and Counseling	58	597	169	428
Medicine and Dentistry	57	583	214	369
Transportation	68	540	155	385
Sociology and Anthropology	61	539	144	395
Mechanical	110	522	140	382
Economics and Accounting	91	443	98	345

Source: The Center for Workforce Information & Analysis

### Top 20 Work Activities and Projected Needs, 2014-2024

Work Activity	Number of Occupations	Total Annual Openings Needing this Skill	Growth Annual Openings Needing this Skill	Replacement Annual Openings Needing this Skill
Getting Information	242	1,742	434	1,308
Communicating with Supervisors, Peers, or Subordinates	184	1,489	378	1,111
Performing for or Working Directly with the Public	68	1,074	179	895
Interacting With Computers	148	917	221	696
Making Decisions and Solving Problems	144	867	241	626
Documenting/Recording Information	102	780	253	527
Identifying Objects, Actions, and Events	97	721	206	515
Organizing, Planning, and Prioritizing Work	105	715	204	511
Establishing and Maintaining Interpersonal Relationships	98	700	195	505
Updating and Using Relevant Knowledge	112	674	198	476
Assisting and Caring for Others	52	650	231	419
Evaluating Information to Determine Compliance with Standards	75	571	157	414
Processing Information	82	420	97	323
Performing General Physical Activities	30	403	122	281
Monitor Processes, Materials, or Surroundings	52	390	111	279
Communicating with Persons Outside Organization	66	334	65	269

Analyzing Data or Information	57	311	105	206
Inspecting Equipment, Structures, or Material	56	307	92	215
Handling and Moving Objects	35	297	67	230
Thinking Creatively	53	288	91	197

Source: The Center for Workforce Information & Analysis

Looking at the skills and certifications employers are looking for in their job postings can provide insight into the types of training needed. The most sought after skills include electronic health record, freight, pediatrics and English speaker. The certifications most frequently listed in job postings are Certified Registered Nurse, Driver’s License and Commercial Driver’s License.

**Top 10 Help Wanted OnLine™ Skills**

Skills	OnLine™ Job Postings
Electronic Health Record	192
Freight+	178
Pediatrics	138
English speaker	133
Geriatrics	93
Tractor-trailers	78
Human resources software	77
Quality Assurance	76
Patient Electronic Medical Record	71
Bilingual	66

Source: Center for Workforce Information & Analysis

**Top 10 Help Wanted OnLine™ Certifications**

Certifications	OnLine™ Job Postings
Certified Registered Nurse	623
Driver's License	426
Commercial Driver's License	324
Basic Life Support	318
Advanced Cardiac Life Support	238
Certification in Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation	183
Licensed Practical Nurse	121
HAZMAT	113
Continuing Education	97
Food safety programs	78

Source: Center for Workforce Information & Analysis

Further, building on expertise gained and through utilization of information received following a comprehensive regional survey of business and industry, entitled the *Northeast Pennsylvania Regional Skills Gap Analysis*, regarding actual employment needs that was prepared and conducted by NC3T (National Center for Career and Technical Colleges) under the Northeast PA Jobs 1<sup>st</sup> Initiative, the local area is poised to address identified needs. From that analysis, the following can be garnered:

<b>Active Listening</b>	Giving full attention to what other people are saying, taking time to understand the points being made, asking questions as appropriate, and not interrupting at inappropriate times.
<b>Complex Problem Solving</b>	Identifying complex problems and reviewing related information to develop and evaluate options and implement solutions.
<b>Coordination</b>	Adjusting actions in relation to other actions.
<b>Critical Thinking</b>	Using logic and reasoning to identify the strengths and weaknesses of alternative solutions, conclusions, or approaches to problems.
<b>Equipment Maintenance</b>	Performing routine maintenance on equipment and determining when and what kind of maintenance is needed.
<b>Judgment and Decision Making</b>	Considering the relative costs and benefits of potential actions to choose the most appropriate one.
<b>Management of Personnel Resources</b>	Motivating, developing, and directing people as they work identifying the best people for the job.
<b>Mathematics</b>	Using mathematics to solve problems.
<b>Monitoring</b>	Monitoring/Assessing performance of yourself, other individuals, or organizations to make improvements or take corrective action.
<b>Negotiation</b>	Bringing others together and trying to reconcile differences.
<b>Operation &amp; Control</b>	Controlling operations of equipment or systems.
<b>Operations Monitoring</b>	Watching gauges, dials, or other indicators to make sure a machine is working properly.
<b>Persuasion</b>	Persuading others to change their minds or behavior.
<b>Reading Comprehension</b>	Understanding written sentences and paragraphs in work related documents.
<b>Repairing</b>	Repairing machines or systems using needed tools.
<b>Science</b>	Using scientific rules and methods to solve problems.
<b>Service Orientation</b>	Actively looking for ways to help people.
<b>Social Perceptiveness</b>	Being aware of others' reactions and understanding why they react as they do.
<b>Speaking</b>	Talking to others to convey information effectively.
<b>Time Management</b>	Managing one's own time and the time of others.
<b>Troubleshooting</b>	Determining causes of operating errors and deciding what to do about it.
<b>Writing</b>	Communicating effectively in writing as appropriate for the needs of the audience.

Local and regional initiatives such as this are vital to sustained economic growth and support the strategies of Pennsylvania's Combined State Plan. As plainly can be seen, the systems are structurally sound to produce results to support the needs of local business and industry. But, to ensure long-range success, business and industry must "remain at the table," providing industry-driven information on current and emerging job numbers and qualifications, fluctuating conditions or labor changes as they become predictable, retooling needs, infrastructure demands, projected expansion information, etc. As more information is

provided on local market needs, not only can curriculums of study be revamped or initiated, but proper matching of the local pool of talent will then facilitate the most effective job referrals and placements, thus, eliminating time and frustration of the employer base. This in turn should promote the provision of family sustaining wages for job seekers.

Spurred by the study listed above as well as the Commonwealth's excitement and active involvement in a *Next Generation Sector Strategies* Initiative, the Lackawanna County WDB participated in three major regional roundtable meetings that saw the identification of a number of problematic issues for the formation of regional industry-led gatherings such as: the large geographic landscape of the region; inability to attract large numbers of employers to the table, and the diversity of the sectors to be addressed. That said; however, perhaps a more localized approach is needed to begin the discussion phase which could, in turn, mobilize a broader initiative.

To that end, the Lackawanna County WDB, through its Business Services Team (BST) at the PA CareerLink® Lackawanna County, conducted a roundtable of 10 Lackawanna County manufacturing companies on June 12, 2017, for the purpose of facilitating a discussion of actual needs (both current as well as projected) and, thus, driving a plan of action to address those needs. A representative from Keystone Development Partnership (KDP) was on hand to promote apprenticeship opportunities to the attending sector representatives as well as a representative from Ben Franklin Technology Partners who provided additional information on resources. Additionally, the availability of On-The-Job Training (OJT) opportunities for new hires was also discussed with an OJT Data Sheet provided. The takeaways from that session include the development of enhanced relationships with the participating employers; the enlightenment that many of the employers were not aware of the various available resources; the understanding that employers are still somewhat reluctant to "share" information among, in some respects, their competitors; and knowledge that trends within the sector are ever-changing. In an attempt to compile data for development of a comprehensive plan of action, a short, two-page survey was distributed to the attending business representatives, and, subsequently, through Constant Contact, to other manufacturing companies, with questions that addressed the following: name and address of company, size of company, number of employees (local, regional and/or nationally based), major occupational job titles, skill sets required for the current positions, incumbent worker upgrade needs, customized training needs, equipment needed for sustainability of growth, and recruitment and/or other challenges. Lastly, a section was available under a "how can we help" question allowing the business to express specific needs from the workforce community to facilitate continued company viability and promote expansion. To date, utilizing employer feedback, the most need, with soft skills not withstanding, seems to be in the following areas: nursing assistants, welders, CNC machinists, infomatics, medical scribe, forklift operators, tractor trailer drivers, and production/assembly operators.

Initiatives such as this can be replicated across the major industry sectors within any given area; however, as is somewhat customary, the return of the surveys has not been all that successful and it is becoming evident that, to reach an employer, a one-on-one approach may be of

necessity. BST's must be strengthened to provide this service. All members must have a comprehensive knowledge of any/all available resources specific to the sector that must be communicated as part of the day-to-day operation of the BST.

Further, commencing back in 2012, the Lackawanna County Workforce Development Board endorsed conducting quarterly "Sector Initiatives" which targets one of the four main industry sectors (health care and life sciences; transportation, logistics, and warehousing; manufacturing; and business, finance, and IT) at the local One-Stop Center with guest speakers from the applicable industry, an on-site job fair, and an education fair. These activities will continue.

**Section 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?

Locally, the system is in place to address the needs of employers as described in Section 1.2; however, also as stated above, the challenges in aligning existing labor force skills and education and training with the needs of the employers, firstly, rests with the somewhat reluctance of the employers to fully divulge their specific needs across competitive markets for fear of "giving away internal secrets." Almost any employer will state the broad challenges as detailed in the chart in the previous section; however, when pressed, very little other information is forthcoming, at least not in group meetings. Certainly, broad statements are made such as "we need welders" and, from that, specific training can be developed or implemented by local educational/training institutions but, beyond that, the system seems to stall. As workforce professionals, communication of available resources appears to be the first step is connecting with individual employers and then facilitating a linkage with the resource to supply the need as a follow-up step. Supply and demand is not the issue; demand must promulgate the development of both short-term as well as long-range training capabilities to ensure on-going success and continued engagement of the employer(s).

Also, in some instances, local training providers/educational institutions do not have the caliber of equipment needed to address the new technology being implemented as business and industry modernizes specifically to meet their individual needs (i.e., government contractors utilizing state-of-the-art machinery to produce a specific product) to meet industry standards.

Finally, with the reduction in the number of approved programs of study/courses on the High-Priority Occupation List, local training providers/educational institutions have significantly reduced their course offerings, thus, limiting customer choices.

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

With the inception of the new Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) in July, 2015, the Lackawanna County Workforce Area began an era of implementation of new policies and practices aligned to the new legislation. First and foremost, all services are now competitively procured and enhanced collaboration among partner entities is driving a re-design of structural process to ensure that the local workforce system is universally accessible, customer-centered, and that applicant training is job-driven.

As a comprehensive one-stop center, the PA CareerLink® Lackawanna County serves as the vehicle for community access to a myriad of education, training and employment activities. Collaboration among partner entities ensures a cohesive approach for the delivery of services. Customers entering an inviting, open-concept atmosphere are greeted by a well-informed and friendly receptionist who directs new visitors to a triage area staffed by WIOA and Wagner-Peyser merit staff. This initial contact is provided in a confidential setting to allow for an uninhibited flow of personal information. This contact/interview is driven by the customer to allow for the identification of their immediate employment and/or training needs. Additionally, at this time, they are then provided with a full menu of available services.

From there, the customer is afforded a variety of universal services that may include, but is not necessarily limited to: usage of the Career Resource Center (computer-access for job searching including JobGateway<sup>SM</sup>); career-specific workshops (provision of labor market information and career decision-making for targeted industries); universal employment workshops (i.e., resume' preparation, interviewing techniques, cover letter writing, marketing oneself); State Civil Service information (note: the PA CareerLink® Lackawanna County is a Civil Service Testing site); a financial aid workshop that provides technical assistance in the preparation of Free Applications for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA); entrepreneurial information sessions; and, lastly, an orientation to WIOA workshop for those customers in need of training to enhance employment opportunities.

WIOA-funded training is accessible through sub-contracted providers (Educational Data Systems Inc. [EDSI] – Adult/Dislocated Worker services; Arbor Employment and & Training (E & T) d/b/a ResCare Workforce Services – Youth services; EDSI – EARN services) with eligibility determination completed on site by service provider representatives. This activity is conducted in a confidential interview to ascertain the customer's eligibility based on WIOA standards and facilitate assembly of the pertinent qualifying documents for data validation.

Once determined eligible, the customer is scheduled for computerized assessment in the areas of reading, applied mathematics, and locating information (local area uses WIN/Workkeys or TABE) to determine appropriate avenues for educational placement. Should an individual fall short of required levels on initial testing, as determined by industry standards, access is provided to on-line coursework (remediation/tutoring) to allow for probable improvement of skills prior to re-testing. Should a customer be determined to be basic skilled deficient or in need of more enhanced developmental services, that person is referred to appropriate community adult literacy and, possibly, English-language providers.

Following the assessment process, each customer is assigned a Career Advisor who provides assistance in the development of an Individual Employment Plan (IEP) which charts the progression of activities enroute to the ultimate goal of employment. This plan can include a variety of one or more of the following activities:

- Individual Training Accounts

As required, the local area utilizes the Statewide Eligibility Training Provider List (ETPL) for approval of any Individual Training Accounts (ITAs). Local training providers must follow a Statewide eligibility determination process for inclusion on this list. Most local educational/training providers are aware of the process having provided services for many years but any new training entity or newly appointed staff at traditional providers receive one-on-one instruction from WDB management staff and any viable training provider will be forwarded all applicable information as requested. All providers are informed of the local WDB's performance standards and demand-occupation requirements to enable inclusion on the List. Once a course of study is approved, it becomes a viable option of provision of an ITA. Each year the Lackawanna County WDB reviews, updates and approves the *Lackawanna County ITA Funding Cap Policy* which is included with this Plan as **ATTACHMENT A**.

This process supports improvement of education and training options directly and in-directly related to the fluctuating needs of business and industry as commonly supported by the ETPL.

The ties to the educational community (both educational institutions of higher learning as well as technical training providers) have long been strong and productive.

- Work-Based Training

Implementation of WIOA legislation expanded the type of activities that are considered work-based in nature:

- On-The-Job Training (OJT) has long been a viable option for customers, both from the job seeker as well as employer perspective. As an alternative to the traditional classroom training route, OJT provides an incentive for hire of qualified applicants and reduces the financial cost for an employer during a contracted training phase. Designed to identify gaps in skill sets, it allows for specific employer –driven training to fill the gaps, thus, enabling the employer to augment their workforce. OJT contracting may also serve to eliminate trepidation on the part of the employer who is considering expanding his/her workforce. OJT is promoted through the BST during phone contacts and site visits, during informational sessions at the PA CareerLink®, in pamphlets and brochures, at networking events and job fairs, and on the PA CareerLink® website.

- Work Experience (primarily available for the out-of-school youth population up to 24 years of age and EARN customers) provides an opportunity for those young adults with little or no work history to gain vocational as well as soft skills in an actual worksite setting.

Placements occur at both not-for-profit as well as private sites for up to 35 hours per week at a wage of \$8.00 per hour. (This increased above the current State minimum wage was approved by the local Board at its March, 2016 Quarterly meeting). Currently under consideration by the local WDB is an increase in this amount to \$9.00 per hour.

- Apprenticeships - strong linkages are maintained with representatives of labor organizations to support various apprenticeship opportunities and a listing is available at the PA CareerLink® Lackawanna County. Also, apprenticeship and trade opportunities are strongly promoted in PA CareerLink® workshops and outreach ventures. The local Center provides contact information to prospective trainees on local application submission processes.

The Lackawanna County WDB is also a partner in a Community-Based Grant that was recently awarded to the Luzerne/Schuylkill Workforce Board that will provide pre-apprenticeship classes in the upcoming program year to young adults across a 12-County region in Northeastern PA. This project is designed to provide hands-on experience in apprenticeship occupations.

Finally, three members of local labor organizations actively participate as members of the Lackawanna County WDB.

- Job Shadowing and Internships are coordinated based on such criteria as the customer’s interests and abilities, linkages to higher education programs, feasibility of scheduling, goal compatibility, employment expectations, etc.

Over the course of the past several years, it has also come to light that individuals that are computer illiterate face a severe barrier to both employment and education opportunities. Further, retention of employment also becomes extremely difficult without this skill. To this end, the local area provides a instructor-led computer tutorial for any participant in a structured Job Club or job search activity.

There is employer demand within the following industries where regional training opportunities either do not exist or are currently not meeting the employer demand: Retail, Home Health, Allied Health, Sales and Marketing, Food service/food preparation/cooking, and Clerical.

The following table shows regional completions by program for areas with 100 or more regional openings. With the exception of Business Management and Administration and Registered Nurses there are not enough regional completions to match the regional openings.

CIP Code	Program	Regional Completions (2015)	Regional Openings (2015)	Median Hourly Earnings
51.0000	Health Services/Allied Health/Health Sciences, General	4	435	\$23.90
52.1803	Retailing and Retail Operations	0	350	\$11.44
52.1804	Selling Skills and Sales Operations	0	245	\$12.83

CIP Code	Program	Regional Completions (2015)	Regional Openings (2015)	Median Hourly Earnings
51.2602	Home Health Aide/Home Attendant	0	193	\$11.51
12.0500	Cooking and Related Culinary Arts, General	25	193	\$11.84
52.1801	Sales, Distribution, and Marketing Operations, General	0	191	\$13.53
12.0507	Food Service, Waiter/Waitress, and Dining Room Management/Manager	0	147	\$9.03
52.0408	General Office Occupations and Clerical Services	0	146	\$16.00
51.3899	Registered Nursing, Nursing Administration, Nursing Research and Clinical Nursing, Other	0	144	\$31.63
52.0406	Receptionist	0	144	\$13.60
12.0505	Food Preparation/Professional Cooking/Kitchen Assistant	0	144	\$9.34
51.3822	Women's Health Nurse/Nursing	0	144	\$31.89
51.3816	Emergency Room/Trauma Nursing	0	143	\$31.40
51.3819	Palliative Care Nursing	0	143	\$31.40
51.3821	Geriatric Nurse/Nursing	0	143	\$31.40
51.1199	Health/Medical Preparatory Programs, Other	0	140	\$34.96
01.0608	Floriculture/Floristry Operations and Management	0	139	\$11.78
51.1105	Pre-Nursing Studies	1	133	\$25.85
12.0508	Institutional Food Workers	0	125	\$9.42
51.3818	Nursing Practice	0	123	\$28.84
51.3805	Family Practice Nurse/Nursing	21	117	\$31.89
51.3808	Nursing Science	0	114	\$28.71
51.3812	Perioperative/Operating Room and Surgical Nurse/Nursing	0	114	\$28.98
51.3809	Pediatric Nurse/Nursing	0	113	\$28.50
51.3803	Adult Health Nurse/Nursing	1	112	\$28.31
51.3806	Maternal/Child Health and Neonatal Nurse/Nursing	0	112	\$28.31
51.3810	Psychiatric/Mental Health Nurse/Nursing	0	112	\$28.31
51.3811	Public Health/Community Nurse/Nursing	0	112	\$28.31
51.3813	Clinical Nurse Specialist	0	112	\$28.31
51.3814	Critical Care Nursing	0	112	\$28.31
51.3815	Occupational and Environmental Health Nursing	0	112	\$28.31
51.3820	Clinical Nurse Leader	0	112	\$28.31
52.0201	Business Administration and Management, General	297	112	\$37.08
52.0411	Customer Service Support/Call Center/Teleservice Operation	0	112	\$14.10
19.0501	Foods, Nutrition, and Wellness Studies, General	0	110	\$11.77
51.3801	Registered Nursing/Registered Nurse	201	107	\$27.61
51.3999	Practical Nursing, Vocational Nursing and Nursing Assistants, Other	44	107	\$27.61
52.0101	Business/Commerce, General	42	105	\$40.08
13.0101	Education, General	2	103	\$30.19

As is customary in the local area, communication and collaboration among workforce development and educational partners serves to address issues as outline above.

## Section 2: Vision and Goals

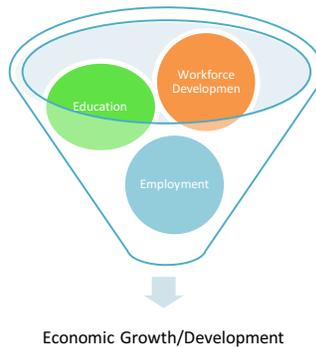
### Section 2.1 What are the local board's strategic vision and goals for preparing its workforce?

As the change in legislation (Workforce Investment Act to Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act) approached in the Spring of 2015, the Lackawanna County Workforce Development Board (WDB) produced a 3-year (7/1/15 – 6/30/18) Strategic Plan of Action to facilitate a seamless migration in format, structure, and delivery of services. Entitled *A Blueprint of Strategic Initiatives to Ensure a Competent, Qualified, Skilled Workforce Supporting Economic Growth in Lackawanna and Surrounding Counties in Alignment with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)*, Enacted July 14, 2014, the Plan provided a picture of the current economic climate (at the time) including local area demographics; implications from the slowly-diminishing recession of 2008; regionalization efforts and linkages; and a broad vision and mission statement, identified below. Further, it mapped out a series of goals with strategies for attainment of each goal. These sub-areas included: a By-Law review; membership categories and involvement; sub-committee structure; business/industry linkages (BST role; involvement with NE PA PREP partners; linkages with local Chambers of Commerce/government economic development departments); education integration (linkages with career and technical education and post-secondary employer-driven curriculum development aligned with industry needs); one-stop operations/integration (alignment with American Job Center network; One-Stop Operator determination; partner/program alignment/integration; infrastructure; and sector initiatives); strategies for engagement of youth/young adults given the expansion of out-of-school youth requirements; fund leveraging; performance mandates; chartering; local plan development; and a linkage with the PA State Board.

This initial Plan provided a structured platform to strengthen the focus on supporting both local and regional economies through training, retraining, and the education of a future workforce. To accomplish this goal, it is recognized that workers, regardless of age or experience, must possess skills identifiable and in-line with the ever-fluctuating needs of business and industry. A needs-driven economy promotes current as well as future growth within and across all industrial sectors. Realizing that on-going planning efforts must engage a myriad of partners to ensure successful outcomes, the Lackawanna County WDB continues to stand poised to develop, implement, and sustain comprehensive workforce initiatives; facilitate alignment of educational curriculums; communicate and integrate in regional projects; maintain/increase linkages within targeted industry sectors; and serve as a resource catalyst for economic re-growth.

From a systemic standpoint based on history, for comprehensive provision of services, the system model does not change. Simply, it remains an integrated and collaborative effort among the primary stakeholders in a socioeconomic environment striving to promote economic prosperity among its citizens. The education of a workforce (skilled/trained) coupled with

initiatives directly supporting the current needs of business and industry translates into economic growth.



In that concept, the Lackawanna County WDB continues to support the following **Vision**: *To serve as a conduit for information and communication among stakeholders, promoting economic growth through strategic investment and leveraging of resources to increase career advancement opportunities and the competitive advantage of businesses in Lackawanna County and all of Northeastern Pennsylvania and to promote the **Mission** of a comprehensive and structurally sound workforce development system through human capital development, capacity building, and operational effectiveness.*

The basic strategy in support of the Vision and Mission, as well as to accomplish the goals outlined in the Strategic Plan of Action, is as follows:

OVERARCHING GOALS	
Recruitment of New Business/Industry	Stabilization of Current Employer Base
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participate in meetings with prospective businesses/industry.</li> <li>• Provide current labor market information/data.</li> <li>• Identify a pool of workers based on specific industry needs through Americas Job Center locations.</li> <li>• Provide assessment/pre-hire testing of applicants.</li> <li>• Provide On-The-Job Training dollars to support new hires.</li> <li>• Provide facility usage for recruitment and interviewing purposes.</li> <li>• Assist in providing linkages to local educational facilities offering industry-specific training options.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participate in meetings with local business leaders to discuss potential growth patterns.</li> <li>• Facilitate/participate in discussions regarding educational curriculum development to support current/projected needs.</li> <li>• Provide linkages to the Strategic Early Warning Network (SEWN)</li> <li>• Identify a pipeline of potential workers supporting an industry-specific skilled workforce.</li> <li>• Address development of career pathways supporting advancement/upgrade or current workforce.</li> </ul>

These objectives are not new. They have been priorities for the past 15 years and have resulted in many successful ventures that have produced qualified, skilled workers in need both locally as well as regionally. However, as the needs of business and industry fluctuate, the local area must be equipped to adapt (quickly) to changes in workforce needs to sustain an energetic

economy. Driven by its business representatives, the Lackawanna County WDB is primed to serve as a catalyst for economic growth and development through implementation of prior best practices as well as newly designed/developed initiatives. This will be accomplished by strategic implementation of the overarching goals listed above combined with systemic goals as furthered outlined:

GOAL	STRATEGY
To be recognized by the business and industry community as a valuable resource for the provision of workforce information, data, assistance, and guidance.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Increase outreach to business and industry through expanded employer contacts and site-visits;</li> <li>2) Improve material for dissemination;</li> <li>3) Develop a BST newsletter; and</li> <li>4) Encourage participation of not only current internal members but external entities as well.</li> </ol>
Continued and enhanced collaboration with NE PA Alliance and PREP.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Ensure continued attendance at all NE PA Alliance/PREP meetings;</li> <li>2) Ensure collaboration in any regional economic development linkages;</li> <li>3) Provide continued assistance in grant writing of regional project initiatives; and</li> <li>4) Provide a mutual exchange of local labor market data.</li> </ol>
Strategic linkage with the Greater Scranton Chamber of Commerce, Lackawanna County Department of Planning and Economic Development, and City of Scranton Office of Economic and Community Development (OECD) .	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Ensure a minimum representation of two members from the above agencies/entities on the Board at any given time;</li> <li>2) Continue collaboration in outreach initiatives such as, but not necessarily limited to, on-site visits to business and industry, provision of current workforce-related data, and dissemination of information detailing One-Stop services;</li> <li>3) Continue representation by the WDB Executive Director on area Boards and Committees;</li> <li>4) Collaborate in the development of business-education initiatives supporting career pipeline development, career awareness/ladders, school-to-work projects, identified industry-related specific needs, etc.</li> </ol>

**Section 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 Lackawanna County Workforce Development Board, as a single-County entity, has long been integrated into the seam of the community with membership overlapping a variety of different boards and committees which, in turn, promotes a system of stability for the provision of services and eliminates duplication of effort among community providers. Stated simply, the Board endeavors to make everyone aware of “who does what” in the community and “where to go” when specific services are needed. To ensure alignment with Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) legislation and to promote acquisition of the most qualified providers of Title I core services, as previously stated, the local Board conducts a formal Request for Proposals (RFP) process, at least by-yearly or more frequently if needed, that outlines required elements (as defined by the WIOA statutes) and application processes. The local Board currently utilizes an ad-hoc *Procurement Review Sub-Committee* for oversight of this process and allows for impartiality and transparency in the selection of providers. This action will serve to address the needs, both specifically and universally, of the Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth populations from intake and eligibility determination through establishment of Individual Employment Plans (IEP) that may or may not include training opportunities (occupational skills training or On-The-Job Training) enroute to self-sufficiency. Further, the IEP will identify the need for additional support services which can be provided through collaboration with community partners such as, but not necessarily limited to, adult education and literacy providers (Marywood University – Title II contractor; United Neighborhood Centers of NE PA) as well as vocational rehabilitation services by OVR, as previously described. These processes will, in turn, support a tactical plan for educational growth and the attainment of skills essential within a competitive job market. The Executive Director and staff to the WDB will continue to sit on community boards and provide insight into local WIOA operations and opportunities, serving as a conduit for the dissemination of WIOA operational information and, in turn, assimilating other community-based information for collaboration purposes. The Lackawanna County WDB Executive Director has for many years sat as a member of the Carl D. Perkins planning committee at the Career Technology Center (CTC) of Lackawanna County, attends semi-annual meetings, and actively participates in the Center’s events. The WDB Executive Director also sits on the *Perkins* planning committees of both Johnson College and Lackawanna College. Finally, WIOA providers of service, Wagner-Peyser, and OVR staff will leverage collective resources to promote optimum outcomes across the system.

The PA CareerLink® Lackawanna County serves over 40,000 customers in any given year period providing universal career services. Over 750 persons receive direct employment and training funding via WIOA, TRADE, National Emergency Grants (NEGs), Strategic Innovation Grants, Community-Based Grants, foundation awards, and Department of Human Services grants. Processes are in place. The system is working; however, areas of weakness to be strengthened include increased usage of OJT; amplified services for at-risk youth/drop-outs; expanded apprenticeship connections; a re-design of operational handbooks to mirror internal structural changes; and augmented staff training opportunities

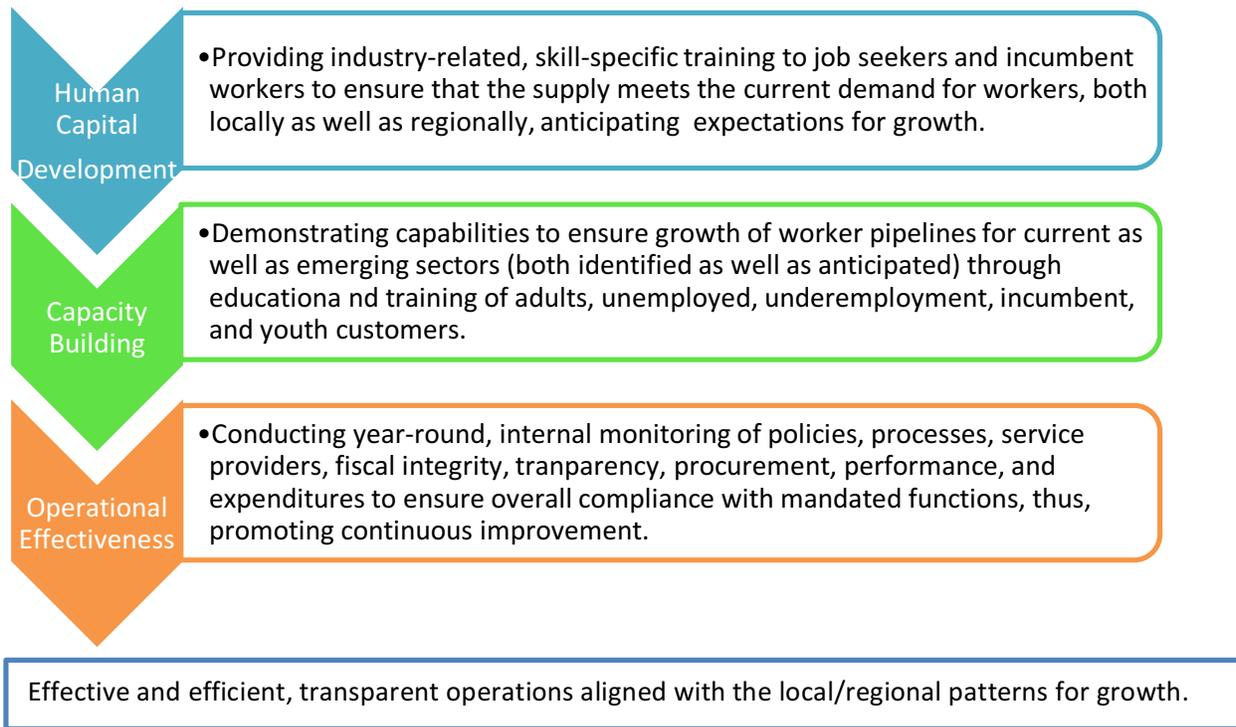
**Section 2.3** How will the local board’s vision and goals align with, support, and contribute to the governor’s vision and goals for the commonwealth’s workforce development system, as well as any goals and strategies articulated in the regional plan?

The Commonwealth of PA has outlined a vision with a rigorous plan of action to make changes to enhance the current workforce system. The Commonwealth's goals surrounding career pathways models, addressing significant worker pipelines and incumbent worker upgrading, increased opportunities for youth, engagement of both local as well as regional employer bases, and data sharing are being replicated locally based on current practices and the development of new and innovative methods of service provision. To that end, the Lackawanna County Workforce Area proposes the following:

- increased integration into both secondary and post-secondary institutions to ensure heightened awareness of career pathways based on the types of current/fluctuating industry trends. This, in turn, will afford individuals, including those with disabilities, the opportunity to pursue employment in fields (from entry-level to highly-skilled positions) that are prevalent in the local market as well as to promote the attainment of self/family-sustaining wages;
- solicitation of alternate forms of funding/support (i.e., H1B Make-It-In-America grants, Industry Partnership Awards, foundation grants, Union support) that will allow for the provision of training opportunities to industries in need of advanced training for their incumbent workers as well as new hires (addressing pipeline issues) to promote industry growth and competition across a global market;
- a reconfiguration of the overall youth structure that allows for implementation of enhanced work-based training opportunities supporting skill attainment, work-based training, career awareness, structured peer-to-peer as well peer-to-authority interaction, increased pre-apprenticeship/apprenticeship opportunities, and GED/literacy instruction leading to increase employment opportunities and retention in jobs;
- continued engagement of employers through industry-sector initiatives (as previously described and panels of previously-trained workers within the targeted cluster providing invaluable insight into job acquisition. Also, heightened outreach by the local Business Services Team (BST) as well as a continued strong collaboration with both the local Chambers of Commerce and other economic development entities; and
- utilization of any/all data provided by the Commonwealth of PA as well as such organization as NEPA Alliance, the Institute for Public Policy & Economic Development, the PA State Data Center, etc., to ensure knowledge of current/fluctuating trends that, in turn, provides a basis for program design and development, employer outreach, systemic stability, and concentrated productivity.

The Lackawanna County Workforce Development Area's vision, if broadly interpreted, facilitates a movement for enhanced collaboration and coordination among all key community partners, overarching both economic and workforce development, to include the education community, community-based organizations, the public welfare system, veteran's organizations, the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR), literacy providers, and other youth providers of services (YMCA, Boys & Girls Club, and Lackawanna County Department of Human Services including children and youth services).

Furthermore, to accomplish the mission strategies, the following must occur:



The strategies defined above also support the Northeast PA Regional Plan identified goals which are as follows:

- Increase the skill level of the Region's labor force through an innovative, integrated workforce infrastructure system that links labor demand and supply to meet the current and future workforce needs of the Region's businesses.
- Utilize the expertise of educational institutions and training providers within the Region to develop training programs and services which are based upon clearly defined opportunities and needs, and supported by research within specific industry sectors.
- Enhance linkages between workforce development and economic development delivery organizations with private industry in a collaborative manner that promotes high skill and high wage jobs.

**Section 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?

The Lackawanna County WDB has negotiated the performance levels outlined in **ATTACHMENT B**. Local level performance goals are tied strictly to Federal performance accountability measures and have always served as the benchmark for rating a local area's attainment of goals, not only within mandated measurable categories but in providing a broad picture of the overall operation of a local program. The overarching goal of the Lackawanna County WDB is to enable a well-rounded menu of services that promotes job acquisition, retention of positions, and the receipt of self/family-sustaining wages upon program exit for all customers (Adult, DW, Youth). Further, the attainment of credentials as well as measurable skill gains serves to increase the parameters for reaching the measures. Moreover, the creation of a skilled workforce that strategically meets the current as well as emerging needs of local (and, perhaps, regional) business and industry is then well positioned to sustain and augment economic growth and development.

The Lackawanna County WDB has always endeavored to meet and/or exceed all mandated performance measures. But this is not enough. Attainment of the measures allows for a usage of a baseline of programmatic data for assessment of current operational practices which, in turn, forms a basis for continuous improvement. As stated in Section 2.3, to accomplish human capital development, capacity building, and operational effectiveness across the local program as a whole, the WDB must have the capability to meet negotiated performance levels.

### **Section 3: Local Area Workforce System and Investment Strategies**

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

The governance structure for the Lackawanna County Workforce Development Area is illustrated in the enclosed **ATTACHMENT C**.

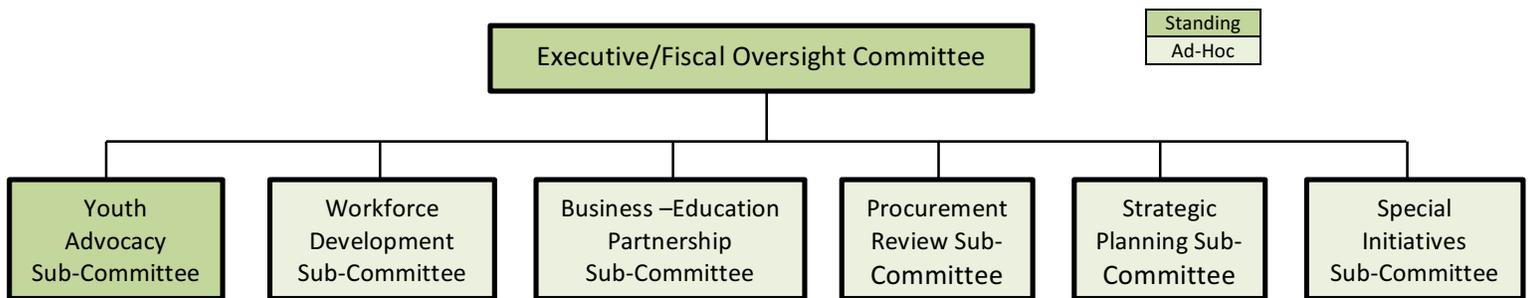
In adherence to this defined structure, the Chief Local Elected Officials (CLEOs) [Lackawanna County Board of Commissioners] appoint all members of the local WDB as authorized by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014. Local Chambers of Commerce, representing local businesses, business organizations and business trade associations, make nomination, by letter, to the CLEOs of potential representatives from business and industry. Regional and local education agencies, institutions, unions, and organizations nominate individuals, again by letter, to represent community-based organizations, labor organizations, economic development agencies, etc. The LCEO's then make appointments as they determine appropriate from the nominated pool. The LCEO's also have the authority to appoint any additional members as they so see fit. Adhering to local By-Laws, established by the WDB and reviewed most recently in December, 2016, the Lackawanna County WDB must be comprised of a minimum 51% majority representing the local business sector. All appointments are publicly conducted through a formal *Resolution* process at bi-weekly Board of Commissioner's meetings.

Once appointed by the Lackawanna County Board of Commissioners, the local WDB assumes responsibility for overall oversight of the comprehensive workforce system in Lackawanna County. This entails:

- develop and strengthen the mission, strategy, objectives and policies of the Lackawanna County Workforce Development Area to ensure that all activities are proactive in nature and in sync with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014;
- in partnership with the Local Elected Officials, shall develop and submit a local plan to the Governor that addresses the requirement in Section 108 of the WIOA of 2014;
- in partnership with the bordering Northeastern PA workforce areas (Luzerne/Schuylkill; Pocono Counties), shall develop and submit a regional plan to the Governor that addresses the requirements of Section 106(c)(2) of the WIOA of 2014;
- provide the necessary technical assistance and guidance in the development of effective, responsive programs that are in line with the local business community/employers' needs;
- Convene, at a minimum, on a quarterly basis to review all system operations;
- Monitor fiscal transparency and accountability for appropriate usage;
- be responsible for the oversight of the local one-stop system, as provided locally through the so-designated PA CareerLink® Lackawanna County, located at 135 Franklin Avenue, Scranton, PA 18503;
- solicit, through a formal Request for Proposals (RFP process), appropriate providers of services for Title I Adult/Dislocated Worker, Title I Youth, Transitional Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and Employment Advancement and Retention Network (EARN) activities;
- solicit, through a formal RFP process, an appropriate Operator to oversee activities at the local One-Stop center (initially 7-1-17 through 6-30-18; renewable through 6-30-1-20);
- utilize WIOA funds and other public workforce development resources efficiently and effectively to maximize customer choice and promote local and regional economic development efforts;
- establish and utilize sub-committees as a means to provide comprehensive oversight of specific areas of operation as further defined herein under Article IX;
- assist in developing, fostering and maintaining strong ties to the community served by the local WDB and to garner grass root support and understanding of WIOA programs and systems for promotion of economic development strategies;
- leverage different/additional resources from the community for the purpose of developing a strong workforce development system and to ensure services are not duplicated at the local level while expanding the resources that currently exist;
- promote public and private involvement in the development of workforce development activities in Lackawanna County and the surrounding counties making up the Northeast region of the Commonwealth;
- utilize pertinent data of economic conditions in the local area/region and undertake on-going community needs assessments through which local gaps can be identified and addressed;

- foster continuous program improvement for workforce development activities under Title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 and any/all subsequent legislation addressing workforce issues and economic development;
- oversee/procure services for the provision of WIOA Title I services within the Lackawanna County Workforce Development Area;
- coordinate activities with local/regional education and training providers; and
- work closely with the Commonwealth of PA’s Bureau of Workforce Partnership & Organization (BWPO) and the Bureau of Workforce Development Administration (BWDA) and the PA Workforce Development Board to ensure high quality economic development initiatives both locally as well as throughout the Northeast region of the Commonwealth.

As stated above, the following Sub-Committee structure has been implemented to ensure comprehensive oversight and transparency of WIOA operations:



Executive Fiscal Oversight Committee	Represents the full-WDB membership in the provision of oversight for overall system operation including fiscal accountability and transparency, WDB staff, One-Stop operations, community outreach, program development, etc. The WDB Executive Committee has the authority of the full-WDB to approve any/all actions (programmatic and fiscal) as necessary to ensure a timely deliverance of services. Any/all action taken by the Executive Committee is presented to the full Board at quarterly meetings for review, discussion, and final approval.
Youth Advocacy Sub-Committee	Provides oversight and guidance in the comprehensive deliverance of all youth services including, but not limited to, the following: authorization of release of Requests for Proposals (RFPs) to secure training/educational services; review and oversight of on-going yearly activities to ensure compliance with local plan of operation and specific funding criteria; provides guidance to Youth Operational Staff, as needed; conducts outreach to local school districts for dissemination of programmatic information and economic development initiatives. Performs any/all other youth-related duties as prescribed by the full-Board with actions reported for final approval during quarterly meetings. Membership is not limited to WDB members and may include members of the community at-large with a vested interest in youth.
Workforce Development Sub-Committee	Serves in the capacity to communicate and promote the actions and activities of the Board in alignment with local and regional economic development through support and oversight of industry-led initiatives including, but not limited to: on-going formation and sustainment of Industry Partnerships; dissemination of any/all industry-specific worker training funding; leveraging of resources; outreach and communication efforts; regionalization promotion; sustainability planning; integration of business services; and long-range development. Meetings are not regularly scheduled and called as warranted. All actions taken by this Committee are reported at full-Board quarterly meetings.
Business-Education Partnership Sub-Committee	Provides directives to the development of educational initiatives to ensure alignment with changes in shifting economic and workforce climates including, but not limited to: development of industry-led curricula; on-line course accessibility; development of wide-based articulation agreements; improving the school-to-work concept within the community at-large; promotion of a variety of training options (short & long-term); and oversight of internal programs aligned with education. Meetings are not regularly scheduled and called as needed. All actions taken by this Committee are reported at full-Board quarterly meetings.
Procurement	Sits for the primary function of review, assessment and rating of any/all proposals received in response to an officially

Review Sub-Committee	procured Request for Proposal (RFP) solicitation. Meetings are not regularly scheduled and called only following solicitation of RFP. All reviews and documentation (rating results) are forwarded to the Executive Committee for discussion and final approval. Any sitting member of the Youth Advocacy Sub-Committee may volunteer to sit as a member of this Sub-Committee. Any member with affiliation to an entity submitting in response to a RFP MAY NOT sit as a member of this Committee.
Strategic Planning Sub-Committee	Provides overall guidance in the development and on-going review of a viable Strategic Plan of Action establishing both short and long-range goals solidifying the Board’s objectives/goals and strategies. Meetings are not regularly scheduled and occur, primarily once per Program Year.
Special Initiatives Sub-Committee	Provides oversight and guidance in the administration and operation of any/all specific initiatives that may include such areas as specialized programs/grant awards, One-Stop programs/events, community requests for funding, etc. Meetings are not regularly scheduled and called as appropriate.

Over the past six-month period, the Lackawanna County Workforce Area has engaged in a structural change to allow for enhanced transparency and a clearer separation of functional duties. Lackawanna County has assumed the role of Fiscal Agent for the local Board, effective July 1, 2017. In addition, as previously stated all services are now competitively procured via a structured RFP process.

On October 12, 2017, an email was received from Ms. Erica Strang that verified *Workforce Development Grant Agreement 055-12 Amendment 2* formally transferred Fiscal Agent from the Scranton-Lackawanna Human Development Agency, Inc. to Lackawanna County. Due to this change, Lackawanna County is now the administrative entity that serves as the mechanism to provide staff to the local board.

Within the Lackawanna County Workforce Area, there is one comprehensive PA CareerLink® One-Stop Center:

PA CareerLink® Lackawanna County  
135 Franklin Avenue  
Scranton, PA 18503  
Phone #: 570.963.4671  
Hours of Operaton: Monday through Friday; 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM

As mandated by the WIOA of 2014, during the Spring of 2017, the Lackawanna County WDB competitively procured an Operator for the named One-Stop site in Lackawanna County. Currently, the approved, 3-member Consortium of Operators for the PA CareerLink® Lackawanna County, is comprised of the following: Title I Adult/Dislocated Worker provider of Services – Educational Data Systems Inc.; the Educational Opportunity Center; and Lackawanna County - Office of Economic Development. The roles and responsibilities One-Stop partners are described in Section 4.2 of this Plan.

Currently the following individuals hold responsibility for ensuring equal employment opportunities and the protection of civil rights within the local areas:

Cathy Gerard, Lackawanna County Workforce Area; and  
Joseph DiStasi, PA CareerLink® Lackawanna County

These individuals maintain records of any filed complaints or instances of non-compliance and submit quarterly reports, as required. They also serve as the initial line of communication and mediation for staff and/or customer concerns.

**Section 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?

As previously stated, the Lackawanna County Workforce Development Board has long been integrated into the seam of the community with membership overlapping a variety of different boards and committees which, in turn, promotes a system of stability for the provision of services and eliminates duplication of effort among community providers. To ensure alignment with Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) legislation and to promote acquisition of the most qualified providers of Title I core services, as previously stated, the local Board conducted a formal RFP process that outlined required elements (as defined by the WIOA statutes) and application processes. The local Board currently utilizes an ad-hoc *Procurement Review Sub-Committee* for oversight of this process that allows for impartiality and transparency in the selection of providers. This action also served to address the needs, both specifically and universally, of the Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth populations from intake and eligibility determination through establishment of Individual Employment Plans (IEP) that may or may not include training opportunities (occupational skills training or On-The-Job Training) enroute to self-sufficiency. Further, the IEP identifies the need for additional support services which can be provided through collaboration with community partners such as, but not necessarily limited to, adult education and literacy providers (Marywood University – Title II contractor; United Neighborhood Centers of NE PA) as well as vocational rehabilitation services by OVR, as previously described. These processes will, in turn, support a tactical plan for educational growth and the attainment of skills essential within a competitive job market. The Executive Director and staff to the WDB continue to sit on community boards and provide insight into local WIOA operations and opportunities, serving as a conduit for the dissemination of WIOA operational information and, in turn, assimilating other community-based information for collaboration purposes. The Lackawanna County WDB Executive Director has for many years sat as a member of the Carl D. Perkins planning committee at the Career Technology Center (CTC) of Lackawanna County, attends semi-annual meetings, and actively participates in the Center’s events. The WDB Executive Director also sits on the *Perkins* planning committees of both Johnson College and Lackawanna College. Finally, WIOA providers of service, Wagner-Peyser, and OVR staff will leverage collective resources to promote optimum outcomes across the system.

Following the previously mentioned competitive procurement process, the Lackawanna County Workforce Development Board (WDB) has assigned responsibility for the day-to-day operation of the physical center, located at 135 Franklin Avenue in downtown Scranton, to a designated Consortium of Operators, comprised of representatives from Educational Data Systems Inc.

(EDSI), Educational Opportunity Center (EOC), and the County of Lackawanna. Their key role is as follows:

- Ensure a seamless delivery of services.
- Provide oversight to the assigned Site Administrator in the following areas:
  - organization and coordination of all co-located partner staff by function in accordance with State and/or provider personnel rules; collective bargaining agreements, if applicable; and other specific partner policy and guidance.
  - establishment of a customer-friendly service delivery model.
  - development of operational procedures and protocols that promotes effective seamless service delivery to ensure positive program outcomes.
  - communication of workforce system policy that effects overall Center operations.
  - establishment of internal policies and procedures for situations such as inclement weather; holidays, as allowed by partner entity, etc.
  - ensures an effective partner referral mechanism is in place for the benefit of both the individual customer as well as partner performance.
  - act as an ambassador of the One-Stop Center in the community.
  - provides a bridge to business services and resources.
  - assures that relevant policies and procedures including equal opportunity and civil rights measures are enforced.
  - recommends and retires technological tools and services needed for the operation of the One-Start Center.
- Serve in the capacity of an intermediary with all the One-Stop partners.
- Recognize and understand the parameters under which the individual partners provide services including partner-specific performance measures.
- Schedule One-Stop Partner meetings (minimum quarterly).
- Prepare a meeting Agenda for distribution prior to the set meeting date.
- Provide in-person facilitation of the Operator meeting.
- Prepare and distribute any/all required meeting materials.
- Prepare and distribute post-meeting minutes.
- Assist the Local Board in preparation of compliance measures for One-Stop Center Certification to ensure continued receipt of infrastructure funding.
- Approve the expenditure of earned income. Provide recommendation for approval of internal operational services (i.e., security services, disbursement of any earned income; disbursement of any RSAB costs in excess of \$500.00, etc.) to the Lackawanna County WDB. Allow Site Administrator discretion in disbursement of funds up to a maximum of \$250.00, reportable at the next regularly-scheduled Operator's Meeting.
- Track and implement the negotiated One-Stop Partner Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

The success of the Operator Consortium, all having demonstrated a vested interest in the public workforce system, will be its ability to work cooperatively with the Local Workforce Development Board, the assigned Site Administrator of the Center, and Partners, affiliates, and

other constituents of the local Center. All members of the Operator Consortium are decision-making level representatives of their organizations with the expertise to provide systemic oversight that strategically fosters an integrated service model. The Operator must inspire others and lead change; demonstrate extremely high levels of professionalism, integrity, and collaboration; and enhance and develop partnerships.

The local board completed and attached a *One-Stop Location and Program Services* template which comprehensively details partner entities.

The local area, yearly, conducts outreach to community partners for solicitation of proposals that support activities for TANF/SNAP-eligible youth. These traditionally address after-school tutoring and career-awareness activities, mentorships, community service projects, work experience, and arts-related instruction. These activities provide peer interaction, an introduction to the soft skills necessary for employment, homework assistance, and nutritional information and subsistence.

Additionally, the local area conducts a yearly summer work experience project for approximately 100 TANF/SNAP-eligible youth earning \$8.50 per hour for up to 30 hours per week with placements occurring at local non-profit worksites. These youngsters also receive, during the enrollment, information on career exploration, anti-bullying, financial literacy and health-related information.

Low-income individuals may access Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) home assistance and weatherization programs that help eligible families make minor home repairs and/or reduce energy consumption and overall energy bills through the installation of cost-effective energy conservation measures.

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

- Expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly individuals with barriers to employment.
- Facilitate the development of career Pathways and co-enrollment, as appropriate in core programs (specify on-ramps from adult education).

➤ The Lackawanna County WDB utilizes the PA CareerLink® Lackawanna County, centrally located at 135 Franklin Avenue in downtown Scranton, PA, as the operational arm for the provision of services and coordination of activities amongst a variety of community partners and educational institutions/training providers. Selected WIOA providers of services (WIOA Adult/Dislocated Worker/Youth and EARN) are based at the PA CareerLink® site to ensure a coordinated effort with not only PA Wagner-Peyser staff but with OVR, PA Department of Human Services, Lackawanna County Head Start, local training providers, Pathstone (provision of older worker services), and others to ensure a seamless, friendly, and uncomplicated process for service provision for the job-seeking customer as well as assistance for the business community. As mentioned, all of these entities are partners at the local PA CareerLink® site, thus, enabling a comprehensive mix of activities in the true “One-Stop” fashion. It must also be

noted here that Lackawanna College, and Johnson College, maintain close ties with the PA CareerLink® as member and/or community affiliates, visiting the Center on a regular basis and providing valuable materials and contact information for all of their programs of study. In an attempt to further expand connections, from a youth standpoint, WIOA staff are visiting local intermediate and secondary schools, providing career information, discussing services available following graduation, and promoting technical education. Also, linkages have been established with the Lackawanna County Department of Human Services (formerly Lackawanna County Children and Youth Services) for referral of youngsters that are foster children, those aging out of the foster care system, or are involved with the Juvenile Justice system. An additional collaboration with the Lackawanna County Department of Human Services (formerly Department of Public Welfare) provides assistance in identifying prospective customers which may, in turn, assist in the reduction of the welfare rolls. Finally, a linkage with the Center for Independent Living allows for frequent visits of their clients (individuals with severe barriers) to tour the local One-Stop site and receive career awareness/pathway information. Linkages are also established with local re-entry programs and domestic relations organizations. As described, all services are available to individuals with barriers to employment. Finally, solicitation of additional PA CareerLink® partner/member entities is on-going with the Educational Opportunity Center (EOC) providing tutoring services and SAT prep during the summer of 2017 on-site at the local Center.

Within this system, determination of initial eligibility for services is conducted by the individual partner entities to ensure compliance with specific program requirements. The local area has implemented a *WELCOME CENTER* approach which provides an initial, comprehensive overview of PA CareerLink® services to interested customers. This introductory session details pathways to available programs and services and also may establish linkages to other off-site community service providers (i.e., Dress for Success, Catholic Social Services, United Way and its affiliate agencies, community action agencies). If an individual is interested in specific partner services, they are referred to on-site career advisors/counselors for pre-eligibility determination. This is conducted one-on-one in a confidential setting with validation to include, at a minimum, inspection of applicable documents (traditionally copied for file data validation), utilization of electronic documentation of government records, and face-to-face attestations. Telephone verification and notarized statement are used only sparingly when no other method is available.

The local board, through its Consortium of Operators and pending Partner Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), has systemically defined overarching roles and responsibilities for the collaboration and interaction among Partners. The Consortium of Operators, under the direction of the local Board, will now communicate quarterly with all Partners, offering a formal platform for comment and discussion of operations.

➤ Core services are universal in nature, provided by all partner entities within the PA CareerLink® system that compliment outreach to the business community. Core services traditionally encompass, but are not necessarily limited to, the following: development of customer resumes for employer job matching (in the JobGateway<sup>SM</sup> system); job readiness services that include career counseling, workshops, and assessments to ensure appropriate job

matching; provision of labor market information by industry sector that identifies local high-demand industry openings; provision of one-on-one staff assisted services that compliments not only the job seeker but significantly improves relations with employers and reduces frustrations with usage of a complex system; and development of an Individual Employment Plan with each job seeker with the ultimate goal of successful job matching. The one-stop system of operation significantly enhances local employers' access to an appropriate pipeline of skilled talent to meet their individualized needs. Additionally, training opportunities (provided through WIOA funding) can address skill gaps both prior to hire (new workers) as well as upgrading of the incumbent workforce (career advancement) within an industry to sustain on-going competitiveness and provide an on-ramp from adult education to employment. It has long been recognized that "subsidized training" is only a stepping stone in an individual's career pathway which can be charted from the on-set of service provision through lifetime learning opportunities. The Lackawanna County WDB has also designed its Individual Training Account (ITA) CAP Policy to support career pathway development as follows: **"The maximum amount of reimbursement payable to any given training provider will not exceed \$5,000 or the actual cost of training, whichever is less, unless it is determined that the customer (trainee) is engaged in career-ladder training as recognized by an employer and/or industry. In that case, an additional \$3,000 will be made available to support second-tier training (i.e., Nursing Assistant to LPN; LPN to RN; machine operator to CNC Operator; MOS certification to Associate Degree in Computer Science, etc.)."**

The local Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) is an integral Partner in the PA CareerLink® Lackawanna County. As a core program, OVR has a representative on the Lackawanna County WDB, has a staff member sitting on the WDB Youth Advocacy Sub-Committee, and, currently has 6 staff members assigned to the Lackawanna County One-Stop Center. Due to recent changes, referrals now occur via electronic processing; however, the back and forth of referrals within the PA CareerLink® system has, historically, been simple and effective in the best interest of clients.

