



Northern Tier

(Region 5)

WIOA PY 2021-2024

Regional Plan

PY 2021-24 WIOA Multi-Year Regional Plan



northern tier
regional planning &
development
commission

Region Workforce Development Area name:
Northern Tier Region

Effective Date: July 1, 2021

1.1. *Identification of the region.*

- Name: Northern Tier Region
- Workforce Development Area: Northern Tier Workforce Development Area comprising the counties of Bradford, Sullivan, Susquehanna, Tioga and Wyoming
- Key Region Committee Members: Northern Tier Workforce Development Board Members and Workforce Board staff, Northern Tier Regional Planning & Development Commission Executive Committee
- Key Regional Committee meetings:

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

July 22, 2020 – Bradford County Outreach meeting
July 24, 2020 – Sullivan County Outreach meeting
July 30, 2020 – Susquehanna County Outreach meeting
August 7, 2020 – Tioga County Outreach meeting
August 8, 2020 – Wyoming County Outreach meeting
October 7, 2020 – Youth Committee meeting
October 7, 2020 – Workforce Board meeting
October 13, 2020 – PA CareerLink® Partner meeting
December 18, 2020 – Northern Tier PREP meeting
January 12, 2021 – PA CareerLink® Partner meeting
January 26, 2021 – Title I subcontractor meeting
February 3, 2021–Youth Committee meeting
February 3, 2021 – Workforce Board meeting
February 19, 2021 – NTRPDC Executive Committee

Northern Tier Region of Pennsylvania



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

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

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

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

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

- Strengthen the system's impact on the secondary school system which will increase awareness of job opportunities, necessary skills, PA CareerLink®, and help create a youth talent pipeline
- Continue to engage industry sectors to address recruitment, retention and training needs
- Strengthen relationships with economic development and education partners to offer

PY 2021-24 WIOA Multi-Year Regional Plan

- seamless, integrated network of support to regional businesses
- Enhance services to priority populations, focusing on those with multiple barriers
- Enhance customer-focused services to priority populations through our PA CareerLink® centers
- Work with partners to increase and promote training opportunities

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

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

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

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

The NTWDB/NTRPDC has introduced the Next Generation Industry Partnership model to workforce partners and employers. Manufacturing focus groups were held last year in two of our five counties convening industry leaders to discuss common workforce and economic priorities. The NTWDB was recently awarded a Next Generation Industry Partnership Convening grant for Diversified Manufacturing which will assist in continuing the work that has already been started with our local manufacturers.

Apprenticeship has been around for a millennium because it is an effective and equitable training model. The "earn while you learn" strategy is appealing to employees who need sustainable wages while learning new skills. It is beneficial to employers because they receive highly trained employees who learn skills specific to the employer's needs because they are trained on the job, within their employer's walls.

PY 2021-24 WIOA Multi-Year Regional Plan

Unfortunately, there are less than five employers in the Northern Tier Region that have registered apprenticeship programs. The NTWDB/NTRPDC seeks to build upon existing registered apprenticeship programs and help local employers implement the model.

The NTWDB has pledged time and resources to the growth of apprenticeship in the region. A NTWDB/NTRPDC staff member is currently participating in the Keystone Development Partnership's Navigator registered apprenticeship program. The intention is to hone skills and develop expertise that will allow local board staff to assist any company in the Northern Tier in learning about or developing apprenticeship programs in various occupations. Open information sessions will be advertised and conducted quarterly for employers interested in learning about the model.

The Navigator's job is to act as an ambassador to apprenticeship. NTRPDC intends to provide outreach, information, assistance and even group sponsorship (when applicable) to employers desiring to start apprenticeship programs. The local board has met with and given foundational apprenticeship information to the region's Business Services Team (BST). The BST meets with new and existing employers regularly and has informational materials to give employers about apprenticeship. Referrals are made to the Navigator/local board staff for those employers that are interested in more information and individual meetings are scheduled. NTRPDC Economic Development staff also have apprenticeship information to disburse to employers and partners during meetings and initiate referrals the same as the BST. All companies participating in job fairs within the region are also given apprenticeship materials.

NTRPDC was approved as a Registered Apprenticeship sponsor in August 2018. The manufacturing industry was targeted because of a shortage of machinists. The healthcare industry has also been identified because of in-demand occupations such as LPN, CNA and EMT. Meetings with healthcare employers were held to discuss healthcare trends. Progress was curbed due to the pandemic. NTRPDC seeks to build better infrastructure for registered apprenticeship in targeted industry clusters such as these. Labor market information will provide input into in demand clusters and occupations going forward.