That said, eligibility to receive services under WIOA Title IV may only be determined by a qualified OVR Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor.

Training for OVR staff is at the discretion of the local OVR District Administrator. OVR staff supervision and direction is the responsibility of the local OVR District Administrator.

Title II Adult Education has long been an affiliate of the PA CareerLink® Lackawanna County. The Lackawanna County Literacy Coalition (spearheaded by the local Title II provider) conducts their quarterly meetings at the One-Stop site. At this meeting, services are discussed and coordinated with other social services agencies including information regarding workforce initiatives and employment opportunities. A referral process is in place for any workforce customer in need of adult literacy and/or GED services and has been utilized frequently for many years. The need for these services is determined during an in-depth assessment process of incoming clients at the PA CareerLink® and can include the submission of initial testing scores

to the local Title II provider. Additionally, PA CareerLink® partner staff periodically present information regarding career services in the actual classroom setting at the provider’s location.

As has been previously discussed herein, when a need is identified, either locally on a regional basis, the community, as a whole, efficiently and effectively implements historical practices which enables the merger of education and business in the development of new curriculums of study to support the identified need.

**Section 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;
- Manage activities or services that will be implemented to improve business engagement;
- Better coordinate regional workforce and economic development strategy, messaging, engagement and programs; and
- Strengthen linkages between the PA CareerLink® service delivery system and unemployment insurance (UI) programs.

➤ Building on the previously described, successful Board-sanctioned *Sector Initiatives* that infuse business and industry into the One-Stop setting, other systemic procedures have been implemented to address current worker needs and promote the on-going development of a trained workforce that can not only compete in today’s global economy but that will significantly and specifically support both the current as well as projected needs of the business community in Lackawanna as well as surrounding Northeastern PA counties. These procedures involve a unified team (economic and workforce development professionals) approach to outreach that allows for identification of challenges and needs of both small as well as large employers. Additionally, representatives from OVR/BVR (District Office in Wilkes Barre, PA) have long been involved in the overall operations of the local area, from a seat on the Workforce Development Board, to integration of 6 OVR/BVR staff members located on-site at the local One-Stop, to, finally, the local OVR Business Services Representative attends monthly meetings of the PA CareerLink® Lackawanna County Business Services Team and provides information about incentives offered through OVR for the local business community. Site visits, phone contacts, and email distributions (both employer-specific as well as universal through Constant Contact) augment employer services that includes posting jobs, applicant screenings, wage rate comparisons, research of skilled labor pools, development of job descriptions, and coordination of job fairs. Additionally, surveys are conducted quarterly of employers utilizing the One-Stop system (either on-line or in person) that provide a barometer of effective practices and allow for recommendations to improve delivery of services.

It is fully understood that the Next Gen initiative is designed to enable the local as well as regional business community to drive the development of activities and programs that fully support economic and workforce growth, regardless of the specific sector. To that end, the Lackawanna County WDB promotes Next Gen through its *Quarterly Sector Initiatives* (currently addressing health care/life sciences; manufacturing; transportation/logistics; and

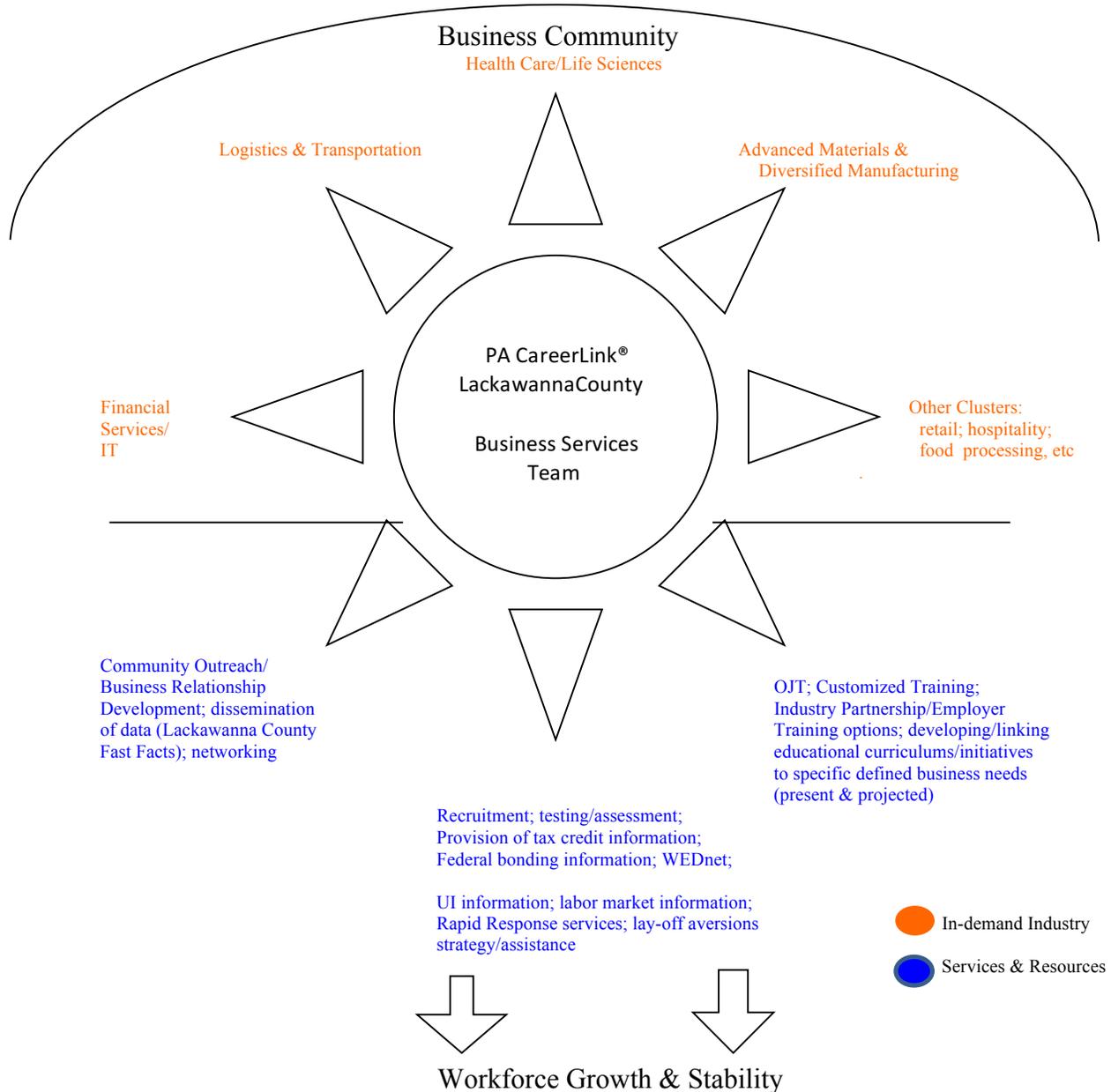
business/finance/IT) which involve industry expert kick-off speakers followed by an on-site mini job fair and a supporting educational roundtable supporting existing openings. Most recently, the Health Care Sector Initiative was conducted at the One-Stop Center with the health reporter from WBRE TV and the Vice-President of MTFbiologics presenting. MTFbiologics is a global company with 2 facilities located in Lackawanna County employing over 1000 workers with a starting wage of \$16.00. Following their presentations and a question and answer period, 17 health care/life sciences employers were physically on hand, actively recruiting. Additionally, 6 educational institutions were represented providing information on training opportunities that support the job openings. These events, which began in 2014, traditionally draw 150-200 job seekers and incumbent workers seeking advanced positions. It should be noted here that, as sectors grow or decline within the local area, these initiatives will adjust to ensure that the most prevalent needs are addressed. Finally, BST visits are coordinated with external staff representing the local Chamber of Commerce and provide information on other initiatives such as Ben Franklin Technology Partners and the Governor's Action Team (NE PA Office), thus, delivering the most comprehensive package of information across the business community.

It also must be noted here that the Strategic Early Warning Network (SEWN) has proven to be a valuable partner, not only to local Workforce Development Boards, but to many other economic development organizations as well, in helping companies across all industries, to minimize, or in some cases completely avoid, reductions in employment or closures. The WDB Executive Director receives monthly newsletters from SEWN which provides an update of their activity. Should the local area identify any business/company which would need their assistance, a referral would be generated.

Prior to the implementation of the WIOA of 2014, under the prior Workforce Investment Act legislation and as the country was slowly emerging from the 2008 Recession, workforce development organizations across the country began forging new relationships between the manufacturing sector and economic development to proactively address the needs of regional/local employers to assess their business risks, devise risk migration strategies, and implement those strategies in ways that were affordable, effective, and sustainable. The U. S. General Accounting Office (GAO) published a report in January of 2012 entitled *Workforce Investment Act-Innovative Collaborations between Workforce Boards and Employers Helped Meet Local Needs*. One particular success story outlined a California Workforce Board's relationship with the California Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) which, through proactive layoff aversion services, avoided over 400 layoffs and facilitated the creation of over 70 new positions. Over the passage of 5 years, the process is still viable. In Pennsylvania, it is being reborn as the *Next Generation Sector Partnerships* initiative. In regards to that initiative, local WDB efforts are broadly discussed in Section 1.2 of this Plan with the local Board ensuring continued development of practices that support augmented relationships with the business community.

That said, how these services are delivered are particular to individual One-Stop centers; however, all must support the rationale that efficient and effective delivery can significantly

drive economic, workforce, and, subsequently, community development. Internal operational practices must promote collaborative enterprises that coordinate broad as well as individualized-based outreach efforts and promote a “demand-driven” product. It, then, falls to the local One-Stop Business Services Team (BST) to take the lead. Within the Lackawanna County Workforce Area, the PA CareerLink® Lackawanna County BST is structured/operates accordingly:



The diagram above is specific to the internal operations of the BST within the PA CareerLink® Lackawanna County with the Business Community (see top arch) as the guiding entity. It is understood, from a Next Gen standpoint, that business and industry should guide and dictate workforce initiatives and ultimately this will occur as long as the companies are available,

amenable to participation, and vocal in the sharing of their needs. To accomplish this, the local BST must be structured internally to address all community sectors. Next Gen can be specific across a variety of sectors.

The PA CareerLink® Lackawanna County BST works extremely hard (proactive approach) to attract and target not only new employers, but also assist and educate existing local businesses, both large and small, in such areas as fluctuating employment trends, available workforce pools, average hourly wage data, etc. Through review and analyzation of reports generated by the PA Center for Workforce Information and Analysis (CWIA) as well as Ad Hoc reports designed to provide local statistics, the BST can assess trends that can then, in turn, provide measurements of current services and dictate any necessary adjustments.

Listed below is a breakdown of the information gathered for full-calendar year 2016 and half-year 2017:

Calendar Year 2016					Calendar Year 2017				
Month	Self-Entered Job Orders (JO)/Staff Entered	Total # of JO Entered	New Employers	Avg JO per day	Month	Self-Entered Job Orders (JO)/Staff Entered	Total # of JO Entered	New Employers	Avg JO Per day
January	111/167	278	12	14.63	January	140/209	349	9	16.62
February	137/205	342	111	17.10	February	121/182	303	10	15.94
March	146/217	363	14	15.78	March	155/233	388	7	18.48
April	135/202	337	14	16.04	April	106/246	352	11	12.60
May	111/166	277	7	13.19	May	147/221	368	9	17.52
June	124/187	311	14	14.13	June	122/184	306	20	13.91
July	96/144	240	13	12.00					
August	109/162	271	110	12.32					
September	110/165	275	11	13.10					
October	116/173	289	10	14.45					
November	100/148	248	7	13.05					
December	121/181	302	4	14.38					
2016 Totals	1416/1978	3,296	129	14.18	2016 YTD Totals				

As can be seen, usage of the system/services is brisk from a business/employer standpoint. Twitter, Facebook, phone apps, and Constant Contact supplement efforts with a distribution of information to well over 5,000 participants, professionals, and educational providers on a daily/weekly basis.

➤ Management of the One-Stop Center’s business-related activities falls to the Site Administrator who has over 35 years of local workforce experience and is known throughout the community as the “face of the Pa CareerLink® Lackawanna County.” Guiding a team of professionals comprised of not only One-Stop staff (other representatives/members hail from the local Chamber of Commerce, the local PA Senator’s office, Lackawanna County Economic Development, the local WDB), the Site Administrator guides the planning process for Sector

*Initiative* events and mobilizes other activities. The lead member of the BST schedules and conducts monthly BST meetings and prepares meeting materials for distribution. This BST lead also coordinates the usage of a *Business Center* which has been established on-site at the One-Stop Center and includes a private, small conference area and management desk area that can be utilized by any business entity in need of recruiting/interviewing facilities. At present, the Business Center is averaging approximately 3 business entity usages per week.

Also, once every six months, employers utilizing the system/services are surveyed to determine the effectiveness of the local One-Stop operation or to identify gaps in services which need to be addressed.

➤ The Lackawanna County WDB has, for many years, maintained a strong and solid linkage with the Greater Scranton Chamber of Commerce and the Lackawanna County Office of Economic Development, Lackawanna County's foremost economic development entities. Mr. Andrew Skrip, representing the Scranton Lackawanna Industrial Business Company (SLIBCO), the business arm of the Greater Scranton Chamber of Commerce, and Mr. George Kelly, Director of the County's Economic Development Office are active members of the local Board and provide invaluable insight into the fluctuating economic climate. The WDB Executive Director sits as a member (Vice-President) of the Board of Skills in Scranton, the education arm of the local Chamber. WDB and PA CareerLink® administrative staff participates regularly in meetings with potential employers considering Lackawanna County as a home and provides data/material on workforce issues on request. This collaboration ensures that economic development partners are well informed as to the capability of the local workforce system to provide such activities as On-The-Job Training (OJT), work-based training, customized training, incumbent worker training (through WIOA, specialized grants, and industry partnerships) and, in turn, can then effectively promote them to the business and industry community. Additionally, other strategies include employer engagement activities coordinated through the Governor's Action Team that affords the opportunity to showcase local workforce resources, thus, promoting enhanced business services through the PA CareerLink® Lackawanna County's Business Services Team (BST). The BST actively solicits participation from local business and industry in locally-driven sector initiatives (i.e., health care, advanced manufacturing, logistics/transportation, and business/finance) conducted quarterly on-site at the PA CareerLink®. Also, as needed, local training providers come to the table to address specific needs of employers through development of industry-specific training resulting in degrees and/or credentials recognized across industry sectors. The usage of Industry Partnership (NE PA regional) funding further enhances educational opportunities for the incumbent workforce populations. The Lackawanna County Office of Economic Development, the Greater Scranton Chamber of Commerce, and the Lackawanna County Workforce Development Board stand united in the provision of data, staff support, linkages to workforce training opportunities as well as WEDnet (when available), Ben Franklin Grants, tecBridge (technology, entrepreneurship, collaboration) and other community resources to ensure a comprehensive approach to coordination of efforts. The linkages are solid; messaging is coordinated. Future ventures will continue.

➤ The local One-Stop Center continues to be a pilot site for the Commonwealth of PA in the provision of RESEA (Re-employment Services & Eligibility Assessment) which addresses the needs of recently separated individuals through on-site orientation and case management in their quest for re-employment. Wagner-Peyser staff conduct one-on-one interviews for the development of an individual services plan which could include a variety of assignments such as, but not necessarily limited to: various workshop attendance, informing them of job fairs, introducing career information, and/or workforce training options.

Additionally, the Site has 3 direct phone lines to the UI Service Centers to assist in addressing UI questions and issues in a timely manner. The local UI liaison to the PA CareerLink® Lackawanna County conducts a monthly information workshop for the general public, both for employers as well as UC claimants. This individual is also available in between session via email or phone to answer any question(s) posed by a One-Stop customer.

**Section 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?

The Lackawanna County WDB recognizes NEPA Alliance as the premier regional economic development entity in Northeastern Pennsylvania. The Executive Director of the local WDB regularly attends meetings schedule by and/or at NEPA Alliance’s office and, has, in the past, coordinated special project initiatives with NEPA’s staff. Further, approximately 10 years ago, the Lackawanna County, Luzerne/Schuylkill, Northern Tier and Pocono Counties Workforce Boards, through their Executive Officers, formed the Northeast PA Consortium of WIBs (subsequently WDBs) with regularly scheduled, bi-monthly meetings occurring to specifically discuss the regional economic climate, discuss regionalized projects, promote distribution of regional Industry Partnership funding, etc. This Consortium facilitates an open line of communication among partners and allows for the replication of best practices and well as homogenous processes across the region.

The local Board, through the local One-Stop Center, is strategically linked with the University of Scranton’s Small Business Development Center (SBDC). On request, the SBDC Director has made presentations to both One-Stop staff as well as the general public at the Center. Referrals of appropriate customers interested in entrepreneurial ventures occur regularly and are coordinated through case management activities and on-site staff. The SBDC can also facilitate microenterprise services for any interested customers. Further, linkages are solid with the Scranton and Carbondale business incubators as well as the micro-loan program administered through the Greater Scranton Chamber of Commerce.

## **Section 4: Local Area Workforce Delivery System**

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

The Lackawanna County Workforce Development Area has been authorized by the Governor of Pennsylvania as a single-County entity. Governed by a board appointed by the Lackawanna County Board of Commissioners (BOC), as the Local Chief Elected officials, comprised of 17 private sector members and 15 public members (current as of 7-21-17), the Board meets all regulatory requirements. The Board conducts full-Board quarterly meetings as well as quarterly Youth Advocacy Sub-Committee meetings. WDB Executive Committee meetings are called as needed but occur no less than once per calendar quarter.

During PY 2016, the local Board competitively procured providers of services for Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth activities as well as EARN program services. The following subcontracts were awarded:

- Adult/Dislocated Worker – Educational Data Systems Inc. (EDSI)
- Youth – Arbor Employment and Training (E & T) d/b/a ResCare Workforce Services
- EARN – EDSI

Staff of these organizations are now fully co-located at the PA CareerLink® Lackawanna County. Additional One-Stop partner entities are described below in Section 4.2.

The local Board also competitively procured a Consortium of Operators for its sole, comprehensive One-Stop Center, which took over full responsibility for Site oversight on July 1, 2017. The Consortium is comprised of the following members:

- EDSI
- Educational Opportunity center (EOC)
- Lackawanna County Department of Economic Development

This process involved the solicitation of vendors through a formal RFP process which followed the procurement processes of the County of Lackawanna with 2 publications of the RFP notice as well as an opportunity for Bidder's to submit questions. Only one proposal was received which was then reviewed by the WDB Procurement Review Sub-Committee for content and viability with a recommendation for approval made to the WDB Executive Committee. The following depicts the actual timeline of events for this action:

- Release of RFP: April 19, 2017
- Bidders' questions to be received by email to [vturano@wiblackawanna.org](mailto:vturano@wiblackawanna.org) by 4:30 PM on Monday, April 24, 2017

- Answers to submitted questions will be provided electronically to those who submitted questions by 4:30 PM on Wednesday, April 26, 2017
- Proposals are due by 4:00 PM on Friday, May 12, 2017
- Opening/initial review of all proposals received: Monday, May 15, 2017
- Proposal review and selection: May 16, 2017 to June 2, 2017
- Award of Contract: June 8, 2017

The key roles of this Consortium are described, in detail, in Section 3.2 of this Plan.

Other stakeholders include the Greater Scranton Chamber of Commerce, the Carbondale Chamber of Commerce, Pathstone, 7 local institutions of higher learning, various other training providers, local community-service providers, and Title II Adult Education providers. All core partners are comprehensively identified in Attachment D – *Lackawanna County WDA Program Partners-Provider List*.

Again, as stated in Section 3.1, the following individuals hold responsibility for ensuring equal employment opportunities and the protection of civil rights within the local areas:

Cathy Gerard, Lackawanna County Workforce Area; and  
Joseph DiStasi, PA CareerLink® Lackawanna County

These individuals maintain records of any filed complaints or instances of non-compliance and submit quarterly reports, as required. They also serve as the initial line of communication and mediation for staff and/or customer concerns.

**Section 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).

The local area has developed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to delineate the roles and responsibilities of WIOA mandated partners and other entities. An Infrastructure Cost Schedule (included as **Attachment D**) supports the development of a cost-effective plan for site operations and supports the overarching goal of the Center: *to provide all job seekers and workers with high-quality career, training, and supportive services needed to obtain and maintain good, self and family-sustaining jobs as well as address the needs of business and industry throughout the community.*

PARTNER ENTITY	ROLES/RELATIONSHIPS
<i>Wagner-Peyser Act Services</i>	Services provided by the PA Bureau of Workforce Partnership and Organization (BWPO) and the PA Bureau of Workforce Development Administration (BWDA) that includes vocational counseling, job search assistance, job matching, JobGateway <sup>SM</sup>

	enrollment assistance, business services for employers, and intensive re-employment services
<i>WIOA Title I Adult/Dislocated Worker/Youth Providers</i>	Sub-contracted entities to offer employment, training, and supportive services along with career guidance & planning, Job Clubs, eligibility determination, assessment, job matching, computer instruction, GED instruction, and workshops.
<i>Programs under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973</i>	As the designated sole provider of these programs, Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors provide multiple individualized services that include diagnostic, vocational counseling and guidance, vocational evaluation, restoration, training, job placement, and pre-employment training services for eligible and potentially eligible youth (14 – 21 year olds) and adults with disabilities to prepare them for competitive, integrated employment. OVR also provides multiple services to the business community designed to assist businesses with hiring qualified employees with disabilities.
<i>Services authorized under Title V of the Older Americans Act of 1965</i>	Administered locally by Pathstone, Inc., services are targeted to individuals over 55 years of age such as paid work experience programs, some employment training, and vocational counseling.
<i>Community Services Block Grant(CSBG) Act</i>	Services are provided through a local Community Action Agency with a direct linkage to PA CareerLink® services.
<i>Adult Basic Education &amp; Literacy</i>	Services provided through a local college as well as secondary local community-based organizations. referrals are direct from the one-stop system.
<i>Veterans Services</i>	Veterans services are provided through the PA CareerLink® system by a BWPO staff person. Services include career counseling, information and veterans benefits, and tuition for skill training.
<i>Department of Human Services</i>	Services provided through TANF and EARN which are targeted to Public Assistance recipients and include information and dissemination of welfare benefits, supportive services, counseling, supported work, and job coaching.
<i>Vocational Educational Activities under Carl D. Perkins Act</i>	A vocational /technical school provides these services which include dissemination of information relative to financial aid to attend post-secondary training and post-secondary occupational skill training.
<i>Trade Adjustment Assistance</i>	Service is provided by BWPO and includes tuition assistance for dislocated workers, rapid response to employees in the event of massive layoffs or plant closings and income subsidies to assist candidates while in training.

**Section 4.3:** How will the local board facilitate access to services provided through the one-stop delivery system?

The local One-Stop Center, the PA CareerLink® Lackawanna County, is conveniently located in downtown Scranton, PA, easily accessible by public transportation. The hours of operation are 8:30 A.M. to 4:30 P.M, Monday through Friday with extended hours implemented as is determined by need. The Center is modern and inviting and is staffed by friendly, courteous, and knowledgeable individuals who have been trained to accommodate customer needs. From an ADA compliance standard, the Site has been certified. Other means of access include social media (facebook, twitter and phone app), Constant Contact communication, and posting of Site information on the Greater Scranton Chamber of Commerce's and Lackawanna County's websites. (Note: a new WDB website is currently under development.)

Core partners are located at the One-Stop comprehensive site as described above. Upon entry to the Center, individuals are afforded a triage opportunity which provides a one-on-one setting for dissemination of a menu of available services. At this time, the customer traditionally selects the service which best suits their individualized needs and, from there, can migrate to a *Welcome Center* where more detailed information is available on funding for training and career pathway information (access to partner programs). This provides a seamless mechanism for program service delivery.

If a client is in need of OVR services (i.e., deaf or hard of hearing individuals) a two-fold approach may be utilized. First, the local site has six OVR Counselors assigned on a daily basis who can accommodate an immediate consultation or, at the least, schedule the individual accordingly. Second, if an OVR staff is not immediately available, the PA CareerLink® Lackawanna County is contracted with *Interpretex Services* who are available on a pre-scheduled basis.

Title II services are made available through a well-established referral method between the local Title II contractor (Marywood University) as well as the United Neighborhood Centers of NE PA who also offers adult literacy, ESL and workplace literacy services. These referrals commonly occur via Constant Contact, face-to-face case management advocacy or dissemination of information for self-referral.

Additionally, the Site has three direct phone lines to the UI Service Centers to assist in addressing the UI customers questions and issues in a timely manner.

**Section 4.4:** How will entities within the one-stop 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 Consortium of Operators providing oversight to PA CareerLink® Lackawanna County are well aware of the provisions of WIOA Section 188 and applicable provisions of the American with Disabilities Act of 1990 regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services, technology, and the provision of materials. The PA CareerLink® Lackawanna County now annually conducts an *OEO Non-Discrimination and Equal Opportunity Self Evaluation* of its facility and processes that includes a combined physical and program access evaluation. The local area will continue to comply with any/all directives regarding the provision of services and facilities maintenance for individuals with disabilities. The local Center provides the following amenities for persons with disabilities: TTY phone line, adaptive devices on a computer workstation including a split keyboard and rolling mouse, a video magnifier, headset, computer speakers, Zoom Text Xtra, and JAWS for Windows. Additionally, one-stop staff may utilize technology guides for using screen enlargement software, screen reading software, and windows accessibility features. Any questions regarding ADA compliance are discussed at quarterly PA CareerLink® Consortium of Operators meetings. Finally, the PA Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) has stationed 6 OVR staff at the local One-Stop site who regularly monitor Site compliance.

To ensure that all customers are afforded comprehensive services, the PA CareerLink® Lackawanna County provides the following:

- 1) For individuals with limited-English proficiency, the Site has bi-lingual staff to assist in eliminating language barriers as well as linkages/referral capabilities with other community service agencies providing/developing specific remedies to eliminate this barrier.
- 2) Partner actions traditionally include one-on-one intervention; ensuring accessibility to accommodations, as specifically needed; individualized job coaching; translation of materials; and physical accessibility determination.
- 3) Once per program year, the Pa CareerLink® Lackawanna County engages an OVR staff member to conduct a disability awareness session to ensure that all partner staff are aware of the OEO requirements as well as the need to provide exemplary services to all individuals with disabilities.
- 4) Customarily, core program partners include: Title I providers of Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth services; OVR; Wagner-Peyser Pathstone (SCSEP); Veterans services; TANF/EARN; and Title II (on invite). Additionally, other local partners include: Lackawanna College, New Horizons Computer Learning Center, Fortis Institute, Smith and Solomon Driver training, Lackawanna County Head Start, and TransAmerican Technical Institute.

The local area is now utilizing the U. S. Department of Labor *One-Stop Disability Access Checklist*, a standardized checklist as a compliance review tool that will be completed annually and maintained on-site for review purposes. This survey will enable the local One-Stop Center to ensure compliance with a yearly self-evaluation and to anticipate future needs. Also, if a new training provider is identified, WDB staff conducts an on-site review of the institution and completes an accessibility form which is also maintained in the providers file.

**Section 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.

Due to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's new requirement to establish a Local Training Provider List (LTPL), the Lackawanna County WDB will utilize the process and criteria outlined in the State's Workforce System Policy 04-2015 (issued December 23, 2015) to develop a local list of approved training providers that are exempt from the Statewide ETPL requirements. Understanding the goal of supporting work-based training opportunities with employers to establish training paths to employment, the local Board will facilitate the compilation of a LTPL that ensures accountability of local level training providers, the quality of the training programs to be offered, and assessment of any return on investment. This, in turn, broadens the scope of customer choice in the selection of training opportunities.

It is further understood that the development of an LTPL will assist the local Board in implementing work-based training activities that include OJT, pre-apprenticeships, internships, and registered apprenticeships or other training that is responsive to the needs of local employers.

Additionally, any program of study must be approved for inclusion on the High-Priority Occupation (HPO) List which will ensure that any/all education training funded with workforce dollars is targeted to available jobs. This is first accomplished by a review by local WDB staff of the information posted on CWDS for inclusion. If all information/data is complete, accurate, and well-defined and performance criteria is met, the local staff person will approve the course in the system. The Commonwealth will then formally approve or table the action. Once approved by the Commonwealth, the information becomes visible to the general public for acquisition of training dollars. If, for any reason, the course is rejected, a letter is sent to the provider explaining the decision.

The local area utilizes the Commonwealth-approved petition process for addition of any provider/course that addresses emerging workforce needs based on fluctuating economic conditions. Emerging trends are usually identified through strategic contacts by the PA CareerLink® Business Services Team (BST), linkages with local Chambers of Commerce and other economic development entities, monitoring of new and/or expanding business ventures, and contacts by business and industry with local educational providers.

Once approved, training providers are regularly (at least twice per program year) monitored by the local WDB to ensure their compliance with mandated performance requirements and overall attainment of goals.

It should be noted here, that the local area, during the Fall of 2016, formally procured Title I service providers for Adult, DW, Youth and EARN services, thus, ensuring, a transparent delivery system. Current contracts are in place through June, 2018. The WDB meets, at a minimum,

monthly, with the selected providers to track progress, review budgets vs. expenditures, project performance outcomes, and align goals, as necessary..

Recognizing that information contained in WSP 04-2015 may be subject to change based on the issuance of future US Department of Labor regulations and/or guidance, the local Board assures compliance with any/all forthcoming directives.

**Section 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.

Through its open-door policy for all customers seeking to utilize the PA CareerLink® One-Stop system of operation, the WDB assures that all adults and dislocated workers have universal access to all core services that includes:

Service determination	In-depth assessment of skills and service needs
Outreach, intake, orientation	Individual Employment Plan (IEP) development
Initial Assessment	Group counseling
Job Search	Individual counseling
Employment information	Case management
Performance and cost information on providers	Short-term prevocational services
Civil Service information	Computer instruction
Support service coordination	GED computer instruction
Labor market information	TABE testing
Employment-related workshops	WIN/WorkKeys Testing
Job applications	ABLE/literacy referrals

Once a customer has been identified as an eligible Adult and/or Dislocated Worker under WIOA regulations, a variety of options are available to support the attainment of their career goals through development of individualized employment/re-employment plans. Currently, the local area is subcontracted with Educational Data Systems Inc. (EDSI) as the provider of Adult/Dislocated Worker services. Through EDSI, customers are afforded the following options:

- ◆ Occupational Skills Training is curriculum-based instruction conducted either through a classroom setting or on-line (or mix of both) in one or more occupations identified as high priority within the local area. For inclusion on the Statewide Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL), programs of study must be submitted by eligible educational institutions and other training providers and approved by the Commonwealth of PA. All approved programs must meet performance standards in the areas of program completion, attainment of credentials, job placement rates, and median earnings as well as providing program descriptions, length of time, cost, prerequisites, and outcome credentials. The ETPL is the utilized for development of Individual Training Account (ITAs). The local area currently has an ITA policy which is reviewed yearly by the Board and included here as ATTACHMENT A.

- ◆ On-The-Job Training (OJT) has long been an option for customers, both from the job seeker as well as employer perspective. As an alternative to the traditional classroom training route, this work-based training model provides an incentive for hire for the adult/dislocated worker customer and reduces the financial cost for an employer during a contracted training phase. OJT contracting may also serve to eliminate trepidation on the part of the employer who is considering expanding his workforce. OJT is promoted through the BST during phone contacts and site visits, during informational sessions at the PA CareerLink®, in pamphlets and brochures, at networking events and job fairs, and on the PA CareerLink® website. Employer reimbursement is standard at 50% with the contract length determined by the actual job requirements and the skill gaps of the customer.
- ◆ Customized Training, although to-date not widely requested by local employers, is a viable option that includes skill-specific training requested by an employer and designed by the company's selected training provider. Customized training is, primarily, utilized to upgrade the company's incumbent worker population. This, in turn, facilitates new hire openings which can be filled with OJT subsidies.

In addition to these options, additional training and job placement opportunities may become available for adults and dislocated workers through Rapid Response activities/funding and through specialized competitive grants.

Also, EDSI conducts weekly Job Clubs for both the entry-level and management level customers.

Also, any adult/dislocated worker customer with disabilities receives priority in the provision of all activities and services as discussed.

In adherence to Workforce System Policy (WSP) No. 05-2015, as issued by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Department of Labor & Industry on December 23, 2015, and in alignment with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014, the Lackawanna County Workforce Development Board/Area ensures priority of service in the administration and distribution of WIOA Title I funding. Priority of service ensures that individuals falling into targeted groups such as public assistance recipients, other low-income individuals, individuals who are basic skills deficient, and those that are unemployed who are also low-income are given priority over other individuals for receipt of individualized career and training services funded by the WIOA Title I Adult Program. Further, veterans and spouses of eligible veterans within these groups receive priority over non-veterans. Adult priority is determined for the targeted groups during eligibility determination and enrollment.

Due to the fact that the Lackawanna County Workforce Development Area is designated as a single-County entity, priority of service will be given first to those individuals who reside within the boundaries of Lackawanna County as verified during the eligibility determination process. No additional discretionary priorities are identified at this time.

That said, in adherence to the priority of service mandate, the Lackawanna County Workforce Development Board/Area has adopted the following process for provision of services to *Adult* Program customers:

1. ***“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.

2. ***“Low-income”***:

- 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.

*Note:* The following category may be added to the “low-income” definition, pending US Department of Labor approval: Youth in-school up to age 21; or parents of such a youth, who are eligible to receive a free or reduced price lunch. This policy will be updated as additional federal guidance is issued.

The Lackawanna County Workforce Development Board does not opt to adopt a more stringent definition for “low-income”. 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 I 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.

3. ***“Basic skills deficient”*** - 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. The local area utilizes the *Worldwide Interactive Network (WIN)* for assessment of all Adult Program customers. *WIN* assessments are administered following a standardized process of published guidelines and locators/appraisals are used to determine the appropriate level of use of such assessments. Reasonable accommodations are made for any individual with disabilities. *WIN* assessments measure reading, applied mathematics, and locating information and

readiness for specific occupations. Also, as supported by case notes, an adult customer may be assessed as basic skills deficient through a case manager's observation that the customer is unable to read, cannot complete an application form, or does not have basic computer literacy. Additionally, the case manager may also document basic skills deficiency(ies) through use of one or more of the following: basic skills assessment questions or test results; school records; referral or records from a Title II Adult Basic Education program; and/or referral or records from an English Language Learner program. Case notes will provide an auditable trail back to the source of the information utilized for verification of the deficiency which may include, but is not limited to, school name, dates of enrollment, and other applicable information. Due to the fact that this is an electronic assessment tool, the test administrator will document any computing skills deficiency.

Any youth, 18 years of age or older, who was determined basic skills deficient for the WIOA Title I Youth Program may be co-enrolled in the WIOA Title I 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 months prior to the date of co-enrollment. Please Note: The Lackawanna County Workforce Investment Area utilizes the TABE (Test of Adult Basic Education) for any youth determined eligible under WIOA Title I Youth. The TABE sufficiently measures the required components of reading and writing and, due to the fact that this test is also administered electronically, a measurement of computing skills. As with the WIN assessment, reasonable accommodations are made for any individual with disabilities.

4. ***“Underemployed”*** who are employed full or part-time and meet the definition of a low-income individual are afforded the same Adult priority of service.

As previously stated, veterans and spouses of eligible veterans receive priority over non-veterans. The priority of services for veterans and eligible spouses applies across all qualified employment and training programs. The priority of service for public assistance recipients, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient is a statutory priority that applies only to the receipt of individualized career and training services in the WIOA Title I Adult program. With regard to the priority of service to veterans and eligible spouses, priority of services for the WIOA Title I Adult program will be applied in the following order:

1. Veterans and eligible spouses who meet the statutory priority (public assistance recipient, other low income individuals including the underemployed, or basic skills deficient) and Adult program eligibility must receive the highest level of priority for services;
2. Other individuals (not veterans or eligible spouses) who meet the statutory priority (public assistance recipient, other low-income individuals including underemployed, or basic skills deficient) and Adult program eligibility then receive the second level of priority of services;

3. All other veterans and eligible spouses who meet Adult program eligibility, then receive third level of priority of service;
4. Other individuals (not veterans or eligible spouses) who do not meet the statutory priority (public assistance recipient, other low-income individuals including underemployed, or basic skills deficient), but do meet a local discretionary priority (not applicable to the Lackawanna County Workforce Development Area) and Adult program eligibility, then would receive the fourth level of priority for services; and
5. Other individuals (not veterans or eligible spouses) who do not meet the statutory priority (public assistance recipient, other low-income individuals including underemployed, or basic skills deficient) and do not meet the local discretionary priority, but do meet the Adult program eligibility, then receive the fifth level of priority for services.

In the development of this Priority of Service Policy, it is recognized that the Lackawanna County Workforce Development Area's success in achieving priority of service for the target groups within the Adult program, as defined herein, will be measured by a state-established formula comparing the percentage of individuals in the four (4) statutory priority targeted groups, adding those in the local discretionary priority group (where applicable), who are enrolled in the Adult program versus the percentage of all other individuals who are enrolled in the program. It is further understood that the goal (at least 51%) is to serve a greater percentage of Adult customers from the priority targeted groups than all other individuals. In a concerted effort to attain this goal, the Lackawanna County Workforce Development Area will conduct active outreach to the priority groups as outlined. It is further comprehended that, during Program years 2015 and 2016, the percentage of new Adult customers from the targeted priority groups will be used to establish a baseline percentage with Program Year 2017 the first compliance year for the 51% target.

Supportive services for youth are defined (WIOA Section §681.570) as services/assistance that are needed to enable an individual to participate in activities. These services can include but are not necessarily limited to the following:

- linkages to community services;
- transportation assistance;
- child and dependent care assistance;
- housing assistance;
- needs-related payments;
- educational testing assistance;
- reasonable accommodations for youth with disabilities;
- referrals to health care;
- assistance with uniforms or other appropriate work attire; and
- the provision of work-related tools, including such items as eye glasses and protective eye gear.

According to WIOA Section §680.900, supportive services for Adults and Dislocated Workers may only be provided to individuals who are participating in career or training services, unable to obtain supportive services from other programs providing such services, and when necessary to enable participation in career and training services. These services may include:

- transportation;
- child care and dependent care;
- housing assistance; and
- needs-related payments.

Any/all services provided must be identified and defined, in detail, in the participant's *Individual Employment Plan (IEP)*. The maximum amount of WIOA funds will be based on an individual's documented need, not to exceed \$1,500, and not to extend past a participant's actual enrollment in career services or a training activity. The local Board ensures collaboration with One-Stop partners and other community service providers to ensure resource and service coordination in the local area.

**Section 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?

Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) provide the mechanism for adult and dislocated worker customers to access occupational skills training as described in the previous section. The local area utilizes a structured ITA format and follows an ITA Cap Policy that is reviewed yearly by the Local Board. As stated above in Section 4.6, a copy of the PY 2017 ITA CAP Policy is included in the attachments to this document.

Work-based training opportunities are conducted through formalized OJT contracting processes, also as described above. Currently, an EDSI staff member is assigned specifically to conduct outreach, negotiate, and develop OJT sites for contracting purposes. An OJT Data Sheet has been designed for outreach purposes to business and industry informing them of the opportunity to receive this service. Additionally, through the quarterly *One-Stop Sector Initiatives*, company/business interaction is used for networking purposes for development of opportunities for the local job seekers.

In addition to ITAs and OJT contracting, the local area may engage business/industry for the purpose of development of customized training opportunities. Over the past ten years, this has only been utilized once in the local area.

Constant Contact is used regularly to disseminate information to both job seekers as well as business customers regarding available opportunities. The local One-Stop site hosts both group workshops or one-on-one case management sessions (traditionally bi-weekly) for presentation of labor market data including the knowledge, skills, and abilities to secure employment in local

market. The Center also conducts O’Net Interest Inventory sessions for anyone unsure of their career path and weekly career decision-making sessions geared to specific industries. Finally, job seekers are informed of the methods to research available training, career path, and employment opportunities.

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

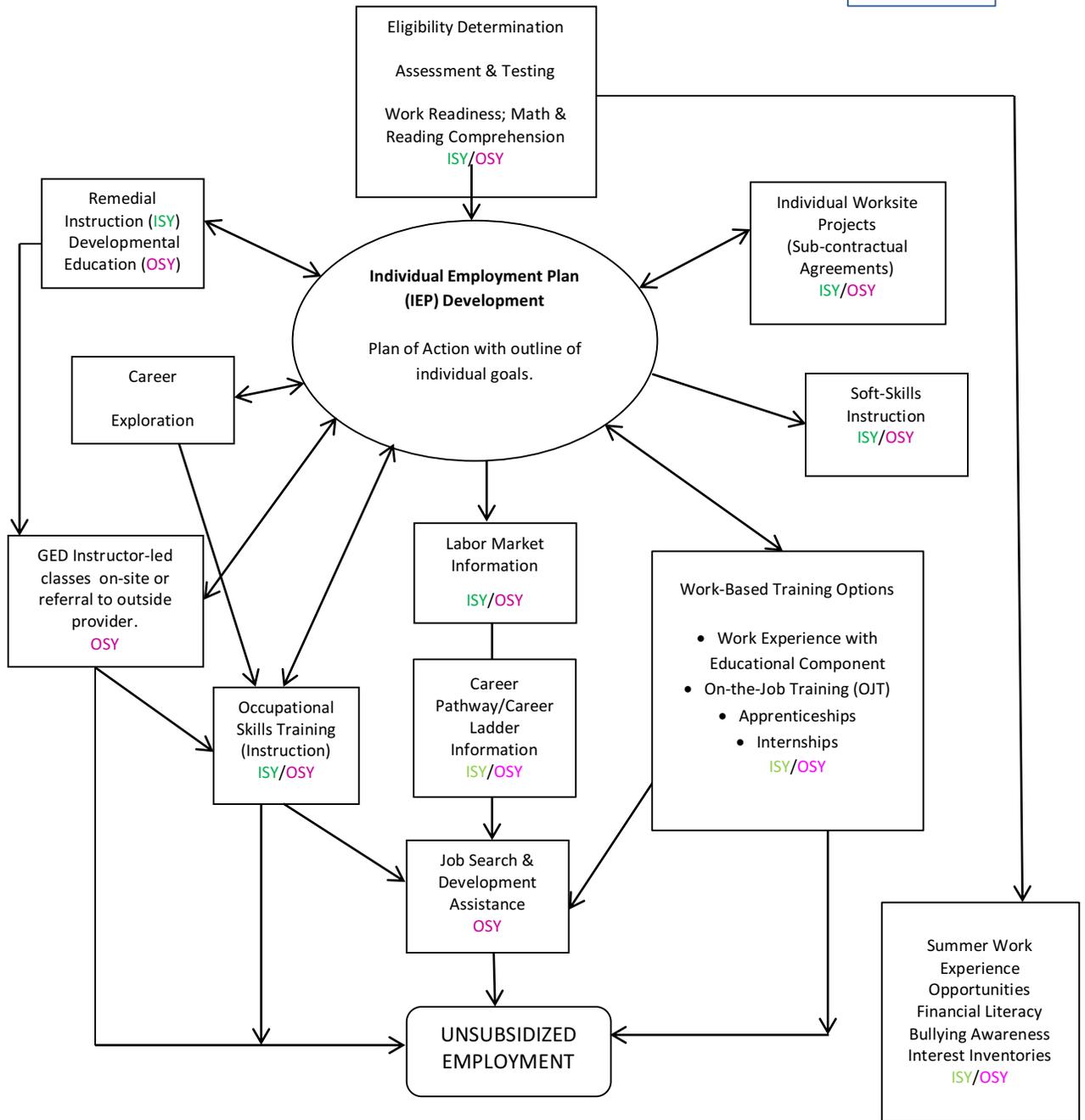
The Lackawanna County WDB, local economic development officials, and constituents have, for many years, promoted the development and orchestration of an information network that thoroughly encompasses all youth organizations throughout the County. Representatives from many of these bodies sit as active members of the WDB and its Youth Advocacy Sub-Committee and provide invaluable insight into local youth issues. All are kept abreast of current systems in place or under development and concur that we must target specific pockets of “at risk” youth such as those involved with the courts for various reasons such as truancy, domestic violence situations, juvenile delinquency and children of incarcerated parents; homeless and foster care youth; migrant and seasonal farm worker youth; youth with disabilities; etc. Also targeted are those economically disadvantaged and underprivileged youth in need of guidance and supervision to learn not only social skills but job skills as well. Strategies addressing the “in-school” student are coordinated with local school districts and outreach centers such as United Neighborhood Centers, the local Boys and Girls Club, Project Elect (pregnant and parenting youth – both Mothers and Fathers), etc., and have, traditionally, revolved around remedial and truancy concerns but are currently broadening to include economic development issues such as local employment awareness campaigns targeting not only high schools, but the intermediate level as well. Local youth advocates strongly agree that access to a younger youth population affords the opportunity to address such pertinent issues as course scheduling for specific occupations in demand or projected to be in demand in the local area, coordination of services addressing specific needs, involvement of the PA CareerLink® in career planning efforts, attendance at local and regional education and job fairs, etc.

Recognizing that career ladders and goal-setting should begin during the intermediate and secondary school years, it must also be accepted that those youth traditionally classified as out-of-school youth, including those categorized as “disconnected”, if they can be successfully engaged and maintained, are adaptable to open options and development of employment plans. Intensive promotion of available services coupled with information on local employment opportunities including wage scales, post-secondary training opportunities, and funding availability serves to entice prospective youth job seekers (through 24 years of age). Initiatives such as school visits, dissemination of career pathways information, speaker presentations, and involvement in career fairs helps to “fill the gaps” in career-based education and promotes the investigation of future career paths. Additionally, implementation of a Business Education Partnership (BEP) Grant, afforded by the Commonwealth of PA, is allowing for much enhanced infiltration with Intermediate level students (grades 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup>) for career-related material dissemination, interactive career pathways projects, and career “fun days” in local schools.

Currently, the Youth service provider, contracted following a formal RFP process, is Arbor Employment and Training (E & T) d/b/a ResCare Workforce Services (hereinafter ResCare). ResCare staff are physically located at the PA CareerLink® Lackawanna County, from where all activities emanate. The initial intake process, objective assessment, case management, the development of Individual Employment Plan (IEP), and eligibility assessments/determinations are handled on a one-on-one basis by ResCare staff. Applicants are first provided with an overview of program opportunities and the services available, and, if interested, begin the eligibility determination process. Once economic eligibility is confirmed, computerized testing is conducted utilizing the TABE format and/or WorkKeys. Scoring is automatic and results are available for discussion with the client immediately. Taking into consideration such factors as the youth's age, educational level, barriers, skills and abilities, and interest each participant is afforded one-on-one case management services to develop and ensure an appropriate employment plan and confirm the responsibilities involved.

The design of the local youth program format is such as to provide a myriad of opportunities to guide eligible participants in meeting their individual goals which may include attainment of educational credentials, assistance with basic literacy skills, acquisition of a HSE or GED, acquiring basic work experience, smoothly transitioning from high school to post-secondary education, learning new skills, and/or entering the work force. To this end, the following framework has been established: Most youth operations are conducted from the PA CareerLink® Lackawanna County, located at 135 Franklin Avenue in downtown Scranton. Center hours are 8:30 to 4:30, Monday through Friday. A variety of activities, as charted on the following page, are available to youth from ages 5 -24, utilizing both TANF as well as WIOA funding:

CODE:  
 ISY – In-School Youth  
 OSY – Out-of-School Youth



Activities are developed on an individual basis based on the youngsters/young adults’ skills, abilities, desires, specific program (funding stream) eligibility, transportation needs, and financial feasibility (for occupational training above and beyond local ITA limits). All services are prioritized to any youth with disabilities. As previously noted herein, the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) is a partner in the PA CareerLink® Lackawanna County and has a youth OVR counselor stationed at the One-Stop. This individual not only sits as a member of the WDB’s Youth Advocacy Sub-Committee but works closely with ResCare staff to ensure that

youth with disabilities received the most appropriate mix of services, based on their individualized needs. This linkage also affords leveraging of resources to services to best serve those youngsters with disabilities.

In addressing the 14 essential elements specified for youth under WIOA, the implementation strategy for each element is herein defined:

Element #	Implementation Strategy
<p>1</p> <p>Tutoring, study skills training, instruction and evidence-based dropout prevention and recovery strategies that lead to completion requirements for a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent (including a recognized certificate of attendance or similar document for individuals with disabilities) or for a recognized post-secondary credential.</p>	<p>The Local WDB has, for many years, solicited youth providers of service that addresses this element.</p> <p>During the current program year, locally approved vendors provide tutoring and academic enrichment, study skills training, career awareness, strengthening of individual self-advocacy skills, post-secondary opportunities, and individual one-on-one counseling through a mix of after-school study programs, skill-development activities coupled with remedial education, a personal growth/leadership/community service project, and a pre-apprenticeship project. In addressing drop-out initiatives, the local Board, has, for the past several years, distributed a packet of informational materials, <i>Dropout Transitions</i>, for distribution to any student having made the decision to leave school. Included is invaluable information regarding “where to go” for services, accessing GED/remedial programs, labor market data, training opportunities, etc. Each school is presented with a minimum of 5 booklets with the larger County schools receiving 10 or more with additional copies provided to any school upon request.</p>
<p>2</p> <p>Alternative school services, or dropout recovery services</p>	<p>Drop-out recovery services are discussed above. This process will continue with possible enhanced distribution of information to providers of in-school youth services, the alternative schools, libraries, etc. Alternative schools in Lackawanna County are: Friendship House, Nativity Miguel, and New Story. Youth program staff makes visits to these sites at least once per school year to speak with the participants about opportunities available to them upon graduation with each student receiving a packet of information containing handouts on job searching activities (i.e., enrolling into the CWDS System, searching for jobs, resume´ preparation, and interviewing skills). During these presentations, students are also encouraged to visit the PA CareerLink® Lackawanna County to become familiar with activities offered and participate in the many workshops that are offered to the public at no charge. Although not specifically considered an alternative school, the Commonwealth Connections Academy is available for interested students. Finally, other programs available in the community support pregnant and parenting youth (Project Elect) as well as remedial needs.</p>
<p>3</p> <p>Paid and unpaid work experience coupled with academic and occupational education which may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. summer employment and/or other employment opportunities available throughout the school year;</li> <li>ii. pre-apprenticeship programs;</li> <li>iii. internships and job shadowing; and</li> <li>iv. on-the-job training opportunities.</li> </ul>	<p>Paid work experience and on-the-job training (OJT) experiences are an integral part of the current program strategy. Any participant enrolled in work experience has, included in their employment plan, an education activity that may include GED preparation; remediation; referral to local literacy programs; and/or financial literacy. Currently, a pre-apprenticeship project (in collaboration with the other NE PA workforce boards) is available at the Career Technology Center of Lackawanna County, specializing in the building trades and manufacturing. Additionally, each year the local area provides a summer work experience program from late June to late August for approximately 100 participants, working 30-35 hours per week, earning an \$8.50 wage. In addition to the work experience activity, participants receive information on financial literacy, bullying, and career exploration.</p>
<p>4</p>	<p>Occupational skills training is addressed through the award of Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) to eligible out-of-school youth, with amounts customarily ranging from \$2,500 up to</p>

<p>Occupational skill training with priority consideration for training that leads to recognized post-secondary credentials that align with demand industry sectors or occupations in the local area as approved by the local Board as meeting the criteria defined in the WIOA.</p>	<p>\$5,000 maximum (current WDB-approved funding level) toward specific skills training in in-demand occupational areas at an approved training/educational facility (on ETPL). Historically, approximately 40 ITAs are awarded during each Program year.</p>
<p>5 Education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster.</p>	<p>At present, students attending occupational skills training received job data/information as part of their program involvement. A much enhanced approach to the provision of labor market information has been implemented to ensure that a comprehensive package is available to all students as they matriculate through their educational endeavor. This new career decision-making component promotes a smarter, quicker, and easier job search upon completion.</p> <p>Youth participants will have the opportunity to master basic academic skills at the same time as learning career-specific technical skills. This approach aligns with recent research which found students using an integrated education and training model occurring concurrently and contextually with workforce preparation activities had better rates of program completion and persistence than a comparison group.</p>
<p>6 Leadership development opportunities, including community service and peer-centered activities that encourage responsibility and other positive social and civic behaviors.</p>	<p>Leadership development opportunities are opportunities that encourage responsibility, confidence, employability, self-determination, and other positive social behaviors such as: exposure to post-secondary educational possibilities; community and service learning possibilities; peer-centered activities, including peer mentoring and tutoring; organizational and team work training, including team leadership training; training in decision-making, including determining priorities and problem solving; citizenship training, including life skills training such as parenting and work behavior training; civic engagement activities which promote the quality of life in a community; and other leadership activities that place youth in a leadership role.</p> <p>During the current Program Year, United Neighborhood Centers of Northeastern PA (UNC) is subcontracted to conduct a <i>Leaders in Training</i> program for youth between the ages of 14 to 18 years of age, which promotes good citizenship and community involvement. Students who successfully complete the program may be placed at Project Hope, a summer camp for economically disadvantaged families, as Junior Camp Counselors to assist and facilitate the activities sponsored by the camp or enrolled in another summer work experience activity.</p>
<p>7 Supportive services.</p>	<p>Supportive services can be defined as services/assistance that are needed to enable an individual to participate in activities. The need for supportive services is determined during each participant's enrollment process and the development of their <i>Individual Employment Plan (IEP)</i>. In accordance with a WDB-approved WIOA Supportive Services Policy, supportive Services, as determined by individual need, can include but are not necessarily limited to the following: linkages to community services; transportation assistance; child and dependent care assistance; housing assistance; needs-related payments; educational testing assistance; reasonable accommodations for youth with disabilities; referrals to health care; assistance with uniforms or other appropriate work attire, and the provision of work-related tools, including such items as eye glasses and protective eye gear. As services are administered, they are recorded in the participant personnel record accordingly.</p>
<p>8 Adult mentoring for at least 12 months that may occur both during and after program participation.</p>	<p>Historically, youth program staff mentor their participants due to their one-on-one involvement with each participant and their understanding of the individual participant's needs, concerns, issues, etc.</p> <p>On-going contacts by the Case Managers serve to identify issues and allow for immediate intervention.</p> <p>The local area will solicit adult mentors from the community at-large, from other community organizations, from WDB membership, from the Youth Advocacy Sub-Committee membership, from the Greater Scranton Chamber of Commerce Skills in Scranton Advisory Board. Adult mentors (other than the assigned case manager) must commit for at least 12 months and provide guidance, support, and encouragement (face-</p>

	to-face once per year) to promote the development of competence and character of the mentee. Mentoring activities can be done through electronic means and may include workplace mentoring at assigned worksites.
9 Follow-up services for not less than 12 months after the completion of participation.	Follow up services are the responsibility of the Youth Program staff or contracted provider with all contacts/outcomes recorded in the participant's personnel file. Follow-up services are provided monthly to insure that all aspects of a participant's plan is being followed as per their agreement. All exited youth participants are contacted at 30, 60, and 90 day intervals; reviewed again at 6 months after exit; and, finally, at 1 year from their exit date. Follow-up contacts are made more often in situations where extenuating circumstances exist. Follow-up services for youth may include the leadership development and supportive services listed earlier; regular contact with a youth participant's employer to address work related problems that may arise; assistance securing a better paying job, career pathway development, and further education or training; work related peer support groups; adult mentoring - minimum duration of 12 months, more if deemed necessary; follow-up services must include more than only a contact attempted or made for securing documentation in order to report a performance outcome.
10 Comprehensive guidance and counseling, which may include drug and alcohol abuse counseling, as well as referrals to counseling, as appropriate based on individual needs.	The approved contracted provider will provide one-on-one comprehensive and counseling services throughout a participant's enrollment in activities as well as support after a participant exits the program. Any participant in need of out-side services (which may include drug and alcohol or abuse services) are referred to community programs, as appropriate.
11 Financial literacy training.	As previously stated in item #3, the local area has, for many years, conducted a summer work experience program. As part of this activity, Wells Fargo Bank provided a curriculum that was used for instructional purposes revolving around the basics of the banking system including such topics as: how to start saving money, opening up a checking and/or savings account, understanding wage tax deductions, debit versus credit use, spending money wisely, etc. This activity is being expanded to all work experience participants as part of their overall educational component. Additionally, workers from local banks can be encouraged to serve as speakers in classroom presentations.
12 Entrepreneurial training.	An "entrepreneurial workshop" series is under development in collaboration with the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) at the University of Scranton for presentation to OSY participants as well as possible inclusion in high school visit presentations.
13 Services that provide labor market and employment information about in-demand industry sectors or occupations available in the local area such as career awareness, career counseling, and career exploration services.	Currently, career awareness, counseling, and information is provided to all OSY participants during their enrollment in youth activities. This is handled one-on-one between the participant and their assigned case manager as well as through PA CareerLink® workshops and sector initiative projects. The in-school populations receive this as part of classroom/group presentations. The local also utilizes the CWIA High School and Middle School Guides as an additional resource for dissemination labor market and employment information.
14 Activities that help youth prepare for and transition to post-secondary education and training.	Currently, this is handled through the provision of an interest inventory to all eligible participants through one-on-one discussions and provision of labor market and educational services data. Case managers provide guidance based on a participant's goals and plan of action, all of which are documented in an Individual Employment Plan. The Educational Opportunity Center will also provide financial aid workshops for transitioning students to identify funding sources.

If a young adult "requires additional assistance to complete an educational program or to secure and hold employment", ResCare Workforce Services, as the local youth provider, will provide intensive one-on-one case management to ensure that the individual receives a viable plan of action. All activity will be thoroughly documented in the individual's IEP and monitored, at a minimum, on a monthly basis to allow for updates and changes as may be necessary. Also,

information which may be received from the youth's educational provider will be incorporated into the overall case management activity and case file.

The WDB has not, customarily, utilized the 5% exception but, if it so implemented in the future, any youth placements will need WDB staff approval.

A Keystone Job Corps representative visits the PA CareerLink® Lackawanna County on a bi-weekly basis to present information on the Luzerne County Site as well as to conduct interviews and complete applications on prospective candidates. Also, referrals are made whenever a need is expressed by a customer, thus, enabling a seamless delivery of service. For many, many years, the Keystone Job Corps Community Liaison was a very active member of the previous Youth Council and did transition to the WDB Youth Advocacy Sub-Committee at the on-set of WIOA. He has just recently retired and outreach occurred for a replacement; however, no response has been received to date. The WDB will continue its efforts to secure a new Job Corps representative.

**Section 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 Lackawanna County WDB is fortunate to have a Statewide Rapid Response Regional Representative stationed at the PA CareerLink® Lackawanna County. This individual is instrumental in organizing comprehensive rapid response services for any company filing a WARN notice or smaller dislocations/closings, upon request. For many years, the local Board has been strategically involved in all rapid response activities which includes attending meetings of dislocated workers either prior to dislocation or after; conducting information sessions on available services; providing materials to ease the transition process; providing one-on-one, individualized staff services; charting dislocated workers needs through a survey process; developing appropriate employment plans; providing GED referrals; and arranging a job/education fair specific to the dislocated population. Local service delivery staff and partners participate as part of a team that provides the services listed. This is provided through workshops and one-on-one counseling, and, if needed, referrals to other social service agencies. The local BST is also utilized to contact other industry-specific businesses for the purpose of a rapid transition to re-employment for those dislocated individuals.

**Section 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 services(s).

The design of the local Board's youth activities/services, as described in detail in Section 4.8, is such as to augment/supplement secondary and postsecondary education programs, not duplicate them. Following procedures originally implemented under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, the local Board has made significant in-roads into local secondary schools that has

allowed for the dissemination of industry-specific information, career pathways discussions, distribution of systemic materials, and recruitment of potential program participants. Service provider staff are accompanied by industry experts during school presentations. It has been found that smaller group sessions are much more effective than large assemblies. Further, if sessions are designated for specific groups (e.g., those interested in industry-specific careers; those undecided about their future plans; those seeking summer employment), this activity is much more beneficial to the audience.

One major local example is the implementation of a Health Care Academy within the Scranton School District. Scranton's healthcare sector represents one of the most vibrant areas of employment growth in Lackawanna County. Currently, dozens of employment vacancies exist within the city's four hospitals and healthcare system presents heightened opportunities for access into this active employment market. Frequently, human resource personnel at these facilities are challenged to fill vacancies due to a gap in the skill sets of applicants. The Healthcare Career Academy project seeks to identify those consistent employment vacancies; communicate related training requirements to secondary school systems; and integrate into school curricula information that can better assist students in obtaining these jobs following graduation. Developed and spearheaded by the Greater Scranton Chamber of Commerce, and supported by the local WDB under its Business Education Partnership (BEP) Grant, this initiative integrates employment information and skill requirements into the schools' curriculums. The hope is to make appropriate students more prepared to access important and often hard to fill jobs in the local hospitals.

Also, the WDB Executive Director and other Board staff regularly participate in activities at the Career Technology Center of Lackawanna County (most school districts are participating members) and, through its youth provider (ResCare) makes regular visits to local high schools to promote local services and encourage graduating students to visit the local center for career services and/or further training options. The receipt of a BEP grant is affording the local Board additional access to the 13 school districts across the County and will allow access to a wider-range of students.

As previously stated, Title II services are made available through a well-established referral method between the local Title II Contractor (Marywood University) as well as the United Neighborhood Centers of NE PA who also offers adult literacy, ESL and workplace literacy services. These referrals commonly occur via Constant Contact, face-to-face case management advocacy or dissemination of information for self-referral.

Linkages with all postsecondary institutions are solid and provide a platform for communication of not only current practices but of any issues that may arise which would impair system initiatives. Working collaboratively, issues are resolved and best practices are established.

In addressing collaboration with post-secondary institutions in the area, many members of the local Board as well as Board and PA CareerLink® staff sit as members of these institutions workforce advisory committees to ensure collaboration of programs and functions. The

education community in Lackawanna County is close-knit and has, for many years, participated in PA CareerLink® and workforce initiatives with the intention of better servicing the needs of business and industry, both stable as well as migrating/fluctuating. Members of all local postsecondary institutions/facilities regularly participate in educational fairs during Sector Initiative events at the local One-Stop.

The local Board serves as the overseer of WIOA educational service provision and monitors outcomes to ensure alignment with both secondary and post-secondary initiatives. All of the associations listed above enable a conduit for communication of information and networking that serves to avoid duplication and allow for the enhancement of overall systemic strategies. Further, Quarterly WDB meetings have been used as a vehicle to engage local educational entities through presentations and discussion of activities.

**Section 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. sec.) services and other services provided through the one-stop delivery system.

The PA CareerLink® Lackawanna County conducted its grand opening in April of 2001. Since that time, both WIOA/contracted staff work alongside the Department of Labor & Industry's merit staff to provide the best possible mix of services to both the job seeking as well as business customer. The Pa CareerLink® Lackawanna County is designed in an open floor plan configuration with integrated WIOA contracted/merit/partner staff sitting side-by-side. Customers are served by PA CareerLink® staff with no denotation of their employing agencies. The Center's Business Services Team is comprised of both WIOA and merit staff as well as "outside" partners representing the Greater Scranton Chamber of Commerce, the office of Senator John Blake, the Lackawanna County Office of Economic Development, and the WDB. This concept allows for the flow of information among internal staff as well as the economic development community. There has never been a discord among staff. All staff are integral in the provision of workshops, administration of services, visits to local employers, and Center events. WIOA contracted and Wagner-Peyser staff are cohesive in their approach to service provision and support each other on any/all specific entity projects. Wagner-Peyser merit staff assumes the role of the primary provider of career services within the PA CareerLink® operational structure. The expertise of merit staff in providing labor market information, job order matching, state and federal Civil Service information, RESEA profiling, and TRADE services augments the career information and training opportunities provided by WIOA contracted staff to ensure a non-duplicative, comprehensive menu of services for both customer groups, job seeker and employers. The ultimate goal of the local one-stop system is to provide a customer-friendly, inviting atmosphere with trained staff to assist in all job seeking tasks, training opportunities, and, ultimately, the employment/re-employment of its job seeking customers and to provide seamless services to the business community. As stated, locally, the system is working.

**Section 4.12:** How will the local board coordinate WIOA Title I workforce investment activities with adult education literacy activities under WIOA Title II?

Coordination with local WIOA Title II Adult Education and Literacy providers has always been of high-priority within the Lackawanna County Workforce Area. Local providers attend quarterly WDB meetings and, yearly, present information regarding their services and or applications for funding. When applicable, an ad-hoc Committee of the WDB is formed to review all WIOA Title II applications to ensure that they are consistent with this local plan. Additionally, recommendations will be made to the eligible agencies/providers to ensure alignment. It should also be noted that the Lackawanna County Literacy Coalition meets bi-monthly at the PA CareerLink® Lackawanna County for coordination and collaboration of information among a variety of community partners to eliminate any duplication of effort and to provide a continuum in the provision of services. As of the writing of this plan, the local Title II Adult Literacy provider, Marywood University, has agreed to become a part-time member affiliate at the local One-Stop Center.

**Section 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?

The Lackawanna County WDB utilizes the PA CareerLink® Lackawanna County, centrally located at 135 Franklin Avenue in downtown Scranton, PA, as the operational arm for the provision of services and coordination of activities amongst a variety of community partners and educational institutions/training providers. WIOA providers of services are based at the PA CareerLink® site to ensure a coordinated effort with not only PA Wagner-Peyser staff but with OVR, PA Department of Human Services, Lackawanna County Head Start, local training providers, Pathstone (provision of older worker services), the local EARN provider, and others to ensure a seamless, friendly, and uncomplicated process for service provision for the job-seeking customer as well as assistance for the business community. As mentioned, all of these entities are partners at the local PA CareerLink® site, thus, enabling a comprehensive mix of activities in the true “One-Stop” fashion that are described throughout this Plan. It must also be noted here that Lackawanna College, Johnson College, Penn State-Worthington Scranton Campus, and Marywood University maintain close ties with the PA CareerLink®, visiting the Center and providing valuable materials and contact information for all of their programs of study. In an attempt to further expand connections, from a youth standpoint, WIOA contracted staff are visiting local intermediate and secondary schools, providing career information, discussing services available following graduation, and promoting technical education. Also, linkages have been established with the Lackawanna County Department of Human Services (formerly Lackawanna County Children and Youth Services) for referral of youngsters that are foster children, those aging out of the foster care system, or are involved with the Juvenile Justice system. An additional collaboration with the Lackawanna County Department of Human Services (formerly Department of Public Welfare) provides assistance in identifying prospective customers which may, in turn, assist in the reduction of the welfare

rolls. As described, all services are prioritized for individuals with barriers to employment as well as veterans and their spouses. Finally, solicitation of additional PA CareerLink® partners is on-going with the Educational Opportunity Center (EOC) providing tutoring and SAT preparation classes at the Site during the Summer of 2017.

WIOA Title IV OVR Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors provide eligible WIOA Title IV customers with multiple, individualized services such as diagnostic, vocational counseling and guidance, vocational evaluation, restoration, training, and job placement. OVR also provides both OVR eligible and potentially eligible 14-21 year old in-school youth with disabilities pre-employment transition services designed to prepare them to enter competitive, integrated employment. Pre-employment transition services include paid work-based learning experiences, job shadowing as well as vocational counseling and guidance. Also offered is group training on workplace readiness, independent living skills, and self-advocacy skills.

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

OVR Business Services Team staff provides multiple services to the business community designed to assist businesses with onboarding pre-screened qualified WIOA Title IV eligible individuals with disabilities. OVR business services include reasonable accommodations consultation, OJT, referral on tax credits or deductions. OVR also offers no cost consultation on the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), accessibility standards and helping a business to retain current employees following an accident, injury, or disability. OVR statewide business services staff can identify resources to assist an organization on how to improve access compliance and steps to diversify their workforce to include citizens with a disability.

Throughout this Multi-Year Plan, many activities have been described which ensure that businesses and employers are provided a myriad of services. These include:

- Access to a state-of-the art, on-site Business Center at the PA CareerLink® Lackawanna County for recruiting and interviewing purposes.
- One-on-one off-site visits.
- Access to On-The-Job Training (OJT) funds for new hires.
- Staff-assistance in utilizing the Commonwealth Workforce Development System (CWDS) for job postings and job matching.
- Access to customized training funds addressing larger-scale hiring or incumbent worker needs.
- Ability to participate in quarterly *Sector Initiative* events.
- Ability to participate in industry-specific roundtables.
- Staff-assistance in preparation of job descriptions applicable to the local labor market.
- Provision of wage and labor market information indicative to both the local as well as regional employment market.

- Accessibility to no less than quarterly Unemployment Compensation information sessions.
- Provision of information about local/regional specialized grant opportunities and/or Industry Partnership linkages.

This list was compiled mainly from outreach to local/regional employers by the One-Stop BST. Continued open lines of communication with the business community facilitate an awareness of fluctuating needs/trends and allows for a re-focus of service provision.

Also, the local area is well entrenched within the economic development community. Representatives from both the Greater Scranton Chamber of Commerce and the Lackawanna County Department of Economic Development are long-standing, active members of the WDB and provide much insight into the economic climate in the County. Both of these individuals also sit as representatives on the Northeast PA Alliance Board which serves to allow for collaborated regionalization of many projects. The Lackawanna County WDB Executive Director also serves as the Deputy Director for Workforce Development for Lackawanna County. All of these alliances provide an interactive platform for project development that can best meet the needs of the local business community. Coupled with the *Quarterly Sector Initiatives* which are described in Section L3.4 of this Plan, support is provided to business and industry through the following: assistance in posting of job orders, assistance in recruitment of qualified candidates to fill openings, provision of labor market information regarding wage rates as well as linkages to educational facilities for upgrading of incumbent workforces, provision of quarterly Unemployment Compensation seminars to assist employers in navigating current unemployment law and regulations, and On-The-Job Training (OJT) funds for new hires. And, as has been previously described, a state-of-the-art *Business Center* is available at the PA CareerLink® Lackawanna County for use by the business community for interviewing and recruitment purposes

Again, as previously stated, the Site has 3 direct phone lines to the UI Service Centers to assist in addressing UI questions and issues in a timely manner. The local UI liaison to the PA CareerLink® Lackawanna County conducts a monthly information workshop for the general public, both for employers as well as UC claimants. This individual is also available in between session via email or phone to answer any question(s) posed by a One-Stop customer.

**Section 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 Local Board developed and approved (most recently at the WDB Quarterly Meeting on June 15, 2017) a Supportive Service Policy that clearly defines the areas for provision of services. This policy, which is reviewed and approved yearly, currently includes the following:

Supportive services for youth are defined (WIOA Section §681.570) as services/assistance that are needed to enable an individual to participate in activities. These services can include but are not necessarily limited to the following:

- linkages to community services;
- transportation assistance (i.e. bus passes);
- child and dependent care assistance;
- housing assistance;
- needs-related payments;
- educational testing assistance;
- reasonable accommodations for youth with disabilities;
- referrals to health care;
- assistance with uniforms or other appropriate work attire; and
- the provision of work-related tools, including such items as eye glasses and protective eye gear.

According to WIOA Section §680.900, supportive services for Adults and Dislocated Workers may only be provided to individuals who are participating in career or training services, unable to obtain supportive services from other programs providing such services, and when necessary to enable participation in career and training services. These services may include:

- transportation;
- child care and dependent care;
- housing assistance; and
- needs-related payments.

Any/all services provided must be identified and defined, in detail, in the participant's *Individual Employment Plan (IEP)*. The maximum amount of WIOA funds will be based on an individual's documented need, not to exceed \$1,500, and not to extend past a participant's actual enrollment in career services or a training activity. The local Board ensures collaboration with One-Stop partners and other community service providers to ensure resource and service coordination in the local area.

As has been previously stated, Lackawanna County is primarily urban in nature with a wide-spread, coordinated public transportation system. Lackawanna County also has a coordinated transportation system to accommodate the needs of individuals with disabilities, the aging, and others in need of assistance. Also, there is a coordination of bus transportation between the Lackawanna (COLTS) and Luzerne (LCTA) transit authorities to address travel between Scranton, Pittston, and Wiles Barre, PA.

## **Section 5: Compliance**

**Section 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 Local Board has developed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that specifically defines the roles and responsibilities of all mandated One-Stop partners including those services providers awarded contracts (through a competitive procurement process) for the 2017 Program Year. This MOU comprehensively outlines the processes and procedures to facilitate the requirements for integration and transparency of service provision including data sharing, confidentiality, referrals, accessibility (physical virtual, communication, and programmatic), outreach, dispute resolution, monitoring, non-discrimination and equal opportunity, indemnification, severability, drug and alcohol workplace compliance, anti-lobbying certification, debarment and suspension adherence, priority of services, compliance with salary compensation and limitation, and governing law. Adherence to these practices will further ensure minimum duplication of effort and a universal access to all services as described below:

Business Services	Job Seeker Services	Youth Services
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Serve as a single point of contact for businesses, responding to all requests in a timely manner</li> <li>• Conduct outreach regarding the local workforce system's services and products</li> <li>• Provide access to labor market information</li> <li>• Assist with the interpretation of labor market information</li> <li>• Use of local one-stop facility for recruitment and interviewing</li> <li>• Post job vacancies in CWDS and take and fill job orders</li> <li>• Provide information regarding workforce development initiatives and programs</li> <li>• Provide information and services related to UI taxes and claims</li> <li>• Conduct on-0site Rapid Response activities</li> <li>• Conduct job fairs</li> <li>• provide customized recruitment and job applicant screening, assessment and referral services</li> <li>• Consult on human resources issues</li> <li>• Provide information regarding disability awareness issues</li> <li>• Provide information regarding assistive technology and communication accommodations</li> <li>• Assist with disability and communication accommodations, including job coaches</li> <li>• Provide information on On-the-Job Training (OJT) contracting</li> <li>• Provide employer and industry-driven Occupational Skills Training information</li> <li>• Provide information on customized training initiatives</li> <li>• Coordinate with employers to develop and implement layoff aversion strategies</li> <li>• Develop, convene, or implement industry or sector partnerships</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Basic Career Services</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outreach, intake and orientation to the information, services, programs, tools and resources available through the local workforce system</li> <li>• Initial assessment of skills, aptitudes, abilities, and supportive service needs</li> <li>• Job search and placement assistance</li> <li>• Access to employment opportunities and labor market information</li> <li>• Performance information and program costs of eligible providers of training, education, and workforce services</li> <li>• Information on performance of the local workforce system</li> <li>• Information on available supportive services and referral to such, as appropriate</li> <li>• Information and meaningful assistance on UI claim filing</li> <li>• Determination of potential eligibility for workforce Partner services, programs and referrals</li> <li>• Information for application of financial aid for training and education programs not provided under WIOA</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Individualized Career Services</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of an Individual Employment Development Plan charting goals, achievement objectives, and service needs</li> <li>• Referral to training services</li> <li>• Group counseling</li> <li>• One-on-one counseling and career planning</li> <li>• Literacy activities related to work readiness</li> <li>• Case management for customers seeking training services, in and out of area job search, referral and placement assistance</li> <li>• Work experience, transitional jobs, registered apprenticeships, and internships</li> <li>• Workforce preparation services (soft skills) to prepare individuals for unsubsidized employment or training</li> <li>• Post-employment follow-up services</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Training</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Occupational skills training through Individual Training Accounts (ITAs)</li> <li>• Adult education and literacy activities, including English language acquisition (ELA) in combination with the above training activities</li> <li>• Incumbent worker training</li> <li>• On-The-Job training (OJT)</li> <li>• Programs combining workplace training with related instruction (cooperative education)</li> <li>• private sector training initiatives</li> <li>• Skill upgrading and retraining</li> <li>• Entrepreneurial training</li> <li>• Employer-committed customized training</li> <li>• Oher (locally determined)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tutoring, study skills training, instruction, and evidenced-based drop-out prevention and recovery strategies that lead to completion of a high school diploma or GED (including a recognized certificate of attendance or similar document for individuals with disabilities) or for a recognized post-secondary credential</li> <li>• paid and unpaid work experience with an academic and occupational education which may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Summer and year-round employment opportunities</li> <li>○ Pre-apprenticeship programs</li> <li>○ Internships and job shadowing</li> <li>○ and OJT Opportunities</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster</li> <li>• Supportive services</li> <li>• Follow-up services for not less than 12 months after the completion of participation, as appropriate</li> <li>• Financial literacy education</li> <li>• Provision of labor market and employment information about in-demand industry sectors or occupations available in the local area, such as career awareness, career counseling, and career exploration services</li> <li>• Alternative secondary school services or dropout recovery services, as appropriate</li> <li>• Occupational skill training with priority consideration in areas that lead to recognized post-secondary credentials that are aligned with local in-demand industry sectors or occupations</li> <li>• Leadership development opportunities such as community service, peer-centered activities encouraging responsibility, and other positive social and civic behaviors, as appropriate</li> <li>• Adult mentoring during participation and not less than 12 months subsequent</li> <li>• Comprehensive guidance and counseling, which may include drug and alcohol abuse counseling and referral, as appropriate</li> <li>• Entrepreneurial skills training</li> <li>• Activities that help youth prepare for and transition to postsecondary education and training</li> </ul>

**Section 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?

The Lackawanna County WDB will adhere to the following process in the collection of debts, as follows:

- Step 1: An official initial contact (letter and/or email) informing the sub-recipient of the audit finding(s) that requests a written response to the allegations within 10 days of the date of the initial correspondence.
- Step 2: Within 15 days of receipt of the sub-recipient letter, a meeting of the WDB Executive Committee will be scheduled for discussion and/or resolution purposes. Any decision made with a restitution plan will be communicated to the sub-recipient via certified mail.
- Step 3: The sub-recipient, must, within 15 days, accept or dispute, in writing, the finding of the WDB Executive Committee. If accepted, the restitution plan will be enforced.
- Step 4: If the finding(s) is disputed, the WDB will solicit a legal decision on the audit concern(s).
- Step 6: If the legal decision supports the audit finding(s), the matter will be forwarded to a collection agency or Magistrate for resolution.

**Section 5.3:** What action(s) is the local board taking (or will take) towards becoming or remaining a high-performing board?

Lackawanna County has been designated as a single-County workforce area dating back to the late 1970's under the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) and traversing through the Jobs Training Partnership Act (JTPA) and, most recently, the Workforce Investment Act of 1998. Due to this situation, a formal network is well-established that has brought "to the table" a myriad of local stakeholders providing information and expertise in workforce development as well as community initiatives promoting systemic change. This close-knit community of professionals has the advantage/knowledge of each individual entity's goals and outcomes, thus, allowing for quick reaction to fluctuating needs within the local business environment and the subsequent development of timely plans of action. Cross affiliation of Board members serves to strengthen the linkages and provides a mechanism for disbursement of information regarding critical socioeconomic workforce and economic development issues.

That said, the Lackawanna County WDB recognizes the need for regionalized linkages and initiatives to ensure that quality services are provided universally and similarly to both job seekers and the business community across the 7-County (Carbon, Lackawanna, Luzerne, Monroe, Pike, Schuylkill, Wayne) Northeast region of the Commonwealth. Given the diversity (i.e., urban vs. rural; square mileage; transportation differences and challenges; local economies) of the three designated workforce areas in Northeast PA, it is important that workforce strategies, policies, procedures, and the like, are designed to promote a seamless operational package that is adaptable to both the region as well as the specifics of each area.

Collaboration and cooperation (regardless of circumstance), both internally and externally, sets the basis for continued designation as a high-performing Board. To ensure transparency and

improve accountability, during the course of this past Program Year, the local area has restructured through competitive procurement of Title I service providers, a new Operator Consortium for the local One-Stop operation, the EARN provider, as well as a transition in Fiscal Agent from a local private, non-profit to Lackawanna County. The Lackawanna County Board was designated as a high-performing Board in the mid-2000's and recognizes the following as steps for continued success:

- Review and update of the local Strategic Plan of Action with on-going, yearly reviews;
- A strengthened Sub-Committee structure;
- Continued participation in the Northeast PA Consortium of Workforce Boards;
- Continued participation by Board staff in NE PA Alliance PREP initiatives;
- Continued linkages with the Greater Scranton Chamber of Commerce and local economic development offices/agencies (the local WDB Executive Director also now serves as the Deputy Director for Workforce Development for Lackawanna County in the Office of Economic Development);
- Yearly Board review and approval of all policies and procedures;
- Increased Board member attendance and participation at quarterly meetings;
- Successful One-Stop chartering;
- Enhanced One-Stop Business Services Team roles in the local community with strengthened emphasis on employer-engagement;
- Continued linkages with career and technical education; and post-secondary educational institutions and training providers to ensure employer-driven curriculum development aligned with industry needs;
- Continuation of Board-approved Quarterly *Sector Initiatives*;
- Attainment of full mandated partner involvement in One-Stop operations;
- Continue priority engagement of Out-of-School Youth (OSY);
- Provide career awareness activities to the K-12 population;
- Provide career planning information and labor market data to local secondary schools;
- Increased services to individuals with disabilities
- Increased services to veterans and spouses of veterans;
- Attainment of all negotiated performance levels;
- Attainment of the 80% expenditure requirement of WIOA funds;
- Attainment of the 75% OSY mandate;
- Attainment of the 30%/40%/50% progressive training mandates; and
- Leveraging of outside funding sources and community resources to promote on-going sustainability.

**Section 5.4:** 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 an effort to thoroughly communicate the local Board’s development of this Multi-Year Plan and provide an opportunity for input from stakeholders, the following steps were taken prior to its release to the general public to solicit comments, suggestions, and areas for improvement:

- ❖ An initial draft of the Plan was distributed to all members of the Lackawanna County Workforce Development Board which includes members of the business, education, and labor communities, program partners, public agencies and additional community stakeholders (primarily the Greater Scranton and Carbondale Chambers of Commerce, Northeast Industrial Resource Center [NEPIRC], Lackawanna County Office of Economic Development, and City of Scranton Office of Economic Development. It is envisioned that these members will disseminate this Plan to their colleagues or business associates for additional input;
- ❖ An initial draft was forwarded to the Lackawanna County Board of Commissioners (Patrick O’Malley, Chairman; Jerry Notarianni; and Lauren Cummings) and
- ❖ All mandated One-Stop partners.

Any/all suggestions/comments received will be taken into consideration by the Executive Committee of the Lackawanna County WDB for inclusion in the final-approved document.

**Section 5.5:** What is the process the local board uses to provide a 30-day public comment period prior to submission of the plan?

This Plan was formally released, via publication in the Scranton Times/Tribune on **July 26, 2017**, and subsequently on **July 29, 2017**. Given that a new Lackawanna County WDB website is under development, the Plan was also posted on the local PA CareerLink® website, [www.pacareerlinklackawanna.org](http://www.pacareerlinklackawanna.org), as well as at [www.lackawannacounty.org](http://www.lackawannacounty.org). It remained available for public comment through August 25, 2017.

In addition, to ensure transparency and universality for public comments, a public information session was conducted on August 11, 2017 at the PA CareerLink® Lackawanna County, 135 Franklin Avenue in downtown Scranton, PA. This session was also advertised in the Scranton Times/Tribune and on the PA CareerLink® website.

Comments to this multi-Year Plan were to be submitted in writing (via letter and email processes) to Ms. Virginia H. Turano, WDB Executive Director, Scranton Enterprise Center, 201 Lackawanna Avenue Suite 215, Scranton, PA 18503 or to [vturano@wiblackawanna.org](mailto:vturano@wiblackawanna.org). **No comments were received.**

## Appendix D: Multi-Year Local Area Plan Instructions

### 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 plans.

- Agreement between all counties and other local governments, if applicable, establishing the consortium of local/chief elected officials. **Not applicable.**
- Agreement between the chief elected official(s) and the fiscal agent, if a fiscal agent is designated.
- Agreement between the local area elected official(s) and the local workforce development board.
- 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.
- 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.
- Local area procurement policy – must describe formal procurement procedures.
- 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.
- Risk management policy and process including records retention and public access; public records requests; monitoring; grievance; incident; and disaster recovery plan;
- 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.
- Professional services contract(s) for administrative services such as staffing and payroll, if applicable. **Not applicable.**

# PY 2017-2019 WIOA Multi-Year Local Area Plan



October 27, 2017

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## PY 2017-2019 WIOA Multi-Year Local Area Plan

Luzerne-Schuylkill Workforce Investment Board, Inc.

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

#### 1.1. Identify the composition of the region's population and labor force.

**Overview.** The Luzerne-Schuylkill Workforce Investment Board (Board or L/S WIB) oversees the workforce development activities of the local area. As part of the strategic planning process, the Board analyzed the population and labor force as follows:

The Luzerne-Schuylkill Workforce Development Area (WDA) is comprised of the Counties of Luzerne and Schuylkill located in Northeast Pennsylvania. Overall, it is home to approximately 460,600 citizens.<sup>1</sup> Its three largest population centers are Wilkes-Barre (population 40,800) and Hazleton (population 24,800) in Luzerne County; and Pottsville (population 13,800) in Schuylkill County.<sup>2</sup>

With a 2016 labor force of 227,900, the largest sector in the Luzerne-Schuylkill WDA is Healthcare and Social Assistance, employing 31,953 workers, representing 10% of the Gross Regional Product (GRP), with average earnings of \$49,578. The next largest sectors are Government, including education and law enforcement which employs 26,274 workers and represents 12% of the GRP with average earnings of \$68,794); and Manufacturing which employs 26,060 and represents 15% of the GRP with average earnings of \$60,254<sup>3</sup>.

Location quotient (LQ) is a way of quantifying how concentrated a particular industry, cluster, occupation, or demographic group is in a region as compared to the nation. It can reveal what makes a region "unique" in comparison to the national average. An LQ of 1.0 means that a region has the same employment as the nation, while an LQ greater than 1.0 has a greater share of employment than the nation.

The sectors with the largest LQs in the Luzerne-Schuylkill WDA include Logistics and Transportation (LQ=2.53), Wood, Wood Processing, and Publication (LQ=1.66), and Energy (LQ=1.36).<sup>4</sup>

**Population.** As shown in **Figure 1** on the following page, the population in the WDA and in the Northeast Region, has been declining since 2010, and is projected to continue to decline. It appears that this decrease is due to an aging population as well as fewer births.

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<sup>1</sup> Population estimates per Claritas

<sup>2</sup> EMSI, 2017

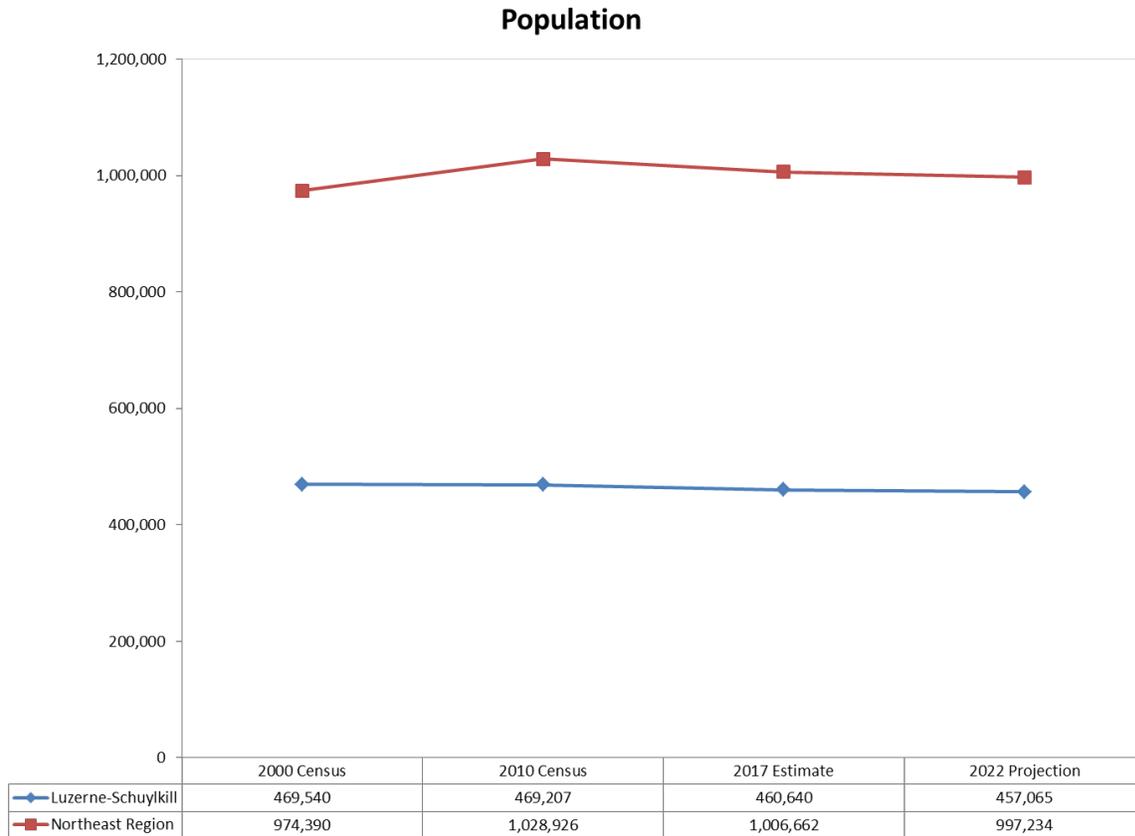
<sup>3</sup> United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics

<sup>4</sup> Center for Workforce Information and Analysis

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**Figure 1. Population for Luzerne-Schuylkill and the Northeast Region**



Source: Claritas

**Figure 2 shows that** the average age of citizens in both the WDA and region is approximately 42. When looking at the median age, both the WDA and Region are home to an aging population.

**Figure 2. Age Information for Luzerne-Schuylkill and Northeast Region**

	Current Median Age	Average Age	Projected Median Age
Luzerne-Schuylkill	43.9	42.8	44.7
Northeast Region	44.0	42.6	44.8

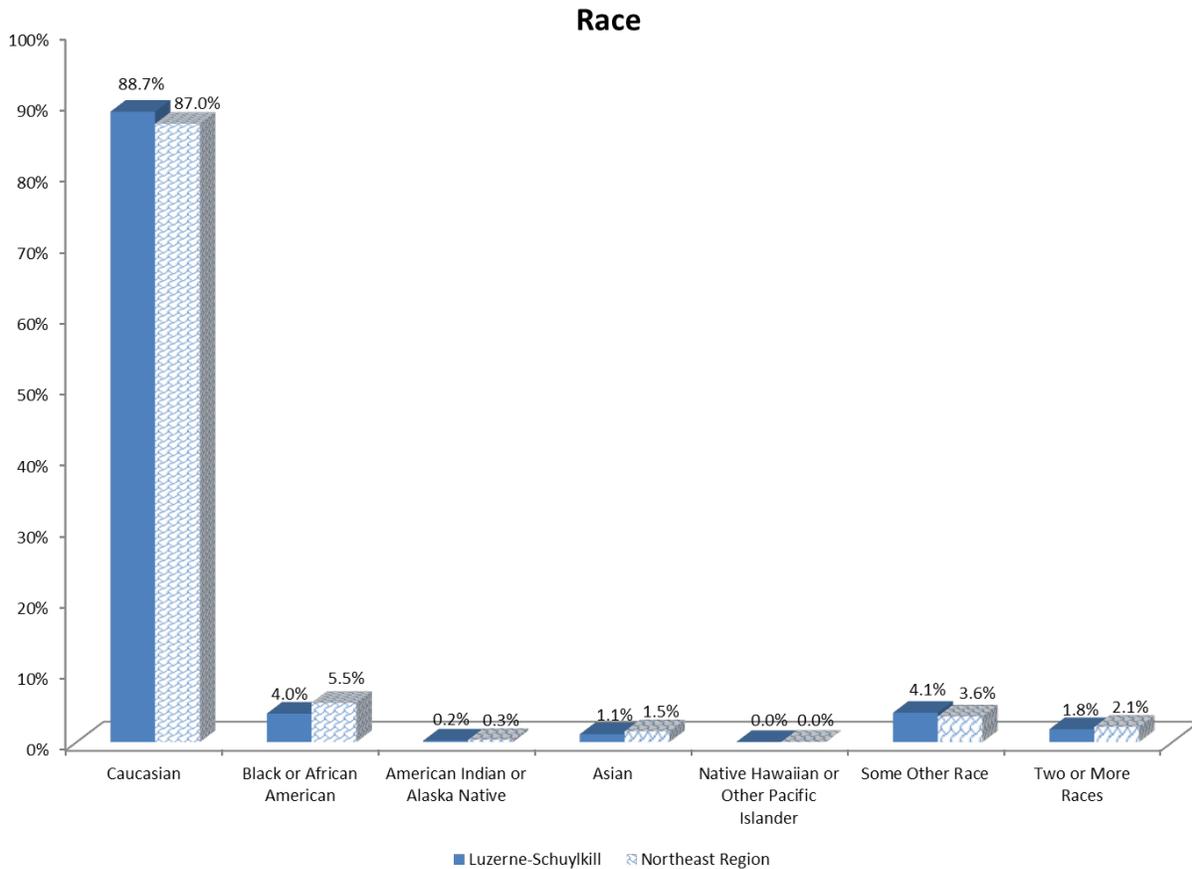
Source: Claritas

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As shown in **Figure 3**, the majority of the residents are Caucasian. Additionally, the WDA’s current estimated Hispanic or Latino population is 8.6%, and the Northeast Region’s is 9.1%.

**Figure 3. Race for Luzerne-Schuylkill and the Northeast Region**



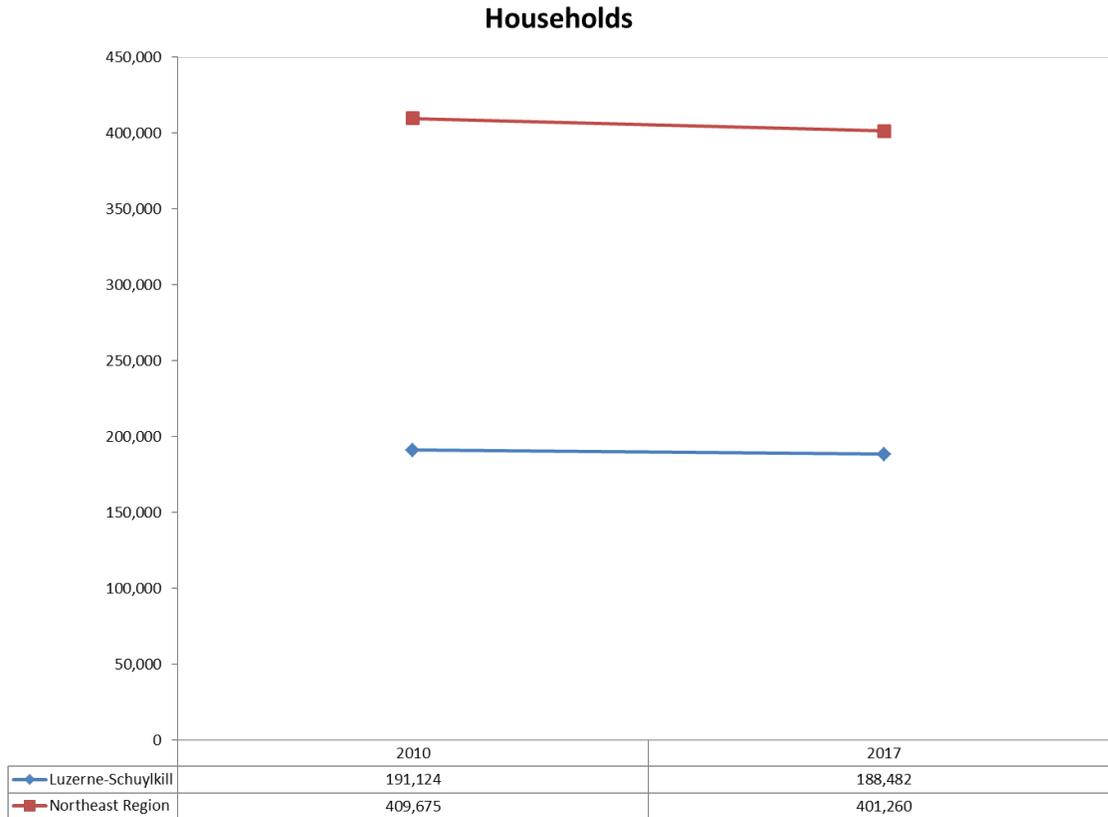
Source: Claritas

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**Households.** Coinciding with the declining population, the number of households<sup>5</sup> in the WDA and the Region are also declining. **Figure 4** provides an overview.

**Figure 4. Number of Households in Luzerne-Schuylkill and the Northeast Region**



Source: Claritas

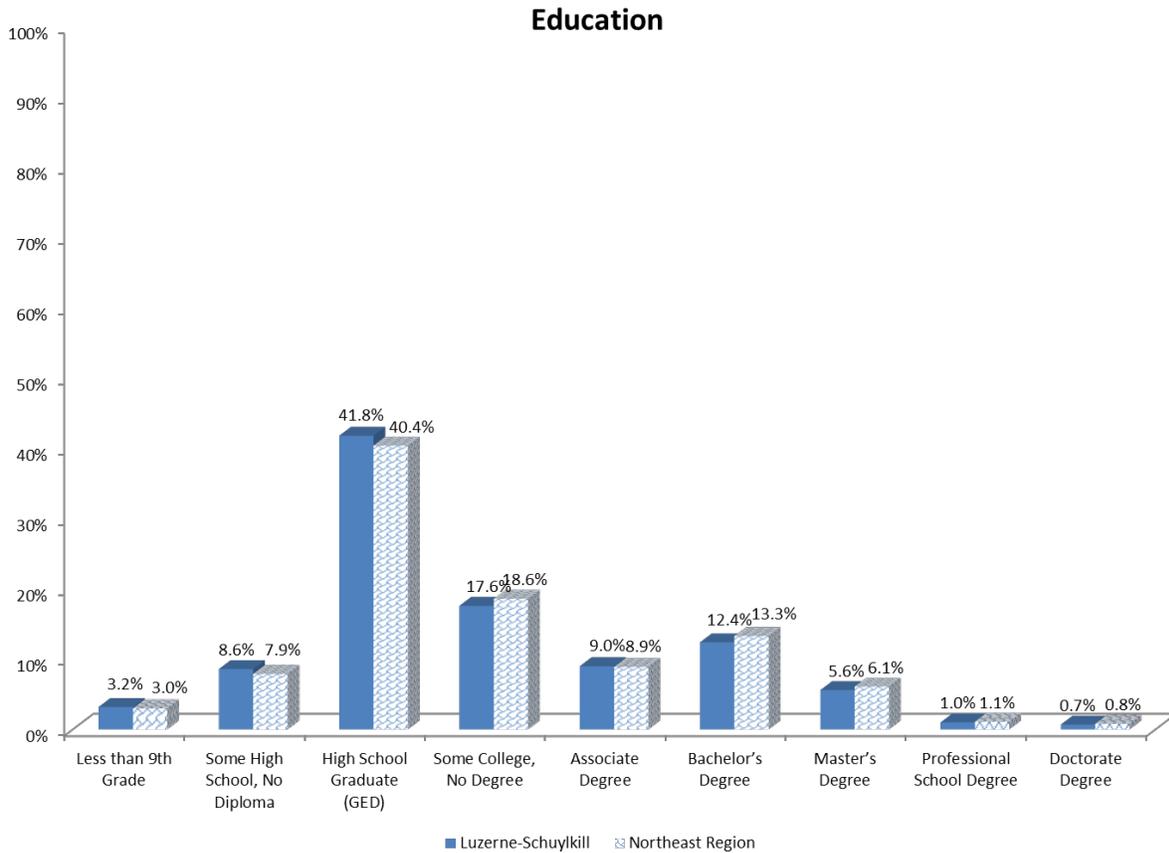
<sup>5</sup> As defined by the US Census Bureau, a household is composed of one or more people who occupy a housing unit

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**Education.** As shown in **Figure 5**, educational attainment in the Luzerne-Schuylkill WDA is similar to the Northeast Region. Just under one in four (19.7%) residents in the WDA have earned a Bachelor’s Degree or higher, which is slightly lower than the Region (21.3%). At the same time, 11.8% of the local population did not graduate high school, which is slightly higher than the Region at 10.9%.

**Figure 5. Education Levels for Luzerne-Schuylkill and the Northeast Region**



Source: Claritas

**Income.** The average household income for Luzerne-Schuylkill is estimated to be \$62,434 for the current year, which is about 5.5% lower than the Northeast Region’s average of \$65,892 for the same time frame.

The average household income for both the WDA and the Region is projected to increase approximately 7.1% over the next five years. Luzerne-Schuylkill will go from \$62,434 to \$66,889 and the Northeast Region will change from \$65,892 to \$70,571.

**Housing.** Most of the dwellings in the WDA (70.5%) are estimated to be Owner-Occupied for the current year, which is slightly less than the Northeast Region (72.6%). At 60.4%, Luzerne-Schuylkill currently has nearly 15% fewer 1-Unit Detached structures as compared to the Region at 69.2%. Moreover, 40.0% of the WDA’s housing units are estimated to have been built between 1939 or earlier as compared to only 30.6% for the Northeast Region.

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**Employment.** As shown in **Figure 6**, there are fewer Unemployed Citizens in the Luzerne-Schuylkill WDA (4.6%) than in the Northeast Region (5.2%). However, the WDA and Region have nearly identical percentages for Employed Citizens and Not in the Labor Force.

**Figure 6. Employment Status of Individuals Over Age 16 in Luzerne-Schuylkill and the Northeast Region**

	Employed Citizens	Unemployed Citizens	Not In Labor Force
Luzerne-Schuylkill	54.4%	4.6%	40.9%
Northeast Region	54.1%	5.2%	40.7%

Source: Claritas

Further, the data in **Figure 7** indicates that the distribution of employment classifications in the WDA is similar to those of the Region, with just over half of those age 16 and older employed in White Collar occupations. The highest percentage of workers in the Luzerne-Schuylkill WDA are employed in Office and Administrative Support (15.3%) and Sales and Related Services (9.6%) occupations, which is comparable to the Region (14.5% and 10.0%, respectively).

**Figure 7. Occupational Classifications for Luzerne-Schuylkill and the Northeast Region**

	Blue Collar	White Collar	Service and Farm
Luzerne-Schuylkill	26.6%	55.0%	18.4%
Northeast Region	25.4%	55.5%	19.1%

Source: Claritas

Employment in the Pottsville Micropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) has been increasing, while unemployment has fluctuated and is currently 6.0%. The Scranton-Wilkes-Barre-Hazleton MSA is in Luzerne County, with an employment rate of 5.9%.

**Figure 8** on the following page provides information on the Pottsville MSA, including comparative data for the Scranton-Wilkes-Barre-Hazleton MSA as well as a number of other key MSAs in Pennsylvania.

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**Figure 8. Micropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) Data for Luzerne-Schuylkill and Northeast Region**

**POTTSVILLE MICROPOLITAN STATISTICAL AREA**

(Schuylkill County)

TOTAL CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE, EMPLOYMENT, UNEMPLOYMENT, AND UNEMPLOYMENT RATE  
BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE 1/

TIME PERIOD	CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE	EMPLOYMENT 2/	UNEMPLOYMENT	RATE (%) 3/	SEASONALLY ADJUSTED 4/			
					LABOR FORCE	EMPLOYMENT 2/	UNEMPLOYMENT	RATE (%) 3/
May 2017	67,600	63,500	4,100	6.0	67,300	63,100	4,200	6.2
April	67,200	63,500	3,700	5.6	67,700	63,500	4,100	6.1
March	67,000	62,800	4,200	6.3	67,300	63,300	4,000	5.9
May 2016	68,300	64,300	4,000	5.9	68,000	63,900	4,200	6.1

SELECTED LABOR MARKET AREAS, PENNSYLVANIA, AND UNITED STATES

May 2017

AREA NAME	CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE	EMPLOYMENT 2/	UNEMPLOYMENT	RATE (%) 3/	SEASONALLY ADJUSTED 4/			
					LABOR FORCE	EMPLOYMENT 2/	UNEMPLOYMENT	RATE (%) 3/
Allentown-Beth -Easton PA-NJ MSA	432,800	410,200	22,500	5.2	431,400	408,800	22,600	5.2
Harrisburg-Carlisle MSA	300,800	287,300	13,500	4.5	299,800	286,400	13,400	4.5
Reading MSA	215,300	204,700	10,600	4.9	214,700	204,200	10,500	4.9
Scranton-W-B-Hazleton MSA	278,000	261,700	16,300	5.9	277,900	261,500	16,400	5.9
Bloomsburg-Berwick-Sunbury CSA	128,400	121,800	6,600	5.1	127,200	120,600	6,600	5.2
PENNSYLVANIA	6,477,000	6,141,000	336,000	5.2	6,475,000	6,152,000	323,000	5.0
UNITED STATES	159,979,000	153,407,000	6,572,000	4.1	159,784,000	152,923,000	6,861,000	4.3

Source: Center for Workforce Information and Analysis, 2017

**Commuting Patterns.** In its most basic form, commuting patterns reveal how workers travel from their home counties to their work counties. The specific reasons for commuting may be unknown; however, it may be reasoned that workers travel to other areas for job opportunities that are not found within their home counties. Or, they may choose to live in their home counties due to housing, schools, or entertainment preferences.

The *Commuting Patterns 2012-2014* report that was prepared by the Central Pennsylvania Workforce Development Corporation (CPWDC) for the L/S WIB, studied the work travel habits for residents of the WDA. It determined that 117,100 residents are non-commuters, meaning they live and work within the local area.

The report indicates of the 132,900 commuters, 58,300 travel into the WDA and 74,600 travel outside of the area. The 58,300 in-commuters are primarily from Lackawanna and Columbia Counties, at 16.4% and 6.2% respectively. Most of the 74,600 out-commuters travel to either Lackawanna County or to Berks County, at 13.8% and 10.3%, respectively.

**Population 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 Luzerne-Schuylkill WDA, one in ten families (10.8%) are living in poverty. Moreover, there are portions of Luzerne County (Hazleton and Glen Lyon) and Schuylkill County



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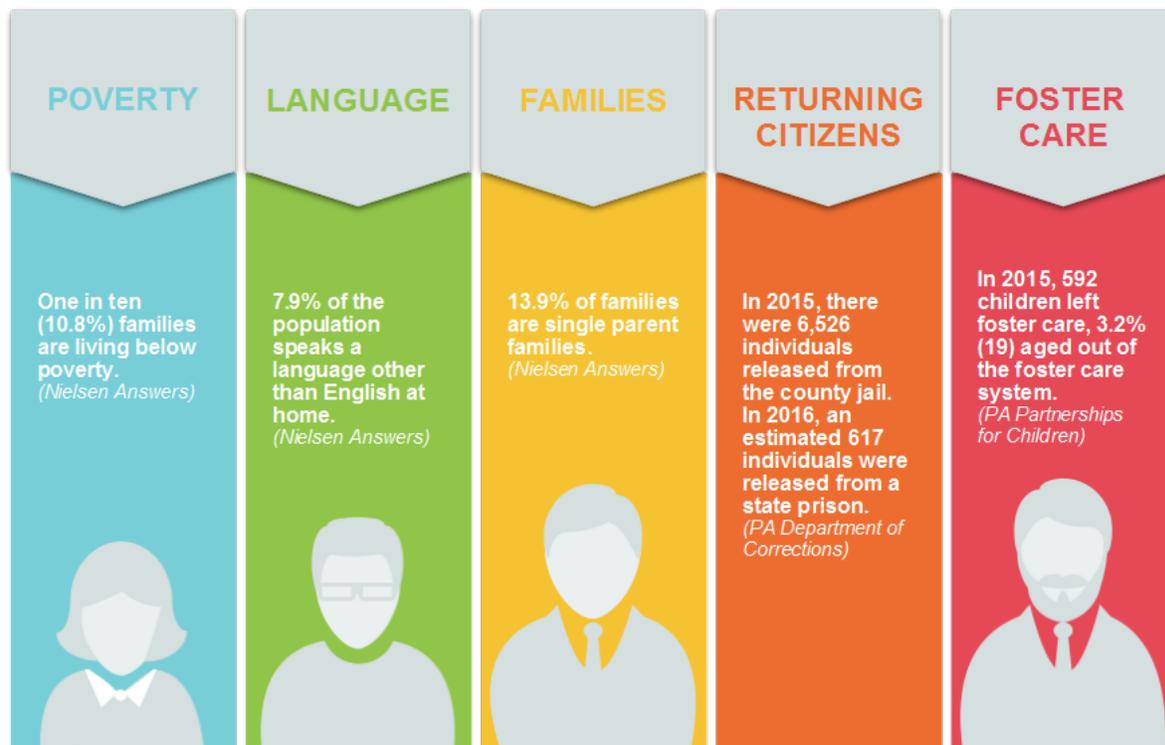
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chances of reoffending; and with a higher wage, they are less likely to return to crime. However, most former prisoners experience difficulty finding a job after release. During the time spent in prison, many lose work skills and are given little opportunity 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 Luzerne-Schuylkill, in 2015 there were 6,526 individuals released from the county jail and in 2016 there were 617 individuals released from a state prison.