NTRPDC will also work to distribute relevant apprenticeship information and opportunities to partners with shared interests in education and training opportunities, such as CTCs, high schools, post-secondary and other educational providers. These partners can become involved in apprenticeship development as well as pre apprenticeship programs, creating talented pipelines for local employers.

Under the Engage! efforts in the Northern Tier, the economic development partnership regularly and proactively interacts with targeted companies across the five-county region. The overall goal of Engage! is to retain existing businesses and help them grow and expand by building solid relationships between key business decision makers and economic development providers. Following the nine years of successfully working together across the five counties, the PREP partners utilize the Engage! funding to take a step forward in their ability to serve the employers of the region. Referrals are made to the PA CareerLink® system and workforce partners at the county level, as well as at the board level. Cumulative and anecdotal information is shared as deemed appropriate. This open communication has been especially beneficial addressing business needs throughout the Covid-19 pandemic.

PY 2021-24 WIOA Multi-Year Regional Plan

The Northern Tier Workforce Development Board and the Northern Tier Partnership for Regional Economic Performance (PREP) coordinator both operate under the Northern Tier Regional Planning and Development Commission (NTRPDC) and continue to achieve strategic goals by participating in PREP meetings and activities. The NTWDB is a PREP partner engaging local economic development organizations by sharing information at local meetings, participating in local economic efforts and bridging the gap between PREP partners, employer visits and the PA CareerLink® system. The PREP coordinator attends NTWDB meetings and is a standing agenda item. Referrals are made to the NTWDB by economic development partners through the Executive Pulse system. Executive Pulse is the system of record for PREP and referrals are made through the system once a business visit or contact is made.

This communication allows for immediate attention to the business requesting information such as available training, posting a position, participating in a job fair, etc. The system allows for a better coordination of business outreach service, referrals, information sharing and the ability to measure results. The NTWDB has been part of local initiatives such as the Tioga County Economic summits. This close partnership allows for open and frequent communication including collaboration on projects to achieve the goals of the region.

Finally, the NTWDB, NTRPDC and PREP continue to collaborate and coordinate efforts to best serve businesses throughout the region. An example would be the effort made during the start of the pandemic to streamline services for our businesses, providing them with the most up-to-date information available, sharing funding opportunities as well as workshops and webinars designed to assist local business during a difficult period.

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

The Northern Tier Workforce Development Area is a 4,000-square-mile rural area located in northcentral Pennsylvania which includes Bradford, Sullivan, Susquehanna, Tioga and Wyoming Counties. With approximately 173,000 residents, Northern Tier has a low population density. Area residents live in small communities spread over large tracts of agricultural land and forests. The rural nature of our region presents challenges, but it also provides a good quality of life and strong sense of community. With the Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA) requiring greater services to those individuals with barriers to employment and concurrently greater services to employers and their sectors, the analysis of regional labor market data is critical to the success of the Northern Tier Workforce Development Area and the Commonwealth.

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

It is important to note the Northern Tier Region 5 has the same geographic designation as the Workforce Development Area. Northern Tier Regional Planning and Development Commission (NTRPDC) is the Local Development District (LDD), a multi-county planning organization that houses workforce, economic and

PY 2021-24 WIOA Multi-Year Regional Plan

community development for the 5 (five) counties of Bradford, Sullivan, Susquehanna and Wyoming counties.

Regional Labor Market Overview

The population in the Northern Tier Region is estimated to have declined since the 2010 census and is projected to continue to decline over the next five years, while the population in Pennsylvania is projected to grow slightly. The population changed from 179,014 to 173,121, resulting in a decline of 3.3% between 2015 and 2020.¹ Over the next five years, the population for the region is projected to continue to decline by 2.0%. During the same time period, population in the state has changed from 12,784,795 to 12,812,575, resulting in a growth of 0.2%. Over the next five years, the population is projected to grow by 0.3% in Pennsylvania. All counties within the Northern Tier Region are projected to experience a decline in population. The Northern Tier Region represents 1.4% of Pennsylvania's population.