Research obtained from Children's Rights<sup>7</sup> 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 high school equivalency compared to 94% in the general population. By age 26, 4% of youth who aged out of foster care had earned a four-year college degree, while 36% of youth in the general population had done so. In Luzerne-Schuylkill, approximately 19 children age out of foster care each year.

**Figure 10. Overview of Population with Barriers in Luzerne-Schuylkill**



<sup>7</sup> Children's Rights is a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the child welfare system to ensure the rights of children in foster care are upheld ([www.childrensrights.org](http://www.childrensrights.org)).

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According to the Division for Social Policy and Development<sup>8</sup>, 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.

Within the WDA, 5.8% of employed persons have a disability, while 15.5% of the unemployed have a disability. Unemployment is 126% higher for those with a disability (17.0%) compared to those without a disability (7.5%). There are 3,962 students receiving services through a local Intermediate Unit; 54.3% have a learning disability, 10.4% have an intellectual disability, 0.7% have a speech/language impairment, 11.1% have emotional disturbances, 17.0% have health implications, and 6.5% have autism.

According to Youth. Gov<sup>9</sup>, 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. Specifically:

- By age 22, approximately 50% of teen mothers have received a high school diploma and only 30% have earned a high school equivalency certificate, whereas 90% of women who did not give birth during adolescence receive a high school diploma.
- Approximately 10% of teen mothers complete a two- or four-year college program.
- Teen fathers have a 25 to 30% 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 healthcare;
- 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.

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<sup>8</sup> 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](http://www.un.org)).

<sup>9</sup> Youth.Gov is the U.S. government website that helps to create, maintain, and strengthen effective youth programs ([www.youth.gov](http://www.youth.gov)).

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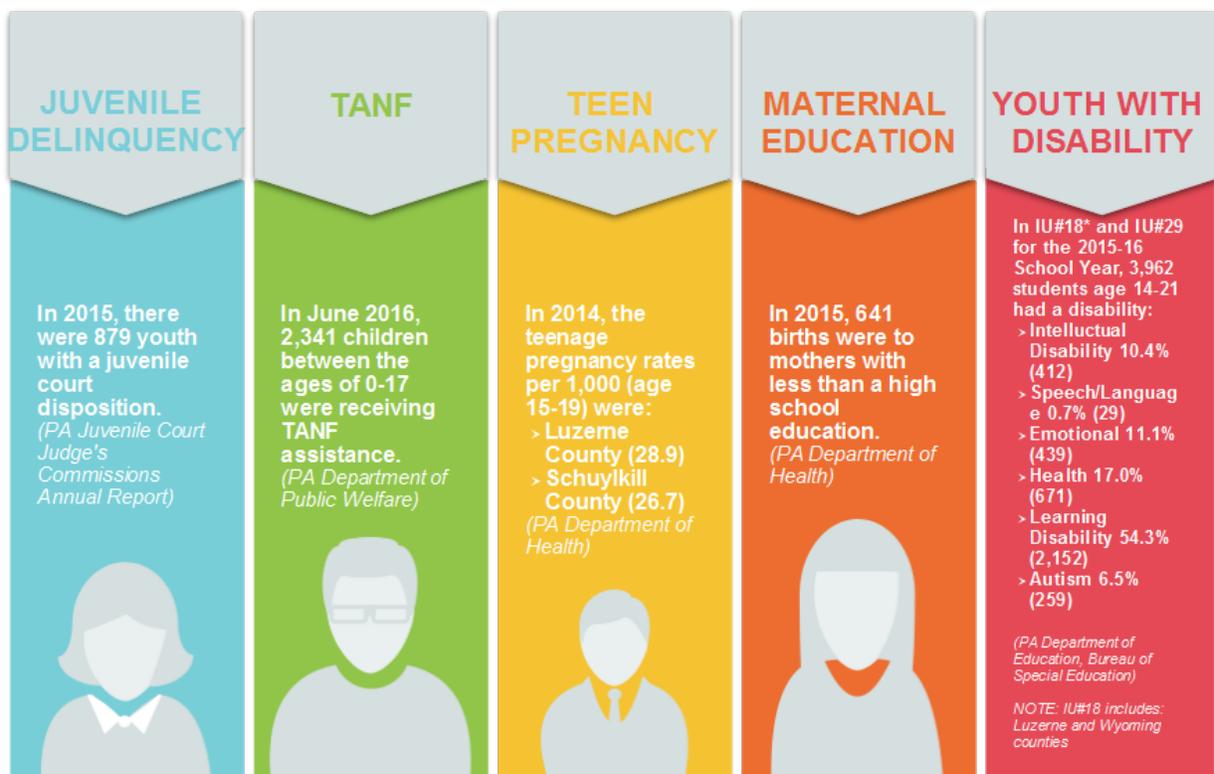
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These immediate and long-lasting effects continue for teen parents and their children even after adjusting for the factors that increased the teen's risk for pregnancy (e.g., growing up in poverty, having parents with low levels of education, growing up in a single-parent family, and having low attendance and performance in school).

Teen pregnancy costs US taxpayers about \$11 billion per year due to increased healthcare 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.

In the Luzerne-Schuylkill WDA, there were 2,341 children between the ages of 0 and 17 receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) in 2016; 879 youth had a juvenile disposition in 2015; and there were 641 births to mothers with less than a high school education. In 2014, according to the PA Department of Health, the teen pregnancy rate per 1,000 teens age 15-19 was 28.9 in Luzerne County and 26.7 in Schuylkill County. The state rate was 27.2.

**Figure 11. Overview of Youth with Barriers in Luzerne-Schuylkill**



According to the National Coalition for the Homeless<sup>10</sup>, meaningful and sustainable employment is the key to creating and maintaining housing stability. Unemployment, underemployment, and

<sup>10</sup> The National Coalition for the Homeless is a national network of people who are currently experiencing or who have experienced homelessness, activists and advocates, community-based and faith-based service providers, and others committed to prevent and end homelessness while ensuring the immediate needs of those experiencing homelessness are met ([www.nationalhomeless.org](http://www.nationalhomeless.org)).

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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 the number of sheltered and unsheltered homeless persons on a single night in January. HUD requires that Continuums of Care perform the PIT annually to determine the number 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 293 individuals counted in Luzerne and Schuylkill Counties.

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.)
- Children living in "cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations".

In 2016, there were 587 students in the Luzerne-Schuylkill WDA who met the McKinney-Vento definition of homeless.

**Figure 12. Additional Information Regarding Individuals with Barriers in Luzerne-Schuylkill**



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**Labor Market Trends.** As shown in **Figure 13** and **Figure 14**, the overall unemployment rate for the Luzerne-Schuylkill WDA in 2016 was 6.3%, with a labor force of 227,400. When looking at the first few months of 2017, the unemployment rate has fluctuated between 5.5% and 6.3%.

**Figure 13. Luzerne-Schuylkill Annual Average Labor Force Statistics, 2016**  
**Annual Average Labor Force Statistics, 2016**

Annual Average	Labor Force	Employed	Unemployed	Unemployment Rate
2016	227,400	212,900	14,400	6.3

**Figure 14. Luzerne-Schuylkill Seasonally Adjusted Labor Force Statistics, 2017**  
**Seasonally Adjusted Labor Force Statistics, 2017**

Month	Labor Force	Employed	Unemployed	Unemployment Rate
January	223,700	211,300	12,400	5.5
February	224,900	211,500	13,400	5.9
March	224,800	211,400	13,400	6.0
April	226,400	212,200	14,200	6.3

*Source: Center for Workforce Information and Analysis*

Labor Market trends can also 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 Luzerne-Schuylkill WDA is projected to increase by 5.8% or 11,780. This rate is equal to that of the Northeast Region.

However, both the WDA and the Region are lower than the state rate of 7.7%.

**Figure 15** on the following page provides an overview.

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**Figure 15. Long-Term Industry Projections for Luzerne-Schuylkill WDA (2014-2024)**

Industry	Employment (2014)	Projected Employment (2024)	Employment Change (2014-2024)	
			Volume	Percent
Total Jobs	204,850	216,630	11,780	5.8%
Goods Producing Industries	34,290	34,270	-20	-0.1%
Agriculture, Mining & Logging	2,330	2,260	-70	-3.0%
Construction	6,000	6,990	990	16.5%
Manufacturing	25,970	25,020	-950	-3.7%
Services-Providing	159,530	171,030	11,500	7.2%
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	49,490	52,680	3,190	6.4%
Information	2,210	2,090	-120	-5.4%
Financial Activities	7,300	7,350	50	0.7%
Professional & Business Services	18,100	20,180	2,080	11.5%
Education & Health Services	45,060	50,150	5,090	11.3%
Leisure & Hospitality	16,220	17,620	1,400	8.6%
Other Services, Except Public Admin.	6,960	7,190	230	3.3%
Federal, State & Local Government	14,190	13,770	-420	-3.0%

*Source: Center for Workforce Information and Analysis*

As shown in **Figure 16** on the next page, over the past year there was no significant increase or decrease in the percentage of change in the major occupational categories in the Luzerne-Schuylkill WDA. The occupational category with the greatest change in the number of jobs was in Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand.

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**Figure 16. Occupational Changes in Luzerne-Schuylkill**

Occupation	2015 Jobs	2016 Jobs	Change in Jobs (2015-2016)	% Change	2015 Median Hourly Earnings
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	6,779	6,924	145	2%	\$12.89
Cashiers	5,759	5,762	3	0%	\$8.86
Retail Salespersons	5,726	5,697	-30	-1%	\$11.33
Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food	4,764	4,813	49	1%	\$8.70
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	4,478	4,507	29	1%	\$20.55
Office Clerks, General	4,379	4,376	-3	0%	\$13.76
Registered Nurses	4,114	4,169	55	1%	\$28.07
Customer Service Representatives	4,106	4,206	99	2%	\$13.99
Stock Clerks and Order Fillers	3,565	3,589	24	1%	\$10.81
Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	3,559	3,551	-8	0%	\$14.34

Source: EMSI, 2017

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

**Figure 17. Opportunity Occupations in Luzerne-Schuylkill**

SOC	Description	2016 Jobs	2021 Jobs	2016 - 2021 Change	2016 - 2021 % Change	Annual Openings	COL Adjusted Avg. Hourly Earnings	Typical Entry Level Education
11-3071	Transportation, Storage, and Distribution Managers	211	233	22	10%	9	\$41.74	High school diploma or equivalent
15-1152	Computer Network Support Specialists	161	165	4	2%	3	\$26.30	Associate's degree
19-4051	Nuclear Technicians	149	154	5	3%	8	\$35.76	Associate's degree
29-2032	Diagnostic Medical Sonographers	77	81	4	5%	2	\$31.75	Associate's degree
33-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Correctional Officers	117	119	2	2%	4	\$35.21	High school diploma or equivalent
41-4012	Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Except Technical and Scientific Products	1,982	2,013	31	2%	48	\$27.11	High school diploma or equivalent
51-8011	Nuclear Power Reactor Operators	78	82	4	5%	4	\$39.72	High school diploma or equivalent
53-1031	First-Line Supervisors of Transportation and Material-Moving Machine and Vehicle Operators	501	525	24	5%	22	\$28.26	High school diploma or equivalent
53-2012	Commercial Pilots	51	65	14	27%	4	\$41.53	High school diploma or equivalent

Source: EMSI, 2017

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Looking at Help Wanted OnLine™ Job Postings provides insight into real time employment demands our employers are facing. When looking at the Top 10 postings by industry and occupation there has been an increase in postings for Home Health Care Services, Temporary Help Services, General Freight Trucking, Nursing Care Facilities, General Warehousing and Storage and Home Centers. Occupations experiencing growth include Retail Salespersons, First Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers, Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Licensed Practical and Vocational Nurses, and Maintenance and Repair Workers.

An overview of the Top 10 Job Postings by Industry and the Top 10 Job Postings by Occupation is provided in **Figure 18** and **Figure 19**, respectively.

**Figure 18. Top 10 Help Wanted OnLine™ Job Postings by Industry for Luzerne-Schuylkill**

**Top 10 Help Wanted OnLine™ Job Postings by Industry, May 2016 & 2017**

Industry Title	NAICS	May-2016	May-2017
Direct Health and Medical Insurance Carriers	524114	347	250
Home Health Care Services	621610	337	438
Temporary Help Services	561320	204	233
Employment Placement Agencies	561311	134	124
All Other Miscellaneous Ambulatory Health Care Services	621999	128	86
General Freight Trucking, Long-Distance, Truckload	484121	120	198
Commercial Banking	522110	77	50
Nursing Care Facilities	623110	76	91
General Warehousing and Storage	493110	67	99
Home Centers	444110	58	76

Source: Center for Workforce Information and Analysis

**Figure 19. Top 10 Help Wanted OnLine™ Job Postings by Occupation for Luzerne-Schuylkill**

**Top 10 Help Wanted OnLine™ Postings by Occupation, May 2016 & 2017**

Occupation	SOC	May-2016	May-2017
Registered Nurses	29114100	458	347
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	53303200	391	379
First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	41101100	186	145
Retail Salespersons	41203100	176	185
Customer Service Representatives	43405100	137	122
First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers	51101100	118	127
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	53706200	112	141
Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	29206100	104	205
Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	49907100	93	96
Social and Human Service Assistants	21109300	86	78

Source: Center for Workforce Information and Analysis

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**Figure 20** shows the industries that are projected to experience the most growth between 2014 and 2024, with Warehousing and Storage, Employment Services, and Restaurants and Other Eating Places projected to increase the most in terms of volume; and Community Care Facilities for the Elderly, Outpatient Care Centers and Home Health Care Services are expected to grow the most in terms of percentage.

**Figure 20. Fastest Growing Industries in Luzerne-Schuylkill WDA 2014-2024**

<b>By Volume Change:</b>		<b>By Percent Change:</b> (min. employment of 500)	
<b>Industry Title</b>	<b>Employment Change (Volume)</b>	<b>Industry Title</b>	<b>Employment Change (Percent)</b>
Warehousing & Storage	2,240	Community Care Facilities For The Elderly	48.1%
Employment Services	1,250	Outpatient Care Centers	39.9%
Restaurants & Other Eating Places	1,010	Home Health Care Services	34.2%
Outpatient Care Centers	950	Employment Services	26.9%
Individual & Family Services	820	Individual & Family Services	21.9%
Community Care Facilities For The Elderly	740	Warehousing & Storage	20.2%
Home Health Care Services	660	Other General Merchandise Stores	17.6%
Nursing Care Facilities	490	Other Specialty Trade Contractors	17.5%
Other General Merchandise Stores	410	General Freight Trucking	16.9%
General Medical & Surgical Hospitals	410	Building Equipment Contractors	15.0%
General Freight Trucking	390	Building Foundation/Exterior Contractors	13.8%
Building Equipment Contractors	270	Nonresidential Building Construction	12.9%
Traveler Accommodation	230	Automobile Dealers	12.7%
Automobile Dealers	200	Personal Care Services	11.6%
Offices Of Other Health Practitioners	150	Nursing Care Facilities	11.1%
Offices Of Physicians	150	Investigation & Security Services	10.9%
Architectural & Structural Metals Mfg	130	Architectural & Structural Metals Mfg	10.3%
Child Day Care Services	120	Offices Of Other Health Practitioners	10.1%
		Restaurants & Other Eating Places	9.6%
		Insurance Agencies, Brokerages & Support	9.5%

*Source: Center for Workforce Information and Analysis*

**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 the region/local area.**

One way to measure the skills gap is to compare the current educational attainment with the expected employment growth by educational level.

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As shown in **Figure 21**, there are projected to be 36,670 jobs that require a Bachelor’s Degree or higher in 2024. Data from **Figure 22** shows that there are currently 65,600 individuals in the WDA have achieved this educational level. Therefore, it appears that there are more than enough individuals to meet the projected demand.

At the same time, **Figure 21** shows that there are expected to be 152,560 jobs that will require some level of on-the-job training, long-term training, or postsecondary education or experience. As shown in **Figure 22**, within Luzerne-Schuylkill WDA there are currently 58,472 persons who have some level of college with no degree and another 139,093 that have achieved a high school diploma. Thus, these two groups may be able to fulfill the projected demand if they are able secure the required skills via additional education and/or training.

**Figure 21. Employment Growth Rates by Educational Attainment Level for Luzerne-Schuylkill**

<b>Educational Grouping</b>	<b>Employment (2014)</b>	<b>Projected Employment (2024)</b>	<b>Percent Change (2014-24)</b>
On-the-job training	104,800	109,780	4.8%
Long-term training	9,900	10,790	9.0%
PS education or experience	29,880	31,990	7.1%
Associate degree	3,110	3,310	6.4%
Bachelor's degree	27,820	29,690	6.7%
Advanced degree	6,280	6,980	11.1%

Source: Center for Workforce Information and Analysis

**Figure 22. Overview of Estimated Population Age 25+ by Educational Attainment for Luzerne-Schuylkill**

<b>2017 Est. Pop Age 25+ by Edu. Attainment</b>	<b>332,564</b>	
Less than 9th grade	10,769	3.24%
Some High School, no diploma	28,620	8.61%
High School Graduate (or GED)	139,093	41.82%
Some College, no degree	58,472	17.58%
Associate Degree	30,010	9.02%
Bachelor's Degree	41,179	12.38%
Master's Degree	18,767	5.64%
Professional School Degree	3,359	1.01%
Doctorate Degree	2,295	0.69%

Source: Claritas, 2017 estimates

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As shown in **Figure 23** and **Figure 24**, looking at future work activities and tools and technologies it is important that the workforce is able to order materials, supplies or equipment, and record operational or production data. The ability to use a computer and related software is important with high demand for those that can use spreadsheet software.

**Figure 23. Top 10 Detailed Work Activities Required by Employers Luzerne-Schuylkill**

Detailed Work Activity	2024 Employment	Percent of Annual Openings	Annual Openings
Order materials, supplies, or equipment	32,210	15.2%	970
Record operational or production data	30,620	15.0%	959
Calculate costs of goods or services	27,480	14.7%	936
Sell products or services	25,210	13.6%	868
Clean work areas	25,390	13.4%	855
Greet customers, patrons, or visitors	20,840	10.5%	671
Monitor inventories of products or materials	22,800	10.1%	645
Maintain records of sales or other business transactions	17,750	9.5%	608
Load shipments, belongings, or materials	18,470	9.2%	587
Answer customer questions about goods or services	16,870	9.1%	583

Source: Center for Workforce Information and Analysis

**Figure 24. Top 10 Tools and Technologies Required by Employers for Luzerne-Schuylkill**

Tools & Technologies	2024 Employment	Percent of Annual Openings	Annual Openings
Spreadsheet software	169,370	76.5%	4,884
Data base user interface and query software	157,470	72.5%	4,626
Personal computers	153,210	70.1%	4,472
Office suite software	140,690	64.4%	4,107
Word processing software	147,130	64.3%	4,105
Desktop computers	126,470	56.2%	3,587
Electronic mail software	108,850	46.3%	2,954
Notebook computers	105,750	44.2%	2,823
Internet browser software	98,140	40.9%	2,610
Enterprise resource planning ERP software	85,200	37.8%	2,409

Source: Center for Workforce Information and Analysis

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Looking at job postings provides insight into current needs of the WDA’s employers. **Figure 25** shows that the highest number of job postings are seeking someone with Electronic Health Records or Forklift skills. **Figure 26** shows that the most requested certifications are driver’s license and Certified Registered Nurse.

**Figure 25. Top 10 Skills Requested in Help Wanted OnLine™ Job Postings for Luzerne-Schuylkill**

Skills	OnLine™ Job Postings
Electronic Health Record	333
Forklifts	248
Freight+	198
Pediatrics	189
Preventive maintenance	139
Quality Assurance	121
Behavioral health	120
Bilingual	118
Mathematics	116
Medical-Surgical Nursing	106

Source: Center for Workforce Information and Analysis

**Figure 26. Top 10 Certifications Requested in Help Wanted OnLine™ Job Postings for Luzerne-Schuylkill**

Certifications	OnLine™ Job Postings
Driver's License	602
Certified Registered Nurse	584
Basic Life Support	422
Commercial Driver's License	377
Advanced Cardiac Life Support	222
Certification in Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation	186
Licensed Practical Nurse	170
HAZMAT	139
Continuing Education	132
Graduate Nurse	114

Source: Center for Workforce Information and Analysis

The Board’s Business Services Team continually validates and updates the labor market information cited in the figures above through its real-time interactions with area employers, including data received during Rapid Response interactions. Using this information, the Board

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enrolls individuals into a variety of education and training programs, including work-based learning opportunities that bridge skills gaps and prepare qualified candidates to meet employer demands. As discussed in the **responses to 4.5 and 4.6 below**, the Board emphasizes training and education programs that are aligned with its targeted industries of **Advanced Manufacturing, Logistics and Transportation, Food Processing, and Healthcare**.

### 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 local area faces two primary challenges in aligning its labor force skills and education and training activities with the needs of regional employers: (1) Development of Soft Skills for Youth and (2) Development of Educational and Occupational Skills for All Jobseekers.

**Soft Skills for Youth.** Through direct feedback from employers, the Board knows that many youth do not possess the necessary soft skills that are required to secure and retain jobs, as well as to help them further advance in their careers. Examples of these soft skills include: communication, customer service, teamwork, leadership, and other positive employment traits.

The Board will meet this challenge through the YES (Your Employability Skills) program. As detailed further in the **responses to 3.3 and 4.8 below**, YES is a 120-hour curriculum that focuses on the employability skills that are mandatory in today's business environment. The Board's strategic goal is to have this program implemented in every school district in the local area.

**Educational and Occupational Skills for All Jobseekers.** **Figure 27** on the following page shows the regional educational completions for occupational categories with 100 or more job openings. As shown, the number of individuals completing programs for occupations in Business Management and Administration, Commercial Drivers, and Registered Nurses appears to be meeting regional demand.

However, additional enrollments and completions are needed to fill numerous openings in Health Services/Allied Health/Health Sciences; General Office Occupations and Clerical Services; Sales, Distribution, and Marketing Operations; and Registered Nursing, Nursing Administration, Nursing Research and Clinical Nursing. As outlined in **Figure 22**, only 58,472 persons in the local area have some level of college and another 139,093 possess only a high school diploma. Therefore, the challenge to the Board is to recruit individuals from these two groups and enroll them into education and/or training programs to provide them with the skills and certifications needed to meet employer demand.

The Board will meet this challenge by prioritizing its employment and training investments in the targeted industries of **Advanced Manufacturing, Logistics and Transportation, Food Processing, and Healthcare**. As described further in the **responses to 4.5 and 4.6 below**, the Board places particular emphasis on enrolling eligible jobseekers into training programs that are aligned with the hiring needs of regional employers in these sectors.

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**Figure 27. Education Program Completions as Compared to Occupational Openings**

CIP Code	Program	Regional Completions (2015)	Regional Openings (2015)
51.0000	Health Services/Allied Health/Health Sciences, General	69	728
52.1803	Retailing and Retail Operations	0	705
52.1804	Selling Skills and Sales Operations	0	448
12.0500	Cooking and Related Culinary Arts, General	0	325
52.0408	General Office Occupations and Clerical Services	0	321
12.0505	Food Preparation/Professional Cooking/Kitchen Assistant	2	308
52.1801	Sales, Distribution, and Marketing Operations, General	0	292
12.0508	Institutional Food Workers	0	278
51.2602	Home Health Aide/Home Attendant	0	272
52.0406	Receptionist	0	259
12.0507	Food Service, Waiter/Waitress, and Dining Room Mgt./Manager	0	257
01.0608	Floriculture/Floristry Operations and Management	0	253
51.3899	Reg. Nursing, Nursing Admin., Nursing Research & Clinical Nursing	7	251
51.3822	Women's Health Nurse/Nursing	0	251
51.3816	Emergency Room/Trauma Nursing	0	250
51.3819	Palliative Care Nursing	0	250
51.3821	Geriatric Nurse/Nursing	0	250
51.1105	Pre-Nursing Studies	0	240
52.0201	Business Administration and Management, General	435	228
51.1199	Health/Medical Preparatory Programs, Other	0	222
13.0101	Education, General	12	213
52.9999	Business, Mgt., Marketing, and Related Support Services, Other	0	205
52.0101	Business/Commerce, General	61	204
52.0411	Customer Service Support/Call Center/Teleservice Operation	0	204
51.3818	Nursing Practice	44	199
52.0212	Retail Management	0	195
49.0205	Truck and Bus Driver/Commercial Vehicle Operator and Instructor	194	191
44.0000	Human Services, General	25	190
51.3805	Family Practice Nurse/Nursing	14	186
46.0000	Construction Trades, General	0	183
51.3808	Nursing Science	0	183
51.3812	Perioperative/Operating Room and Surgical Nurse/Nursing	0	183
51.3809	Pediatric Nurse/Nursing	0	182
51.3803	Adult Health Nurse/Nursing	0	181
51.3806	Maternal/Child Health and Neonatal Nurse/Nursing	0	181
51.3810	Psychiatric/Mental Health Nurse/Nursing	0	181
51.3811	Public Health/Community Nurse/Nursing	0	181
51.3813	Clinical Nurse Specialist	0	181
51.3814	Critical Care Nursing	0	181
51.3815	Occupational and Environmental Health Nursing	0	181
51.3820	Clinical Nurse Leader	0	181
19.0501	Foods, Nutrition, and Wellness Studies, General	0	180
51.3801	Registered Nursing/Registered Nurse	309	174

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CIP Code	Program	Regional Completions (2015)	Regional Openings (2015)
51.3999	Practical Nursing, Voc. Nursing and Nursing Assistants, Other	0	174
49.0299	Ground Transportation, Other	17	153
44.0401	Public Administration	0	148
13.1207	Montessori Teacher Education	0	145
13.1208	Waldorf/Steiner Teacher Education	0	145
52.0205	Operations Management and Supervision	0	142
13.1337	Earth Science Teacher Education	0	138
43.0115	Law Enforcement Record-Keeping and Evidence Management	0	137
43.0304	Terrorism and Counterterrorism Operations	0	135
43.0117	Financial Forensics and Fraud Investigation	0	127
52.0701	Entrepreneurship/Entrepreneurial Studies	1	125
13.1338	Environmental Education	0	119
11.0701	Computer Science	6	117
51.2601	Health Aide	0	117
46.9999	Construction Trades, Other	0	113
43.0122	Maritime Law Enforcement	0	113
43.0120	Protective Services Operations	0	111
43.0119	Critical Incident Response/Special Police Operations	0	110
51.3902	Nursing Assistant/Aide and Patient Care Assistant/Aide	0	110
43.0114	Law Enforcement Investigation and Interviewing	0	108
31.0399	Parks, Recreation and Leisure Facilities Management, Other	0	107
42.2814	Applied Behavior Analysis	0	102
11.0201	Computer Programming/Programmer, General	17	101
13.1206	Teacher Education, Multiple Levels	0	100

Source: EMSI, 2017

### 1.4. Provide an analysis of workforce development activities, including education and training.

The Board analyzes and interprets labor market information and other relevant data that provides the framework for its decisions. Local policy drives the quantitative goals and desired outcomes for workforce programs funded through each specific Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). Local policies provide direction for jobseekers' choice of investment in obtaining skill enhancements through education/training that leads to an industry recognized credential in demand occupations. The priorities are to ensure a skilled workforce that improves by designing programs and policies to meet jobseekers needs which are jobs driven and in meeting employer training needs. The Board offers workforce development services to the region's employers and jobseekers targeting core programs – Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Adult Basic Education and Literacy, Wagner-Peyser Programs, and Vocational Rehabilitation.

The Board offers career and training services through the assistance of well-trained professional staff. Its three PA CareerLink® centers, proud partners of the American Job Center network, are located in Hazleton, Pottsville, and Wilkes-Barre. Each center is customer-focused with goals for preparing the workforce with education and skill advancement in meeting employer needs to spur economic growth.

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The Board partners with local organizations and has strong relationships with education leaders. Its PA CareerLink® offices have distinguished relationships with the schools and training providers in the area. Jobseekers and employers have access to a variety of training services. The Board maintains the quality of the training programs listed on the State Eligible Training Provider's List (ETPL) with training offerings that are aligned with business hiring needs in High Priority Occupations (HPOs).

The Board has formative relationships with key education providers which includes community colleges, state colleges, local private colleges and universities, technical schools, local school districts and numerous other training providers. These relationships allow us to explore and identify skill gaps that exist between jobseekers and industry. Training programs must meet performance benchmarks such as program completion, employment rates, median earnings and credential attainment. Training options include: Individual Training Accounts (ITAs), On-the-Job Training (OJT), and incumbent worker training through industry partnerships (IPs).

The One-Stop Operator, and WIOA Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth services are contracted using separate competitive procurement process conducted at staggered terms. Typically, contracts are awarded on a three-year basis, and are reviewed annually for renewal. The procurement process is comprehensive and in compliance with established policies.

Using the consortium of entities model, the Board selected EDSI and ReDCo/Pathways as the One-Stop Operator.

The WIOA Title I Contractor for Adult and Dislocated Services in Luzerne County is EDSI and the Title I Contractor for Adult and Dislocated Services in Schuylkill County is ReDCo/Pathways.

The Title I Contractor for Youth Services in Luzerne County is ResCare Workforce Services and the Title I Contractor for Youth Services in Schuylkill County is ReDCo/Pathways.

Workforce Development activities offered, include but are not limited to: Basic Career Services, Individualized Career Services, Career Resource Centers, Training Services, Employer Services and Youth/Young Adult Workforce Development Services, Work-Based Training, Work Experience, promotion of Pre- Apprenticeship/Apprenticeship information and outreach events.

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### 2. STRATEGIC PLANNING QUESTIONS: Vision and Goals

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

The Board's strategic vision and goals for preparing its workforce support closing the skills gap and improving worker quality by integrating economic development, workforce development, and education initiatives. Specifically, the vision and mission are ***"to ensure a demand driven, world-class competitive workforce aligned with economic development and education"***.

The economic future of Northeast Pennsylvania is dependent on a workforce that is globally competitive. A skilled workforce united with initiatives that directly support current business/industry needs translates to economic growth. The Board is committed to building a workforce system that is accountable, market driven, and aligned with economic development and education.

Businesses need to attract younger workers to fill the positions that are being vacated by retiring employees. The vacated occupations are diverse as are the skill requirements for these jobs. There is a focus on career pathways for skill, credential, and degree attainment targeting youth and individuals with barriers.

The Board supports work-based learning through summer employment programs, pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship initiatives and other related activities specifically pursuing youth, individuals with barriers and non-traditional participants.

The Board is committed to a regional strategy of cooperative partnerships with the Lackawanna and Pocono Workforce Development Boards as well as the Northern Tier Workforce Board, to support both local and regional economies through training, retraining, and addressing the demands of the future workforce.

#### 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 Board is continuously analyzing the effectiveness of its customer-friendly services, as well as the organizations who deliver these services, to ensure strategic objectives are being met. Currently, under the oversight of the WDB, the staff of the three PA CareerLink® centers work cohesively in the delivery of services and in meeting the Board's goals. The introduction of the newly appointed One-Stop Operator Consortium provides the WDB with the opportunity to better coordinate required Partners' services with those of the Title I Providers, further promoting the seamless delivery of services.

The Board's strategies to work with the core programs to align available resources, include:

1. Building on its customer-focused design to better connect partners, providing improved access to those services that are most frequently used by customers.
2. Meeting the needs of special populations, including those with basic skills deficiencies and barriers to employment.
3. Streamlining talent delivery and business services of the core partners and exploring opportunities to reduce the administrative burden for employers who work with the core

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partners.

4. Exploring sector-based strategies based on industry demand through a coordinated model that focuses on skills, recruitment, retention, and advancement with all core partners' resources.
5. Increasing access to literacy/numeracy services through clear referrals and tracking.
6. Increasing work-related opportunities for youth, improving the youth talent pipeline, and collaborating on the development of career pathways.
7. Establishing performance benchmarks to support and promote the achievement of the WIOA performance accountability measures.
8. Supporting the regional initiatives articulated in the Northeast PA Consortium Regional WIOA Plan to further increase the economic vitality of the region.
9. Shifting the focus of the PA CareerLink® Luzerne-Schuylkill Consortium and Partner meetings to include discussion of the workforce delivery system as a whole, and the progress toward the strategic vision and goals of the local workforce development area.

### **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 as the goals and strategies articulated in the regional plan?**

The Board's vision and goals align with the Governor's five rigorous goals which include the development of career pathways, a focus on increasing the skills of pipeline workers and incumbent workers, an increase in employment opportunities for youth, the engagement of local and regional employer bases, and the use of data to effectively identify, analyze, and improve training opportunities for in-demand occupations. Specifically, they include:

1. Developing career pathways for skill, credential, and degree achievement and providing individuals in the local area, including those with barriers to employment, opportunities to obtain jobs that pay self-sustaining wages.
2. Increasing public-private investment in the area's diverse skill sets of workers and in incumbent workers for targeted industry sectors from entry-level skills to middle skills through Industry Partnerships, WEDnetPA, and other sector strategies and funding streams that support the workforce initiatives.
3. Developing opportunities for youth to participate in work-based learning through summer and year-round employment opportunities, pre-apprenticeship, apprenticeship, internships, and other similar work experiences.
4. Involving employers through a variety of workforce partnerships to elicit their knowledge and expertise to improve connections and response time of workforce programs to fulfill their labor market needs, enhance critical skills development through public-private investment, and encourage employment practices that support jobs that pay.
5. Utilizing the developed relationships among state agencies and workforce development partners to understand and evaluate education and employment outcomes and rely more effectively on data to improve investments and target resources.

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The Board continues to support and augment the Commonwealth's goals through its local planning initiatives. Activities and results are overseen by the Board's Planning and Development Committee that convenes quarterly. Board staff, Site Administrators, and partner personnel meet monthly to discuss strategies to ensure planned outcomes are achieved. Each PA CareerLink® office has formed teams to support attainment of local goals as well as meeting the Commonwealth's goals.

In alignment with goal # 1 and # 2: The Board utilizes data which identifies targeted industry clusters in the local workforce area in establishing career pathways models. They address the required skill sets, credential and degree achievement for businesses and employment needs. The Board is concentrating on four targeted industries: **Advanced Manufacturing, Logistics and Transportation, Food Processing, and Healthcare**. These career pathways will provide direction to individuals seeking employment in HPOs, will assist individuals with barriers and assist incumbent workers looking to advance their careers. The Board is engaged in Regional Industry Partnerships with neighboring Workforce Development Boards in NEPA which offer skilled training to the incumbent workforce. It will continue the promotion of employment opportunities that pay viable wages for self-sustainability.

Through its Priority of Service Policy, the Board is working to ensure individuals with barriers to employment are utilizing WIOA programs. It is committing at least 50% of its training to help those with employment barriers. It is also working to obtain alternate forms of funding such as Sector Partnership Grants, Strategic Innovation Grants, Business Education Partnership Grants, HI-B Make It In America Grants, Industry Partnerships, Jobs For The Future Next Gen Apprenticeship Grant, and Foundation Grants that offer training opportunities for fulfilling the need in all areas described in goals # 1 through # 5.

In alignment with goal # 3 and # 4: The Board recognizes the importance of education and addressing the need to increase employment opportunities for youth, particularly 18 to 24 year olds, youth with barriers, and youth with disabilities. Age demographics for the Northeast indicate an aging workforce. As a result, there is a need to recruit younger workers to fill the skilled positions that are being vacated by retiring workers. The Board is prioritizing services to Out-of-School Youth for work-based learning via summer employment, pre-apprenticeship programs, and apprenticeships.

In collaboration with the other Northeast Boards through a Strategic Innovation Grant, it is currently offering five pre-apprenticeship training classes that provide stackable credentials to help approximately 50 youth or dislocated workers. This initiative has enhanced the Board's relationships with key community partners such as the career and technical centers, education and training providers, economic development, community based organizations, veteran's organizations, Job Corp, Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR), literacy providers and youth service providers.

The PA CareerLink® offices are reaching out to businesses through Constant Contact for interest in sponsoring youth work-experience. Through these efforts 20 new businesses have committed to be work experience sites. The Title I Youth Providers are focused in engaging youth with work-based training that offers enhanced training opportunities, career awareness, exposure to peer-to-peer, peer-to-authority interaction, and high school equivalency/literacy instruction.

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The Board plans to increase outreach to employers by engaging businesses/employers through industry sector initiatives and exposing them to PA CareerLink® services, informational workshops, introduction to Business Services Team (BST) associates, and funding opportunities such as for OJT or other non-WIOA funding. Three employer forums were held this past fall:

- Employer Forum event was held on 9/15/16 at Benco Dental, Pittston, PA. A collaboration between Pittston Chamber of Commerce, Luzerne-Schuylkill Board and PA CareerLink® Wilkes-Barre
- Employer Forum was held on 10/27/16 at AutoZone, Hazleton, PA. A Collaboration between Hazleton Chamber of Commerce, Luzerne-Schuylkill Board and PA CareerLink® Hazleton
- Employer Forum held on 11/16/16 at the Schuylkill Chamber of Commerce, Pottsville, PA. A Collaboration between Schuylkill Chamber of Commerce, Luzerne-Schuylkill Board and PA CareerLink® Pottsville

The Board actively solicits feedback during these forums that assists it in improving relations to fulfill labor market needs, industry-related specific needs and in meeting the business demands for a skilled workforce.

In alignment with goal # 5: The Board uses all data as the basis of understanding education and employment outcomes. It will continue to evaluate training programs and employment outcomes through the utilization of a variety of data sources such as but not limited to CWIA, EMSI, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Census, PA Data Center, etc., and through its workforce development partners such, The Institute for Public Policy and Economic Development, NEPA Alliance, and others for continuous program improvements.

### **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 1**, 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 negotiated local performance measures reflect the efforts of the public workforce system to provide quality employment and training services which includes goals for the percentage of Adults, Dislocated Workers, and Youth with respect to employment, median earnings, credential attainment rate, measurable skill gains, and the effectiveness in serving employers. The negotiated levels provide a mechanism to assess the success rate of the local workforce system in providing quality services and helping the unemployed obtain jobs.

The Board strives to meet and exceed its negotiated goals. Its staff meet with and monitor Title I Providers regularly to review activities, to identify corrective actions that may be needed, and to ensure that performance outcomes are continually improving.

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

#### **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 Luzerne-Schuylkill Local Workforce Development Area is included as **Attachment 2**.

**Local Elected Officials.** Luzerne and Schuylkill Counties' Executives are the Chief Elected Officials who are responsible for board appointments that oversee the workforce delivery system.

**Fiscal Agent and Administrative Entity.** The Board is the grant recipient, fiscal agent (FA) and signatory in the administration of WIOA and other grant funds. The accounting services are under contract with Service Access and Management, Inc., (S.A.M.). The Board manages all the FA obligations and S.A.M. employs a local individual to perform the day-to-day fiscal operations, in addition to other personnel who offer accounting advice and support for information technology and human resources services.

The Board also serves as the Administrative Entity under a 501(c)(3) structure. It serves as the employer of record and is responsible for hiring and managing the local board staff.

**Workforce Development Board.** Fifty-one percent of the volunteer members of the Board are from private industry organizations; all members are leaders in their field; each have optimum policy-making authority; and carry out regional and planning responsibilities for workforce development, employment, and training needs.

The Board is responsible for governance, developing and oversight responsibilities of the workforce system and for the procurement and selection of WIOA Title I Youth, Adult and Dislocated Worker Providers.

**Board Committees.** The Board's Standing Committees and responsibilities are as follows:

- **Executive Committee** acts for the Board in between its regularly scheduled meetings on those issues of policy that require timely action to meet statutory compliance. It does not usurp those specific functions, powers, and duties that are reserved by the Board under its agreement with the Chief Elected Officials.
- **Finance Committee** functions as the representative of the Board for fiscal oversight and accountability; and prepares financial information and reports on fiscal matters regarding funding allocated to the Luzerne and Schuylkill workforce area.
- **Performance and Evaluation Committee** establishes and negotiates the local common measures for approval by the appropriate Commonwealth of Pennsylvania agency acting on behalf of the Governor; works with Board staff and PA CareerLink® representatives in the development of performance standards and evaluation policies; and oversees monitoring and oversight activities.
- **Planning and Development Committee** encourages regional planning efforts that facilitate regional economic and workforce development partnerships with the Board and surrounding

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counties; and promotes regional coordination of workforce resources and the promotion of the public workforce system.

- **Youth Committee** provides a forum for stakeholders who provide youth leadership expertise; actively engages in aligning goals of youth activities and youth program strategies for youth; and efforts focus on the development of the emerging workforce and strategically align with state and federal priorities of the public workforce system.

**Equal Employment Opportunity and Civil Rights Protections.** The name, organization, and contact information of the designated equal opportunity officer for each PA CareerLink® center within the local area is as follows:

Robert Pisko, Supervisor, BWPO  
PACL Hazleton Equal Opportunity Liaison  
75 North Laurel Street  
Hazleton, PA 18201-5950  
Phone: (570) 459-3854  
[rpisko@pa.gov](mailto:rpisko@pa.gov)

Joseph Miscannon, Supervisor, BWPO  
PACL Pottsville Equal Opportunity Liaison  
201-203 East Arch Street  
Pottsville, PA 17901-3512  
Phone: (570) 622-5253  
[jmiscannon@pa.gov](mailto:jmiscannon@pa.gov)

Robert Pisko, Supervisor, BWPO  
PACL Wilkes-Barre Equal Opportunity Liaison  
32 East Union Street  
Wilkes-Barre, PA 18701-0651  
Phone: (570) 822-1101  
[eboutin@pa.gov](mailto:eboutin@pa.gov)

Marla Doddo, EO Officer  
Luzerne-Schuylkill Workforce Investment Board, Inc.  
22 East Union Street, Suite 115  
Wilkes-Barre, PA 18701  
Phone: (570) 822-1101, ext. 296  
[marladoddo@lswib.org](mailto:marladoddo@lswib.org)

- 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?**

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The Board works collaboratively with the entities that are carrying out workforce programs to support service alignment in the local area. A One-Stop Location and Program Services Chart that identifies the workforce programs, providers, and locations is included as **Attachment 3**.

**Service Alignment.** The Board procured and selected its One-Stop Operator in accordance with WIOA, the Uniform Guidance and its implementing regulations, and local procurement policy. The One-Stop Operator is a Consortium model composed of two private entities: EDSI – and ReDCo/Pathways; with EDSI serving as the lead agency. The One-Stop Operator works with the Site Administrators at each location to coordinate local PA CareerLink® activities. It functions as the liaison between the Board and the system partners, ensuring that all services and available resources are properly aligned to carry out the vision of the Board. Additional details about the programmatic and administrative functions of the One-Stop Operator are included in the **response to 4.1 below**.

As discussed in the **response to 1.4 above**, partner staff provide seamless service delivery to all clients—from the initial intake assessments and direct referrals to partner services and programs – recognizing that services must be guided by the policies of the designated funding streams. Staff are available to assist individuals in enrolling on the Internet-based system, browsing written material and signing up for scheduled workshops and events. A team approach is utilized to assist customers, which involves the cooperation and collaboration of staff from multiple departments (i.e., case managers, workshop facilitators, etc.). Staff from partner organizations, such as OVR, also participate directly in work that is specifically related to their target populations. The special populations and services provided include:

**Veterans** and their spouses are given priority of service. A triage form is used to help identify those veterans who may have special needs. The form is provided to the Veterans' Employment Program representative and the person is called in for specialized services. Based on individual need, the staff may refer the veteran to training options and/or job placement. Staff may also refer a veteran to the OVR or other social service agencies for help with disabilities or more comprehensive needs.

**Individuals that are basic skills deficient** have their education needs met through a variety of system partners as detailed in the **response to 3.3 below**. Services include basic adult education, remediation, and high school equivalency preparation services.

**Individuals who receive public assistance** are referred to the Employment, Advancement, and Retention Network (EARN) program for employment and training assistance. EARN services and staff are fully-integrated and co-located with the center for job search, job development services, and training programs.

**Older individuals** who may be eligible under Title V are referred to the Senior Employment Programs in the area. In addition, the PA CareerLink® centers may serve as host agencies or may hire older workers as greeters. Moreover, older workers have additional resources available to them through the Social Security Administration Office and OVR.

**Returning citizens** receive guidance and counseling to prepare for employment. PA CareerLink® staff encourage them to participate in workshops to help reinstate their driver's license, health insurance, and social security benefits, as well as to have their record expunged, when applicable.

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Workshops geared to returning citizens focus on financial literacy, credit rebuilding, and fair housing.

**Individuals with disabilities who are eligible under WIOA Title IV** access services provided by the OVR. It helps them secure and maintain employment and independence; helping them become qualified trained members of the workforce. Eligible OVR customers receive multiple, individualized services such as, diagnostic testing, vocational counseling and guidance, vocational evaluation, restoration, occupational training, and job placement.

**Underemployed individuals** are referred to staff for individualized services including testing, provision of labor market information, assistance in defining marketable and transferrable skills and development of an individual employment plan. They are informed about State Civil Service job opportunities to pursue while still employed, and other existing training.

**Unemployed individuals** are also served through the system. Staff participate in Rapid Response activities. They provide assistance such as Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) workshops, the Unemployment Compensation Work Test, and Trade Adjustment Act services to help impacted workers return to work as quickly as possible.

**Low-income individuals** may access Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) home assistance and weatherization programs that help eligible families make minor home repairs and/or reduce energy consumption and overall energy bills through the installation of cost-effective energy conservation measures. The Luzerne Commission on Economic Opportunity and Schuylkill Community Action administer these programs in the local area.

**LEP persons** are provided with access to English as a Second Language (ESL) classes instruction, a translator, and/or information provided in other languages as may be required. ESL providers in the local area include the Greater Hazleton Metro Ministries and Luzerne County Community College programs.

**Migrant or Seasonal Farm Workers (MSFWs)** are not a significant population in the Luzerne-Schuylkill Area. However, these individuals can access services through the centers. They receive the full range of employment services, benefits and protections, including counseling, testing, and job and training referrals. In providing such services, staff will consider the preferences, needs, and skills of the individual MSFW.

Overall, this strategic alignment of workforce programs under the PA CareerLink® Luzerne-Schuylkill umbrella helps the Board maximize the resources available in the community and promote increased accessibility for employers and individuals, including those who may have barriers to employment.

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

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The Board is working with organizations throughout the local area to expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services, particularly to those individuals who have barriers to employment; and to facilitate the development of Career Pathways and co-enrollment processes within the PA CareerLink® system. An overview is described below.

**Eligibility Validation.** Individuals must be determined “eligible” prior to enrollment into any type of WIOA-funded services. The Board understands the importance of correctly documenting this eligibility, and requires 100% verification of all documents.

Staff members help customers gather the required eligibility paperwork by giving them a detailed listing of the forms and materials that meet programmatic standards. Additionally, they offer advice on how individuals can get required documents, such as contacting Vital Records offices for birth certificates or checking on-line for selective service registration.

As needed, the staff may also provide more intensive assistance to help individuals with barriers to employment gather the required information. Moreover, in certain instances, they may accept an individual’s self-certification as to support specific eligibility criteria; however, hard-copy documentation is always preferred.

As eligibility information is provided by the customer, staff verifies it by examining it, or by speaking with official representatives of authorized agencies. They also document eligibility information in case files by maintaining physical evidence such as copies of documents (where legally permitted) and completed and signed telephone records and/or document inspection forms.

Of note, staff refers any customers who are determined ineligible for WIOA services to an appropriate partnering agency or other community organization that may be able to provide alternative services or assistance.

**On-Ramps.** The Board will continue to develop its HPO list to align career pathways to in-demand occupations that have higher skill needs and pay self-sustaining wages. The Board, through its providers in the PA CareerLink® system, will consult with employers in the region to discuss implementing additional training programs that will fill the jobs they are having difficulty filling.

Working with employers to develop the HPO list ensures that the Board is focusing its training dollars on occupations that will lead to employment in the region. Most of the occupations listed on the HPO list have a career pathway attached to them, some with entry-level positions and some requiring high technical skills. Employer engagement in this process will help identify career pathways that have quality entry-level jobs that can serve as “on-ramps”.

**Referrals and Co-Enrollment.** The Board collaborates with the six core programs: WIOA Adult, WIOA Dislocated Worker, WIOA Youth, Adult Education and Literacy, Wagner-Peyser, and Vocational Rehabilitation as well as the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) and leverages resources and services to serve jobseekers and employers in the region. Most partners are co-located in the PA CareerLink® center or offer services in concert with the PA CareerLink® center, as needed or as referred. Co-enrollment in programs is encouraged to best meet a customer’s needs in order to be successful in their employment and careers. Leveraging resources and direct communication with the partners promotes non-duplication of services.

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- **WIOA Adult.** The Adult program targets individuals 18 years of age and older who are in need of services to become employed or to advance their careers. Eligible Adult individuals are recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, individuals who are basic skills deficient and individuals who are both underemployed and low-income.
- **WIOA Dislocated Worker.** The Dislocated Worker programs assist individuals who are being laid off from employment or have lost their jobs and could benefit by assistance through OJT or customized training or apprenticeship to help them become reemployed quickly. During intake an individual develops a service strategy with their case manager to include core reemployment activities.
- **WIOA Youth.** Youth services are provided to youth aged 14-24 that support educational attainment and career guidance, an opportunity for a summer or year-round work experience, internship or pre-apprentice component, skills training focused on a career pathway based on in-demand occupations and industries. Supportive services are also offered to eligible youth. Goals for youth in this programming are to advance into postsecondary training or employment with a self-sustaining wage. Services are available for youth who are deemed out-of-school (e.g., a high school dropout, a youth possessing a barrier such as a disability, a pregnant or parenting youth, a youth who is in foster care, or a youth who involved with the juvenile or adult justice system).
- **Wagner-Peyser.** Employment services are provided to jobseekers and employers. Jobseeker services include: job search and job placement assistance; needs and interest assessments, counseling on careers, employment workshops, creation of an individual employment plan, and case management. Employer services include posting job orders, referral of qualified jobseekers to job openings and job fairs. Labor market information is provided to jobseekers and employers in order for them to make decisions based on reliable information.
- **Adult Education and Literacy.** Adult basic education partners under Title II develop pathways to careers for adults who are basic skills deficient. Programming includes beginner level literacy instruction to support college and career readiness. Instruction is also provided for English language learners and workforce and workplace preparation activities. Extensive case management is provided to participants that help students address barriers to participate (such as transportation, childcare, housing, and healthcare). The Board works in tandem with Title II staff to support alignment of core programs and other workforce system partners. Additional information regarding the Board's efforts to increase awareness and access to Title II services is provided in the **responses to 4.10 and 4.12 below**.
- **Vocational Rehabilitation OVR.** OVR provides services to eligible individuals with disabilities that they may prepare for, obtain, and maintain employment and independence. Eligibility to receive services under WIOA title IV may only be determined by a qualified OVR Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor. They work with customers to develop an Individual Plan for Employment, providing services necessary to meet their specific vocational goal. Examples of services include diagnostic assessment and evaluation, counseling and guidance, restoration, training and placement services. OVR often collaborates with other workforce program partners to provide services, outreach and assessment. Training for OVR staff is at

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the discretion of the local OVR District Administrator. OVR staff supervision and direction is the responsibility of the local OVR District Administrator. Additional information regarding the Board's efforts to increase awareness and access to Title IV services is provided in the **response to 3.2 above and 4.3 below.**

- **SCSEP.** The Mature Worker Program, Area Agency on Aging for Luzerne/Wyoming Counties operates the SCSEP in Luzerne County and the AARP Foundation operates it in Schuylkill County. SCSEP targets economically disadvantaged individuals aged 55 and over. The two providers offer on-the-job training, referrals for additional classroom training, and referrals to employers in the community. They also offer assessment, testing, and counseling, services if desired or needed.

**Postsecondary Credentials.** With respect to postsecondary credentials, the Board emphasizes the WorkKeys® National Career Readiness Certificate and the YES Northeast Initiative. These programs were implemented based on employer feedback and a skill gap analysis of the workforce area that revealed a ***strong need for basic soft skills*** across all industries and occupations.

The Board formally adopted WorkKeys® National Career Readiness Certificate as a *strategic initiative*, an evidence-based credential that measures essential workplace skills which addresses immediate business need. It provides qualified certificate-bearing labor to local employers who have committed to hiring through the PA CareerLink® system. WorkKeys® is a reliable workplace success for both jobseekers and employers. This service is offered in the PA CareerLink® centers free of charge by professionally trained staff responding to workforce needs. Approximately 50 businesses endorse the WorkKeys® National Career Readiness Certificate in the local area.

The Board also formally adopted the YES Northeast Initiative which addresses workforce *skill gaps*. The YES program provides the youth population with basic skills training for the foundation of employability skills that are mandatory in today's business environment. The Board's strategic goal is to have this program implemented in every school district in the local area.

The YES Northeast Initiative addresses the talent pipeline of youth; the future workforce of the region and nation. The 120-hour curriculum coursework focuses on employability skills, which include the following: communication; customer service; writing skills; interview training; resume writing; career exploration; health and safety; personal development; goal setting; quality and technology; teamwork and leadership; entrepreneurship; financial literacy; plus many more beneficial and relevant workforce topics. It also conducts on-sight business tours providing participants with a first-hand look of how industry functions and the employment opportunities available. The Yes Program modules meet and exceed PA Chapter 4 Academic Standards for career education and work.

Every school district in Schuylkill County with the exception of one, utilizes the YES Northeast program. A total of 10 districts use the curriculum, as well as the Schuylkill Technology Center for a total of 11 schools. In Luzerne County, four of the 12 districts utilize the YES Northeast program - Crestwood, Hazleton, Pittston, and Wyoming Valley West with the fifth school, Lake Lehman, joining the program in the 2016-17 school year. Approximately 330 Northeastern Pennsylvania businesses endorse the program and have agreed to offer preferred hiring to YES Northeast

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graduates.

**Career Pathways.** The Board has established relationships with institutions, industry partnerships, and the PA Office of Apprenticeships to support placement of individuals with barriers to employment into quality entry-level jobs that provide the work experience and non-technical skills necessary to lead to employment in HPOs. This collaborative effort identifies career pathways that provide specific on ramps for quality entry level jobs.

Career guidance and navigation services are enhanced to guide individuals, particularly individuals with barriers to employment and education, into programs and services that provide an effective pathway to their career goals. These strategies evaluate and incorporate the skills and abilities of individuals with barriers to employment, including individuals with disabilities, veterans, ex-offenders, TANF recipients, and those who do not speak English well or at all, to meet present workforce needs and future demand.

The Board utilizes innovative strategies to implement its operational requirements. It has implemented Welcome Centers where every new customer receives a staff-assisted service and is introduced to career-track employment. This model provides any new customer to the PA CareerLink® center with an opportunity to work with the Intake and Assessment staff in the Welcome Center, which is located in or near the Career Resource Center at each PA CareerLink® location. Individuals complete a full registration on JobGateway®, an on-line initial assessment of skills, and an initial Career Pathways Plan.

The Intake and Assessment staff help jobseekers sign up for various workshops and a WIOA information session, if applicable. It is the Board's intent to provide the customer with the service level they require and the services that meet his/her needs. Some individuals require minimal oversight while others need more intensive services, such as immediate job placement, job upgrading, training, remediation, etc.

Program design is a customer-friendly, step-by-step, systematic approach that provides job or training-seeking customers with an integrated "seamless" service delivery system. The Board believes that this method engages customers in a process that offers many services in a convenient manner.

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

- **Support a local workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses in the local area;**
- **Manage activities or services that will be implemented to improve business engagement;**
- **Better coordinates regional workforce and economic development strategy, messaging, engagement and programs; and**
- **Strengthen linkages between the PA CareerLink® service delivery system and unemployment insurance (UI) programs.**

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**Overview.** The Board's integrated Business Services Team (BST) focuses on a two-tier business services system to facilitate engagement of employers. It consists of a Business Services Team Lead (BSTL) who is employed by the Title I Provider, and a team of Business Services Representatives (BSRs) that is made up of staff from many different partners, including L&I that helps with layoff aversion and Rapid Response activities, as well as OVR that offers enhanced services to employers hiring individuals with disabilities.

Collectively, they are responsible for establishing and maintaining employer relationships with small, mid-size and large employers. Each BSR carries a full employer caseload that is based on the Board's targeted industry sectors.

The BSTL aligns employer relations across all partners and the BSRs partner with the PA CareerLink® staff in matching the skills of jobseekers to available position openings. The BSTL acts as an ambassador and concierge to the business community, including lead relationships with the Chambers of Commerce, Economic Development, and industry targeted sectors that include **Advanced Manufacturing, Food Processing, Healthcare, Logistics and Transportation, Energy and Utilities** and other business-oriented groups.

The BSRs work directly with employers to determine their needs and collaborate closely with the PA CareerLink® personnel to coordinate services and referrals. When recruiting employers, BSRs discuss the benefits of services and they communicate information about employers' job requirements to all PA CareerLink® staff responsible for making jobseeker referrals. Additionally, they maintain employer contacts regularly by telephone, email, in person, or through a newsletter or card; update Constant Contact; conduct on-site Job Fairs; and distribute employer satisfaction surveys to a diverse selection of employers monthly. The BSRs also inform employers about all PA CareerLink® services, such as pre-screening, job matching, job fairs, tax incentives, rapid response, training availability, customized and OJT training opportunities, vocational rehabilitation assessments and literacy services.

They constantly follow up with employers regarding customers' interviews, job offers, and job opportunities. After a customer is hired, the BSR remains in contact with the employer to monitor satisfaction. If a customer is not hired, the BSR will determine the reason and share that information with the customer as well as his/her Recruiter. Follow-up includes the completion of a customer post-interview debriefing form and an employer feedback form. The data from these documents ensures feedback is received from both the customer and employer. This information is used to improve preparation for future candidates and to better present employers with qualified candidates for their open positions.

To enhance the quality of services to employers, the BSTL develops a quarterly business plan and recruitment strategy that addresses outreach services with employers and community partners and identify what high-priority occupations we are targeting based on local economic data. The BSTL also conducts research on job postings that are over 60 days old to determine how to better meet employer needs. In conducting this research over the past few years, the local area has successfully increased the number of employer relationships and valid open positions.

The Board requires new job postings to be approved within 24 hours. Additionally, it limits the Fully Referred and Hold Job Postings to 20 days. Full utilization of JobGateway® reports ensures

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job orders are managed and customers are being matched to the most appropriate opportunities system-wide to improve the fill rate. BSR and BSTL work with PA CareerLink® Functional Leadership Team in developing a fill rate and cycle time for filling all staff-assisted job orders and monitor these goals monthly.

As part of its continuous improvement processes, the Board will be developing enhanced approaches to better engage employers in the public workforce development system and to better address employer concerns using the Next Gen model.

**Rapid Response.** It is important to note that the state-assigned Rapid Response representative works with the BST to identify the labor needs of new and existing employers. During layoff events, BST representatives often attend initial fact-finding meetings to learn about the dislocating workforce and identify suitable new employment opportunities for that group. Knowledge of the skill sets of the available dislocated workers is valuable to the BSTs in helping them to market to those employers who are hiring. Business Service Teams also assist the Rapid Response staff to coordinate dedicated job fairs for large groups of dislocated workers with the goal of returning the dislocated workers to suitable new employment as soon as possible.

**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 telephones in the PA CareerLink® centers so that Unemployment Compensation (UC) Claimants can call the statewide toll-free UC number regarding any benefits questions they may have.

Additionally, individuals who are likely to exhaust their benefits are identified by the State through the RESEA program. These individuals are directed to come to one of the PA CareerLink® locations for job search assistance.

At the local Center, 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.

Of significance, employers are invited to attend RESEA sessions to speak directly with participants. Moreover, the UC Workforce Development Representative conducts several seminars throughout the year for employers to learn more about UC Programs. Typical seminars include: UC 101; Separation Issues; UC Appeals and Hearings; Suitable Work; Relief from Charges. A best practice of receiving preapproval from the Society of Human Resource Management (SHRM) for HR recertification credits is also in place.

### **3.5. How will the local board coordinate local workforce investment activities with regional economic development activities that are specific to a local area? How will the local board**

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### **promote entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services?**

**Regional Economic Development Activities.** The Board is actively connected to regional economic development activities through its workforce system partners, including chambers, industrial development authorities, trade associations, community college/education providers, and community-based organizations. Specifically, it works in close cooperation with the lead organization for the Commonwealth's PREP Program, NEPA Alliance.

The NEPA Alliance includes members who promote economic development across the seven counties of the Northeast Region. Its services include Business Financing, Government Contracting Assistance, International Trade Assistance, Non-Profit Assistance, Transportation Planning, Research and Information, and Local Government Services. Collectively, NEPA PREP partners provide a powerful network of regional experts who help business owners address nearly every type of challenge facing their companies. They also help businesses access critical state and federal resources, such as loans, grants, technical assistance, or other support.

The Board's employment and training services are designed to support and complement these regional economic development efforts. To assist with business attraction, expansion, and retention activities, the Board provides information about the available labor pool and skill sets. The Board also conducts outreach, including mass recruitments and job fairs to further assist with economic development.

Additionally, as part of its strategy to support economic growth, the Board is developing policies to include incumbent worker training programs, OJT training programs, work-based learning programs, apprenticeship models, customized training programs, industry and sector strategies, career pathways initiatives, and utilization of effective business intermediaries.

**Training for Self-Employment.** Entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services should provide the basics of starting and operating a small business. Some examples of such skill development include, but are not limited to, the following abilities:

- Taking initiative;
- Creatively seeking out and identifying business opportunities;
- Developing budgets and forecasting resource needs;
- Developing a customer-centered environment;
- Understanding various options for acquiring capital and the tradeoffs associated with each option; and
- Communicating effectively and marketing oneself and one's ideas.

Although the Board provides a variety of workshops each week that include many employment-related topics, the Board has not identified a specific career track for entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services. Rather, individuals who are interested in self-employment are referred to community partners, such as the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) at Wilkes University, to receive specialized assistance that includes:

- Entrepreneurship education that provides an introduction to the values and basics of starting

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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.

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### 4. OPERATIONAL PLANNING QUESTIONS: Local Area Workforce Delivery System

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

**PA CareerLink® Operator.** In compliance with the WIOA and related federal and state regulations, the Board recently initiated a competitive procurement process to secure the consortium of EDSI and ReDCo/Pathways to provide its One-Stop Operator services. As of July 1, 2017, the One-Stop Operator's programmatic responsibilities will include:

- Ensure that the role of all required partners in the PA CareerLink® system have been defined, identified, and integrated into the service delivery system.
- Implement and augment the integrated services structure within the PA CareerLink® centers, as designed by the Board and enabled via the MOU with all core and required partners operating at the site.
- Monitor operational procedures and protocols to promote effective and seamless partner referral, for the benefit of the customer, while ensuring that individual partner program performance and outcomes are not negatively impacted.
- Evaluate service delivery (e.g., timing, type, format, etc.) across providers and partners as well as across customer segments, and identify opportunities to optimize services.
- Develop, implement, and monitor customer service standards across the centers. Continuously assess customer needs via customer feedback mechanisms at the center and make recommendations to the Board for continuous improvement.
- Implement and monitor the negotiated One-Stop partner MOU.
- Develop an understanding of and use all required technologies to access and report on necessary data (i.e., CWDS-Commonwealth Workforce Development System, ClientTrack™, etc.).
- Establish and monitor metrics for measuring success based on state and federal requirements associated with Provider and Partner funding streams
- Develop and implement a plan for continuous improvement that engages all partners operating at the centers.
- Convene a regular meeting of the administrative leadership of MOU partners to review progress and performance of the core programs.
- Hold regular cross-agency staff meetings of partner staff to coordinate services within the structure of the multi-partner MOU including both on-site and off-site partners.

The administrative responsibilities of the One-Stop Operator will include:

- Convene regularly scheduled meetings and/or conference calls with Board staff.
- Present a report, in an approved format at each quarterly Board meeting, regarding coordination of services, adherence to the MOU, and performance outcomes at the centers.

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- Site Administrator provides functional supervision to influence and drive change across providers, partners, and Board staff.

**WIOA Providers.** The entities providing WIOA Title I, Title II, Title III, and Title IV services are detailed in the One-Stop Location and Program Services Chart included as **Attachment 3**.

**Procurement Policy.** The Board's procurement standards promote fiscal accountability and prevent waste, fraud, and abuse. Its policies and guidelines ensure compliance with the Commonwealth's minimum procurement standards. Specific provisions include:

- a. The L/S WIB requires competitive procurement wherever practicable.
- b. The L/S WIB requires affirmation that no conflict of interest exists for procurement of programs and services over \$25,000.
- c. The L/S WIB requires specifications that encourage free and open competition.
- d. Solicitation - The costs involved and the type of acquisition being sought govern L/S WIB methodology for procurement. Generally, quotes are used for small purchases that individually, or in an aggregate, fall within the small purchase policies. The Request for Proposal (RFP) is used for acquisitions that do not qualify under small purchase requirements.
- e. Use of Written Quotes - The primary method for acquisitions that qualify under the Small Purchase Policy and have a unit cost in excess of \$5,000 is through the use of written quotes. Quotes on vendor letterhead, or electronically submitted price quotes or copies of equipment/supply catalogs, advertisements, or brochures, are applicable. Use of General Services Administration (GSA) or State Education price listing will automatically satisfy the three minimum quote requirements.

**Historical Procurement Summary.** The following narrative provides a historical overview of the Board's procurement of its One-Stop Operator:

The Board was continually apprised throughout 2017-2017 program year regarding the WIOA requirement for the Procurement of the One-Stop Operator, including the preliminary guidance provided by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania during the December 2016-January 2017 timeframe.

On January 18, 2017, the Performance and Evaluation (P&E) Committee reviewed the various One-Stop Operator procurement models. After discussion and careful consideration, the P&E Committee recommended Model #6.

On February 1, 2017, the Executive Committee met and approved proceeding with the One-Stop Operator Procurement pursuant to Model #6, subject to compliance with final guidance from the Pennsylvania Department of L&I and U.S. Department of Labor.

On April 10, 2017 Public Notice was made to advertise the RFP. It was published in both the *Citizens' Voice* and *Republican Herald*. Additionally, it was posted on [www.classified570.com](http://www.classified570.com) and [www.lswib.org](http://www.lswib.org) for thirty (30) days. The RFP was also distributed to groups and individuals listed on the Board's vendor list.

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On April 26, 2017, bidders' questions were answered and posted on [www.lswib.org](http://www.lswib.org).

On May 10, 2017, proposals were received from interested parties.

From May 15, 2017 to June 2, 2017, the proposals were reviewed and recommendations were made.

On June 7, 2017, the Board made its selection.

On July 1, 2017, the One-Stop Operator Consortium began services.

### **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 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 3**.

The new MOU and Resource Sharing Agreement (RSA) 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. They will be effective July 1, 2017 and will replace the existing One-Stop Partner Agreements and RSA. They will comply with all federal and Commonwealth directives regarding the WIOA.

### **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.** The Board provides access to services throughout the local area via the three comprehensive PA CareerLink® locations. Addresses are as follows:

PA CareerLink®: Luzerne County at Wilkes-Barre, 32 East Union Street, Wilkes-Barre, PA 18701

PA CareerLink®: Luzerne County at Hazleton, 75 North Laurel Street, Hazleton, PA 18201

PA CareerLink®: Schuylkill County at Pottsville, 203 East Arch street, Pottsville, PA 17901

Overall, the hours of operation and services are varied and flexible based on customer need. Evening and other alternative hours may be utilized. Factors which influence hours include, but are not limited to, availability of public transportation, the needs of under-employed and unemployed individuals, and employer hours of operation.

**Providing Access in Remote Areas.** In addition to the three Centers, the Board will also provide and expand services in the remote locations of local area through the following strategies:

- Promoting use of the PA CareerLink® services available at <http://www.jobgateway.pa.gov>.
- Forming partnerships with the library system to provide service in remote areas of the counties.
- Encouraging and allowing the use of technology, including text messaging, social media, on-

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line video conferencing, Internet searches, and other state-of-the-art methods to locate, communicate, and contact jobseekers and industry personnel.

- Expanding its existing network community partnerships to include additional community-based entities, faith-based organizations, employer-sponsored groups, and government organizations to increase access throughout the local area.

**Utilizing Case Management Systems.** The system as a whole utilizes the CWDS and JobGateway® to provide specific information to jobseekers and employers in their respective efforts to obtain employment and find the best employees. Additionally, the local area also utilizes Constant Contact to provide timely notice of new job postings, training opportunities and other services to customers who register for these services. To promote the timeliness and accuracy of information, Case Managers 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 Board works with its Adult Education partners to identify strategies that improve access. For example, it implemented 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 Board's approach for meeting the needs of individuals with barriers to employment, including improving digital literacy skills is detailed in **the response to 3.2 above**.

**Improving Access to Services for English Language Learners and Individuals Who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing.** As part of its service strategy, the Board requires that the PA CareerLink® centers provide translation and/or interpretation services. It encourages partners to staff each location with highly-qualified personnel who mirror the center's demographics; utilizing bi-lingual and multi-lingual personnel as needed. Telephone-based translation services may be used for languages other than English, and the Board encourages the PA CareerLink® centers to provide workshops in Spanish. Individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing are afforded equal communication and programmatic access, including the scheduling and use of a PA certified American Sign Language interpreter.

**Providing Access to a Variety of Programs.** When deemed appropriate, partner staff may refer customers to other partner programs within the system that provide additional/ancillary services that may be beneficial. For example, if an EARN participant can benefit from training programs offered under WIOA, then co-case management occurs. The WIOA case manager determines eligibility and both WIOA and TANF case managers work together with the client to make sure they receive all services for which they are determined eligible.

Additionally, UC Courtesy phones and UC PCs are also available at the PA CareerLink® centers for those customers who need access to such services.

#### **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**

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### **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 are fully accessible to any individuals who may be interested in receiving employment and training services. Each site is certified annually for compliance with the Office of Equal Opportunity, PA Department of Labor and Industry (L&I). The OEO officer receives monthly reports from the OEO manager regarding any grievances. Overall, the Board promotes full accessibility by requiring that its One-Stop 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® center and throughout the local area and coaching them on how to apply for needed resources.
- Utilize a Limited English Proficiency policy, including the use of bi- and multi-lingual personnel in the Center as well as providing access to language interpretation services, including the language services provided by Propio, a system with whom L&I has contracted.
- 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. Training on ADA compliance is provided through OVR. It also provides information regarding its programs and services during monthly staff meetings and staff development trainings. Partner staff from BWPO, OVR; UC; Veterans; Rapid Response; Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth; and EARN participate in these sessions.
- Help individuals with disabilities who may require additional assistance with the registration process.
- Maintain required federal and state notices and postings.

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

The Board ensures continuous improvement of eligible providers of services for WIOA Title I

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Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth through its competitive procurement process. The extensive RFP process is assessed on a variety of criteria, including: past performance, organizational capacity and experience, ability to establish organizational partnerships, program design, program budget, and capacity to join, manage and lead the PA CareerLink® staff in efforts to outreach to employers and jobseekers. Each proposal is required to demonstrate an in-depth understanding of customer needs, both jobseekers and employers, and service gaps in each county, and that propose additional activities beyond the minimum requirements to meet those needs. Proposers are required to provide an oral presentation to the local Board.

The Board's Executive Committee reviews proposals and evaluates oral presentations using an evaluation tool that facilitates the ordinal ranking of proposals in each county. The full Board then considers the Executive Committee's recommendations when making its decision to award the contract in part or in whole, or to reject it.

To track provider results, Board staff conducts program monitoring on an annual basis and fiscal monitoring on a quarterly basis. The PA CareerLink® One-Stop Operator will meet regularly with partners to discuss strategies for continuous improvement, including opportunities for cross training and collaboration across program partners. Meeting minutes are captured and distributed to all partners.

Additionally, the Board ensures the quality of providers on the statewide ETPL, and certifies that such providers meet the employment needs of local employers, workers, and jobseekers based on the list of requirements to be approved for initial eligibility. Specifically, training providers must be authorized by the Commonwealth to operate programs in Pennsylvania, provide documentation that confirms financial capability, and comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), as well as WIOA nondiscrimination and equal opportunity requirements. ETPL training programs must also meet performance benchmarks related to program completion, job placement rates, median earnings, and credential attainment.

ETPL applications must include program-specific information, such as a program description, length of program, costs of tuition, any prerequisites, and the type of credential offered. This detailed application process helps to advise the customer in choosing a program that fits his or her particular interests and needs. All programs on the ETPL must be training in a HPO. Program providers are required to annually apply to have their programs placed on the ETPL.

#### **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.**

The Board regularly reviews the type of programs available to Adult and Dislocated Workers in the local area, including training services available through the ETPL as described in the **response to 4.5 above**. 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, 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 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.

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

Upon entry in the system, individuals are directly referred to the specific services that best meet their particular needs. As may be required, interpretation and/or translation services may be utilized to assist customers who do not speak English well.

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. Details of these services are provided in the **response to 4.13 below**.

**Priority of Service.** The Board's priority of service policy aligns with the Commonwealth's performance goals for the targeted groups as outlined in the State Plan. Adult priority is determined for the targeted groups during eligibility and enrollment and individuals must meet the general eligibility criteria shown below:

- Age (18 years or older)
- U.S. Citizen or Eligible-to-Work
- Selective Service (if applicable)
- Resident of the Luzerne-Schuylkill Workforce Investment Area

Priority is given to residents of Luzerne-Schuylkill Counties for WIOA Individualized Career and Training Services to individuals satisfying at least one of the following barriers to employment:

- Recipients of Public assistance
- Other *low-income* individuals
- Individuals who are basic skills deficient
- Individuals who are both underemployed and low-income

Luzerne-Schuylkill residents receive priority services for enrollment into WIOA programs. However, non-residents may be considered on a case-by-case basis pending funding availability with the approval of the WIOA Title I Adult Program Manager and Board staff. Enrollment of non-residents will require coordination with other PA CareerLink® centers and Boards to prevent potential duplication of services. Management approval and coordination with all parties must be documented in the participant's file and case notes.

The PA CareerLink® centers use TABE or WorkKeys assessments to identify individuals who are basic skills deficient. Case notes must provide an auditable trail to the source of verified information.

Veterans and veteran's eligible spouses within these targeted groups receive priority over non-veterans. Priority of services for veterans and eligible spouses applies across all qualified employment and training programs. The priority of service for public assistance recipients, other low-income individuals, individuals who are basic skills deficient and individuals who are both

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underemployed and low-income is a statutory priority that applies only to the receipt of individualized career services and training services with respect to WIOA Title I Adult program. With regard to the priority of service for veterans and eligible spouses, priority of service for WIOA Title I Adult program must be applied in the following order:

1. Veterans and eligible spouses who meet the *statutory* priority (public assistance recipient, other low-income individuals including the underemployed, or basic skills deficient) and Adult program eligibility must receive the highest level of priority for services;
2. Other individuals (not veterans or eligible spouses) who meet the *statutory* priority (public assistance recipient, other low-income individuals including underemployed or basic skills efficient) and Adult program eligibility then receive the second level of priority for services;
3. All other veterans and eligible spouses who meet Adult program eligibility, then receive the third level of priority for services;
4. Other individuals (not veterans or eligible spouses) who do not meet the statutory priority (public assistance recipient, other low-income individuals including underemployed, or basic skills efficient), but do meet a local discretionary priority and Adult program eligibility, then receive the fourth level of priority for services;
5. Other individuals (not veterans or eligible spouses) who do not meet the statutory priority (public assistance recipient, other low-income individuals including underemployed, or basic skills efficient) and do not meet the local discretionary priority, but do meet Adult program eligibility, then receive the fifth level of priority for services.

Overall, the Board strives to ensure that a minimum of 51% of Adult program participants are from the priority targeted groups. Monitoring is conducted quarterly to track compliance.

### **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 apprenticeships. Such coordination will be clearly identified in the customer's Individual Employment Plan (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 ETPL 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 processes is provided on the following page:

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**ITAs.** Before processing an ITA, PA CareerLink® Title I staff ensures potential participants have researched the local labor market and that there are suitable job opportunities available after completing training.

ITAs are awarded to eligible applicants interested in attending quality training programs that appear on the Pennsylvania ETPL, and prepares them for occupations appearing on Pennsylvania's HPO List. ITAs are intended to support training that will enable participants to re-enter the labor force quickly. To that end, Bachelor's Degree or higher levels of education programs are not eligible to receive ITA funding, except under the circumstances as described in A and B below:

- A. If a customer can be deemed WIOA eligible, and is enrolled in a Bachelor's Degree program at an accredited school, the PA CareerLink® staff can consider processing an ITA if all of the following conditions are met:
  1. The degree can be achieved within the two-year timeframe of an ITA,
  2. The customer must provide proof how the remaining costs of training will be funded,
  3. The degree program is on the Pennsylvania ETPL,
  4. The training is directly related to gaining employment in an occupation listed on Pennsylvania's HPO List, and
  5. A waiver request must be submitted to, and approved by the L/S WIB.
- B. If a customer can be deemed WIOA eligible, and is enrolled in a semester based, credentialed program, less than two years in length, at an accredited school, the PA CareerLink® staff can consider processing an ITA if all of the following conditions are met:
  1. The credentialed program can be achieved within the two-year timeframe of an ITA,
  2. The customer must provide proof of how the remaining costs of training will be funded
  3. The degree program is on the Pennsylvania ETPL,
  4. The training is directly related to gaining employment in an occupation listed on Pennsylvania's HPO List, and
  5. In this circumstance, it is not necessary to request a waiver from L/S WIB.

The following standards are used to determine the level of ITA funding:

- The target job, (based on course title and corresponding Standard Occupation Code (S.O.C. code) is nestled within a recognized Industry Cluster.
- The target job is on the High Priority Occupations list.
- The target job has projected annual openings and or quantifiable growth potential through emerging job creation/economic development activity.
- The target job has an annual average wage that is self-sustaining.
- The customer's Career Readiness Component (WorkKeys) indicates an aptitude necessary for academic success

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A Level One grant maximum of \$5,000 will be awarded to Applications meeting each of the aforementioned standards. A Level Two grant of \$3,500 will be awarded to Applications meeting all but one of the preset standards. A Level Three grant of \$1,500 will be awarded to Applications meeting three or fewer of the preset standards.

Priority in ITA funding is given to eligible applicants interested in attending training programs that provide an industry-recognized credential. Registered Apprenticeships listed on the Pennsylvania ETPL qualify for ITA funding; participants are encouraged to consider an Apprenticeship as a viable career pathway.

ITAs should align with key industry sectors identified by L/S WIB. L/S WIB and the WIOA Title I contractor will work to align training funds across programs to ensure a broad portfolio of strong training options are available to potential training participants.

**Work-Based Learning.** The Board is exploring the expansion of work-based learning programs, such as OJT, work experience, co-op programs, apprenticeships, and transitional jobs to meet unique skill needs of employers in the area. Its current work-based learning guidelines include the following stipulations:

- Prioritized for occupations that are considered HPOs and occupations in a Targeted Industry Cluster
- Allowable for occupations that are determined to be in sectors that have a high potential for demand or growth in the local area
- Occupations which do not require extra-ordinary training will not be considered, unless they involve the training of customers with limited skill potential (e.g. learning disabilities)
- Work-based training for incumbent workers must relate to the introduction of new technologies, introduction to new production or services, procedures, upgrading to new jobs that require additional skills, and/or work place literacy or similar skills
- Trainee wages must be at least \$10 per hour
- Employer receives a reimbursement of 50% of the trainee's base wage rate, not to exceed \$5,000 (which is in line with the Board's maximum for an ITA as described above) during a fixed training period of six to 26 weeks
- Trainee must be scheduled for at least 32 hours per week (or 64 hours per two weeks); however, reimbursable hours to employer cannot exceed 40 hours per week
- Employer is expected to retain the trainee as a regular full-time employee who is provided benefits and working conditions at the same level and to the same extent as other employees working a similar length of time and doing the same type of work
- Length of work-based training contracts will be reduced by 50% when the prospective employee has had past experience or training in the proposed occupation within the last year.

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

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**Overview.** The Board is conscious of the fact that it needs to produce an educated and skilled pipeline of talent for its targeted industry clusters. Key to this effort is the availability of workforce services to youth. To ensure this, the Board, in coordination with the its Youth Committee (YC), has developed a vision for providing comprehensive services for eligible local youth, as well as goals and objectives to achieve that vision.

Through on-site and off-site services, youth may access each of the 14 WIOA Youth program elements as applicable to their needs. The customer's Individual Service Strategy (ISS) serves as the guiding document. Using this tool, the youth and case manager identify the steps and actions required to connect the customer to his or her education, training, or career goal.

In order to meet its planned 75% WIOA expenditure rate, the Board primarily focuses youth services on Out-of-School individuals. It believes that a youth must first obtain a high school equivalency diploma before pursuing postsecondary education, a career, and/or placement in the military. To assist, it ensures that high school equivalency diploma review classes are held on-site at each of the PA CareerLink® centers.

Additionally, because most of the area's Out-of-School Youth have never held a job, the Board uses the industry recognized ServSafe credential which opens the door to employment for many individuals. It has been especially helpful in placing youth in food services. In fact, using ServSafe, as a starting point, the L/S WIB has established career pathways in the Food Processing and the Logistics and Transportation industries.

**Referral and Co-Enrollment.** The Board promotes the concept of referral and co-enrollment of youth into partner programs, including TANF services. TANF eligible youth aged 14-18 are provided with a year-round program that includes life skills; job searching skills; and career awareness activities. Life skills focus on such things as financial literacy (i.e. budgeting, credit card usage, etc.), community service, substance abuse and wellness, diversity, sexual harassment, time management, conflict resolution, getting along with co-workers, respecting supervisors, and leadership. Job searching skills activities include how to apply for a job, put a resume together, interview for a job, and keep a job.

Career awareness activities help prepare TANF-eligible youth for life after high school. Youth are exposed to career interest inventories, exploration of various careers, O\*Net Interest profiler, and high priority occupations in the region. Participants learn the differences in apprenticeships, vocational-technical training, community college and university/college programs of study.

Participants are also exposed to information about the local business community and labor market information. Youth are given an opportunity to participate in job shadowing activities as well as campus tours. Additionally, work experience opportunities are available to eligible participants, ages 14-18. Most work experiences occur during the summer months and worksites are chosen as close to the participants' homes as possible so that transportation is minimal.

The Board is currently exploring potential partnerships with local libraries to offer literacy programming to the youngest members of the TANF population, those aged 5-10. Additionally, the Board is also extending contracts with the four TANF providers to conduct after school programs that focus on STEM, career awareness, financial literacy and literacy.

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Youth with disabilities are provided with information on the services available through the OVR. It is helpful that OVR staff are co-located within the PA CareerLink® centers as referrals are easily made and facilitate a much shorter turnaround time for service.

Additionally, the Board supports Job Corps' monthly presentations WIOA Youth, providing them with opportunities to interview and visit the Luzerne Job Corps location. The Board has also collaborated on Youth Build proposals with regional organizations. Finally, as part of the NEPA Consortium of Workforce Boards (planning region), the L/S WIB has worked to secure two rounds of Strategic Innovation Funding to support a Pre-Apprenticeship Initiative which is available to WIOA Youth and Dislocated Workers in the seven-county region. Phase I ended June 30, 2017 and Phase II of this initiative begins in Fall 2017.

**Work Experience.** Work experience is a powerful tool that helps lower-income youth, mainly those with barriers to employment, gain invaluable and life-changing experience in work places.

The Board's selected service providers reach out to employers to secure access to high-quality opportunities, including internships, workplace learning, transitional jobs, pre-apprenticeships, and summer jobs. Particular emphasis is placed on assisting Out-of-School Youth.

The Board utilizes **Yes Northeast** to provide youth with a number of soft skills and entrepreneurship workshops. Each of these program components includes high-quality work experience that promotes employment opportunities after the training is completed.

Another successful work experience program provides vocational training and soft skills training at Schuylkill Technology Center. A new program has recently been developed with the City of Wilkes-Barre to employ youth at city parks. Using strategies such as these, the Board expects to successfully meet or exceed the 20% work experience requirement each year.

**Youth Committee.** The YC includes L/S WIB members as well as at-large members. They represent the business sector, chambers of commerce, intermediate units, career and technical education, higher education, Title I and Title II providers, labor unions, Job Corps, county assistance office, vocational rehabilitation, juvenile probation, youth service organizations, associations that provide programming and services for youth, and the nonprofit sector.

**WIOA Youth Eligibility Requirements.** The Board and Youth Committee review and approve all outlines and tools for WIOA Youth documentation requirements, including the policy for "requires additional assistance to complete an education program or to secure and hold employment" for eligibility and enrollment for WIOA Youth program services. To enroll in WIOA Youth programming, a youth must provide documentation to determine eligibility for the following requirements:

- Age (In-School Youth are 14-21 years old and Out-of-School Youth are 16-24 years old)
- Authorization to Work
- Residency
- Selective Service Registration (if applicable)
- School Status

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- Low-Income Determination (if applicable)
- Barrier Status (School drop-out; pregnant/parenting; youth with a disability; individual in foster care/aged out; homeless or runaway; offender; basic skills deficient; English language learner; requires additional assistance)

The Board has adopted the following criteria as its definition for an eligible youth who *“requires additional assistance to complete an educational program, or to secure and hold employment”*:

- Under Employed or Poor Work History
  - Fired from one or more jobs, or has a history of sporadic employment (i.e., held three or more jobs within the last 12 months and is no longer employed)
  - Has actively been seeking employment for at least three months, but remains unemployed or underemployed. This includes a youth with no employment history, with limited work experience, and/or actively seeking full-time employment, but have only achieved part-time employment
  - Held several jobs in a year
  - Aged 22-23 and making \$7.25 hour
  - Aged 21-24 and never had a job
  - Youth who lacks a significant work history, defined as meeting one of the following:
    - Has no unsubsidized work history
    - Has been unemployed for more than 15 weeks of the last six months
    - Lacks meaningful work experience and/or general job search, basic entry level or employment readiness skills
- Education/Skills Deficient
  - Received a low score on a pre-employment assessment
  - Has received a rejection letter from an employer stating that the participant does not meet the required skills needed or employment
  - Currently at-risk of dropping out of school (Documentation provided by a school counselor, or other school staff, probation officer, or another person who can provide documentation demonstrating chronic poor attendance and/or discipline problems during the last current and/or last school year or has a low-grade point average)
  - Currently credit deficient (i.e., one or more grade levels behind) and/or currently enrolled in math/reading extra supports
  - Currently attending a high school where economically disadvantaged rate is 50% or greater

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- Transportation Barriers
  - Lack of consistent and available public and/or personal transportation as identified in their Individual Service Strategy (ISS)
- At Risk Youth
  - Mentally challenged, learning disabled, non-cash recipient or
  - Possessing no marketable skills (i.e., no meaningful unsubsidized work experience of at least two years cumulative or has not completed postsecondary training that has resulted in a degree, license, or certificate in a demand occupation)
  - Has an incarcerated parent

Criteria for inclusion under this category will be verified by the Case Manager and clearly documented in the individual's case file to demonstrate that it is reasonable, quantifiable, and evidence-based. Examples of such documentation include copies of pay check stubs, school records, assessment results, and court documents.

Enrollments under this category will be approved on a case-by-case basis by the Executive Director. This important step will ensure that documentation is complete and that the 5% limitation is not exceeded.

### **4.9. How will the local board coordinate workforce investment activities carried out in the local area with statewide rapid response?**

Rapid Response provides services to the community, the employer, and the worker. It is a proactive and coordinated effort that includes access to Pennsylvania's economic development assistance resources, such as helping businesses that are at risk of closing to keep their doors open, as well as helping employers reduce the size of, or prevent a layoff.

In addition to these proactive services, the Board also serves as the link to services and financial support for major dislocation events. It coordinates activities as news of pending or unexpected layoffs is received, in conjunction with the State Rapid Response Coordinator and PA CareerLink® staff.

The State Rapid Response Coordinator takes immediate action in addressing intervention strategies and services aimed toward rapid and suitable long-term employment for the adversely affected Dislocated Workers. The Rapid Response Coordinator meets with the employer and when appropriate, representatives of the employees, to discuss the services that are available through the program. The Rapid Response Coordinator leads a team of experts to provide workers with information about access to services, such as the following, in a centralized and convenient location before the layoff or closure occurs:

- Unemployment Insurance
- Health and pension benefits
- Job search activities
- Education services

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- Training Program
- Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) and NAFTA/TAA programs
- Social Services programs
- Community and economic development activities
- Emergency assistance
- Crisis counseling

The Rapid Response program helps laid off workers turn the challenge of a layoff into an opportunity by providing information about, and access to, the services that will help put workers back to work. Primary services include:

- Career counseling
- Job search assistance
- Information about education and training opportunities
- Use of computers, telephones, and fax machines for a job search
- Financial support for training
- Income support if a job was lost to foreign trade
- Special services for adults with disabilities and veterans

#### **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 services.**

The Board's Business Education Partnership-PY2016 (BEP) affects youth, parents and educators in the region with direct opportunities to understand and incorporate career exploration and education that is in line with HPOs, and first-hand job shadowing opportunities with employers. Funding provides career-focused awareness and discovery opportunities for youth, educators, and parents. It includes career events, educator in the workplace experiences, soft skills development and opportunities to participate in a structured program where they explore a specific job, interacting with staff and through hands-on experiences. A few examples of the Board's efforts for non-duplicated activities and services offered to enrich programming that were offered to all youth in the workforce area (and not just those constrained to WIOA or TANF funding restrictions follow):

- **Schuylkill Youth Summit.** Brings together over 100 high school students from 16 county schools each year. Youth learn how communities and democracy works and are challenged to make real changes in their communities while working on goals they design for themselves. Youth focus on career and job awareness, learning about issues in their community, and planning and goal-setting to spearhead transformation in their communities. PA CareerLink® Schuylkill staff provide tours and supplemental information to participants on JobGateway®.
- **Leadership Wilkes-Barre.** The *Impact* program develops teachers' career awareness skills. Teachers leave their classrooms to learn firsthand about employer needs, and employment

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and job shadowing opportunities for students. Peer-to-peer learning, collaboration, and the exchange of ideas are used to promote positive results and outcomes. As part of the program, teachers complete a School Impact Project (SIP).

- **Luzerne Intermediate Unit 18.** *Looking Forward* are career and academic planning events that will take place in 2017 and 2018. It is open to all Northeastern Pennsylvania students, grades 8 through 12, and their parents. *Looking Forward* is designed to give students the opportunity to explore personal career interest areas, regional HPOs, and viable career pathways. It is anticipated to serve 800 students and parents.
- **Northeast PA Manufacturers and Employers Council.** WDB is providing support for the 2017 YES Breakfast, 2017 Schuylkill County Career Fair, and the YES curriculum for one school district. It is anticipated that 1,700 students will be served.
- **Wyoming Valley United Way.** Career events are held in three districts: Wyoming Valley West, Hanover, and Wilkes-Barre Area. It targets students in grades 9-12 and is planned to serve 2,400 youth in the upcoming year.
- **Schuylkill Intermediate Unit 29.** Youth are provided career awareness activities for in-demand technical occupations. It is designed for students and their parents and family members along with local educators. Twelve districts in Schuylkill County and one charter school participate. It is planned that 250 students and their families and 75 teachers will take part.

Supporting these efforts, the Board also strives to work with school districts to provide career and labor market information to staff and students, and help districts coordinate career events. PA CareerLink® staff have developed relationships within the districts and continue to reach out to provide additional presentations to staff and students.

Additionally, the local area's Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy Program provides Adult Basic Education (ABE), Adult Secondary Education (ASE), Educational Functioning Levels (EFL), and English Language Acquisition (ELA) activities where there is a need. It also supports a tutoring program that offers one-on-one and/or small group instruction or volunteer classroom aides.

It prepares students for and supports them in achieving successful transition to postsecondary education/training or employment. It integrates digital literacy, employability skills and workforce preparation activities into its services. Its basic skills instruction incorporates activities that require the use of technology, promote critical thinking, and build self-management skills, such as utilizing resources and information, understanding systems, and working with others.

The Adult Education and Family Literacy Program also integrates career awareness and career planning activities, including using those activities as the context for basic skills instruction. Case management activities in support of transition are offered in a variety of ways: integrated into instruction, stand-alone group activities, and one-on-one case management support. The activities include introducing students to and helping them use the resources available through L&I and the PA CareerLink®; helping students identify employment and career pathways that align with their skills and interests and that lead to jobs that pay; and supporting students through the application process for employment or training.

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### **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.**

**Coordination of Roles and Responsibilities.** The Board's approach to workforce development efforts is centered on quality customer service to jobseekers and employers, the leveraging of various resources and funding streams to eliminate duplication of services, collaboration with other partner agencies, and support for a service delivery structure which maximizes access to all customers within the local area while allowing for flexibility in each county to design service strategies around the needs and resources available in their respective labor markets. The Board has developed close working relationships with the other Boards in the region, supporting regional approaches to the workforce needs of Northeastern Pennsylvania. Regional Rapid Response services, and collaboration in a wide variety of Industry Partnership programs are testament to this collaborative approach.

The PA CareerLink® centers use an intake form to capture each customer's contact information, employment history, veteran's status, possible barriers to employment, and reason for the initial visit. This information helps staff easily identify the program(s) and services which may be most beneficial to the customer. Referral to the appropriate partner and/or outside organization is determined jointly by the customer and staff person.

**Improving Program Partner Integration.** The Board recognizes the importance of the partner coordination and cooperation. It will charge the One-Stop Operator to provide this function. It will be responsible for assessing current gaps in the service delivery system, strengthening current partnerships, and facilitating seamless referrals between partners.

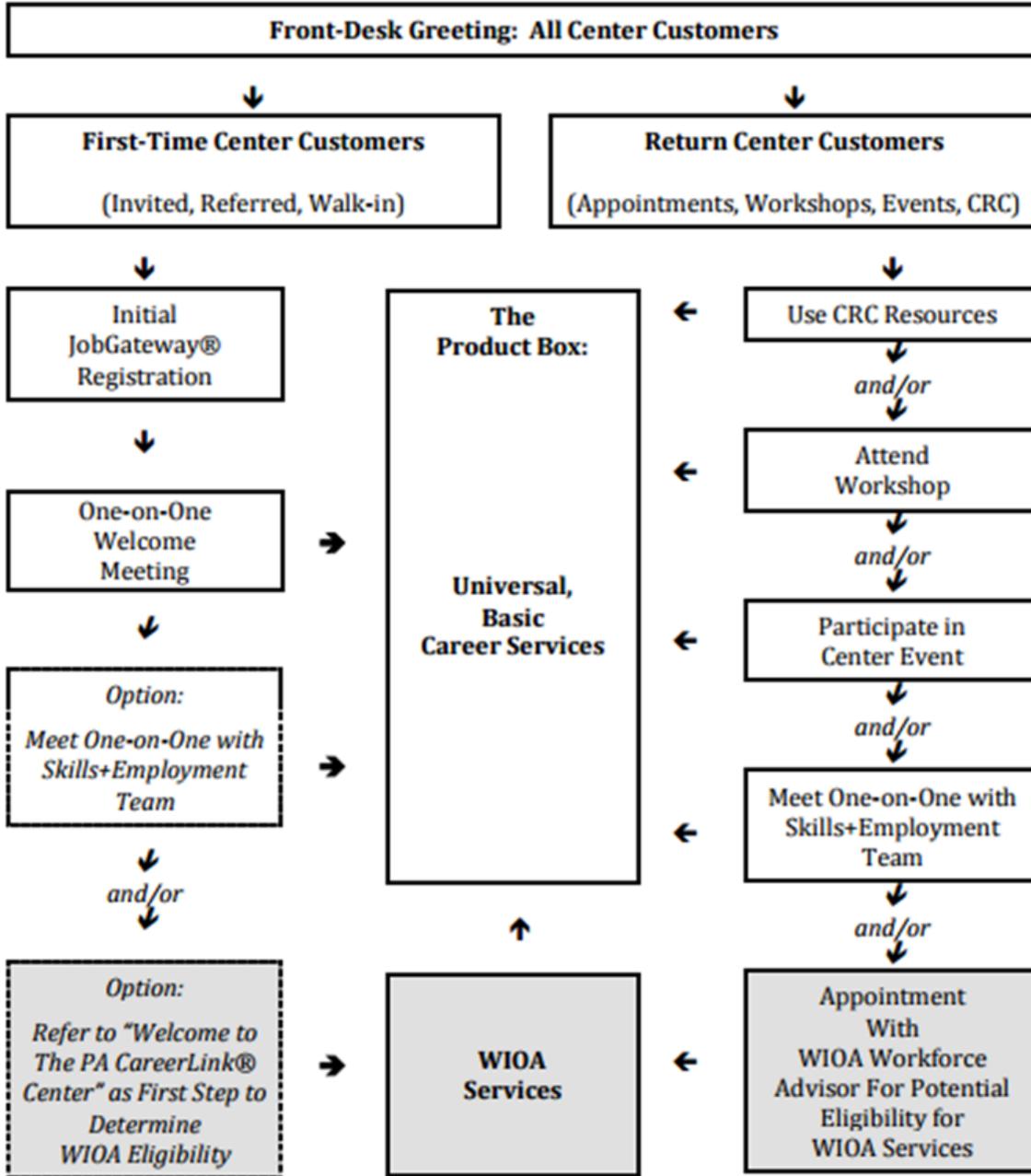
**Referral Mechanism.** As discussed, a common intake form captures information on each new customer. This data is very helpful in determining which program(s) may best meet the individual's needs. In addition to in-house referrals to partner programs, staff members may also refer customers to outside services for comprehensive help with issues such as, child care services; clothing; drug and alcohol; local food banks; and housing. All referrals are documented in the customer's case notes on CWDS.

**Orientation and Customer Flow.** A PA CareerLink® orientation is provided to customers as a workshop that is offered several times per week in each center. During orientation, customers learn about the One-Stop concept, the participating partners, the services available, veterans priority of service; youth activities, and other special programs, services, and events that may be helpful with their employment and training needs. It is highly recommended that every new customer attend an orientation session.

An overview of jobseeker customer flow is depicted in the chart that follows:

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**Staff Development.** All partner staff of the PA CareerLink® centers are provided information regarding partner services. In fact, partners report on their programs at regularly scheduled staff meetings. Moreover, formal cross-training on partner services is held annually, or as may be needed when new partners and/or services are made available. The One-Stop Operator is tasked with establishing a formal professional development process for the system on an ongoing basis.

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

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Board staff and Site Administrators from the PA CareerLink® centers sit on the regional advisory committee for the Title II, Adult Education and Literacy Program at Luzerne County Community College. During the bi-monthly meetings, adult education services are discussed, and workforce development staff provides input that is used for strengthening adult education services to the local workforce area.

Currently, adult education services are provided to referrals from the PA CareerLink® sites in tandem with the Title II, Adult Education provider referring their adults to workforce services. Adult education offers presentations to customers at the PA CareerLink® centers on an ongoing basis on current adult education services.

Moving forward, the Board will review the RFP for Title II programming to ensure that educational opportunities will align with the targeted employment needs of the region. Specifically, 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 reviewing and evaluating the applications, the local boards will be responsible for submitting recommendations to PDE and will also be responsible to provide technical assistance later in the process.

### **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?**

**Outreach and Intake.** Outreach, intake, and eligibility, including the identification of an individual's potential barrier(s) to employment are discussed in the **response to 3.3 above**.

Overall, the PA CareerLink® centers offer a wide variety of services to assist customers with job preparation and job search. The 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. The menu of services available to jobseekers, including those with barriers to employments is as follows:

#### **Basic Career Services include:**

- Information about services available through the PA CareerLink® centers
- Initial assessment of needs
- Referral to appropriate services
- Self-directed or staff-assisted job search

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- 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
- 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, including 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

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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 HPO, 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 ETPL which establishes eligibility and provides information about training institutions and their programs.

**Services to Individuals with Disabilities.** OVR provides eligible WIOA Title IV customers with individualized diagnostic, vocational counseling and guidance, vocational evaluation, restoration, training, and job placement services. Eligible and potentially eligible 14 to 21-year old in-school youth with disabilities receive pre-employment transition services including work-based learning experiences, job shadowing and vocational counseling and guidance. Group training services for youth include workplace readiness, independent living skills, and self-advocacy skills. More information regarding the services provided to individuals with disabilities, are described in the **responses to 3.2, 4.3, and 4.4 above.**

**Services to Older Pennsylvanians.** The Board provides services to Older Pennsylvanians through its relationship with its SCSEP partners, the Mature Worker Program, Area Agency on Aging for Luzerne/Wyoming Counties and the AARP Foundation that target economically disadvantaged individuals aged 55 and over. They provide assessment, testing and counseling, on-the-job training, referrals for additional classroom training, and referrals to employers in the community.

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

The BST has responsibility to support business engagement activities including:

- Support staff-assisted job orders
- Screen and refer qualified job candidates to job openings
- Outreach to new employers
- Promote services such as OJT, incumbent worker training, and customized training
- Assist with Rapid Response when companies lay off workers
- Conduct layoff aversion activities

The BST conducts its employer engagement activities with personnel from other programs such as veterans, OVR, and Older Worker program (Title V). To avoid duplication of efforts, each team member is assigned a specific caseload of employers within a specific industry cluster. The BSTL and the Veterans Employer Representative serve as the source of direct outreach to employers. Additionally, to coordinate these activities, the Board procured its One-Stop Operator. It will provide guidance on the employment outreach efforts of the BST and its partners.

With respect to Title II services, the BST takes the lead on engaging employer inquiries regarding adult basic education and literacy, but coordinates with literacy and education partners through the One-Stop Operator.

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Employer customers receive Title III services from Wagner-Peyser partners of the system. These services include:

- Use of PA CareerLink® centers to host employer events
- Job orders placed in JobGateway®
- Priority for veterans for job orders in the JobGateway® system

Employer customers receive Title IV services from OVR BST staff. These services include: reasonable accommodation consultation, OJT, referral on tax credits or deductions, consultation on the ADA accessibility standards and retention of current employees following an accident, injury, or disability.

Employers are also invited to UC Seminars that are made available at the PA CareerLink®. UC representatives make presentations on a variety of topics, including: UC Updates; Separation Issues; UC Appeals/Hearings: Suitable Work; and, Relief from Charges.

Additionally, the WDB makes full use of its partnership with the NEPA Alliance as discussed in the **response to 3.5 above** to align its workforce development services with economic development resources. Examples include NEPA Alliance's help with loans, grants, technical assistance, and other support, including business financing, government contracting, international trade, non-profit services, and transportation planning.

Services are aligned so that there is no duplication of efforts. Specifically, economic development contacts are focused primarily on long-term strategies for business attraction, retention, and expansion while workforce development contacts are concentrated on more immediate needs, such as talent recruitment and screening.

### **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?**

Supportive services, including assistance with transportation, work clothing, certifications, and other needs may be made available to WIOA-eligible customers based on documented need and available funding. Customers make a specific request to their Case Manager. Then, in accordance with local policies and procedures, this request is approved (or denied) by the WIOA Title I Manager.

All supportive services requests (both approved and denied) are documented in the customer's case file. Quarterly supportive services are forwarded to the Board for review.

Additionally, to augment the WIOA-funded supportive services, customers may also be referred to other partner organizations and community agencies to receive assistance with needs such as child care, health/wellness, housing, and clothing.

Of key significance, the local area has a diverse geography that includes three urban centers as well as many rural municipalities where public transportation is lacking. In fact, access to public transportation is a principal impediment.

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In Luzerne County, there are two separate public transportation systems, the Luzerne County Transportation Authority (LCTA) and the Hazleton Public Transit (HPT). The county has a total area of 906 square miles of which 890 square miles is land with a large portion of it rural. HPT primarily serves lower Luzerne County in the Hazleton area, with limited service to the Mountain Top area (a mostly residential area located between Wilkes-Barre and Hazleton) and the Intermodal Transportation Center in downtown Wilkes-Barre from which riders can transfer to a LCTA bus for further travel. LCTA serves the majority of the balance of Luzerne County. There is an area between Wilkes-Barre and Hazleton that has no bus service at all. Neither transit systems have bus service into the evening hours which ends service at 6:00 pm. and provides very limited service on Saturdays— no service on Sundays. The weekend public service is not coordinated with the business evening work shifts but rather geared towards the rider needing to run household errands.

There are large industrial parks in both the upper Luzerne County area (in the LCTA service area) and in lower Luzerne County located in the Hazleton area. Both transit systems provide service to the industrial parks. Many of the businesses located in the industrial parks run 24/7. Unfortunately, the service does not allow for bus service following second shift or third shift.

Board staff, PA CareerLink® Site Administrator and multiple partners worked with LCTA to address and identify the county's transportation issues. Surveys were conducted with businesses and employees within the upper Luzerne County CenterPoint Industrial Park and as a result of the survey, LCTA created a new bus route which is currently in place to assist workers in the industrial park. LCTA is evaluating the possibility of adding "loops" through the CenterPoint Industrial Park to provide service prior to and following second and third shifts.

There are several local businesses that provide shuttle service to/from their facility, such as, TJ Maxx Distribution Center. There is usually a small fee associated with utilizing the shuttle service.

Schuylkill County has a total area of 783 square miles of which 779 square miles is land and a large percentage is rural with limited public transportation. Transportation continues to be one of the biggest issues effecting jobseekers in Schuylkill County. There is no transportation to the various industrial parks located throughout the area. The Schuylkill Transportation System (STS) is the only provider of busing in Schuylkill County. STS provides mainly fixed route busing, including stops at Penn State Schuylkill Campus, McCann School of Business & Technology, and the two county malls.

The Shared Ride Program is designed to offer specialized accessible van transportation to Schuylkill County residents who are primarily senior citizens aged 65 and over. Persons with disabilities aged 18-64 who live in areas not served by STS fixed Route or ADA Para Transit services may be eligible to use the service. In some cases there are only specific dates, times, and locations to which shared ride transportation is provided. Recently, Commuter Services of Pennsylvania began including Schuylkill County as one of thirteen counties in which their services can be accessed. The PA CareerLink® Schuylkill County is working with Commuter Services of PA to promote their programs to jobseekers and employers.

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### **5. COMPLIANCE**

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

Within the PA CareerLink® centers, OVR provides enhanced services for eligible individuals with disabilities, including assessments, assistive technology and service-related reasonable accommodations, as well as many personal use items such as wheelchairs, scooters, eye glasses, and hearing aids. With respect to employer services, OVR recruits candidates for job openings, serves as mentors for employed persons, delivers training on diversity and inclusion, and provides assessment of workplace accessibility.

The Board utilizes OVR expertise for assessment, career pathways development, education, training, and placement services. It also uses OVR's very effective professional development program that promotes proper cross-training of staff, technical assistance between partners, and sharing of information and resources.

Because OVR serves as a full partner in the PA CareerLink® Luzerne-Schuylkill system and holds a seat on the Board, the local area is well-positioned to serve individuals with disabilities.

#### **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?**

The Board uses the following process to ensure the collection of debts from its sub-recipients.

1. The board complies with the Policies and Procedures Manual regarding the formulation of its Sub-recipient Audit Plan. In addition, any irregularities disclosed during the monitoring review of a Sub-recipient may result in an immediate audit of the Sub-recipient regardless of the dollar amount involved. This action will be initiated by the Board.
2. Upon issuance of the initial report, a copy will be submitted to the Sub-recipient, by certified mail, for review and corrective action. The Sub-recipient will have a period of thirty (30) days, from the date of mailing, to provide additional documentation supporting any questionable or unallowed costs. Following receipt of any additional documentation, the Board Chairperson will issue an Initial Determination of all Findings. The Sub-recipient will then have the opportunity to request an informal audit resolution meeting to discuss any findings not yet resolved. Should a request be received, an informal meeting will be granted. If a request is not received within 30 days, a final determination will be issued. This final determination will list costs that remain disallowed and will explain the Sub-recipient's right to request a hearing before an independent hearing officer within ten (10) days. The independent hearing officer will be required to hold a hearing within thirty (30) days. Both the Board and/or Sub-recipient have the right to appeal this formal decision to the L&I. This appeal; however, will only be accepted if all local administrative remedies have been exhausted, i.e., informal meeting followed by a formal hearing. This

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determination will also list as a debt any amounts determined to be unallowable. Upon approval by the L&I of this determination, the audit will be considered resolved.

3. Upon receipt of the Hearing Officer's Decision, the Sub-recipient and/or Board shall have a right to formally appeal to the L&I through both informal followed by formal hearings, and only after all local remedies have been exhausted. The Appeal must be submitted in writing with a copy to the Board Chairperson within ten (10) days of the receipt of the Final Determination.
4. Should the Sub-recipient choose not to appeal the Final Determination, payment of the established debt will be due within thirty (30) days of receipt of the determination. Should the amount due not be returned within the required time, a second request will be sent with a twenty (20) day response limitation. Should the second request not result in the payment of the debt, a third request will be sent allowing a ten (10) day response limitation. Interest will be charged, after consulting with the L&I, on the outstanding debt after the initial thirty (30) day period. Should no response be received following the third request, the matter will be referred to legal counsel for appropriate action.

### **5.3. What action(s) is the local board taking (or will take) towards becoming or remaining a high-performing board?**

The L/S WIB is currently functioning as a high-performing local board in that it consistently achieves the following:

- Attains the Governor's goals as described in the PA Combined Plan;
- Meets the local area negotiated federal performance goals;
- Sustains fiscal integrity;
- Receives successful monitoring reports and other evaluations by federal and Commonwealth oversight staff;
- Researches new and/or improved methods to assist individuals with barriers to employment;
- Achieves training expenditure targets; and
- Develops sector initiatives

In the future, it will implement the actions necessary to remain a high-performing board in accordance with any guidance that may be issued by the Commonwealth. In the meantime, it is researching the following types of activities for action:

- Expanding its collaboration with the other local workforce boards that are contiguous to it, including those in the Northeast Region, to implement broader-based regional workforce initiatives; and
- Increasing the use of technology to further improve access for customers, including returning citizens, those with disabilities, and others with barriers to employment.

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### **5.4. 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?**

The Board conducted strategy sessions that included Board members, local employers, jobseekers, community partners, educational and training organizations, and others to gather their direct input regarding local and regional workforce programs and possible initiatives for the future. Their contributions are included in this document and are an integral part of the strategies that are outlined within. Furthermore, as indicated in the **response to 5.5 below**, the Board also solicited additional feedback and input by publishing the document for a 30-day public comment period.

### **5.5. 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 Luzerne-Schuylkill Local WIOA Plan as well as the Northeast Regional WIOA Plan on its website for the 30-day period beginning July 24, 2017 and ending August 22, 2017. Additionally, notification of the availability of both the Local and Regional WIOA Plans for public comment was also directly distributed via email to representatives of local businesses, labor organizations, educational institutions, and news media. Public notice was published in the *Citizens Voice* and *Republican Herald*, the two primary newspapers for the region.

No comments were received.

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### 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 plans.

- ✓ Agreement between all counties and other local governments, if applicable, establishing the consortium of local/chief elected officials.
- ✓ Agreement between the chief elected official(s) and the fiscal agent, if a fiscal agent is designated.
- ✓ Agreement between the local elected official(s) and the local workforce development board.
- ✓ 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.
- ✓ 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.
- ✓ Local procurement policy – Must describe formal procurement procedures.
- ✓ 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 training provider list and eligibility criteria and process; “additional assistance” definition; transitional jobs thresholds; documentation for training expenditure targets; incumbent worker training.
- ✓ Risk management policy and process including records retention and public access; public records requests; monitoring, grievance; incident; and disaster recovery plan.
- ✓ 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.
- ✓ Professional services contract(s) for administrative services such as staffing and payroll, if applicable.

**REQUIRED ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment 1. Performance Measures Table

Attachment 2. Local Workforce Development Area Workforce System Organizational Chart

Attachment 3. PA CareerLink® Workforce Service Delivery System Program Partner/Provider List

**Attachment 1. Performance Measures Table**

Local Workforce Development Area Name: **Luzerne-Schuylkill Workforce Investment Board, Inc.**

Effective Date: **September 2016**

**WIOA Title I Programs**

<b>WIOA Performance Measures</b>	<b>Local Area PY17 Negotiated Performance Goals</b>	<b>Local Area PY16 Attained Performance Measures</b>
<b>Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)</b>	<b>Negotiated Goals</b>	<b>Attained Performance</b>
Adult	65%	Not Yet Available
Dislocated Worker	74%	Not Yet Available
Youth	65%	Not Yet Available
<b>Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)</b>	<b>Negotiated Goals</b>	<b>Attained Performance</b>
Adult	65%	Not Yet Available
Dislocated Worker	75%	Not Yet Available
Youth	57%	Not Yet Available
<b>Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)</b>	<b>Negotiated Goals</b>	<b>Attained Performance</b>
Adult	\$5,000	Not Yet Available
Dislocated Worker	\$7,000	Not Yet Available
Youth	Baseline	Not Yet Available
<b>Credential Attainment Rate</b>	<b>Negotiated Goals</b>	<b>Attained Performance</b>
Adult	55%	Not Yet Available
Dislocated Worker	57%	Not Yet Available
Youth	70%	Not Yet Available
<b>Measurable Skill Gains</b>	<b>Negotiated Goals</b>	<b>Attained Performance</b>
Adult	Baseline	Not Yet Available
Dislocated Worker	Baseline	Not Yet Available
Youth	Baseline	Not Yet Available
<b>Effectiveness in Serving Employers</b>	<b>Negotiated Goals</b>	<b>Attained Performance</b>
Adult	Baseline	Not Yet Available
Dislocated Worker	Baseline	Not Yet Available
Youth	Baseline	Not Yet Available

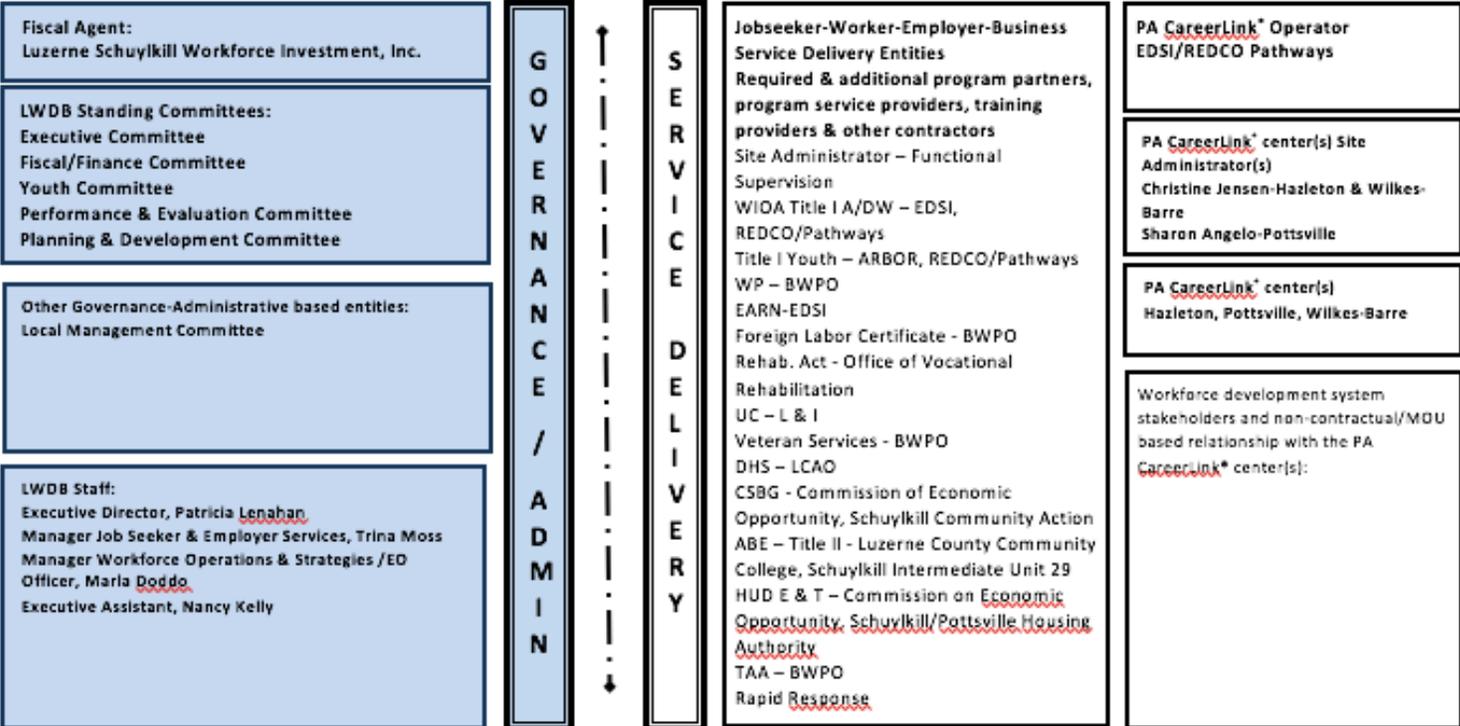
Attachment 2. PY 2017-2019 WIOA Multi-Year Regional/Local Area Plan  
Local Workforce Development Area Workforce System Organizational Chart

Local Workforce Development Area name: Luzerne-Schuylkill Workforce Investment Board, Inc.

Effective Date: July 1, 2017

**Chief/Lead Elected Official(s): Luzerne County Local Elected Officials, Schuylkill County Local Elected Officials**

**Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB): Luzerne Schuylkill Workforce Investment Board, Inc.  
Karen Kenderdine, Chair**



**Attachment 3. PA CareerLink® Workforce Service Delivery System Program Partner/Provider List**

Local Workforce Development Area Name: **Luzerne-Schuylkill Workforce Investment Board, Inc.**

Effective Date: **July 1, 2017**

<b>Program Name</b>	<b>Program Authorization</b>	<b>Local Area Partner/Provider</b>
<b>POC address</b>	<b>POC telephone</b>	<b>POC website/email</b>
SAMPLE: Adult Employment and Training Activities	WIOA, Title I, Sec. 131	ABC Inc.
123 Main St. Anytown, PA 17001	XXX-XXX-XXXX	ABC.com
<b>EDSI</b>	<b>WIOA Title I Adult/ Dislocated Worker &amp; EARN</b>	<b>Joseph Farrell, Operations Director</b>
15300 Commerce Drive N., Suite 200, Dearborn, MI 48120	215-356-7723	<a href="mailto:jfarrell@edsolutions.com">jfarrell@edsolutions.com</a>
<b>Rescare</b>	<b>WIOA Title I Youth</b>	<b>Ronald Spangler</b>
9901 Linn Station Road, Louisville, KY 40223	215-518-2404	<a href="mailto:rspangler@rescare.com">rspangler@rescare.com</a>
<b>REDCO/Pathways</b>	<b>WIOA TITLE I Adult/ Dislocated Worker &amp; Youth</b>	<b>Sharon Angelo, Chief Administrator for Workforce Development Services</b>
201-203 E. Arch Street, Pottsville, PA 17901	570-622-5253	<a href="mailto:sharona@careerlinkpottsville.org">sharona@careerlinkpottsville.org</a>
<b>Wagner-Peyser</b>	<b>WIOA-Title III</b>	<b>Elaine Stalfa; Assistant Regional Director</b>
L&I Eastern Office - Hazelton	570-459-3895	<a href="mailto:estalfa@pa.gov">estalfa@pa.gov</a>
<b>TRADE ADJUSTMENT ASSISTANCE</b>	<b>Activities authorized under chapter 2 of title II of the Trade Act of 1974</b>	<b>Elaine Stalfa, Assistant Regional Director</b>
L&I Eastern Office - Hazelton	570-459-3895	<a href="mailto:estalfa@pa.gov">estalfa@pa.gov</a>
<b>JOBS FOR VETERANS STATE GRANT</b>	<b>Activities authorized under chapter 41 of title 38, United States Code</b>	<b>Elaine Stalfa, Assistant Regional Director</b>
L&I Eastern Office - Hazelton	570-459-3895	<a href="mailto:estalfa@pa.gov">estalfa@pa.gov</a>
<b>UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION PROGRAMS</b>	<b>Programs authorized under State unemployment compensation laws (in accordance with applicable Federal law)</b>	<b>Barbara A. Mourer Director, Office of UC Services PA Department of Labor and Industry</b>
PA Department Of Labor & Industry	717-787-4127	<a href="mailto:bmourer@pa.gov">bmourer@pa.gov</a>
<b>TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE FOR NEEDY FAMILIES (TANF) PROGRAM</b>	<b>Programs authorized under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act</b>	<b>Kathleen Mordan, Area Manager for Operations, I.M. Administrator 4</b>
PA Department of Human Services	570-275-7030	<a href="mailto:kmordan@pa.gov">kmordan@pa.gov</a>

**Attachment 3. PA CareerLink® Workforce Service Delivery System Program Partner/Provider List**

Local Workforce Development Area Name: **Luzerne-Schuylkill Workforce Investment Board, Inc.**

Effective Date: **July 1, 2017**

<b>Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR)</b>	<b>WIOA Title IV</b>	<b>Heather Nelson; District Administrator</b>
<b>Wilkes-Barre District Office 300G Laird Street Wilkes-Barre, PA 18702-7013</b>	<b>570-826-2011 x109</b>	<b><a href="mailto:hnelson@pa.gov">hnelson@pa.gov</a></b>
<b>ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>WIOA Title II</b>	<b>Luzerne County Community College</b>
<b>1333 S Prospect St, Nanticoke, PA 18634</b>	<b>800-377-5222 or 570- 740-0394 x7394</b>	<b>Kim Gavlick <a href="mailto:kgavlick@luzerne.edu">kgavlick@luzerne.edu</a></b>
<b>Pioneer Education Group-Jolie</b>	<b>Training Provider</b>	<b>Christe Bomber</b>
<b>125 Wilkes-Barre Blvd, Wilkes- Barre, PA 18702</b>	<b>570-825-8363</b>	<b><a href="mailto:cbomber@jolieacademy.com">cbomber@jolieacademy.com</a></b>
<b>Keystone Job Corps</b>	<b>Job Corps</b>	<b>Kelly King, Center Director</b>
<b>235 W. Foothills, Drive, Drums, PA 18222</b>	<b>570-575-8491</b>	<b><a href="mailto:king.kelly@jobcorps.org">king.kelly@jobcorps.org</a></b>
<b>Commission on Economic Opportunity</b>	<b>HUD</b>	<b>Gene Brady</b>
<b>161 Amber Lane, Wilkes-Barre, PA 18702</b>	<b>570-826-0510</b>	
<b>PA Dept. of Community Economic Development</b>	<b>Community Services Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9901 et seq.)</b>	<b>Lynette Praster</b>
<b>DCED Center for Community Services; Director</b>	<b>717-720-1350</b>	<b><a href="mailto:praster@pa.gov">praster@pa.gov</a></b>
<b>PA Department of Corrections</b>	<b>Reintegration Of Offenders</b>	<b>Kay Washington</b>
<b>PathStone Corporation T2W 1625 North Front Street Harrisburg, PA 170102</b>	<b>610-925-5600</b>	<b><a href="mailto:kwashington@pasthstone.org">kwashington@pasthstone.org</a></b>
<b>SENIOR COMMUNITY SERVICE EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>Title V of the Older Americans Act of 1965</b>	<b>Denise Stalica, Mature Worker Program Project Director</b>
<b>Luzerne County; Luzerne/Wyoming Area Agency on Aging</b>	<b>570--822-1159 x2318</b>	<b><a href="mailto:Denise.Stalica@Luzernecounty.org">Denise.Stalica@Luzernecounty.org</a></b>
<b>Schuylkill Technology Center</b>		<b>Gregory Koons, Executive Director</b>
<b>17 Maple Avenue, Mar Lin, PA 17951</b>	<b>570-544-9131</b>	<b><a href="mailto:gkoons@iu29.org">gkoons@iu29.org</a></b>

# **PY 2017-2019 WIOA Multi-Year Local Area Plan**



## **POCONO COUNTIES WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD**

October 27, 2017

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## PY 2017-2019 WIOA Multi-Year Local Area Plan

Pocono Counties Workforce Development Area

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

#### 1.1. Identify the composition of the region's population and labor force.

**Overview.** The Pocono Counties Workforce Development Board (Board or WDB) oversees the workforce development activities of the local area. As part of the strategic planning process, the Board analyzed the population and labor force as follows:

The Pocono Counties Workforce Development Area ("Poconos" or WDA) is comprised of the Counties of Carbon, Monroe, Pike, and Wayne located in Northeast Pennsylvania. Overall, it is home to approximately 335,000 citizens<sup>1</sup>.

With a 2016 labor force of 161,400, the largest sector in the WDA is Government (which includes education and law enforcement) and employs 19,730 workers, representing 16% of the Gross Regional Product (GRP), with average earnings of \$73,922. The next largest sectors include Retail Trade (employs 16,043 workers, represents 7% of the GRP, with average earnings of \$29,424) and Accommodation and Food Service (employs 15,935 workers, represents 6% of the GRP, with average earnings of \$22,672).

Location quotient (LQ) is a way of quantifying how concentrated a particular industry, cluster, occupation, or demographic group is in a region as compared to the nation. It can reveal what makes a region "unique" in comparison to the national average. An LQ of 1.0 means that a region has the same employment as the nation, while an LQ greater than 1.0 has a greater share of employment than the nation.

The sectors with the largest LQs in the WDA include Bio-Medical (LQ=2.14), Hospitality, Leisure and Entertainment (LQ=1.71), and Education (LQ=1.17). When looking at individual industries, Biological Product (except Diagnostic) Manufacturing (LQ 103.44) accounts for the highest cluster<sup>2</sup>.

**Population.** As shown in **Figure 1** on the following page, the population in the Pocono Counties WDA and Northeast Region has been declining since 2010 and both are projected to continue to decline over the next five years.

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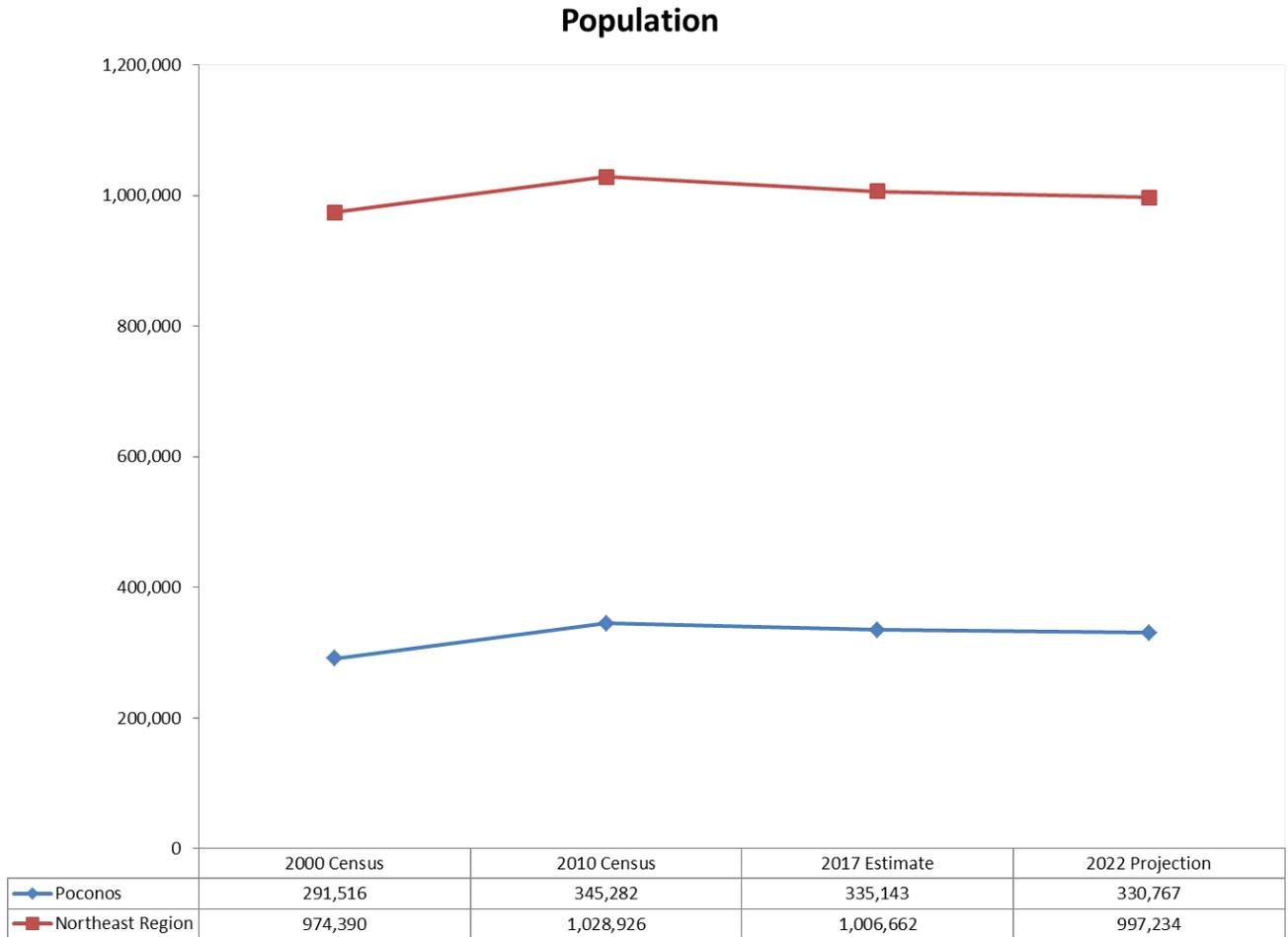
<sup>1</sup> Population estimates per Claritas

<sup>2</sup> EMSI, 2017

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Pocono Counties Workforce Development Area

**Figure 1. Population of Pocono Counties WDA and the Northeast Region**



Source: Claritas

**Figure 2** shows that currently, the age of residents in the Poconos is comparable to that of the Region. (However, information from *Claritas* indicates that in the next five years, it is expected to exceed the Northeast Region’s by two years.)

**Figure 2. Age Information for Pocono Counties WDA and the Northeast Region**

	Current Median Age	Current Average Age	Projected Median Age
Poconos	44.9	42.7	46.0
Northeast Region	44.0	42.6	44.8

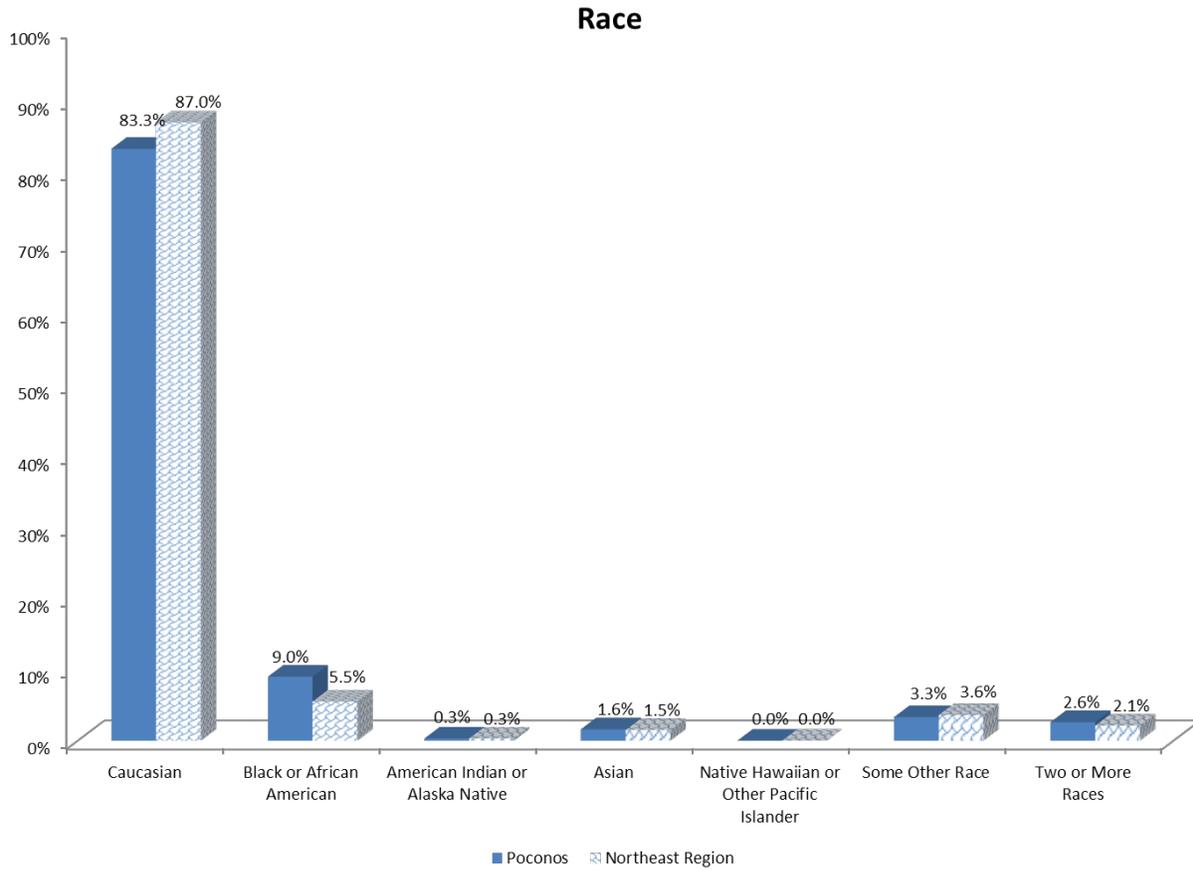
Source: Claritas

## PY 2017-2019 WIOA Multi-Year Local Area Plan

### Pocono Counties Workforce Development Area

While most of the population in the WDA and the Northeast Region are Caucasian, the Poconos has almost twice as many individuals identifying as Black or African American. **Figure 3** provides an overview.

**Figure 3. Race in Pocono Counties WDA and the Northeast Region**



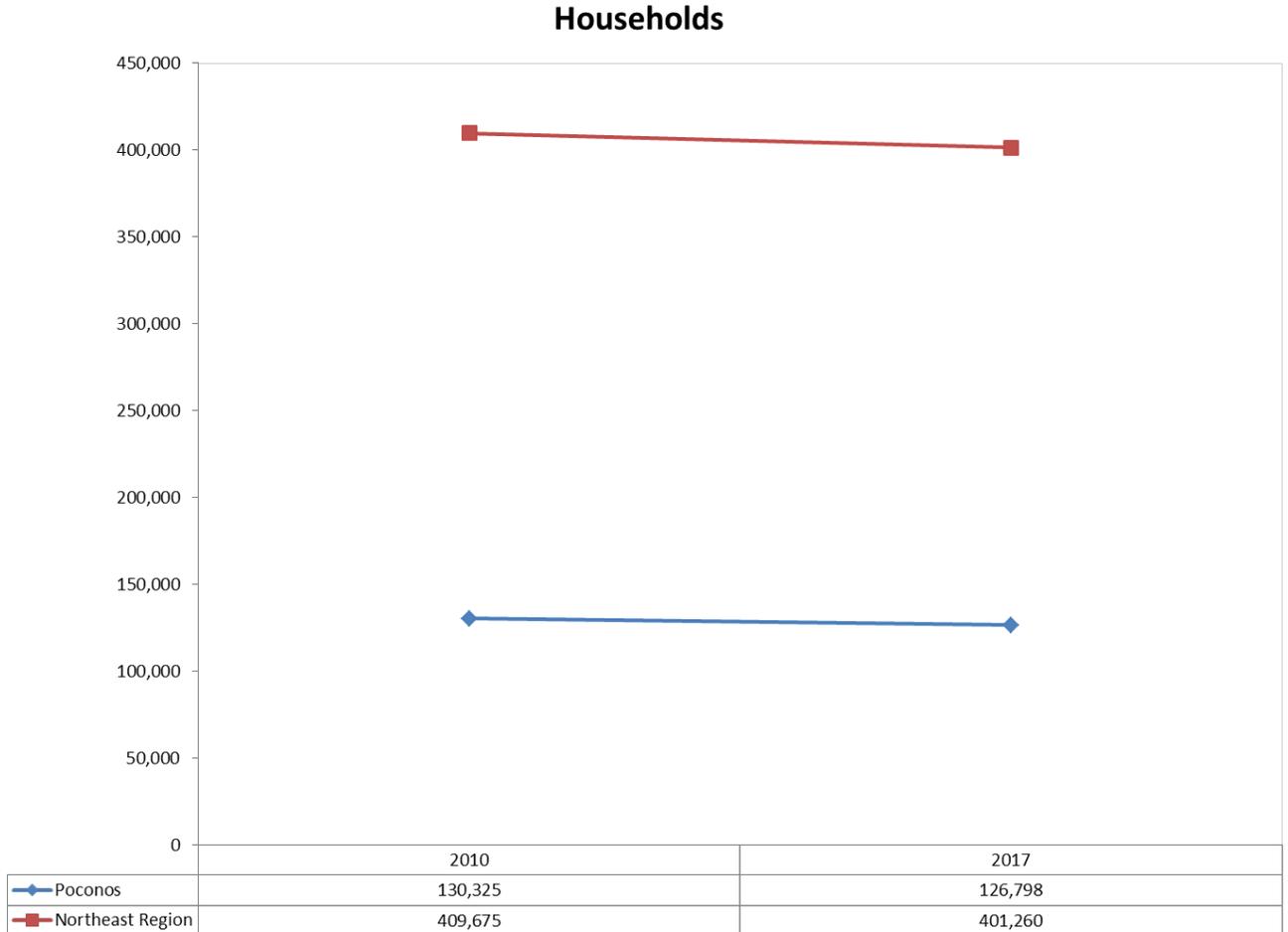
Source: Claritas

## PY 2017-2019 WIOA Multi-Year Local Area Plan

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**Households.** Coinciding with the declining population, the number of households<sup>3</sup> in the WDA and the Region are also declining.

**Figure 4. Number of Households in Pocono Counties WDA and the Northeast Region**



Source: Claritas

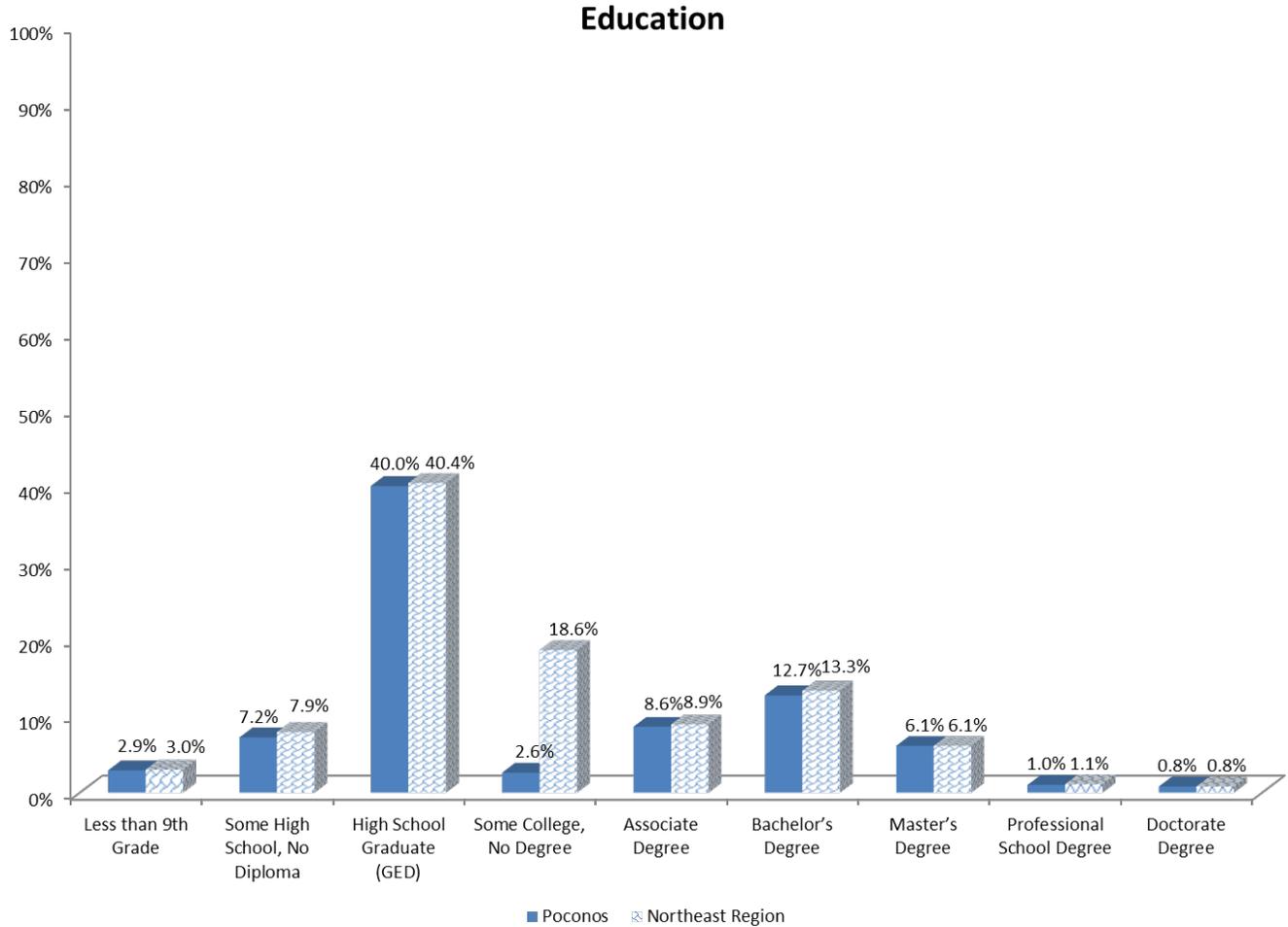
<sup>3</sup> As defined by the US Census Bureau, a household is composed of one or more people who occupy a housing unit

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Pocono Counties Workforce Development Area

**Education.** The educational attainment in the Poconos is similar to the Northeast Region. About one in five (20.6%) residents in the WDA have earned a Bachelor’s Degree or higher, which is slightly lower than the Region (21.3%). At the same time, 10.2% of the local population did not graduate high school, which is also very similar to the Region at 10.9%.

**Figure 5. Education Levels for Pocono Counties WDA and the Northeast Region**



Source: Claritas

**Income.** The average household income for the Poconos is estimated to be \$72,952 for the current year, which is about 10.7% higher than the Northeast Region’s average of \$65,892.

The average household income for the WDA is projected to increase at a higher rate over the next five years as compared to the Region. In the Poconos, it is anticipated to increase approximately 8.4% to \$79,074, while it is projected that the Northeast Region will increase 7.1% to \$70,571.

**Housing.** Most of the dwellings in the Poconos (80.2%) are estimated to be Owner-Occupied in 2017, which is higher than the Northeast Region (72.6%).

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### Pocono Counties Workforce Development Area

**Employment.** Figure 6 show that the Poconos has a slightly higher unemployed civilian population (7.0%) than the Northeast Region (5.2%).

**Figure 6. Employment Status of Individuals Over Age 16 in Pocono Counties WDA and NE Region**

	Employed Civilians	Unemployed Civilians	Not in Labor Force
Poconos	53.2%	7.0%	39.8%
Northeast Region	54.1%	5.2%	40.7%

Source: Claritas

The occupational classification for the Poconos and the Northeast Region are comparable, with just over half of the labor force working in White Collar occupations. The highest percentage of workers in the Poconos and the Region are employed in Office and Administrative Support (13.3% and 14.5%, respectively) and Sales and Related Services (10.3% and 10.0%, respectively).

**Figure 7. Occupational Classifications for Pocono Counties WDA and the Northeast Region**

	Blue Collar	White Collar	Service and Farm
Poconos	25.2%	54.2%	20.6%
Northeast Region	25.4%	55.5%	19.1%

Source: Claritas

**Commuting Patterns.** In its most basic form, commuting patterns reveal how workers travel from their home counties to their work counties. The specific reasons for commuting may be unknown; however, it may be reasoned that workers travel to other areas for job opportunities that are not found within their home counties. Or, they may choose to live in their home counties due to housing, schools, or entertainment preferences.

In the WDA, many residents commute to work outside of the local area, with Carbon County residents traveling to the Lehigh Valley area; Monroe County to New Jersey; Pike County to New York; and Wayne County going to the Scranton area as well as to lower New York.

Most of the employed population in the Poconos and the Northeast Region drives alone to work (79.6% and 80.0%, respectively), with an average travel time of 37 minutes to work for workers in the Poconos, and 28.5 minutes for the Region.

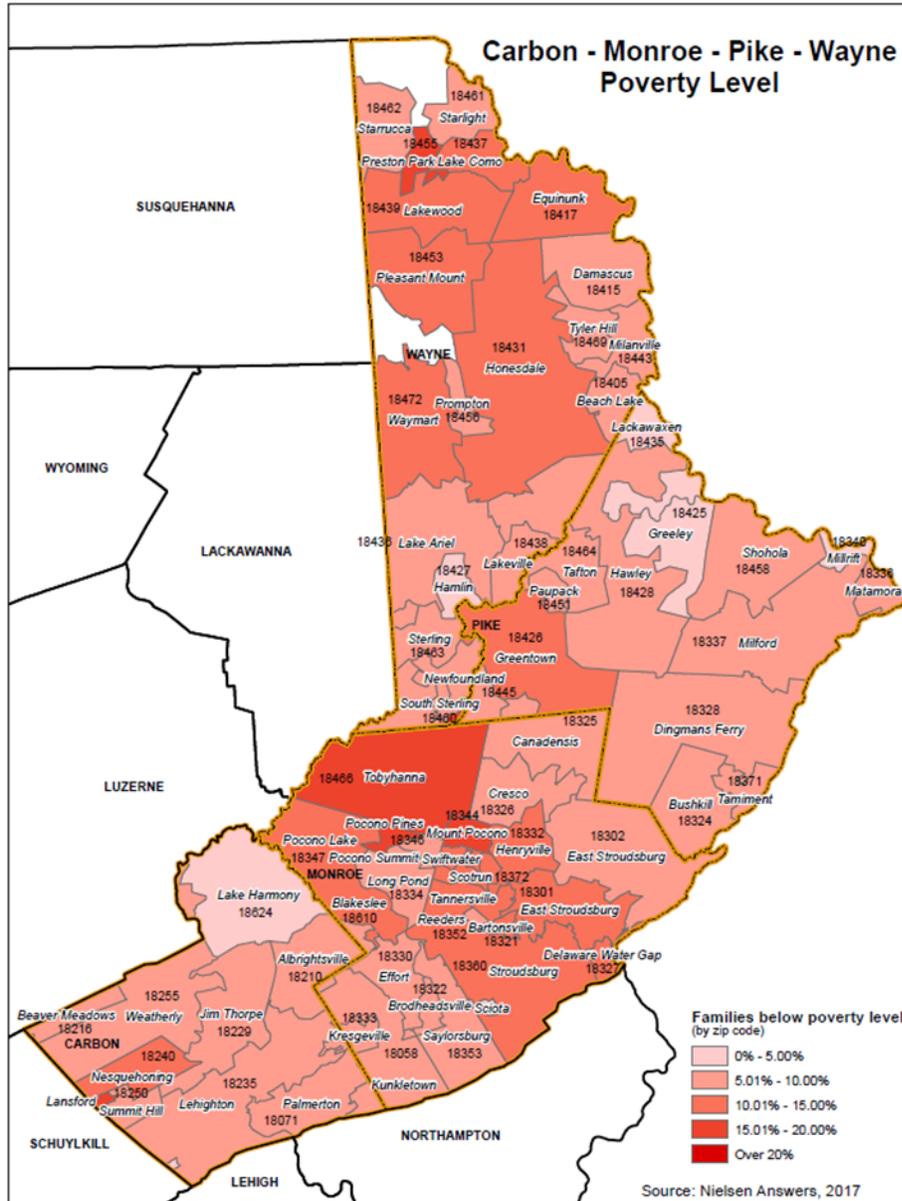
**Populations with Barriers.** Among the factors that often contribute to poverty are unemployment and underemployment. Many people live in poverty because they are unable to find a job that pays a living wage or to find a job at all.

As shown in **Figure 8** on the following page, when looking at the Poconos, 9.0% of families are living in poverty. Single parents are more likely to be living in poverty, with 11.6% of households in the county considered single parent households.

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Figure 8. Pocono Counties WDA Poverty Level



According to the Urban Institute <sup>4</sup>, most individuals released from prison held some type of job prior to incarceration and want legal, stable employment upon release. Some 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 work experience.

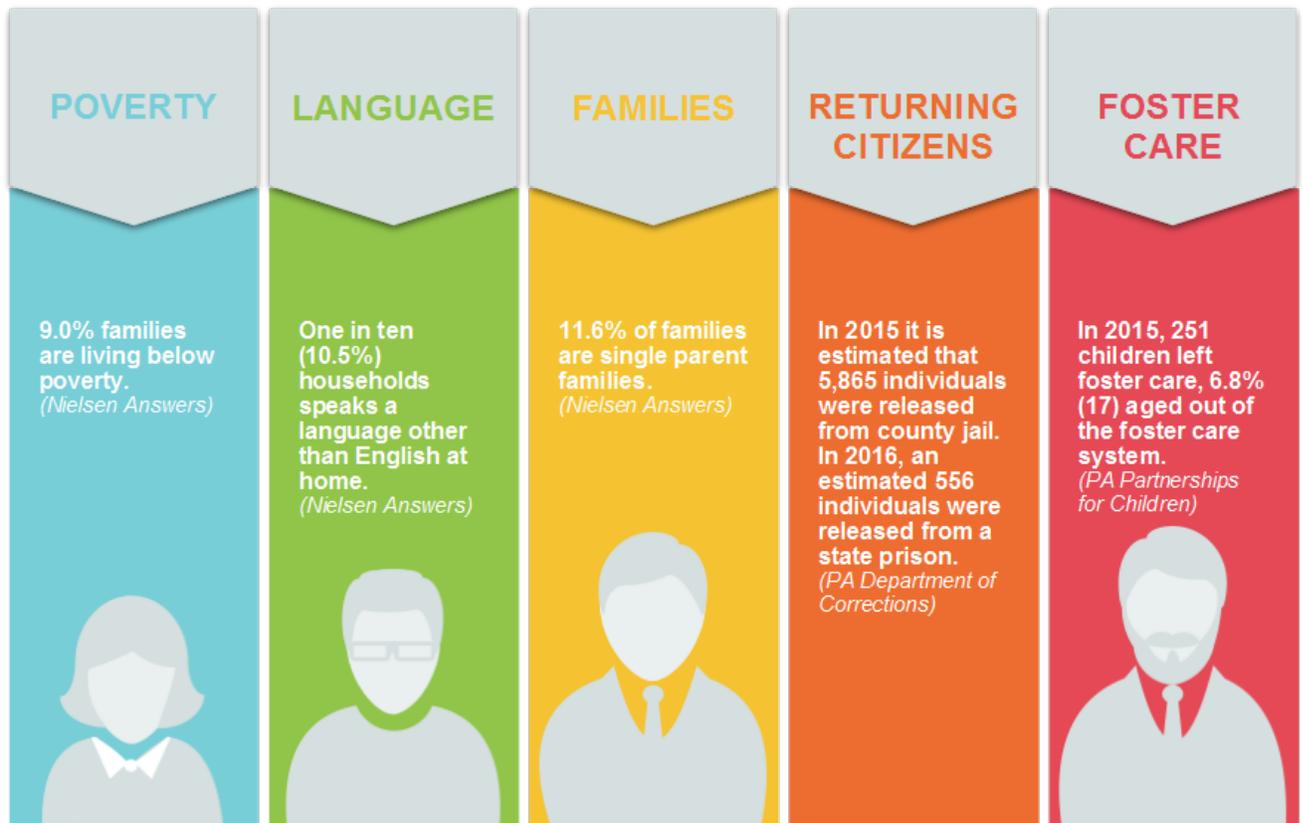
<sup>4</sup> Urban Institute is a nonprofit organization dedicated to elevating the debate on social and economic policy. They conduct research and offer evidenced based solutions to improve lives and strengthen communities (www.urban.org).

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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, many employers reluctant to hire convicted felons and many former prisoners are legally barred from certain occupations. In the Poconos, in 2015, there were 5,865 individuals released from the county jail and in 2016 there were 556 individuals released from a state prison.

**Figure 9. Overview of Population with Barriers in Pocono Counties WDA**



Research obtained from Children’s Rights<sup>5</sup> 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 four-year college degree, while 36% of youth in the general population had done so. In the Poconos, approximately 17 children age out of foster care each year.

<sup>5</sup> Children’s Rights is a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the child welfare system to ensure the rights of children in foster care are upheld ([www.childrensrights.org](http://www.childrensrights.org)).

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### Pocono Counties Workforce Development Area

According to the Division for Social Policy and Development<sup>6</sup>, 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 Pocono County WDA, 6.6% of those employed have a disability, while 13.8% of those unemployed have a disability. In the Poconos, unemployment is 78% higher for those with a disability (17.3%) compared to those without a disability (9.7%). There are also 10,929 students receiving services through the local Intermediate Unit, with over half (57.0%) of those students having a learning disability, 6.8% have an intellectual disability, 0.2% have a hearing impairment, 0.9% have a speech/language impairment, 10.4% have emotional disturbances, 16.7% have health implications and 7.9% have autism.

According to Youth. Gov<sup>7</sup>, 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. Specifically,

- By age 22, approximately 50 % of teen mothers have received a high school diploma and only 30% have earned a high school equivalency certificate, whereas 90% of women who did not give birth during adolescence receive a high school diploma.
- Approximately 10% of teen mothers complete a two- or four-year college program.
- Teen fathers have a 25 to 30% 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;

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<sup>6</sup> 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](http://www.un.org)).

<sup>7</sup> Youth.Gov is the U.S. government website that helps to create, maintain, and strengthen effective youth programs ([www.youth.gov](http://www.youth.gov)).

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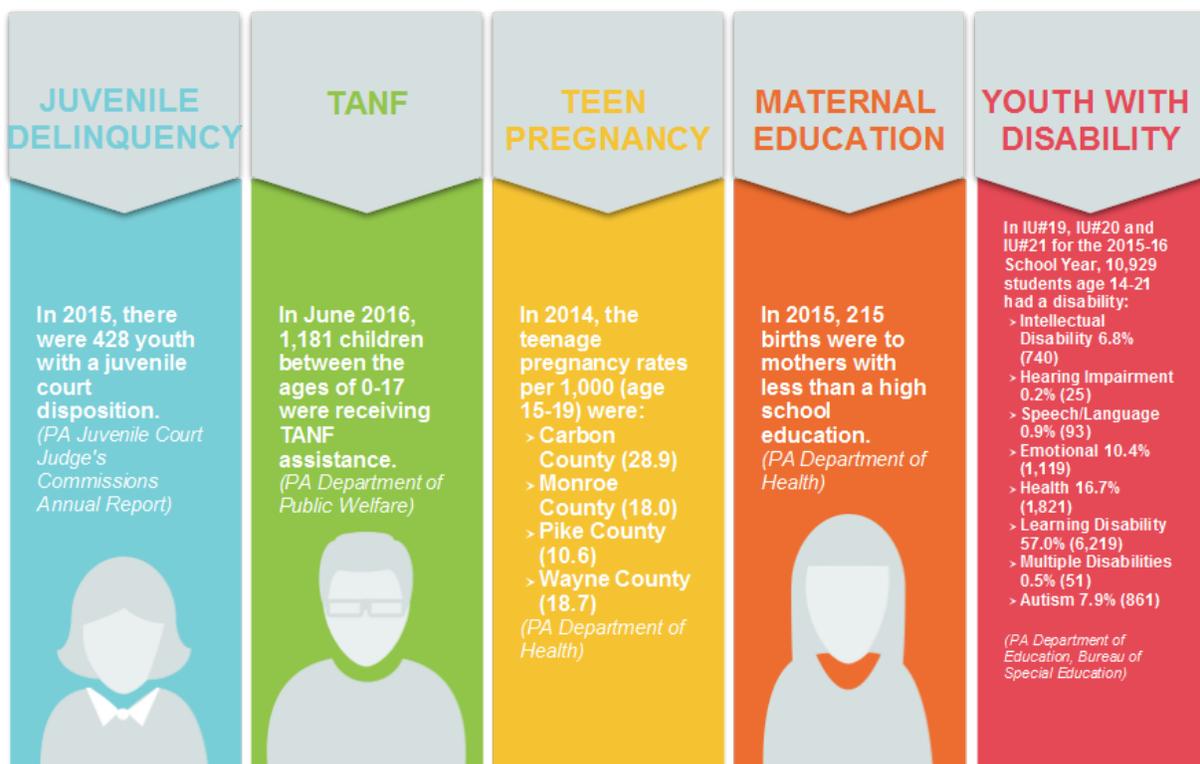
### Pocono Counties Workforce Development Area

- 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 US 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.

In 2014, according to the PA Department of Health, the teenage pregnancy rates per 1,000 individuals aged 15-19 for the Poconos showed that the Counties of Monroe (18.0) and Pike (10.6) were significantly lower than the state rate (27.2), while Carbon County (28.9) and Wayne County (18.7) were comparable to the state rate. There were 1,181 children between the ages of 0 and 17 receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) in 2016, 428 youth had a juvenile disposition in 2015, and there were 215 births to mothers with less than a high school education.

**Figure 10. Overview of Youth with Barriers in Pocono Counties WDA**



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### Pocono Counties Workforce Development Area

The Pocono Counties WDA includes the following Intermediate Units:

- IU#19 includes: Lackawanna, Susquehanna, Wayne and part of Pike Counties
- IU#20 includes: Monroe, Northampton and part of Pike Counties
- IU#21 includes: Carbon and Lehigh Counties

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 314 counted in the Poconos.

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.)
- Children living in "cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations".

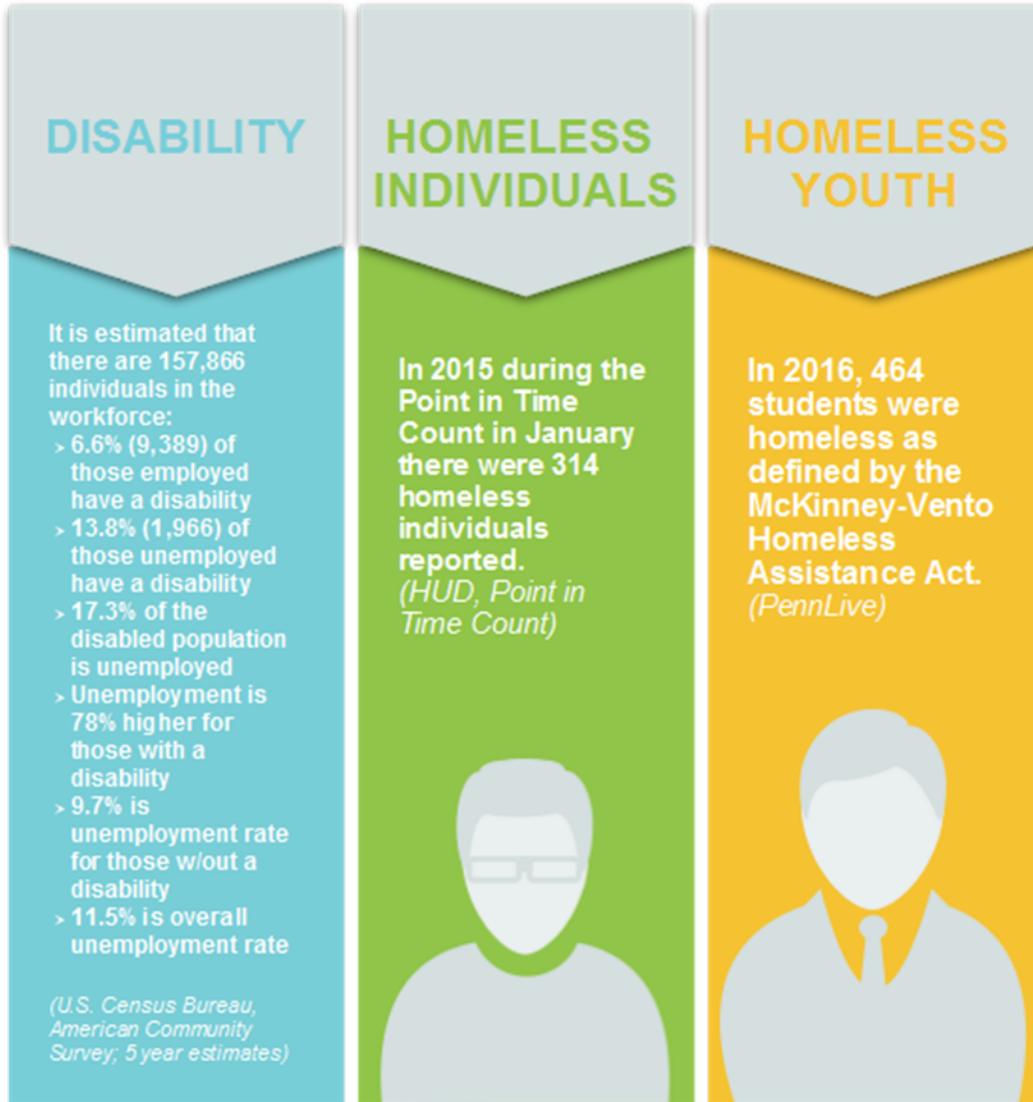
In 2016, there were 464 students in the WDA who met the McKinney-Vento definition of homeless.

**Figure 11** on the following page provides an overview of additional information regarding individuals with barriers to employment.

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Figure 11. Additional Information Regarding Individuals with Barriers in Pocono Counties WDA



**Labor Market Trends.** The overall unemployment rate for the Poconos in 2016 was 6.2%, with a labor force of 161,400. When looking at the first few months of 2017 the unemployment rate has fluctuated between 5.4% and 6.1%. **Figure 12** and **Figure 13** provide details.

Figure 12. Pocono Counties WDA Annual Average Labor Force Statistics, 2016

Annual Average	Labor Force	Employed	Unemployed	Unemployment Rate
2016	161,400	151,300	10,000	6.2

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**Figure 13. Pocono Counties WDA Seasonally Adjusted Labor Force Statistics, 2017**

Month	Labor Force	Employed	Unemployed	Unemployment Rate
January	159,200	150,500	8,700	5.4
February	160,100	150,700	9,400	5.9
March	160,100	150,900	9,200	5.7
April	161,200	151,400	9,800	6.1

*Source: Center for Workforce Information and Analysis*

Labor Market Trends can be examined by looking at Long-Term Industry Projections as well as other Labor Market information. As shown in **Figure 14**, the total employment in the Poconos is projected to grow by 5.5% or 5,870. This is comparable to the growth projected for the Northeast Region (5.8%), but less than the state (7.7%).

Construction and Education and Health Services are projected to have the greatest percentage increase. It is important to note that Construction currently accounts for a large portion of the unemployed; thus, this projected growth provides opportunities to reengage displaced workers. Information is projected to decline (-14.3%), along with Manufacturing (-2.2%), and Government (-0.5%).

**Figure 14. Long-Term Industry Projections for Pocono Counties WDA (2014-2024)**

Industry	Employment (2014)	Projected Employment (2024)	Employment Change (2014-2024)	
			Volume	Percent
Total Jobs	107,280	113,150	5,870	5.5%
Goods Producing Industries	12,270	12,690	420	3.4%
Agriculture, Mining & Logging	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Construction	3,370	3,970	600	17.8%
Manufacturing	7,390	7,230	-160	-2.2%
Services-Providing	86,290	91,540	5,250	6.1%
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	20,640	21,610	970	4.7%
Information	1,680	1,440	-240	-14.3%
Financial Activities	2,930	2,970	40	1.4%
Professional & Business Services	4,760	5,110	350	7.4%
Education & Health Services	23,490	26,320	2,830	12.0%
Leisure & Hospitality	17,420	18,610	1,190	6.8%
Other Services, Except Public Admin.	5,590	5,760	170	3.0%
Federal, State & Local Government	9,770	9,720	-50	-0.5%

*Source: Center for Workforce Information and Analysis*

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### Pocono Counties Workforce Development Area

Looking at Help Wanted OnLine™ Job Postings provides an insight into real time employment demand. Overall, there has been a decline in postings for many of the top job postings by both industry and occupation. However, as shown in **Figure 15**, there has been an increasing number of postings for Employment Placement Agencies and Hotels (except Casino Hotels) and Motels. When looking at occupations, **Figure 16** indicates there has been an increase in postings for Maintenance and Repair Workers, Security Guards, Social and Human Service Assistants, Construction Laborers and Laborers and Freight, Stock and Material Movers.

**Figure 15. Top 10 Help Wanted OnLine™ Job Postings by Industry for Pocono Counties WDA**

Industry Title	NAICS	May-2017	May-2016
Home Centers	444110	85	97
Temporary Help Services	561320	74	112
Employment Placement Agencies	561311	54	37
General Medical and Surgical Hospitals	622110	50	77
Biological Product (except Diagnostic) Manufacturing	325414	49	71
Hotels (except Casino Hotels) and Motels	721110	38	18
Commercial Banking	522110	36	44
Home Health Care Services	621610	34	111
General Freight Trucking, Long-Distance, Truckload	484121	27	37
Department Stores (except Discount Department Stores)	452111	26	64

Source: Center for Workforce Information and Analysis

**Figure 16. Top 10 Help Wanted OnLine™ Job Postings by Occupation for Pocono Counties WDA**

Occupation	SOC	May-2017	May-2016
Retail Salespersons	41203100	102	141
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	53303200	85	124
Registered Nurses	29114100	79	122
First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	41101100	79	96
Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	49907100	48	36
Security Guards	33903200	48	33
Social and Human Service Assistants	21109300	43	37
First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers	35101200	42	52
Construction Laborers	47206100	36	20
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	53706200	34	25

Source: Center for Workforce Information and Analysis

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 county that only require a high school diploma; although most are part of an apprenticeship program or require on-the-job training and experience. **Figure 17** on the following page provides details.

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**Figure 17. Opportunity Occupations in Pocono Counties WDA**

SOC	Description	2016 Jobs	2021 Jobs	2016 - 2021 Change	2016 - 2021 % Change	COL Adjusted Avg. Hourly Earnings	Typical Entry Level Education
11-9081	Lodging Managers	145	151	6	4%	\$28.16	High school diploma or equivalent
15-1152	Computer Network Support Specialists	70	73	3	4%	\$26.76	Associate's degree
17-3026	Industrial Engineering Technicians	38	40	2	5%	\$28.00	Associate's degree
29-1126	Respiratory Therapists	65	69	4	6%	\$26.49	Associate's degree
29-2021	Dental Hygienists	155	170	15	10%	\$31.10	Associate's degree
29-2032	Diagnostic Medical Sonographers	34	38	4	12%	\$30.38	Associate's degree
29-9099	Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Workers, All Other	17	19	2	12%	\$27.36	Postsecondary nondegree award
41-4012	Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Except Technical and Scientific Products	646	656	10	2%	\$33.96	High school diploma or equivalent
49-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Mechanics, Installers, and Repairers	373	382	9	2%	\$31.13	High school diploma or equivalent
49-2022	Telecommunications Equipment Installers and Repairers, Except Line Installers	101	113	12	12%	\$27.47	Postsecondary nondegree award
49-9012	Control and Valve Installers and Repairers, Except Mechanical Door	13	15	2	15%	\$26.63	High school diploma or equivalent
49-9051	Electrical Power-Line Installers and Repairers	45	50	5	11%	\$30.04	High school diploma or equivalent
51-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers	312	326	14	4%	\$26.13	High school diploma or equivalent
51-8013	Power Plant Operators	26	31	5	19%	\$31.17	High school diploma or equivalent
53-1031	First-Line Supervisors of Transportation and Material-Moving Machine and Vehicle Operators	131	137	6	5%	\$27.27	High school diploma or equivalent
53-2012	Commercial Pilots	54	60	6	11%	\$40.19	High school diploma or equivalent

Source: EMSI, 2017

**Figure 18** shows the industries that are projected to experience the most growth between 2014 and 2024. As shown, Traveler Accommodation, Individual and Family Services, and Restaurants and Other Eating Places are projected to experience the greatest volume in increase, while Individual and Family Services is projected to experience the greatest percentage increase.

**Figure 18. Fastest Growing Industries in Pocono Counties WDA (2014-2024)**

**By Volume Change:**

Industry Title	Employment Change (Volume)
Traveler Accommodation	500
Individual & Family Services	480
Restaurants & Other Eating Places	420
Offices Of Physicians	270
Nursing Care Facilities	230
Warehousing & Storage	210
Other Specialty Trade Contractors	120

**By Percent Change:** (min. employment of 250)

Industry Title	Employment Change (Percent)
Individual & Family Services	33.8%
Offices Of Physicians	19.7%
Personal Care Services	17.5%
Offices Of Dentists	16.9%
Other Specialty Trade Contractors	15.8%
Community Care Facilities For The Elderly	15.5%
Warehousing & Storage	15.4%

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**By Volume Change:**

Industry Title	Employment Change (Volume)
Offices Of Dentists	110
Personal Care Services	100
Community Care Facilities For The Elderly	90
Building Equipment Contractors	80
Offices Of Other Health Practitioners	80
Automotive Repair & Maintenance	70
Other Schools & Instruction	70
Special Food Services	70
Gasoline Stations	60
Utility System Construction	60
Building Material & Supplies Dealers	60

**By Percent Change:** (min. employment of 250)

Industry Title	Employment Change (Percent)
Special Food Services	15.2%
Nursing Care Facilities	14.4%
Building Foundation/Exterior Contractors	14.3%
Offices Of Other Health Practitioners	11.6%
Highway, Street & Bridge Construction	11.5%
Building Equipment Contractors	11.3%
Employment Services	10.5%
Automotive Repair & Maintenance	9.1%
Traveler Accommodation	9.0%
Architectural, Engineering & Rel. Services	6.9%
Restaurants & Other Eating Places	6.4%
School & Employee Bus Transportation	6.3%
Gasoline Stations	5.8%

*Source: Center for Workforce Information and Analysis*

**Figure 19** on the following page shows that the Poconos is experiencing some of the fastest decline in industry across the state. Specifically:

- Monroe County is experiencing the fastest decline in Construction and Transportation/Warehousing
- Wayne County is experiencing the fastest decline in Accommodation/Food Service, Arts/Entertainment/Recreation, Information

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**Figure 19. Fastest Growing and Fastest Declining Industry Rates in Pennsylvania**

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 Data Center, State of Industry 2017

### 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 the region/local area.?

As shown in **Figure 20**, there are projected to be 18,270 jobs that require a Bachelor's Degree or higher in the WDA in 2024. Data from **Figure 21** shows that there are currently 49,320 individuals that have achieved this educational level. Therefore, it appears that there are more than enough workers to meet the projected demand.

At the same time, **Figure 20** shows that there are expected to be 79,140 jobs that will require some level of on-the-job training, long-term training, or postsecondary education or experience. As shown in **Figure 21**, within the Pocono Counties WDA there are currently 49,294 persons who have some level of college with no degree and another 95,491 that have achieved a high school diploma. Thus, these two groups may be able to fulfill the projected demand if they are able to secure the required skills via additional education and/or training.

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**Figure 20. Employment Growth Rates by Educational Attainment Level for Pocono Counties**

<b>Educational Grouping</b>	<b>Employment (2014)</b>	<b>Projected Employment (2024)</b>	<b>Percent Change (2014-24)</b>
On-the-job training	53,060	55,910	5.4%
Long-term training	4,600	4,860	5.7%
PS education or experience	17,050	18,370	7.7%
Associate degree	1,050	1,150	9.5%
Bachelor's degree	14,380	15,130	5.2%
Advanced degree	2,860	3,140	9.8%

Source: Center for Workforce Information and Analysis

**Figure 21. Overview of Estimated Population Age 25+ by Educational Attainment for Pocono Counties WDA**

<b>2017 Est. Pop Age 25+ by Edu. Attainment</b>	<b>239,042</b>	
Less than 9th grade	7,026	2.94%
Some High School, no diploma	17,303	7.24%
High School Graduate (or GED)	95,491	39.95%
Some College, no degree	49,294	20.62%
Associate Degree	20,608	8.62%
Bachelor's Degree	30,442	12.74%
Master's Degree	14,643	6.13%
Professional School Degree	2,304	0.96%
Doctorate Degree	1,931	0.81%

Source: Claritas, 2017 estimates

**As shown in Figure 22 and Figure 23** on the following page, looking at future work activities and tools and technologies, it is important that the workforce be able to sell products or services; calculate the costs of goods or services; and order materials, supplies and equipment. The ability to use a computer and related software is also very important, with high demand for those that can use spreadsheet software.

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**Figure 22. Top 10 Detailed Work Activities for Pocono Counties WDA**

Detailed Work Activity	2024 Employment	Percent of Annual Openings	Annual Openings
Sell products or services	18,250	19.2%	639
Calculate costs of goods or services	16,310	17.4%	579
Order materials, supplies, or equipment	18,030	17.0%	565
Greet customers, patrons, or visitors	15,710	15.5%	515
Clean work areas	14,240	15.1%	504
Clean food preparation areas, facilities, or equipment	10,330	12.8%	425
Monitor inventories of products or materials	13,810	12.6%	419
Maintain records of sales or other business transactions	11,360	12.5%	417
Serve food or beverages	9,840	12.3%	410
Answer customer questions about goods or services	11,060	12.2%	407

Source: Center for Workforce Information and Analysis

**Figure 23. Top 10 Tools and Technologies for Pocono Counties WDA**

Tools & Technologies	2024 Employment	Percent of Annual Openings	Annual Openings
Spreadsheet software	81,610	70.0%	2,331
Data base user interface and query software	77,170	67.7%	2,254
Personal computers	74,670	64.1%	2,135
Word processing software	70,840	58.2%	1,936
Desktop computers	66,960	57.6%	1,917
Office suite software	63,120	53.8%	1,790
Electronic mail software	58,280	47.6%	1,583
Internet browser software	53,520	43.4%	1,445
Notebook computers	51,940	40.9%	1,360
Accounting software	38,590	33.0%	1,097

Source: Center for Workforce Information and Analysis

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Looking at Help Wanted OnLine™ job postings provides insight into the skills and certifications employers are seeking. **Figure 24** shows that the highest number of postings contain requests for individuals with current good manufacturing practice and the ability to drive forklifts. As indicated in **Figure 25**, the need for a driver’s license followed by Certified Registered Nurse are the most sought after certifications in the Poconos WDA.

**Figure 24. Top 10 Skills Requested in Help Wanted OnLine™ Job Postings for Poconos WDA**

Skills	OnLine™ Job Postings
Current Good Manufacturing Practice	90
Forklifts	82
Pediatrics	66
Freight+	61
Good Manufacturing Practice	57
Quality Assurance	52
Flatbed scanners	44
Quality control	39
Mathematics	38
Quality Systems	37

*Source: Center for Workforce Information and Analysis*

**Figure 25. Top 10 Certifications Requested in Help Wanted OnLine™ Job Postings for Poconos**

Certifications	OnLine™ Job Postings
Driver's License	268
Certified Registered Nurse	115
Certification in Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation	92
Commercial Driver's License	79
Licensed Practical Nurse	55
Certified in Nursing Administration	54
Home Health Aide	50
Food safety programs	44
HAZMAT	43
Board Certified	42

*Source: Center for Workforce Information and Analysis*

The Board’s Business Services Team continually validates and updates the labor market information cited in the figures above through its real-time interactions with area employers, including data received during Rapid Response interactions. Using this information, the Board enrolls individuals into a variety of education and training programs, including work-based learning opportunities that bridge skills gaps and prepare qualified candidates to meet employer

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demands. As discussed in the **responses to 4.5 and 4.6 below**, the Board emphasizes training and education programs that are aligned with its targeted industries of **Healthcare, Energy, Food Processing, and Logistics and Transportation**.

#### **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 local area faces a primary challenge of finding enough skilled and qualified candidates to fulfill employer demand. **Figure 26** on the following page shows the regional educational completions for occupational categories with 100 or more job openings. As shown, the number of individuals completing programs for occupations in Business Administration and Management appears to be meeting regional demand.

However, additional enrollments and completions are needed to fill numerous openings in Health Services/Allied Health/Health Sciences; Sales, Distribution, and Marketing Operations; General Office Occupations and Clerical Services; and Business Management, Marketing, and Related Support Services.

As outlined previously in **Figure 21**, only 49,294 persons in the local area have some level of college and another 95,491 possess only a high school diploma. Therefore, the challenge to the Board is to recruit individuals from these two groups and enroll them into education and/or training programs to provide them with the skills and certifications needed to meet employer demand.

The Board will meet this challenge by prioritizing its employment and training investments in the targeted industries of **Healthcare, Energy, Food Processing, and Logistics and Transportation**. As described in the **responses to 4.5 and 4.6 below**, the Board places particular emphasis on enrolling eligible jobseekers into training programs that are aligned with the hiring needs of regional employers in these sectors.

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**Figure 26. Education Program Completions as Compared to Occupational Openings**

CIP Code	Program	Regional Completions (2015)	Regional Openings (2015)	Median Hourly Earnings	Regional Jobs (2015)	Regional Jobs (2016)	% Jobs Change (2015-2016)
52.1803	Retailing and Retail Operations	0	519	\$11.37	12,607	12,638	0%
52.1804	Selling Skills and Sales Operations	0	408	\$13.21	8,239	8,337	1%
12.0507	Food Service, Waiter/Waitress, and Dining Room Management/Manager	0	334	\$8.97	3,567	3,712	4%
51.0000	Health Services/Allied Health/Health Sciences, General	0	310	\$25.79	8,165	8,202	0%
12.0500	Cooking and Related Culinary Arts, General	0	277	\$11.53	4,619	4,768	3%
12.0505	Food Preparation/Professional Cooking/Kitchen Assistant	0	271	\$9.38	4,762	4,867	2%
12.0508	Institutional Food Workers	0	234	\$9.40	4,250	4,340	2%
01.0608	Floriculture/Floristry Operations and Management	0	233	\$11.92	6,220	6,221	0%
52.1801	Sales, Distribution, and Marketing Operations, General	0	229	\$12.96	5,821	5,831	0%
52.0201	Business Administration and Management, General	153	161	\$36.45	3,647	3,700	1%
52.0408	General Office Occupations and Clerical Services	0	148	\$15.41	4,893	4,907	0%
49.0205	Truck and Bus Driver/Commercial Vehicle Operator and Instructor	0	137	\$16.52	3,421	3,477	2%
52.9999	Business, Management, Marketing, and Related Support Services, Other	0	134	\$24.40	3,825	3,860	1%
46.0000	Construction Trades, General	0	130	\$19.80	3,970	3,939	(1%)
52.0101	Business/Commerce, General	0	128	\$39.73	3,091	3,132	1%
51.2602	Home Health Aide/Home Attendant	0	121	\$10.31	2,139	2,194	3%
46.0401	Building/Property Maintenance	0	111	\$18.00	2,071	2,123	3%
12.0503	Culinary Arts/Chef Training	0	107	\$11.92	1,472	1,540	5%
51.1199	Health/Medical Preparatory Programs, Other	0	104	\$36.62	2,481	2,517	1%
52.0212	Retail Management	0	104	\$32.11	2,924	2,938	0%
13.0101	Education, General	0	103	\$30.89	4,257	4,198	(1%)
13.1207	Montessori Teacher Education	0	100	\$30.03	3,802	3,763	(1%)
13.1208	Waldorf/Steiner Teacher Education	0	100	\$30.03	3,802	3,763	(1%)

Source: EMSI, 2017

### 1.4. Provide an analysis of workforce development activities, including education and training.

The WDB offers significant workforce development services to the area's employers and jobseekers through the staff and resources available targeting six core programs: Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Adult Education and Literacy, Wagner-Peyser, and Vocational Rehabilitation. Jobseekers and employers can access these services at a PA CareerLink® center located in Carbon or Monroe Counties or an affiliate site located in Pike or Wayne Counties. Overall, the WDB offers a customer-focused and a career-driven process to assure that jobseekers' and employers' training and employment needs are met with quality outcomes.

With the inception of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), the WDB has begun efforts to streamline the employment and training services available to businesses and

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jobseekers. It is applying a two-fold approach to help drive the strategy and decision-making processes:

- 1. Data Driven.** The WDB constantly monitors labor market data to gain a thorough understanding of the skills and abilities of the available labor force as well as the workforce needs and requirements of the regions' employers.
- 2. Hands-On.** The WDB and its PA CareerLink® Business Service Teams (BSTs) regularly meet with employers to collect information to better understand their specific workforce development needs.

Overall, the WDB fosters meaningful relationships with key education providers including community colleges, universities, technical schools, local school districts, and other training institutions. These partners provide the Board with opportunities to bridge learning and skills gaps that exist between jobseekers and key industry partners.

**Workforce Services.** The Basic Career Services provided through the PA CareerLink® centers are available to all customers. However, they also make use of the specialized skills, experience, and services provided by the workforce system partners to meet the needs of customers with special needs or barriers. Customer registration and initial customer needs assessment process attempts to identify any particular barriers, needs, or services that may be of assistance in meeting the customer's goal(s). Staff also attempts to determine the eligibility of customers for services that have specific priority or eligibility requirements. Some of the special populations served through the system include:

- **Veterans.** The Veterans' Employment Program staff are the primary source of assistance for veterans using PA CareerLink® services. These partner staff members work closely with the County Veteran's Affairs and the State's Veteran's Affairs staff to ensure that all veterans are aware of the information and services available to them. Additionally, all center personnel are also trained on the priority service policy for veterans.
- **Basic Skills Deficient Individuals.** Some local area residents may lack basic reading, writing, and math skills. The PA CareerLink® centers and partners address these needs by providing basic education, remediation, and high school equivalency preparation services. Additionally, some services may also help customers in paying any fees associated with taking the high school equivalency examination. All jobseekers who lack a high school diploma or equivalency are encouraged to participate in these services. However, the Board does not deny services to those customers who decline to participate in literacy activities.
- **Low-Income Individuals.** Low-income individuals are a significant population of the Board's customers. They may be working in part-time or low wage jobs. They are a priority for both general job search assistance and for specialized services, such as WIOA training services. The special barriers experienced by many low-income customers are addressed through a variety of local services. Specifically, the Employment, Advancement, and Retention Network (EARN) Program offers job search assistance, career guidance, life skills, supportive services, training assistance, and job retention services designed to meet the needs of this customer group. The Carbon County Workforce Training, the Carbon County

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Assistance Office, the Carbon Career and Technical Institute, the Bureau of Workforce Development Partnership, and the Carbon County Child Care Information Services, as well as Pathstone provide EARN and TANF-related services to low-income customers.

- **Older Individuals.** Older workers often have special employment barriers that must be addressed, such as inadequate technology skills. As a result, they may require more staff assistance in learning skills such as how to access the Internet or how to use a computer to look for work. To assist this special population, the Board partners with the area's Senior Community Service Employment Program providers. Additionally, Older Workers may also qualify for WIOA Adult or Dislocated Worker training services.
- **Returning Citizens.** The Board has working relationships with the county prisons and the Adult and Juvenile Probation offices in the area to help returning citizens secure training and/or employment. Additionally, it also works with various youth correctional services such as the Youth Forestry Camp #2, Youth Services Agency facilities, and others.
- **Individuals with Disabilities.** The Board partners with the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) to assist individuals with disabilities who may need specialized services. OVR staff determine eligibility for WIOA title IV services, and as applicable, assist them in developing a career development plan and provide job development services tailored to their specific goals.

Supporting these efforts, all PA CareerLink® staff are provided training and information on the services and strategies available individuals with disabilities. This training includes workshops on Disability Awareness Etiquette; instruction on the use of adaptive equipment in the Career Resource Area, and the use of the TTY phone system.

It is important to note that individuals with disabilities may also qualify for training assistance under the Board's priority service policy for title I services.

Specialized services designed to assist returning citizen youth include the WIOA title I Youth programs, the Pennsylvania Conservation Corp, and the Job Corp. Adult returning citizens receive assistance through WIOA title I Adult services, the literacy services of the Carbon Career and Technical Institute Adult Education Department, and other general services available at the PA CareerLink centers.

- **LEP Customers.** The Pocono Counties area has a low number of residents with Limited English Proficiency (LEP). However, the Board has a formal LEP Service Plan. All staff are able to make English as a Second Language (ESL) referrals and resources are available at the reception station and within the Career Resource Area. Moreover, language line interpretation services and translated documents are available for customers, as needed.
- **Unemployment Compensation (UC) Claimants.** UC Claimants represent a significant percentage of the customers served through PA CareerLink® services. They can be divided into two primary categories. The first one is claimants who register with JobGateway® for temporary or seasonal layoffs to comply with UC registration requirements. Those individuals are advised of the services available to them in the event that they want to explore or pursue other employment or career goals. The second category is claimants who

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are permanently laid off due to downsizing, business closings, or other reasons. They are also directed to register on JobGateway®. Those profiled as permanent layoffs are directed to register for a Re-employment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) Workshop in the PA CareerLink®.

The RESEA workshop is designed to ensure that these Claimants are aware of all of the services and assistance available to help them with their re-employment efforts. They also receive specialized staff assistance in the development of their individual employment and training plans. The purpose of the RESEA program is to provide timely early services to UC Claimants and help them achieve their re-employment goals quickly, and before they exhaust their UC benefits.

**Youth.** The primary goals of youth services are to give young adults a better understanding of the soft skills (e.g., work maturity skills and basic literacy skills) that are required by employers and to provide youth with a better understanding of the local business needs and the job skills projected to be in demand in the next five to 10 years.

Based on eligibility and specific needs, youth may receive services offered under WIOA title I, including work experience opportunities through the Summer/ Year-Round Youth Employment program, or On-the-Job Training (OJT) and Individual Training Account (ITA) services. Additionally, OVR offers services such as career guidance, job development, training, and job coaching services to Out-of-School Youth with disabilities. Youth are also provided with information and referrals to organizations such as Job Corps.

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### **2. STRATEGIC PLANNING QUESTIONS: Vision and Goals**

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

The economic future of the local area is dependent on a workforce that is globally competitive. The Board is committed to continue building a workforce system that is universal, accountable, market-driven, and aligned with economic development and education efforts. It is also committed to a regional strategy of interaction and cooperation with the Lackawanna County, Luzerne/Schuylkill, and Northern Tier Workforce Development Boards that are also located in Northeastern Pennsylvania.

The WDB's strategic vision is to support regional economic growth and self-reliance through a comprehensive youth, adult and dislocated worker service delivery system. The system identifies barriers to employment and addresses the skill gaps of the region's jobseekers. The over-arching mission is to equip jobseekers with the necessary skills and credentials to attain or return to self-sufficient employment, including established career pathways to high priority occupations.

The following goals and initiatives have been established to achieve the vision:

The WDB developed a strategic alignment with its local school districts to educate youth about high demand career opportunities and postsecondary training options. The goal is to provide youth with the knowledge necessary to pursue viable options that lead to attainment of industry recognized credentials, career pathways and high priority occupations that pay family-sustaining wages.

The WDB maintains meaningful relationships with local training providers (i.e., Career and Technical Centers, Community Colleges, Universities, and others). These partnerships enable it to explore opportunities to bridge learning and skills gaps that exist between jobseekers and key industry partners. Conversations with employers and training providers help to identify the region's critical workforce training needs information that may not be up-to-date in the most recent labor market data available. The goal is to share pertinent labor market information that aids the local training provider in the development of short-term training programs resulting in the attainment of in-demand industry recognized credentials. This goal is intended to offer jobseekers opportunities to quickly find self-sufficient employment.

The WDB and PA CareerLink® staff facilitate meetings with manufacturing employers to promote and discuss the benefits of developing and registering apprenticeship programs as a key workforce development strategy. Employers are aligned with existing funding resources and organizations that support and assist the employers' efforts to develop and register an apprenticeship program that provides their workers with the knowledge and competencies needed in industry. Registered Apprenticeship programs offer jobseekers the opportunity to earn as they learn, while attaining industry recognized credentials and career pathway opportunities.

The Board collaborates with neighboring Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) to develop a Pre-Apprenticeship program for individuals ages 18-24 who are interested in entering a building trade's registered apprenticeship program. The cohort of LWDBs received a state grant to support this project. This program will prepare participants to enroll and succeed in apprenticeship programs.

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Additionally, because agriculture has traditionally been a major economic and cultural factor in Wayne County, the Board also focuses efforts on this important sector. It works with the Wayne Tomorrow/Agriculture Committee to identify occupational need and workforce preparedness, including a plan that demonstrates the impact that agriculture has on Wayne County. The goals are as follows:

- Support existing producers and agribusinesses
- Expand Wayne County's agriculture sector and farming capacity by increasing agricultural productivity
- Attract new agri-businesses to located to Wayne County
- Attract young farmers and support them to be successful

The WDB secured an Industry Partnership (IP) grant on behalf of the local advanced manufacturing sector employers to support incumbent worker training to increase the competitiveness and create new career pathways for employees and jobseekers. The Board also participates in the following IPs with their LWDB partners: **Healthcare, Energy, Food Processing, and Logistics and Transportation.**

### **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?**

In Pocono Counties, partner staff in the two comprehensive PA CareerLink® centers and the two affiliate locations have multiple roles within their respective locations, including responsibilities related to WIOA, Wagner-Peyser, Veterans, Vocational Rehabilitation, Welfare to Work and other core programs administered through the service delivery system. Staff integration relates to familiarity with the services, program eligibility and resources available to individuals seeking assistance. Staff routinely coordinate discussions concerning the service needs of customers to seek solutions to potential barriers and to avoid duplication of services. The Board monitors the provision of core program services through reports submitted by the Operator Consortium and through reports provided by the PA CareerLink® Site Administrators at the Workforce Development Board Meetings.

The Board's strategies to align local and regional resources in order to achieve its vision and goals include the following:

- Developing career pathways for skill credential and degree achievement and provide individuals in the region the opportunity to obtain a job that provides a living wage.
- Increasing public awareness of the region's diverse skill sets of workers and the incumbent worker population through WEDnet, Industry Partnerships, and related funding streams available in the area.
- Continuing its commitment to Apprenticeship Programs and Regional Industry Partnerships.
- Increasing outreach to employers through the PA CareerLink® system and through Business/Education Partnerships.

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- Engaging employers and identifying their respective needs within the region.
- Enhancing relationships with state agencies, education and economic development entities, and with the PA CareerLink® system.
- Increasing referrals to literacy services through enhanced coordination.
- Increasing work-related opportunities for youth through a coordinated youth talent pipeline.

### **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?**

The Board has and will continue to develop and cultivate a demand-driven workforce to provide employers with the resources needed to compete and grow their respective businesses. In doing so, it utilizes accurate data-driven information to identify, profile and analyze cluster information and identify demand occupations. It engages in Regional Industry Partnerships to address the Incumbent Workforce. It continues to promote economic recovery within the Northeast and to preserve and create jobs through innovative training opportunities that will encourage individuals to retool their skills and meet the demands of a 21st century workforce. The Board also continues to interact with area career and technical institutes, community colleges, and educational and training providers to meet the training requirements of a skilled workforce.

The Board's efforts align with the Governor's Vision of the Commonwealth Workforce Development System as follows:

- Establish career pathways as the primary model for skill, credential, and degree attainment and provide all Pennsylvanians, with an emphasis on Pennsylvanians with barriers to employment, an opportunity to a job that pays.

The Board is actively engaged in career pathway models addressing the need to assist individuals with barriers to employment by providing training opportunities for skill training that leads to employment in High Priority Occupations. It is utilizing resources from the TAACT Programs by two community colleges in the Northeast. It has also invested in the implementation of career pathway models in its Business/Education Partnerships as well as a pre-apprenticeship program.

- Expand the state's pipeline of workers for targeted industry sectors from entry level skills to middle skills through Industry Partnerships, WEDnetPA, and other innovative strategies.

The Board will use data and work with employers to identify the skills and competencies necessary to attain family-sustaining employment. Efforts will be directed to ensure individuals with barriers are utilizing programs obtaining postsecondary credentials and certifications. It has consistently committed well over 50% of funds to training activities and has targeted training to individuals with barriers to employment.

- Increase opportunities for all youth to participate in work based learning through

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summer employment, pre-apprenticeship, apprenticeship and other similar experiences.

As noted, the WDB is sensitive to age demographics of the area workforce. It knows it must cultivate and support a comprehensive workforce strategy to meet employer needs to fill newly created positions and positions vacated by retiring workers. Addressing this need the Board has recognized the new priority to serve older youth with effective practices for recruitment and retention. Youth work experience programs have been and will continue to be an important component to service this population. OVR is a vital partner supporting initiatives serving transition age youth with disabilities.

- Engage employers directly to close skills gaps and more quickly upskill or reskill the workforce to meet the current and future needs.

The WDB has always stressed the importance of education in its workforce system. The Board engages employers and educational resources within the area by prioritizing funding directed to business services activities, OJT, and incumbent worker training to employers that offer high-quality jobs. An important element of this task is the utilization of the Business/Education Partnerships within the four counties. These partnerships connect schools, employers, and students to provide career-related experiences and expose opportunities through soft skill development, internships, job shadowing, and career mentoring. Career Pathways are an important component of Business/Education Partnerships.

- Strengthen data sharing across state agencies and workforce development partners to understand education and employment outcomes and more effectively evaluate efforts.

The Board will utilize data provided by the Commonwealth and locally generated data to allow for continuous program improvements. Relative data will allow for informed customer choice in considering programs. Additional pertinent data from state agencies especially the Pennsylvania Department of Education will be welcomed by the Board. Common performance measurements across all core programs will be an asset to better evaluate programs within the local area.

#### **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 1**, 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.

WDB programs will apply the federal performance measures for WIOA as performance goals for programs and sub-recipients. Attainment of performance measures and outcomes will be reviewed at quarterly WDB meetings and monitored by the Training/Performance Subcommittee. The WDB, staff, and Chief Local Elected Officials will monitor performance levels

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throughout the year. This practice allows the WDB to adjust policies as a continuous improvement strategy. These measures include employment, median earnings, credential attainment, measurable skill gains, and effectiveness is serving employers.

Additionally, WDB staff and sub-recipients will target high priority occupations and industries for job development in WIOA programs to meet and exceed employment and earning performance levels. Continuation of services and retention strategies will be in place to ensure long-term employment opportunities for the participants and program activities.

Credential attainment will be met by utilizing national and state recognized credentialing programs. These programs have proven to be successful for sub-recipients. Participants have expressed satisfaction with these programs.

Skill gains and effectively meeting the workforce needs of employers are crucial to achieving success in providing essential services delivery. WDB plans to institute tools to measure success in these areas. Proposed strategies include, but are not limited to the following:

- Employer and participant surveys;
- Increase vs decrease of employer job orders to gauge satisfaction; and
- Pre-and post-training inventories to measure occupation skill gains for employers

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

#### 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 Pocono Counties Local Workforce Development Area is included as **Attachment 2**.

**Local Elected Officials.** The Governing Board of the Local Elected Officials is comprised of the 12 Commissioners representing the four counties. They acknowledge program accountability; appoint WDB members; designate the Fiscal Agent; assist with the development of plans and all provisions listed under WIOA. They attend WDB meetings to discuss and interact with the Board on ongoing activities.

**Fiscal Agent and Administrative Entity.** The Carbon County Commissioners have been designated the Administrative Entity/Fiscal Agent. The Fiscal Agent is responsible for maintaining effective control over and accountability for all funds, property, and all other WIOA assets, while safeguarding all such assets in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles. As the Administrative Entity, the Board of Commissioners serves as the employer of record and is responsible for hiring and managing the local workforce board staff.

**Workforce Development Board.** The WDB is comprised of 24 members and includes representatives from key private sector industries in the Pocono Counties, partners in the service delivery structure, and other key stakeholders required under the WIOA.

Together, the WDB and the Local Elected Officials provide guidance and oversight to manage the local workforce development system, interacting with business and industry, economic development, education, governmental entities, and community based organizations to provide services and training to jobseekers and employers.

**Board Committees.** The Standing Committees of the WDB are as follows: Executive Committee, Financial Committee, Youth Committee, PA CareerLink® Committee, Training/Performance Committee, and Industry Partnership Incumbent Worker Committee.

- **Executive Committee** acts for the Board in between its regularly scheduled meetings on those issues of policy that require timely action to meet statutory compliance. It does not usurp those specific functions, powers, and duties that are reserved by the Board under its agreement with the Chief Elected Officials.
- **Financial Committee** acts as a mechanism for the Board to increase the level of local coordination and the responsible use of all grants associated with WIOA's required programs by developing local board budgets, identifying resources to leverage support, conducting fiscal and financial oversight of programmatic and administrative entities.
- **Youth Committee** provides a forum for stakeholders who provide youth leadership expertise; actively engages in aligning goals of youth activities and youth program strategies for youth; and efforts focus on the development of the emerging workforce and strategically align with state and federal priorities of the public workforce system.

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- **PA CareerLink® Committee** aides in the design of service delivery within the PA CareerLink® centers, including partner referral methods, customer flow processes, and the execution of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and Resource Sharing Agreement (RSA).
- **Training/Performance Committee** establishes and negotiates the local common measures for approval by the appropriate Commonwealth of Pennsylvania agency acting on behalf of the Governor; works with Board staff and PA CareerLink® representatives in the development of performance standards and evaluation training programs; and oversees monitoring and oversight activities.
- **Industry Partnership Incumbent Worker Committee** development partnerships with the Board and surrounding counties; and promotes regional coordination of workforce resources and the promotion of the public workforce system.

**Equal Employment Opportunity and Civil Rights Protections.** The Board has processes that comply with federal and state regulation and policies for handling complaints and Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) issues and civil rights protections. It has established a WIOA Equal Opportunity Officer that are responsible for grievance and complaint resolution.

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### **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 Board works collaboratively with the entities that are carrying out workforce programs to support service alignment in the local area. A One-Stop Location and Program Services Chart that identifies the workforce programs, providers, and locations is included as **Attachment 3**.

The WDB has established two comprehensive PA CareerLink® centers in the county seats of Carbon and Monroe Counties. Additionally, it also supports two satellite facilities in the county seats of Pike and Wayne Counties. The PA CareerLink® centers provide all mandated services and meet the Pennsylvania Department of Labor One-Stop Certification requirements. The satellite facilities provide key jobseeker and business services. Additionally, staff from the Monroe County PA CareerLink® center also assist in specialized services on a part-time basis, such as the RESEA and Veterans services in Wayne and Pike Counties.

Collectively, all four facilities collaborate with each other to ensure that employer and jobseeker customers within the Pocono Counties WDA have access to the full range of workforce development services and resources. This service delivery structure allows for efficient, coordinated services for a variety of agencies.

**Service Alignment.** The Board procured and selected its One-Stop Operator, the Pocono Counties

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WDA Operator Consortium in accordance with WIOA, the Uniform Guidance and its implementing regulations, and local procurement policy. The One-Stop Operator coordinates local PA CareerLink® activities at each location; functioning as the liaison between the Board and the system partners, and ensuring that all services and available resources are properly aligned to carry out the vision of the Board. Additional details about the programmatic and administrative functions of the One-Stop Operator are included in the **response to 4.1 below**.

As discussed in the **response to 1.4 above**, within the full-service centers, partner staff provide seamless service delivery to all clients—from the initial intake assessments and direct referrals to partner services and programs – recognizing that services must be guided by the policies of the designated funding streams.

Staff are available to assist individuals in enrolling on the Internet-based system, browsing written material and signing up for scheduled workshops and events. A team approach is utilized to assist customers, which involves the cooperation and collaboration of staff from multiple departments (i.e., case managers, workshop facilitators, etc.). Staff from partner organizations, such as OVR, also participate directly in work that is specifically related to their target populations. The special populations and services provided include:

**Veterans** and their spouses are given priority of service. A triage form is used to help identify those veterans who may have special needs. The form is provided to the Veterans' Employment Program representative and the person is called in for specialized services. Based on individual need, the staff may refer the veteran to training options and/or job placement. Staff may also refer a veteran to the OVR or other social service agencies for help with disabilities or more comprehensive needs.

**Individuals that are basic skills deficient** have their education needs met through a variety of system partners as detailed in the **response to 4.10 below**. Services include basic adult education, remediation, and high school equivalency preparation services.

**Individuals who receive public assistance** are referred to the EARN program for employment and training assistance. EARN services and staff are fully-integrated and co-located with the center for job search, job development services, and training programs.

**Older individuals** who may be eligible under title V are referred to AARP. In addition, the PA CareerLink® centers may serve as host agencies or may hire older workers as greeters. Moreover, older workers have additional resources available to them through the Social Security Administration Office and OVR.

**Returning citizens** receive guidance and counseling to prepare for employment. PA CareerLink® staff encourage them to participate in workshops to help reinstate their driver's license, health insurance, and social security benefits, as well as to have their record expunged, when applicable. Workshops geared to returning citizens focus on financial literacy, credit rebuilding, and fair housing.

**Individuals with disabilities who are eligible under WIOA title IV** access services provided by the OVR. It helps them secure and maintain employment and independence; helping them become qualified trained members of the workforce. Eligible OVR customers receive multiple,

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individualized services such as, diagnostic testing, vocational counseling and guidance, vocational evaluation, restoration, occupational training, and job placement.

**Underemployed individuals** are referred to staff for individualized services including testing, provision of labor market information, assistance in defining marketable and transferrable skills and development of an individual employment plan. They are informed about State Civil Service job opportunities to pursue while still employed, and other existing training.

**Unemployed individuals** are also served through the system. Staff participate in Rapid Response activities and RESEA orientations. They provide assistance such as RESEA workshops, the Unemployment Compensation Work Test, and Trade Adjustment Act services to help impacted workers return to work as quickly as possible.

**LEP persons** are provided with access to ESL classes instruction, a translator, and/or information provided in other languages as may be required. ESL providers in the local area include the Lehigh Carbon Community College (LCCC), Northampton Community College, and the Wayne/Pike Alliance. Individuals in need of ESL services may also utilize the Greater Hazleton Metro Ministries and Luzerne Community College programs in neighboring Luzerne County.

**Migrant or Seasonal Farm Workers (MSFWs)** are not a significant population in the Pocono Counties. However, these individuals can access services through the centers. They receive the full range of employment services, benefits and protections, including counseling, testing, and job and training referrals. In providing such services, staff will consider the preferences, needs, and skills of the individual MSFW.

Overall, this strategic alignment of workforce programs under the PA CareerLink® Pocono Counties umbrella helps the Board maximize the resources available in the community and promote increased accessibility for employers and individuals, including those who may have barriers to employment.

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

The WDB is working with organizations throughout the local area to expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services, particularly to those individuals who have barriers to employment; and to facilitate the development of Career Pathways and co-enrollment processes within the PA CareerLink® system. An overview is described below.

**Eligibility Validation.** Individuals must be determined “eligible” prior to enrollment into any type of WIOA-funded services. The Board understands the importance of correctly documenting this eligibility, and requires 100% verification of all documents.

Staff members help customers gather the required eligibility paperwork by giving them a detailed listing of the forms and materials that meet programmatic standards. Additionally, they offer

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advice on how individuals can get required documents, such as contacting Vital Records offices for birth certificates or checking on-line for selective service registration.

As needed, the staff may also provide more intensive assistance to help individuals with barriers to employment gather the required information. Moreover, in certain instances, they may accept an individual's self-certification as to support specific eligibility criteria; however, hard-copy documentation is always preferred.

As eligibility information is provided by the customer, staff verifies it by examining it, or by speaking with official representatives of authorized agencies. They also document eligibility in case files by maintaining physical evidence such as copies of documents (where legally permitted) and completed and signed telephone records and/or document inspection forms.

Eligibility to receive services under WIOA title IV may only be determined by a qualified OVR Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor. Training for OVR staff is at the discretion of the local OVR District Administrator. OVR staff supervision and direction is the responsibility of the local OVR District Administrator.

Of note, staff refers any customers who are determined ineligible for WIOA services to an appropriate partnering agency or other community organization that may be able to provide alternative services or assistance.

**Co-Enrollment and On-Ramps.** The Board actively promotes the co-enrollment of customers into multiple programs to maximize its funding resources as well as to improve its performance results. Partner staff work collectively for jobseekers who have multiple needs and are involved in collaborative efforts to maintain joint case records that document contacts and the services provided. The PA Commonwealth Workforce Development (CWDS) is used for enrollment, tracking, case management, and referrals.

The initial registration process for jobseekers is designed to inform them of the broad range of services available, both on-site and through referrals. Partners use this registration information to eliminate the duplication of data collection. It is also instrumental in ensuring that customers can easily access the services that are appropriate to their unique needs and goals.

The local area uses a cross-referral system and customers are co-enrolled into specialized programs as applicable to their specific circumstances. For example, many Wagner-Peyser customers are referred to WIOA staff for enrollment into Adult, Out-of-School Youth, or Dislocated Worker ITA or OJT services when training or postsecondary credentials are needed to help the customer pursue their occupational goals. In the same manner, many WIOA In-School Work Experience participants who have graduated from high school are referred to Wagner-Peyser or other partner services for help with their job search efforts. Moreover, EARN customers served through the system may also make use of Wagner-Peyser services or WIOA services as needed to assist them with their employment or training goals.

Specific program eligibility determination for programmatic services is completed by the partner. However, since all services are tracked through CWDS, a customer may have multiple cases open at the same time for program outcome and performance tracking purposes.

**Postsecondary Credentials.** The goal of advising and assisting customers regarding the benefits

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of postsecondary credentials is handled in a variety of ways. Staff are involved in the career exploration activities and presentations that are conducted in the local school districts to provide In-School Youth. They assist with information about local and statewide career opportunities, the need for postsecondary training or credentials to pursue these careers, and the services and resources available through the PA CareerLink® or other partner programs. Additionally, the orientation for the WIOA Summer Employment Program includes an overview of the services available through the PA CareerLink® system to help students with their post high school employment and training goals. Adult or Dislocated worker customers whose employment goals require postsecondary credentials are referred to WIOA or Trade staff for possible training services.

**Career Pathways.** For customers who have already developed an Individual Employment Plan (IEP) or who prefer to take responsibility for their own career planning and development needs, the PA CareerLink® is charged with providing them with labor market information, self-service tools and resources, and other information on activities that will help them with their career planning needs. Information on the Pocono Counties WDB High Priority Industry Clusters, high demand occupations, training providers, and other information is available on-line or in the Career Resource Area.

For individuals with transferrable skills, the PA CareerLink® staff helps them identify potential career ladders that may be available to them with their current skills and experience. They also assist in identifying any skill gaps that must be addressed. Through interviews and a review of the customer's background and goals, staff better identify those individuals who might fill the skill demands of the local area's business customers.

Many jobseekers who register with the PA CareerLink® system have very specific or narrow goals that do not require comprehensive career planning services. Examples are jobseekers who register only because they want to complete an application for a particular PA CareerLink® business customer, or jobseekers responding to mass recruiting events. In these instances, staff provide these customers with an understanding of the wide variety of services offered at the centers and encourage them to use them.

Career pathways development is also a part of self-assisted services. PA CareerLink® personnel determines potential eligibility for services, enabling jobseekers to directly access the staff or partner who is best suited for their unique needs. This process is especially important for customers who have special needs in developing a career plan. The goals, services, and outcomes for customer career plans are recorded and monitored by the staff who assist them in developing the plans, or by the staff who provide the services that help them achieve their goals.

Adult basic education partners under title II develop pathways to careers for adults whom are basic skills deficient. Programming includes beginner level literacy instruction to support college and career readiness. Instruction is also provided for English language learners and workforce and workplace preparation activities. Extensive case management is provided to participants that help students address barriers to participate (such as transportation, childcare, housing, and healthcare). The Board works in tandem with title II staff to support alignment of core programs and other workforce system partners.

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In all cases, staff attempts to help customers identify the transferrable skills, experience, credentials, and abilities that will enable them to pursue a specific career goal, advance to the next level of the career ladder, or obtain the skills needed to secure employment.

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

- **Support a local workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses in the local area;**
- **Manage activities or services that will be implemented to improve business engagement;**
- **Better coordinates regional workforce and economic development strategy, messaging, engagement and programs; and**
- **Strengthen linkages between the PA CareerLink® service delivery system and unemployment insurance (UI) programs.**

The WDB has fostered engagement with employers through various initiatives over the past 16 years. First, by supporting a business service delivery structure in all four counties. BSTs are formally established in the two comprehensive sites, and the title I WIOA and other partner agencies, including Rapid Response, OVR, and others conduct coordinated employer outreach and engagement efforts in the satellite locations.

The PA CareerLink® centers and affiliate sites conduct county-wide job fairs, specific employer recruitment efforts, workshops on topics of interest to the employer community, and provide other general information of importance to the employers in their respective areas of the local area. They are also engaged with the local and regional employer communities through their membership in the Chambers of Commerce and economic development organizations in the region.

Over the years, these outreach efforts have resulted in close working relationships with both the targeted industry employers, as well as a significant portion of the small businesses located in the area. Success is demonstrated by the fact that more than 40% of the employers have registered within CWDS.

In addition to the efforts of the PA CareerLink® and affiliate site staff, the WDB also works closely with the employer community through its private sector business members and other business service efforts supported by the Board, such as Industry Partnerships, lay-off aversion efforts, and Business/Education Partnership initiatives. The Board is currently exploring the expansion of these local efforts along with regional efforts through the Next Gen model.

The BSTs, as well as staff in the affiliate sites, provide area employers with integrated services to address their employment and training requirements. Services include recruitment of skilled workers, applicant screening, JobGateway® assistance, training for incumbent workers, and other related business activities. The BSTs provide information to employers regarding OJT program services, Industry Partnership training resources, WED-Net Training information, Apprenticeship and other work-based learning best practices, as well as training resources available outside of

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the Service Delivery Network supported by the WDB.

The BSTs have prioritized outreach efforts to target Regional Industry Partnership and Industry Clusters identified as significant parts of the Regional Labor Market to support the growth and development of key sectors of the economy in the Northeast. BST outreach efforts have assisted the Board in identifying skill gaps, training needs and other pertinent issues confronting business and industry in the region.

The services that the BSTs offer employers go beyond those services provided by the PA CareerLink® or affiliate site partner staff. There is a close working relationship with other employer service organizations such as the Chamber of Commerce, Economic Development Agencies, the Small Business Development Centers, and other statewide, county, and local agencies that provide services to both existing and startup businesses. Through electronic communications such as e-mail, Constant Contact, and local websites, the BSTs provide, support, and disseminate a large volume of information regarding services available to the business community.

Information regarding possible WARN or similar large scale layoffs are communicated to the Rapid Response Unit and the WDB. Contact with these employers takes place as quickly as possible in an attempt to determine if any services or resources available can assist the impacted employer in averting the layoffs. All BST members are familiar with OJT services and other training services that may be available to assist businesses, either with recruiting and expansion plans, or possibly with training or upgrading services for their existing workforce. The BSTs offer county-wide Job Fairs to assist with ongoing recruitment needs, as well as provide individualized business recruiting assistance through the PA CareerLink® sites or in other locations.

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 telephones in the PA CareerLink® centers so that UC Claimants can call the statewide toll-free UC number regarding any benefits questions they may have.

Additionally, individuals who are likely to exhaust their benefits are identified by the State through the RESEA program. These individuals are directed to come to one of the PA CareerLink® locations for job search assistance.

At the local Center, 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.

As part of its continuous improvement processes, the Board will be developing enhanced approaches to better engage employers in the public workforce development system and to better address employer concerns using strategies such as the Next Gen model.

**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 telephones in the PA CareerLink® centers so that Unemployment

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Compensation (UC) Claimants can call the statewide toll-free UC number regarding any benefits questions they may have.

Additionally, individuals who are likely to exhaust their benefits are identified by the State through the RESEA program. These individuals are directed to come to one of the PA CareerLink® locations for job search assistance.

At the local Center, 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.

Of significance, employers are invited to attend RESEA sessions to speak directly with participants. Moreover, the UC Workforce Development Representative conducts several seminars throughout the year for employers to learn more about UC Programs. Typical seminars include: UC 101; Separation Issues; UC Appeals and Hearings; Suitable Work; Relief from Charges.

### **3.5. How will the local board coordinate local 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? Regional Economic Development Activities.**

The WDB recognizes that the growth of both the local area and the regional economy relies on strategic collaboration between the Workforce Development Areas, Community, and Economic and Industrial Development agencies. The following is a list of the Economic and Industrial Development Boards and organizations that the WDB has either representation on, or a close working relationship with.

- Carbon County Chamber & Economic Development
- Monroe County Industrial Development Authority
- The Greater Pocono Chamber of Commerce
- Pike County Economic Development Authority
- Pike County Chamber of Commerce
- Wayne County Economic Development Corporation, WEDCO
- The Chamber of the Northern Poconos
- Northeast Pennsylvania Alliance
- The Manufacturing Resource Center and Northeastern PA Industrial Resource Center

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- The Small Business Development Centers at the University of Scranton and Wilkes University

The WDB's employment and training services are designed to support and complement economic development efforts in the region. Engagement and communications with these local and regional economic development partners is ongoing and continuous.

The WDB also works to support a collaborative approach to Workforce Development issues through the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's Partnership for Regional Economic Performance (PREP) areas and through the PA Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) which encompasses a seven-county region: Carbon; Lackawanna; Luzerne; Monroe; Pike; Schuylkill and Wayne. The lead organization for the Commonwealth's PREP Program is the Local Development District: NEPA Alliance – which includes members who engage the promotion of economic development across the seven counties. NEPA PREP partners provide a powerful network of regional experts who can help business owners address nearly every type of challenge facing their companies.

In addition to the services provided directly by specific PREP partners, the network can also help businesses access critical state and federal resources, such as loans, grants, technical assistance, or other support. NEPA Alliance services also include Business Financing, Government Contracting Assistance, International Trade Assistance, Non Profit Assistance, Transportation Planning, Research and Information, and Local Government Services.

**Training for Self-Employment.** Entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services should provide the basics of starting and operating a small business. Some examples of such skill development include, but are not limited to, the following abilities:

- Taking initiative;
- Creatively seeking out and identifying business opportunities;
- Developing budgets and forecasting resource needs;
- Developing a customer-centered environment;
- Understanding various options for acquiring capital and the tradeoffs associated with each option; and
- Communicating effectively and marketing oneself and one's ideas.

Although the WDB provides a variety of workshops each week that include many employment-related topics, the Board has not identified a specific career track for entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services. Rather, individuals who are interested in self-employment are referred to community partners, such as the Small Business Administration, to receive specialized assistance that includes:

- 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

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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.

- Each year, the NEPA PREP partners provide services to local customers, primarily local businesses but also individual residents who are looking to learn about business start-up and management.

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### 4. OPERATIONAL PLANNING QUESTIONS: Local Area Workforce Delivery System

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

**PA CareerLink® Operator.** In compliance with the WIOA and related federal and state regulations, the Board recently initiated a competitive procurement process to secure its One-Stop Operator services. As a result, it approved the Pocono Counties WDA Operator Consortium proposal that was submitted by four current partner agencies in the Carbon and Monroe County PA CareerLink® centers to act in this role for each of the PA CareerLink® centers and the affiliate sites.

The Pocono Counties WDA Operator Consortium includes Monroe County Job Training, Carbon County Workforce Training, Northampton Community College, and the Carbon Career and Technical Institute Adult Education Department. An Operator Consortium Agreement has been signed between the WDB and the members of the Operating Consortium. As of July 1, 2017, the One-Stop Operator's programmatic responsibilities will include:

- Ensure that the roles of all required partners in the PA CareerLink® system have been defined, identified, and integrated into the service delivery system.
- Implement and augment the integrated services structure within the PA CareerLink® centers, as designed by the Board and enabled via the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with all core and required partners operating at the site.
- Monitor operational procedures and protocols to promote effective and seamless partner referral, for the benefit of the customer, while ensuring that individual partner program performance and outcomes are not negatively impacted.
- Evaluate service delivery (e.g., timing, type, format, etc.) across providers and partners as well as across customer segments, and identify opportunities to optimize services.
- Develop, implement, and monitor customer service standards across the centers. Continuously assess customer needs via customer feedback mechanisms at the center and make recommendations to the Board for continuous improvement.
- Implement and monitor the negotiated One-Stop partner MOU.
- Develop an understanding of and use all required technologies to access and report on necessary data (i.e., CWDS, ClientTrack™, Constant Contact, etc.).
- Establish and monitor metrics for measuring success based on state and federal requirements associated with provider and partner funding streams
- Develop and implement a plan for continuous improvement that engages all partners operating at the centers.
- Convene a regular meeting of the administrative leadership of MOU partners to review progress and performance of the core programs.
- Hold regular cross-agency staff meetings of partner staff to coordinate services within the structure of the multi-partner MOU including both onsite and off-site partners.

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The administrative responsibilities of the One-Stop Operator will include:

- Convene regularly scheduled meetings and/or conference calls with Board staff.
- Present a report, in an approved format at each Board meeting, regarding coordination of services, adherence to the MOU, and performance outcomes at the centers.
- Assign a program director who brings a high emotional intelligence and maturity (sensitivity, conflict resolution, listening skills) to influence and drive change across providers, partners, and Board staff.
- Provide a monthly activity report to the Board.

**WIOA Providers.** The entities providing WIOA title I, title II, title III, and title IV services are detailed in the One-Stop Location and Program Services Chart included as **Attachment 3**.

**Procurement Policy.** The Board procures its One-Stop Operator and title I service providers using a competitive Request for Proposals (RFP) process that complies with WIOA regulations and requirements. Under this method, responding proposals are scored using an award criteria and point system. The Board makes its awards based on the proposer's demonstrated ability to perform successfully under the terms and conditions of the RFP. The recent procurement for the One-Stop Operator was conducted as follows:

At the November 30, 2016, WDB meeting, the Board discussed the need for competitive procurement of a One-Stop Operator. The Board approved the Chair to appoint a One-Stop Operator Procurement Proposal Committee that was tasked with developing and writing the RFP, and reviewing, evaluating, and making recommendations to the Executive Committee and/or full Board on any proposals that were received.

The One-Stop Operator Procurement Proposal Committee was comprised of one Board member from each of the four Pocono Counties and it was requested that a representative from each of the four Boards of LEOs also participate in the process. Board staff provided support and assistance with Committee work.

During the March 1, 2017, WDB meeting, the Board approved the release of the RFP effective April 17, 2017 with proposals being due May 26, 2017.

The proposals were received and evaluated by the One-Stop Operator Procurement Proposal Committee, LEO representatives, and Board staff. The recommendation to accept the proposal submitted by the Consortium comprised of Monroe County Job Training, Carbon County Workforce Training, Northampton Community College, and the Carbon Career and Technical Institute Adult Education Department was unanimously approved by the Board during its meeting on June 7, 2017.

**Equal Opportunity and Civil Rights.** As identified in the **response to 3.1 above**, the Board It has established a WIOA Equal Opportunity Officer that is responsible for grievance and complaint resolution related to equal employment opportunities and civil right protections.

**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).**

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A complete listing of the PA CareerLink® partners that are authorized to provide services in the Pocono Counties WDA is found in the One-Stop Location and Program Services Chart included as **Attachment 3**.

The Operator Consortium members are in the process of drafting the new MOU and Resource Sharing Agreements (RSA) for both PA CareerLink® centers and the affiliate sites. It will define the expectations, service levels, and resource contributions of each organization.

This new MOU/RSA will be effective July 1, 2017 and will replace the existing One-Stop Partner Agreements and RSA. It will comply with all federal and Commonwealth directives regarding the WIOA.

#### **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.** The WDB provides access to services throughout the local area via the two comprehensive PA CareerLink® locations as well as its two affiliate sites. As a result, customers in the most remote parts of the region are no more than 15 to 20 miles from the closest location. Addresses are as follows:

PA CareerLink®: Monroe County, 2937 PA-611, Stroudsburg, PA 18360

PA CareerLink®: Carbon County, 69 Broadway, Jim Thorpe, PA 18229

Satellite: Pike County Workforce Development Agency, 837 Route 6, Unit 2, Shohola, PA 18458

Satellite: Wayne County Job Training, 925 Court Street, Honesdale, PA 18431

Overall, the hours of operation and services are varied and flexible based on customer need. Evening and other alternative hours may be utilized. Factors which influence hours include, but are not limited to, availability of public transportation, the needs of under-employed and unemployed individuals, and employer hours of operation.

**Providing Access in Remote Areas.** In addition to the three Centers, the Board will also provide and expand services in the remote locations of local area through the following strategies:

- Promoting use of the PA CareerLink® services available at <http://www.jobgateway.pa.gov>.
- Forming partnerships with the library system to provide service in remote areas of the counties. For example, Community Career & Training Sites, provided by Wayne Pike Workforce Alliance (The Community Education Council) are located within nine Wayne and Pike County libraries. The sites include computers for self-registration and job search, Microsoft office software, resume software, and paper.
- Encouraging and allowing the use of technology, including text messaging, social media, on-line video conferencing, Internet searches, and other state-of-the-art methods to locate, communicate, and contact jobseekers and industry personnel.
- Expanding its existing network community partnerships to include additional community-

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based entities, faith-based organizations, employer-sponsored groups, and government organizations to increase access throughout the local area.

**Utilizing Case Management Systems.** The system as a whole utilizes the CWDS and JobGateway® to provide specific information to jobseekers and employers in their respective efforts to obtain employment and find the best employees. Additionally, the local area also utilizes Constant Contact to provide timely notice of new job postings, training opportunities and other services to customers who register for these services. To promote the timeliness and accuracy of information, Case Managers 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 Board's approach for meeting the needs of individuals with barriers to employment, including improving digital literacy skills is detailed in **the response to 3.2 above**.

**Improving Access to Services for English Language Learners and Deaf and Hard of Hearing Individuals.** As part of its service strategy, the Board requires that the PA CareerLink® centers provide translation and/or interpretation services. It encourages partners to staff each location with highly-qualified personnel who mirror the Center's demographics; utilizing bi-lingual and multi-lingual personnel as needed. Telephone-based translation services may be used for languages other than English, and the Board encourages the PA CareerLink® centers to provide workshops in Spanish. Individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing are afforded equal communication and programmatic access, including the scheduling and use of a PA certified American Sign Language interpreter.

**Providing access to Unemployment Compensation Services.** UC Courtesy phones and UC PCs are also available at the PA CareerLink® centers for those customers who need access to such services.

#### **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 comprehensive PA CareerLink® sites and satellite locations are accessible to any individuals who may be interested in receiving employment and training services. Locations are certified annually for compliance by the Office of Equal Opportunity, PA Department of Labor and Industry (L&I).

The Board promotes full accessibility by requiring that its Operator and Partners:

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- 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 the use of bi- and multi-lingual personnel in the Center as well as providing access to language interpretation services.
- 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.

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

The Board understands the critical importance of ensuring that WIOA-funded training programs provide jobseekers with the skills and qualifications that are required and valued by local area employers. It notifies local educational agencies and training providers of initial eligibility provisions and the availability of applications for the Eligible Provider List.

In partnership with the state, it identifies those training providers at the local level whose performance (based on minimum criteria established by the Governor) qualifies them to receive WIOA funds. It then manages the resulting list of training programs that are eligible for ITAs.

The Board considers the following types of criteria as it reviews the applications for initial and ongoing eligibility:

- Performance results:
  - entered unsubsidized employment
  - employment retention
  - average quarterly wage
  - program graduation/certification rates

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- Licensure by the Pennsylvania Department of Education
- Current labor market employment projections for proposed occupational training outcomes, including those that the WDB has identified as high priority occupations
- Input received from local area employers regarding skill needs
- Results of customer satisfaction surveys

The statewide eligible provider list is updated annually. A local area provider that has been denied inclusion on the list, or has been removed from the list may choose to appeal the decision to the Board.

The Performance/Training Committee is responsible for researching and reviewing such appeals. Based on the Committee's findings, it may re-instate the provider to the list, or it may continue to exclude it. In each instance the Committee will notify the provider of the decision and the rationale behind it.

#### **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.**

The Board regularly reviews the type of programs available to Adult and Dislocated Workers in the local area, including training services available through the ETPL as described in the **response to 4.5 above**. 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, 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® centers. In addition to partner programs, it also competitively procures services as needed to meet local labor market needs.

Upon entry in the system, individuals are directly referred to the specific services that best meet their particular needs. As may be required, interpretation and/or translation services may be utilized to assist customers who do not speak English well.

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. Details of these services are provided in the **response to 4.13 below**.

**Priority of Services.** The WDB recently revised its Priority of Service Policy is to support its efforts to facilitate and prioritize training services to eligible individuals with barriers to employment, as defined in the State Plan. This Priority of Service Policy requires that a minimum of 50% of the Adults served by all WIOA title I service providers meet the definition of individuals with barriers to employment as described in the State Plan.

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### **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 Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) 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.

Funding is limited to \$8,000 per eligible jobseeker to be used within a two-year time frame. This amount typically covers the costs of the most common ITA-related training programs available in the local area, especially short-term vocational training that does not qualify for traditional financial aid such as PELL or PHEAA grants, as well as standard Department of Education Student loans.

Short-term training programs in high-demand occupations represent approximately 80% of the ITA requests received from the local area's WIOA customers. Most WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker customers have a limited timeframe to pursue their training goals; therefore, the funding cap is designed to cover these requests when alternative financial aid is unavailable. It also enables the Board to fund a larger number of customers.

**Work-Based Learning.** The Board is currently exploring expanding the use of work-based learning programs, such as work experience, internships, co-op programs, apprenticeships, and transitional jobs to meet any unique/specific skill needs of employers in the area. Policies it will consider as it moves forward 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

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activities.

- Including work-based learning as part of its agendas and topics of discussion during business forums and summits
- Requiring the BST to actively promote work-based learning as key service for local businesses.
- Establishing time periods and caps for work-based learning activities.

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

**Youth Committee.** The Youth Committee includes Board members as well as at-large members. They represent the business sector, chambers of commerce, intermediate units, career and technical education, higher education, title I and title II providers, labor unions, county assistance office, vocational rehabilitation, juvenile probation, youth service organizations, associations that provide programming and services for youth, and the nonprofit sector.

The WDB Youth Committee is responsible for identifying high-quality employment and training activities for youth and their families. Through on-site and off-site services, youth may access each of the 14 WIOA Youth program elements as applicable to their needs. Additionally, the Youth Committee prioritizes Out-of-School Youth by emphasizing youth outreach efforts to recruit potentially eligible individuals aged 16-24, and by requiring that at least of 75% of WIOA expenditures be made for services to this key population.

It requires the following components as part of its youth program strategies:

- Youth Educational Achievement Services
- Youth Employment Services
- Additional Support for Youth Services
- Youth Leadership Development Opportunities
- Youth Work Experience
- Youth Training Services
- Assessment Testing Services
- Youth Supportive Services
- Youth Follow-Up Services

Annually, about 50% of the enrolled youth are individuals with disabilities identified either through an IEP or physician's statement. Depending on the extent or severity of the disability, collaborating partners may be engaged in the workforce activity. Eligible Youth (ages 14-21) participate in the Paid Work Experience Program. They are mentored by the worksite supervisors as they learn the basic employability skills of attendance, punctuality, proper dress and conduct, accountability, dependability, working with others, and following instructions. Through the intake and interview process with an employment and training specialist, appropriate services are determined and a worksite is selected that best meets the youth's abilities and career plan.

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In alignment with the Commonwealth's workforce development goal to establish career pathways, area school districts are working to incorporate the model into their curricula and youth are required to build a career portfolio starting in the ninth grade. Information from the career portfolio assists the employment and training specialist with pertinent data for career counseling and work experience placement.

The summer work experience activity is customized to the individual's career path and utilizes private, for-profit, and non-profit worksites in accordance with the Commonwealth's workforce development goal to increase opportunities for all youth. In addition, outreach to both the IBEW and the KML Regional Council of Carpenters provides new workforce activities in pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship experiences.

Some youth with disabilities (e.g. Asperger syndrome, autism, social anxiety, Downs syndrome, and intellectual disabilities) require additional services with a job coach. In these cases, the employment and training specialist collaborates with agencies such as Community Vocational Services (CVS), the Human Resource Center, Fitzmaurice Community Services, Inc., and the OVR to provide a job coach on a daily basis to assist the youth with job training.

Out-of-School Youth (ages 16-24) have expanded workforce activities available to them that include: financial literacy education, entrepreneurial skills training, services about local in-demand industry sectors or occupations, activities to help transition to postsecondary education, and education offered concurrently with workforce preparation activities for a specific occupation. This progression of workforce activities allows the youth to participate in paid work experience followed by either occupational skill training or OJT as the youth transitions into full-time employment in an identified career pathway.

START (Skills, Tasks, and Results Training), a successful model and best practice in other areas, has been offered through Northampton Community College for hospitality careers since the summer 2016. This program teaches the foundation of hospitality operations while promoting the long-term career pathways available. START prepares the student to go straight from the classroom into the workforce with four industry recognized professional certifications:

- 1) Hospitality Skills Certification in one of four areas - front desk representative, guestroom attendant, maintenance and engineering, or restaurant server;
- 2) Certified Guest Service Gold (Making Connections and Golden Opportunities);
- 3) ServSafe; and
- 4) Responsible Alcohol Management Program (RAMP).

Students will receive 45 hours of academic support and 55 hours of field work of experience at local resorts, hotels, and restaurants. With hospitality being a major industry in the Poconos, the expectation is that both employers and jobseekers will benefit from this public-private investment and innovative strategy.

Community Health Worker (CHW) Certificate program, also offered by Northampton Community College in partnership with the Eastcentral Area Health Education Center, has been offered since the fall 2016. Community Health Workers proactively serve as a liaison between communities

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and healthcare services, provide guidance and social assistance to community residents, advocate for individuals and community health, provide referrals and follow-up services for care, and serve as a liaison between a physician and the patient. CHW program content consists of motivational interviewing, communication, care coordination, teamwork, ethics, preventative care, and chronic disease. Customers completing the certificate program will also receive certification in Youth Mental Health First Aid, CPR/First Aid & AED, and Tobacco Dependence Treatment. Lehigh Valley Health Network and St. Luke's Hospital employs community health workers in the Lehigh Valley and has accessed CHW training through the local Area Health Education Center. The recent expansion of both hospitals to the Poconos has prompted the creation of this certificate program.

Wayne Pike Adult Literacy Program, Northampton Community College's Center for Adult Literacy and Basic Workforce Development are engaged to assist youth with their training goals as deemed necessary by the employment and training specialist.

OVR is an active partner in the two PA CareerLink® centers and affiliate sites. They provide direct services to their customers and encourage them to utilize other general and PA CareerLink® partner services in their efforts to pursue both postsecondary educational goals as well as employment opportunities in the local area. OVR has sponsored Career Fairs in local school districts for their customers transitioning from secondary schools to introduce these youth to the employment and training resources available to them after graduation from their respective schools. CareerLink® staff and partner programs participate in outreach efforts to youth with disabilities.

In addition, WIOA Youth programs, including the Summer Youth Employment Programs in all four counties provided valuable work based learning opportunities for many youth with disabilities. A significant percentage of the youth who participate and benefit from the work experience opportunities in these programs are youth with disabilities.

The PA CareerLink® Monroe County administers the following workforce activities for youth with disabilities within the Pocono Counties Workforce Development Area:

**Choose Your Future - Goodwill Industries of NEPA.** Goodwill Industries of NEPA is a partner agency co-located with the PA CareerLink® Monroe County. They have contracted with the Pocono Counties Workforce Development Area to provide two separate programs for area youth with disabilities.

#### *1. Choose Your Future – Out-of-School Program*

The "Choose Your Future" is designed to assist eligible participants with their transition into the world of work. This will be accomplished by providing each consumer with Career Pathways components that include a basic assessment to determine aptitudes and abilities as well as likes and dislikes.

This will be followed by interviewing techniques and job search skills. Each participant will then receive instruction in resume preparation that will result in each student having their own resume that will greatly assist in their quest for employment.

Staff will then assist each student in an individualized job search. We will assist in scheduling and

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if necessary providing transportation to interviews. When a student is hired, staff will provide basic job coaching services to ensure the consumer is accomplishing all job-related tasks as required. Upon completion of 30 calendar days of employment, the participant will be considered "placed". However, staff will maintain contact with each consumer and if necessary, address any issues relating to job retention.

#### *2. Choose Your Future - In-School Program*

The "Choose Your Future" is designed to assist eligible participants with their transition into the world of work. This will be accomplished by providing each consumer with Career Pathways components that include a basic assessment to determine aptitudes and abilities as well as likes and dislikes.

This will be followed by interviewing techniques and job search skills. Each participant will then receive instruction in resume preparation that will result in each student having their own resume that will greatly assist in their quest for employment.

Staff will then assist each student in an individualized job search. Assistance is provided in scheduling, and if necessary providing transportation to interviews. When a student is hired, staff will provide basic job coaching services to ensure the consumer is accomplishing all job-related tasks as required. Upon completion of 30 calendar days of employment, the participant will be considered "placed". At this point, contractual obligations are over. However, staff will maintain contact with each consumer and if necessary, address any issues relating to job retention.

**Youth Employment Services (YES).** Youth Employment Services (YES) is a partner agency within the PA CareerLink® Monroe County. They have contracted with the Pocono Counties Workforce Development Area to provide three separate programs for area youth which includes youth with disabilities.

#### *1. Summer Youth & Employability Skills Program (In-School)*

Partnering with PA CareerLink®, Youth Employment Service will: recruit youth participants, establish their eligibility for program services, administer tests/assessments, hold orientations for all participants before they begin the programs, develop Individual Service Strategies for each youth, coordinate a match between youth participants and worksites, monitor both participants and worksites for the duration of the five-week summer work program, collect timesheets weekly, deliver paychecks, complete evaluations the end of the summer work experience program to show improvements and carry youth over into the year-long career pathway and employability training program called Project Success.

Participation in the summer work experience program is contingent on youth's participation in Project Success at the end of the summer. Once the summer work experience program ends in August, youth will be enrolled in Project Success, which starts in September and meets every other Saturday through June, following the academic school year.

Seminars are held every other Saturday, so as not to interfere with school hours, are located in a central location so they are easily accessible to youth throughout Monroe County, and feature

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workshops led by guest speakers who are prominent members of the community.

Topics include: Team building, Leadership and Entrepreneurial Skills, Diversity in Our Community, Education and Career Pathways Research, Financial Literacy – Learning How to Budget, Employability Skills and Resume Writing, Non-Profit/Service Organizations Day, Healthcare Careers Day, Local and State Government Careers Day, Media and Communication Skills/Public Speaking, Mock Interview and Job Fair Preparation, and Volunteer/Job Shadowing Day with a mentor matching the youth's career goal.

Through these workshops, Project Success provides career guidance and job training skills, encouraging youth to take an active role in their future careers and attaining leadership, problem-solving and self-sufficiency skills, ultimately providing the tools needed to successfully obtain employment. Many of youth not only learn these invaluable skills, but utilize them in real world situations and inspire their peers, furthering the growth of the community. By giving them insight into career pathways, educational institutions that are close to home and can offer the programs they want to pursue after high school, and introducing them to community leaders and like-minded peers, youth show stronger determinations to finish high school and have the knowledge and skillset to navigate the post- secondary education transition

### *2. Out-of-School Youth Employment Preparation*

Youth Employment Service will recruit Out-of-School Youth, establish their eligibility for high school equivalency or classroom training services, administer tests and tutoring sessions for those who need remedial testing, establish employment and education goals on an Individual Service Strategy to develop a plan to best achieve those goals, and place youth into the high school equivalency or classroom training program, depending on their needs. YES will conduct year-round eligibility determination for youth who require PA CareerLink® services

While the educational goals are being addressed with in high school equivalency or classroom training programs, Out-of-School Youth will also be expected to attend Project Success Beyond workshops. The curriculum follows the same structure as Project Success for in-school youth, but Project Success Beyond seminars are offered during the week in the evenings.

Seminars are held every other week in the evenings, are located in a central location so they are easily accessible to youth throughout Monroe County, and feature workshops led by guest speakers who are prominent members of the Community. Topics include: Teambuilding, Leadership and Entrepreneurial Skills, Diversity in Our Community, Education and Career Pathways Research, Financial Literacy – Learning How to Budget, Employability Skills and Resume Writing, Non-Profit/Service Organizations Day, Healthcare Careers Day, Local and State Government Careers Day, Media and Communication Skills/Public Speaking, Mock Interview and Job Fair Preparation, and Volunteer/Job Shadowing Day with a mentor matching the youth's career goal.

Through these workshops, Project Success provides career guidance and job training skills, encouraging youth to take an active role in their future careers and attaining leadership, problem-solving and self-sufficiency skills, ultimately providing the tools needed to successfully obtain employment. Many youth learn these invaluable skills and utilize them in real world

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situations and inspire their peers, furthering the growth of the community. By giving them insight into career pathways, educational institutions that are close to home and can offer the programs they want to pursue after high school, and introducing them to community leaders and like-minded peers, youth show stronger determinations to finish their high school equivalency or classroom training program and have the knowledge and skill set to enter the workforce and/or pursue more postsecondary education.

#### 3. *Project Discovery*

YES is partnering with the PA Careerlink® Monroe County and Northampton Community College for Project Discovery. It offers a variety of career exploration and job readiness programs for youth ages 14 - 17, both in-school and out-of-school. Project Discovery program shows youth how to search and explore careers, choose careers, gain workplace skills, find a job, and tap into what Northeastern Pennsylvania employers are looking for in entry-level employees. Activities include:

- Identifying key career interest
- Discovering a few desirable careers Plan steps to chosen careers
- Developing critical skills
- Measuring progress
- Completing WIOA application forms
- Completing of customer profile
- Administering tests and assessing all participants
- Coordinating participant orientation
- Coordinating Project Curriculum with Northampton Community College
- Monitoring participants and their progress
- Conducting workshops for participants in a variety of topics
- Developing a career path for participants
- Conducting various job shadowing opportunities
- Building resumes and conducting mock interviews
- Following up and involving participants in Youth Job Fairs
- Enrolling participants in yearlong Project Success (leadership program)

**Referral and Co-Enrollment.** The Board promotes the concept of referral and co-enrollment of youth into partner programs, including TANF services. TANF eligible youth aged 14-18 are provided with a year-round program that includes life skills; job searching skills; and career awareness activities. Life skills focus on such things as financial literacy (i.e. budgeting, credit card usage, etc.), community service, substance abuse and wellness, diversity, sexual harassment, time management, conflict resolution, getting along with co-workers, respecting supervisors, and leadership. Job searching skills activities include how to apply for a job, put a resume together, interview for a job, and keep a job.

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Career awareness activities help prepare TANF-eligible youth for life after high school. Youth are exposed to career interest inventories, exploration of various careers, O\*Net Interest profiler, and high priority occupations in the region. Participants learn the differences in apprenticeships, vocational-technical training, community college and university/college programs of study.

Participants are also exposed to information about the local business community and labor market information. Youth are given an opportunity to participate in job shadowing activities as well as campus tours. Additionally, work experience opportunities are available to eligible participants, ages 14-18. Most work experiences occur during the summer months and worksites are chosen as close to the participants' homes as possible so that transportation is minimal.

The Board is currently exploring potential partnerships with local libraries to offer literacy programming to the youngest members of the TANF population, those aged 5-10. Additionally, the Board is also extending contracts with the four TANF providers to conduct after school programs that focus on STEM, career awareness, financial literacy and literacy.

**WIOA Youth Eligibility Requirements.** The Board and Youth Committee review and approve all outlines and tools for WIOA Youth documentation requirements, including the policy for “requires additional assistance to complete an education program or to secure and hold employment” for eligibility and enrollment for WIOA Youth program services. To enroll in WIOA Youth programming, a youth must provide documentation to determine eligibility for the following requirements:

- Age (In-School Youth are 14-21 years old and Out-of-School Youth are 16-24 years old)
- Authorization to Work
- Residency
- Selective Service Registration (if applicable)
- School Status
- Low-Income Determination (if applicable)
- Barrier Status (School drop-out; pregnant/parenting; youth with a disability; individual in foster care/aged out; homeless or runaway; offender; basic skills deficient; English language learner; requires additional assistance)

The Board is currently considering the adoption of the following criteria as its definition for “an eligible youth who requires additional assistance to complete an educational program, or to secure and hold employment”:

In-School Youth who meets all other WIOA Youth Program eligibility guidelines who

- a. lacks any prior work history, and
- b. would benefit from participation in WIOA Work Experience Program services, as determined by the WIOA Youth Program staff.

Out-of-School Youth who meets all other WIOA Youth Program eligibility guidelines who

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- a. lacks any prior work history, or who
- b. lacks any postsecondary high priority occupation credential and
- c. would benefit from either participation in WIOA work experience, OJT, or ITA services, as determined by the WIOA Youth Program staff.

The Board requires that the criteria for inclusion under this category to be verified by the Case Manager and clearly documented in the individual's case file to demonstrate that it is reasonable, quantifiable, and evidence-based. Examples of such documentation include copies of school records, assessment results, court records, and attestation regarding prior work history, as applicable.

#### **4.9. How will the local board coordinate workforce investment activities carried out in the local area with statewide rapid response?**

Rapid Response provides services to the community, the employer, and the worker. It is a proactive and coordinated effort that includes access to Pennsylvania's economic development assistance resources, such as helping businesses that are at risk of closing to keep their doors open, as well as helping employers reduce the size of, or prevent a layoff.

In addition to these proactive services, Rapid Response activities are triggered when the L&I learns of a planned closure or layoff through a notice as required by the Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) Act, through the media, or by contacts in the local area. Rapid Response services may also be offered in the event of a mass job dislocation as a result of a disaster.

The Board, in collaboration with the Commonwealth's Rapid Response Coordinator, has established a Rapid Response Team that is comprised of key workforce partners including representatives from PA CareerLink® center staff, L&I, organized labor, and others. Fact Findings and Rapid Response Informational Meetings, which includes presentations and organized activities, are led by Bureau of Workforce Development & Operations Rapid Response staff throughout all phases of the layoff/closure business cycle.

The partners work together to ensure the system implements a strategic and comprehensive approach to address area dislocations. Working together allows for the coordination of services and information-sharing which focus the use of public resources aimed at supporting workers to generate greater outcomes/economies of scale and establish a system that is relevant and responsive. Specifically, the local, regional, and state representatives on the team share the responsibilities for providing the information and services to affected workers.

#### **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 services.**

The WDB works with its secondary and postsecondary educational partners to develop strategies to meet the skill needs of the region's employers and jobseekers. These educational partners are represented on the Board, where they provide insight and are made aware of the educational

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needs and skill gaps experienced by employers in finding qualified workers.

The Board supports Business/Education Partnership activities throughout the local area to foster understanding between educators and employers regarding the employment and career pathways available to students after graduation. The PA CareerLink® center and affiliate sites participate in Career Exploration Programs with local school districts to introduce students to the job search and career guidance services and resources available to them.

PA CareerLink® staff participate on Advisory Boards to local Career and Technical Schools and have close working relationships with the secondary and postsecondary schools in the region. This interaction with educational partners includes discussion of emerging occupational training needs, as well as feedback to educational partners regarding the barriers faced by adult jobseekers in pursuit of postsecondary educational goals. The Board is a strong supporter of the area Community Colleges in applying for funding to expand the training opportunities available to its jobseeker customers. Ongoing discussions have led to new approaches to training, such as the programs offered by area community colleges through the TAACT (Path) Grant. These programs offer more flexible scheduling, stackable skills, and other features which make them more accessible to adult and dislocated jobseeker customers trying to acquire or expand their occupational skills in high demand occupations.

The following is a list of the educational partners and the of the specialized resources available.

The Pocono Counties workforce system is primarily served by the following postsecondary education institutions: LCCC, Northampton Community College and East Stroudsburg University. Although the main campuses of Lehigh and Northampton are located outside of the local area, they have a long history of operating satellite facilities in Carbon and Monroe Counties, increasing accessibility to residents of Carbon, Monroe, Pike, and Wayne Counties.

Additionally, Northampton Community College recently completed the construction of a much larger, state-of-the-art facility in Monroe County to further expand their services in the region. It operates a Center for Business and Industry and LCCC hosts a Center for Leadership and Workforce Development that provides services designed to meet the specific needs of business and industry in the area.

Most of the Secondary School Districts in Carbon County are sponsors of the LCCC, reducing the costs of postsecondary education for residents of these school districts. In addition, the Carbon Career and Technical Institute has collaborated with LCCC to offer a wider variety of Adult and Continuing Education course offerings at their recently updated facility in Carbon County.

East Stroudsburg University partners with the WDB on numerous Economic Development projects. For example, it has a Research and Economic Development Department that incorporates the following initiatives to support the Economic Development efforts of the region: Business Accelerator Program, Entrepreneurial Leadership Center, Workforce Development Department, and the Pocono Mountain Keystone Innovation Zone.

Lackawanna College has a satellite campus in Wayne County that allows residents of the local area to access their extensive list of training programs. The Wayne Pike Workforce Alliance in Hawley is the Community Education Council (CEC) that serves as an intermediary and broker of

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### Pocono Counties Workforce Development Area

training programs based on identified need and demand for Wayne and Pike Counties. The CEC provides educational opportunities that build and support life-long learning in the area.

Carbon and Monroe Counties also have a wide variety of Adult and Continuing Education opportunities for area residents at the Carbon Career and Technical Institute and the Monroe Career and Technical Institute. Each is centrally located in its respective county. The school districts in Wayne and Pike Counties along with the Wayne Pike Workforce Alliance are currently working to expand Career and Technical Education programs despite not having a Career Technology Center

High school equivalency and literacy services are available in the local area through a number of training providers, including the LCCC, the Carbon Career and Technical Institute, Northampton Community College, the Monroe Career and Technical Institute, and the Wayne Pike Adult Literacy Program. The PA CareerLink® centers and affiliate sites refer customers in need of literacy or high school equivalency services to these providers, as well as assist eligible customers with the costs of participating in these programs.

As stated in the **response to 3.2** above, ESL providers in the local area include the LCCC, Northampton Community College, and the Wayne/Pike Alliance. Individuals in need of ESL services may also utilize the Greater Hazleton Metro Ministries and Luzerne County Community College programs located in Luzerne County.

#### **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.**

**Coordination of Roles and Responsibilities.** The WDB's approach to workforce development efforts is centered on quality customer service to jobseekers and employers, the leveraging of various resources and funding streams to eliminate duplication of services, collaboration with other partner agencies, and support for a service delivery structure which maximizes access to all customers within the Pocono Counties while allowing for flexibility in each county to design service strategies around the needs and resources available in their respective labor markets. The WDB has developed close working relationships with the other Boards in the region, supporting regional approaches to the workforce needs of Northeastern Pennsylvania. Regional Rapid Response services, and collaboration in a wide variety of Industry Partnership programs are testament to this collaborative approach.

The WIOA staff and Wagner-Peyser staff work closely together to provide the basic career services needed by most customers and make the most efficient use of the staffing resources available in the local area. As a result, the WDB maintains a high level of funding devoted to training services in the local area. The effectiveness of this approach is also reflected in the long and consistent record of meeting the performance goals set by the U.S. and Pennsylvania Department of Labor.

The service delivery structure allows for flexibility in service strategies, access to a wide range of services, and the ability to share and effectively utilize the resources available in the local area. Even as career guidance information and employer recruiting strategies have moved into

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Internet based platforms, the WDB recognizes that a significant segment of both its jobseeker and employer customers may be better served by maintaining direct access to staff.

The Board's ability to efficiently manage available funding resources is reflected by the fact that it has continued to maintain two Comprehensive PA CareerLink® centers and two satellite facilities while other areas have been forced to close sites and consolidate services in fewer locations.

**Improving Program Partner Integration.** The Board recognizes the importance of the partner coordination and cooperation. It will charge the One-Stop Operator Consortium to provide this function. It will be responsible for assessing current gaps in the service delivery system, strengthening current partnerships, and facilitating seamless referrals between partners.

**Referral Mechanism.** Following assessment and determination of service needs, referrals are made through both formal and informal processes, such as electronic referral systems, in-person introductions, or emails to establish appointment times. Staff members document these referrals through case notes in CWDS.

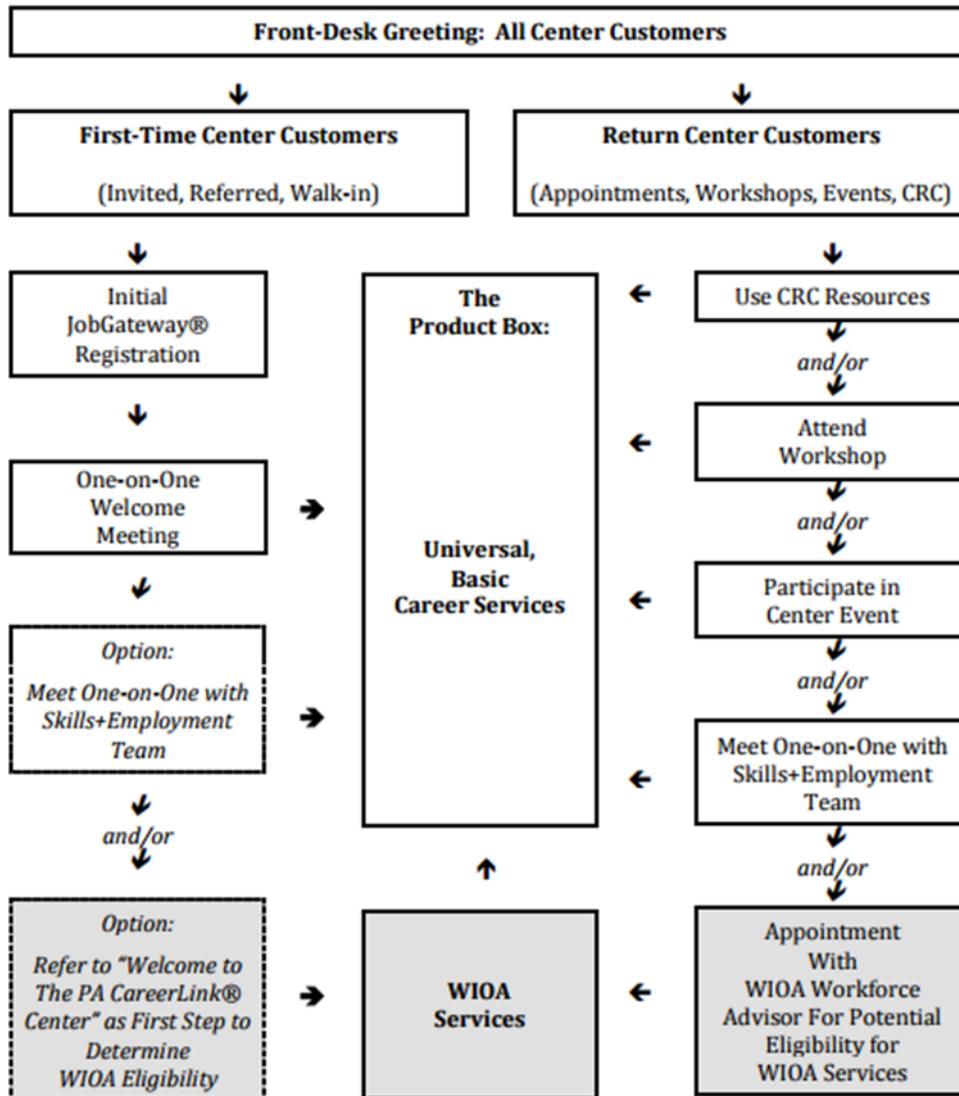
**Orientation and Customer Flow.** An individual orientation process is used. Therefore, customers do not have to wait to participate in a group orientation before using services. This same orientation information and related documents are also readily available on the website at [www.carboncareerlink.org](http://www.carboncareerlink.org) to further promote ease-of-access.

The registration form is a uniform document that captures all data needed for CWDS. Staff members also use a customized IEP to assist the jobseeker in goal setting. Copies are shared with partner programs, with the individual's permission.

An overview of jobseeker customer flow is depicted in the chart that follows:

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**Staff Development.** Partner staff have, and continue to receive information on current services, partner program information, and new initiatives through e-mail, and regular staff meetings. These meetings provide all partner staff with an awareness of services available to customers and how to direct anyone in need of these services to the appropriate staff.

Partner staff have also received training on Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) requirements, program eligibility, emergency procedures, working with special populations, and community resources available for customers.

The One-Stop Operator Consortium will be tasked with establishing a formal professional development process for the system on an ongoing basis.

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

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The WDB will review the RFP for title II programming to ensure that educational opportunities will align with the targeted employment needs of the region. Specifically, 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 reviewing and evaluating the applications, the local boards will be responsible for submitting recommendations to PDE and will also be responsible to provide technical assistance later in the process.

The PA CareerLink® center and affiliate sites have close working relationships with the title II Adult Education and Literacy providers within the local area. Cross-referrals are made for customers in need of training or job search assistance. Eligible customers receive ITA services and supportive services to assist with high school equivalency testing fees, etc. WIOA funds may also be utilized to increase the capacity of the Adult Basic Education programs to provide services to more customers when needed.

#### **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?**

**Outreach and Intake.** Outreach, intake, and eligibility, including the identification of an individual's potential barrier(s) to employment are discussed in the **response to 3.3 above**.

Overall, the PA CareerLink® centers and affiliates offer a wide variety of services to assist customers with job preparation and job search. The 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.

The menu of services available to jobseekers, including individuals with barriers to employment is as follows:

#### **Basic Career Services include:**

- Information about services available through the PA CareerLink® centers and affiliate sites
- 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

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- Supportive service
- Unemployment
- Financial aid
- Relocation assistance

#### **Individualized Career Services include:**

- Eligibility determination
- Comprehensive assessment
- 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, including 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

## PY 2017-2019 WIOA Multi-Year Local Area Plan

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via an ITA, training contract, or a combination of both. Training providers are found through the ETPL which establishes eligibility and provides information about training institutions and their programs.

**Services to Individuals with Disabilities.** OVR provides eligible WIOA title IV customers with individualized diagnostic, vocational counseling and guidance, vocational evaluation, restoration, training, and job placement services. Eligible and potentially eligible 14 to 21-year old in-school youth with disabilities receive pre-employment transition services including work-based learning experiences, job shadowing and vocational counseling and guidance. Group training services for youth include workplace readiness, independent living skills, and self-advocacy skills. More information regarding the services provided to individuals with disabilities, are described in the **responses to 3.2, 4.3, and 4.4 above.**

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

The BST has responsibility to support business engagement activities including the following functions:

- Support staff-assisted job orders
- Screen and refer qualified job candidates to job openings
- Outreach to new employers
- Promote services such as OJT, incumbent worker training, and customized training
- Assist with Rapid Response when companies lay off workers
- Conduct layoff aversion activities

The BST conducts its employer engagement activities with personnel from other programs such as veterans, L&I Rapid Response, OVR, Older Worker program (title V) to ensure non-duplication of efforts. To coordinate these activities, the Board procured its One-Stop Operator. It will provide guidance on the employment outreach efforts of the BST and its partners.

With respect to title II services, the BST will take the lead on engaging employer inquiries regarding adult basic education and literacy, but will coordinate with literacy and education partners through the One-Stop Operator.

Employer customers will receive title III services from Wagner-Peyser partners of the system. These services include:

- Use of PA CareerLink® centers to host employer events
- Job orders placed in JobGateway®
- Priority for veterans for job orders in the JobGateway® system

Employers are also invited to UC Seminars that are made available at the PA CareerLink®. UC representatives make presentations on a variety of topics, including: UC Updates; Separation Issues; UC Appeals/Hearings: Suitable Work; and, Relief from Charges.

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Employer customers may also receive title IV services from OVR BST staff. These services include: reasonable accommodation consultation, OJT, referral on tax credits or deductions, consultation on the ADA accessibility standards and retention of current employees following an accident, injury, or disability.

#### **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?**

It is the WDB's experience that the provision of supportive services is not the most effective use of its funds. Therefore, it limits them to address either minimal barriers to employment or training goals. This approach allows the Board serve more customers and cover more of their training costs.

The PA CareerLink® centers and affiliate sites are central repositories that provide information to individuals in need of supportive services. Staff are knowledgeable and have extensive experience and relationships with local, county and regional entities that provide support services to individuals in need of said services. Example of community and regional partners include, child care, child support, dependent care, housing, Medicaid, CHIP, SNAP, TANF, counselling services, and veterans organizations. Referrals are directed to Interagency Councils, Family Collaborative Board, Drug & Alcohol Services, Social Security, county assistance offices, literacy groups, homeless programs, community churches, libraries, food pantries, Domestic Relations, Children and Youth, Area Agency on Aging, Mental Health providers, abuse and rape crisis centers, legal services, credit counseling services and any and all agencies not listed.

The transportation barriers faced by customers in the area is more readily addressed by ensuring that all customers within the four counties have access to services through either a comprehensive PA CareerLink® center or an affiliate site.

The Pocono Counties WDA is rural in nature, as are many areas of the state, covering an area of 2,322 square miles. Due to its rural nature, and lack of significant population centers, only Monroe County has sufficient population to support a mass transportation system. And even within Monroe County, it primarily serves a relatively small but dense population and business corridor along Route 611 from the county seat in Stroudsburg to Mount Pocono, a distance of approximately 20 miles.

For the most part, the public transportation services that are available in the local area are publicly subsidized buses and van services designed to assist elderly and disabled residents in getting to medical appointments or the retail shopping centers in their respective areas. Private taxi services are also available, but are very expensive.

The balance of Monroe County and the residents of Carbon, Pike, and Wayne Counties rely primarily on private car ownership, or carpooling to get to and from work. The Pocono Counties jobseekers have a long history of commuting to work, both within the boundaries of the four counties, as well as commuting to employment opportunities in the larger labor markets of the surrounding Luzerne, Lackawanna, Lehigh, and Northampton Counties. Over 40% of area residents commute to work outside of the local area. A significant number of residents also commute to labor markets in New York and New Jersey. The large numbers of residents

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commuting to New York City and other out of state areas has resulted in public bus routes, offered by Trans-Bridge Lines, designed around the needs of these commuters.

Despite the limited public transportation options available in the Pocono Counties, the WDB and its PA CareerLink® centers and affiliate sites are involved in ongoing regional and local initiatives to find solutions to transportation issues. The WDB is an active partner in the Northeastern Pennsylvania Alliance (NEPA), designated by the Commonwealth of PA as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for Carbon, Monroe, Pike, and Schuylkill Counties, which serve to assist and advise NEPA with assessing the transportation needs of these counties.

In addition, the PA CareerLink® centers and affiliate sites are working to promote the efforts of the Commuter Services of PA organization to address the transportation barriers faced by many of the region's jobseekers. This organization assists employers and jobseekers in establishing carpooling and other options to assist them with their transportation needs.

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Pocono Counties Workforce Development Area

### 5. COMPLIANCE

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

With respect to the provision of services to individuals with disabilities, the Board will utilize 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. Because OVR serves as a full partner in the PA CareerLink® system and holds a seat on the Board, the local area is well-positioned to serve individuals with disabilities.

#### 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?

The WDB uses the following process to ensure the collection of debts from its sub-recipients.

1. The WDB will comply with the Policies and Procedures Manual regarding the formulation of its Sub-recipient Audit Plan. In addition, any irregularities disclosed during the monitoring review of a Sub-recipient may result in an immediate audit of the Sub-recipient regardless of the dollar amount involved. This action will be initiated by the Board.
2. Upon issuance of the initial report, a copy will be submitted to the Sub-recipient, by certified mail, for review and corrective action. The Sub-recipient will have a period of thirty (30) days, from the date of mailing, to provide additional documentation supporting any questionable or unallowed costs. Following receipt of any additional documentation, the WDB Chairperson will issue an Initial Determination of all Findings. The Sub-recipient will then have the opportunity to request an informal audit resolution meeting to discuss any findings not yet resolved. Should a request be received, an informal meeting will be granted. If a request is not received within 30 days, a final determination will be issued. This final determination will list costs that remain disallowed and will explain the Sub-recipient's right to request a hearing before an independent hearing officer within 10 days. The independent hearing officer will be required to hold a hearing within thirty days. Both the WDB and/or Sub-recipient have the right to appeal this formal decision to the L&I. This appeal; however, will only be accepted if all local administrative remedies have been exhausted, i.e., informal meeting followed by a formal hearing. This determination will also list as a debt any amounts determined to be unallowable. Upon approval by the L&I of this determination, the audit will be considered resolved.
3. Upon receipt of the Hearing Officer's Decision, the Sub-recipient and/or WDB shall have a right to formally appeal to the L&I through both informal followed by formal hearings, and only after all local remedies have been exhausted. The Appeal must be submitted in writing with a copy to the WDB Chairperson within 10 days of the receipt of the Final Determination.

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4. Should the Sub-recipient choose not to appeal the Final Determination, payment of the established debt will be due within 30 days of receipt of the determination. Should the amount due not be returned within the required time, a second request will be sent with a 20 day response limitation. Should the second request not result in the payment of the debt, a third request will be sent allowing a 10 day response limitation. Interest will be charged, after consulting with the L&I, on the outstanding debt after the initial thirty (30) day period. Should no response be received following the third request, the matter will be referred to legal counsel for appropriate action.

### **5.3. What action(s) is the local board taking (or will take) towards becoming or remaining a high-performing board?**

The Board is currently functioning as a high-performing Board in that it consistently achieves the following:

- Attains the Governor's goals as described in the PA Combined Plan;
- Meets the local area negotiated federal performance goals;
- Sustains fiscal integrity;
- Receives successful monitoring reports and other evaluations by federal and Commonwealth oversight staff;
- Researches new and/or improved methods to assist individuals with barriers to employment;
- Achieves training expenditure targets; and
- Develops sector initiatives

In the future, it will implement the actions necessary to remain a high-performing Board in accordance with any guidance that may be issued by the Commonwealth. In the meantime, it is researching the following types of activities for action:

- Expanding its collaboration with the other local workforce boards that are contiguous to it, including those in the Northeast Region, to implement broader-based regional workforce initiatives; and
- Increasing the use of technology to further improve access for customers, including returning citizens, those with disabilities, and others with barriers to employment.

### **5.4. 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?**

The Board conducted strategy sessions that included Board members, local employers, jobseekers, community partners, educational and training organizations, and others to gather their direct input regarding local and regional workforce programs and possible initiatives for the future. Their contributions are included this document and are an integral part of the strategies that are outlined within. Furthermore, as indicated in the **response to 5.5 below**, the Board also

## **PY 2017-2019 WIOA Multi-Year Local Area Plan**

Pocono Counties Workforce Development Area

solicited additional feedback and input by publishing the document for a 30-day public comment period.

### **5.5. 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 Pocono Counties Local WIOA Plan as well as the Northeast Regional WIOA Plan on its website for the 30-day period beginning July 24, 2017 and ending August 22, 2017. Public notice was also published in the primary newspapers for the region.

Additionally, notification of the availability of both the Local and Regional WIOA Plans for public comment was directly distributed via email to representatives of local businesses, labor organizations, educational institutions, and news media.

As shown in **Attachment 4**, comments were received from the Chief Clerk of Wayne County regarding the incorporation of agricultural workforce strategies into the Local Plan. The Board updated **Section 2.1** to include this information.

## PY 2017-2019 WIOA Multi-Year Local Area Plan

### Pocono Counties Workforce Development Area

#### 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 plans.

- √ Agreement between all counties and other local governments, if applicable, establishing the consortium of local/chief elected officials.
- √ Agreement between the chief elected official(s) and the fiscal agent, if a fiscal agent is designated.
- √ Agreement between the local elected official(s) and the local workforce development board.
- √ 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.
- √ 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.
- √ Local procurement policy – Must describe formal procurement procedures.
- √ 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 training provider list and eligibility criteria and process; “additional assistance” definition; transitional jobs thresholds; documentation for training expenditure targets; incumbent worker training.
- √ Risk management policy and process including records retention and public access; public records requests; monitoring, grievance; incident; and disaster recovery plan.
- √ 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.
- √ Professional services contract(s) for administrative services such as staffing and payroll, if applicable.

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### **REQUIRED ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment 1. Performance Measures Table

Attachment 2. Local Workforce Development Area Workforce System Organizational Chart

Attachment 3. PA CareerLink® Workforce Service Delivery System Program Partner/Provider List

Attachment 4. Public Comments

**Attachment 1. Performance Measures Table**

Pocono Counties Workforce Development Board

Effective Date: July 1, 2017

**WIOA Title I Programs**

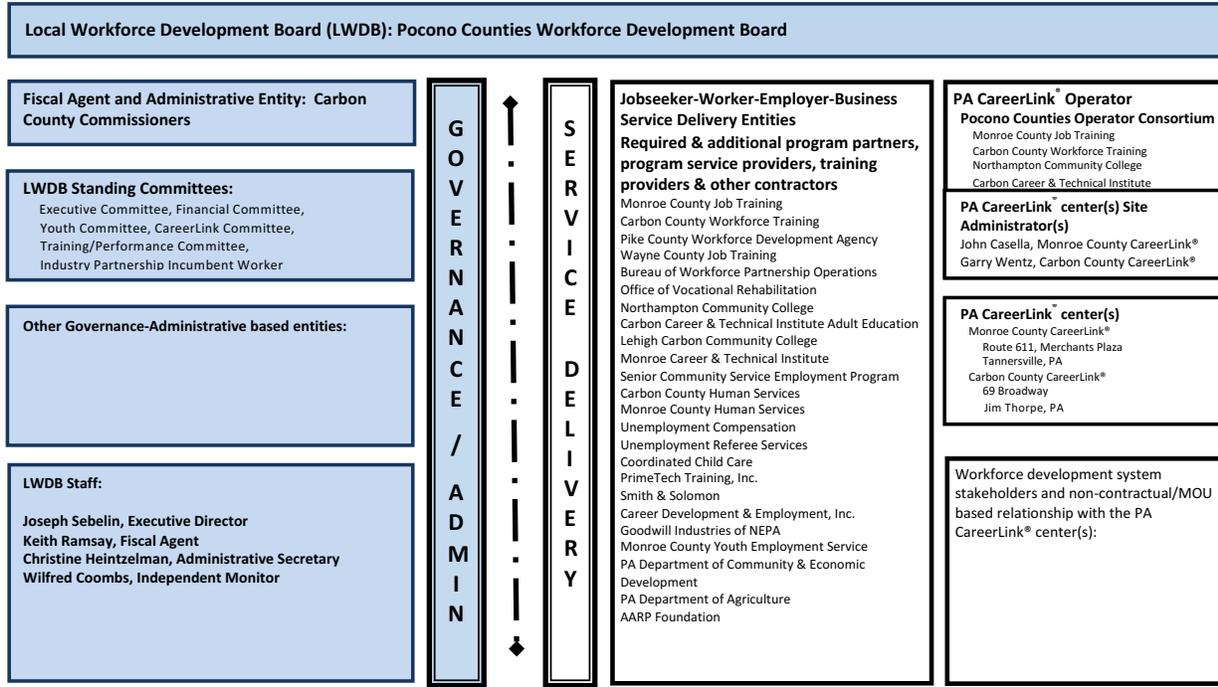
<b>WIOA Performance Measures</b>	<b>Local Area PY17 Negotiated Performance Goals</b>	<b>Local Area PY16 Attained Performance Measures</b>
<b>Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)</b>	<b>Negotiated Goals</b>	<b>Attained Performance</b>
Adult	61.0%	Not Yet Available
Dislocated Worker	69.0%	Not Yet Available
Youth	59.0%	Not Yet Available
<b>Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)</b>	<b>Attained Performance</b>	<b>Attained Performance</b>
Adult	60.0%	Not Yet Available
Dislocated Worker	65.0%	Not Yet Available
Youth	58.0%	Not Yet Available
<b>Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)</b>	<b>Attained Performance</b>	
Adult	\$5,300	Not Yet Available
Dislocated Worker	\$6,500	Not Yet Available
Youth	\$2,300	Not Yet Available
<b>Credential Attainment Rate</b>	<b>Attained Performance</b>	<b>Attained Performance</b>
Adult	69.0%	Not Yet Available
Dislocated Worker	72.0%	Not Yet Available
Youth	61.0%	Not Yet Available
<b>Measurable Skill Gains</b>	<b>Attained Performance</b>	<b>Attained Performance</b>
Adult	Baseline	Not Yet Available
Dislocated Worker	Baseline	Not Yet Available
Youth	Baseline	Not Yet Available
<b>Effectiveness in Serving Employers</b>	<b>Attained Performance</b>	<b>Attained Performance</b>
Adult	Baseline	Not Yet Available
Dislocated Worker	Baseline	Not Yet Available
Youth	Baseline	Not Yet Available

October 27, 2017

## Attachment 2. Local Workforce Development Area Workforce System Organizational Chart

Local Workforce Development Area Name: Pocono Counties Workforce Development Area

Effective Date: July 1, 2017



October 27, 2017

**Attachment 3. PA CareerLink® Workforce Service Delivery System Program Partner/Provider List**

Local Workforce Development Area Name: Pocono Counties Workforce Development Area

Effective Date: July 1, 2017

<b>Program Name</b>	<b>Program Authorization</b>	<b>Local Area Partner/Provider</b>
<b>POC address</b>	<b>POC telephone</b>	<b>POC website/email</b>
Adult Employment and Training Activities	WIOA, Title 1B, Adult, Youth, DW	Monroe County Job Training
2937 Route 611, Tannersville, PA 18372	(570) 620-2850	<a href="http://www.monroecountycareerlink.org">www.monroecountycareerlink.org</a> jacmcl@ptd.net
Adult Employment and Training Activities	WIOA, Title 1B, Adult Youth, DW	Carbon County Workforce Training
69 Broadway, Jim Thorpe, PA 18229	(570) 325-2701	<a href="http://www.carboncareerlink.org">www.carboncareerlink.org</a> gawentz@ptd.net
UC Referee	UCBR-UC Board of Review	Unemployment Compensation Referee Services
Harrisburg, PA		rbrandes@pa.gov
UC	UC	Unemployment Compensation
Harrisburg, PA	(717) 783-4127	<a href="mailto:bmourer@pa.gov">bmourer@pa.gov</a>
	EDU – Title II of WIOA – Adult & Literacy	Northampton Community College
2411 Route 715, Tannersville, PA 18372	(570) 620-9221	mconnell@northampton.edu
	SCSEP – Senior Community Services Employment Program	Senior Community Service Program
	(570) 972-0080	pvergenetti@aarp.org
	Part A of Title IV of the Social Security Act	Carbon County Human Services
	(570) 275-7030	kmordan@pa.gov
Carl-Perkins, Adult Education and Literacy Services Provider	C & T – Career and Technical Education of Secondary and Post-Secondary of Carl D. Perkins Career & Technical Education Act	Carbon Career & Technical Institute
150 West 13 <sup>th</sup> St., Jim Thorpe, PA 18229	(570) 325-3682 ext. 123	hmullen@carboncti.org
	WP – Title III of WIOA – Wagner Peyser TAA Trade JVSG-Veterans Job Counseling, Training and Placement programs under Chapter 41 of Title 38 Rapid Response	Bureau of Workforce Partners Operations

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October 27, 2017

**Attachment 3. PA CareerLink® Workforce Service Delivery System Program Partner/Provider List**

Local Workforce Development Area Name: Pocono Counties Workforce Development Area

Effective Date: July 1, 2017

75 N. Laurel St., Hazleton, PA 18201	(570) 459-3895	estalfa@pa.gov
<b>Program Name</b>	<b>Program Authorization</b>	<b>Local Area Partner/Provider</b>
<b>POC address</b>	<b>POC telephone</b>	<b>POC website/email</b>
OVR	Title IV of WIOA and Title I of Rehabilitation Act – Vocational Rehabilitation	Office of Vocational Rehabilitation
45 North St., Allentown, PA 18102	(610) 821-6441	sustorm@pa.gov
		Coordinated Child Care
69 Broadway, Jim Thorpe, PA 18229	(570) 325-2701 ext. 116	cccis1@ptd.net
CSBG Employment and Training	CSBG-Employment and Training under Community Services Block Grant	PA Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED)
267 South Second St., Lehighon, PA 18235	(610) 377-6400	ccachs@verizon.net
	Title II WIOA Adult Education and Literacy	Lehigh Carbon Community College
1100 Center St., Jim Thorpe, PA 18229	(570) 325-9444	<a href="mailto:kgelinas@lccc.edu">kgelinas@lccc.edu</a>
		PA Department of Agriculture
Harrisburg, PA	(717) 772-4365	<a href="mailto:kelodonnell@pa.gov">kelodonnell@pa.gov</a>
		Berks and Beyond
	(570) 620-2850	<a href="mailto:carol.seals@berksandbeyond.com">carol.seals@berksandbeyond.com</a>
		Prime Tech Training, Inc.
69 Broadway, Jim Thorpe, PA 18229	(610) 377-9790	gcich@PrimeTechTraining.com
		Smith & Solomon
98 Grove Street, Dupont, PA 18641	(570) 602-8780	<a href="mailto:rhamilton@smithsolomon.com">rhamilton@smithsolomon.com</a>
		CDE Career Institute (CDE)
2942 Route 611, Tannersville, PA 18372	(570) 409-9023	tkrasinski@cde.edu
925 Prospect Ave., Scranton, PA 18504	(570) 343-6765	Goodwill Industries of NEPA goodwill925@aol.com
		Monroe County Youth Employment Service
2937 Route 611, Tannersville, PA 18372	(570) 620-2410	payes@ptd.net

October 27, 2017



## Attachment 4. Public Comments

Local Workforce Development Area Name: Pocono Counties Workforce Development Area  
Effective Date: July 1, 2017

**From:** Vicky Botjer [<mailto:VBotjer@waynecountypa.gov>]  
**Sent:** Monday, July 24, 2017 2:03 PM  
**To:** [jsebelin@ptd.net](mailto:jsebelin@ptd.net)  
**Cc:** Mary Beth Wood; Lucyann Vierling  
**Subject:** comments

Joe,

I did review the plan, some of the items I noted was that transportation is a huge issue in the rural counties as a barrier to employment.

Also, are you including all of the Ag work we are doing in Wayne? We have identified this as a needed project/occupation/career path.

Thanks Vicky botjer  
Wayne County  
Chief Clerk

October 27, 2017