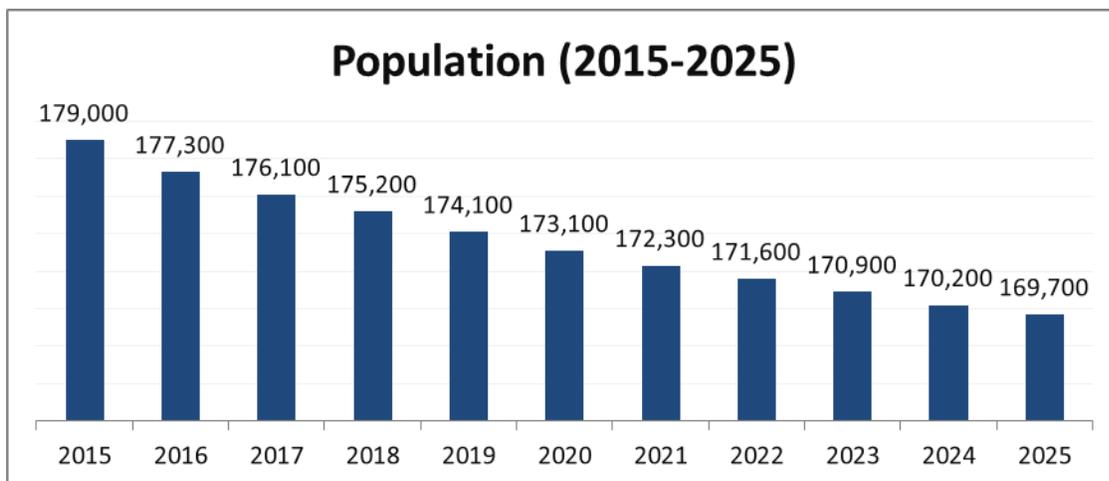


Figure 1: Population Decline
Source: EMSI (Economic Modeling Specialists, International), 2020.4

According to American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Estimates, the median age for the region is 45.8. Comparatively, the current year median age for the state is 40.8. Sullivan County has the highest median age of 53.7, while Bradford County has the youngest median age of 44.5.

In 2020, the 60 to 64 year age group makes up the highest percentage of population for the region at 8.3%. Five-year projections show an expected decrease in our region for the 29 and younger (-5.9%) and 40-59 (-9.4%) age group with an increase in 60 and over (5.8%).² Age group 55-64 represent the largest population of the current workforce at 22%. These statistics support the growing workforce challenges that arise as large numbers of seasoned workers retire leaving a shortage of skilled workers.

¹ Source EMSI (Economic Modeling Specialists, International), 2020.4

² Source: EMSI (Economic Modeling Specialists, International), 2020.4

PY 2021-24 WIOA Multi-Year Regional Plan

Of the region's current year estimated population, 97% are White, 0.9% are Black, 0.3% are American Indian or Alaska Native, 0.5% are Asian, 0.0% are Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, 1.7% are Hispanic, and 1.2% are Two or More Races.³ The population of the state of Pennsylvania overall is more diverse: 80.8% are White, 11.1% are Black, 0.2% are American Indian or Alaska Native, 3.3% are Asian, 0.0% are Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, 2.0% are Other Race and 2.4% are Two or More Races. The region's current Hispanic population is only 1.7%, while the state's current estimated Hispanic population is 7.1%. Sullivan County is the most diverse county in the region with 95.6% Caucasian, 2.4% Black, 1.9% other race. Five year projections are not expected to increase or decrease significantly in any one demographic group.

Education

In 2020 it is estimated that 57.5% of the population age 25 and over in the Northern Tier has a high school diploma or lower and 17.6% have earned a Bachelor's Degree or higher. Projections for 2025 expect the former to increase slightly while the latter will decrease slightly. Sullivan County has the highest percentage of the population who does not have a high school diploma or GED (10.4%) and Wyoming County has the highest percentage with a Bachelor's degree or greater (19.6%).⁴

Currently, it is estimated that 6.3% of the population age 25 and over in the Northern Tier Region had earned a Graduate Degree and higher, 11.3% had earned a Bachelor's Degree, 8.6% earned an Associate's Degree and 16.4% had some College. For comparison, 54.3% of Pennsylvanians have received some level of postsecondary education, 35.5% are high school graduates no post-secondary experience and 10.2% have less than a high school diploma.

The highest number of unemployment rates by educational attainment is for those that have earned less than a high school diploma or GED (11.4%) and the lowest percentage of unemployment group by educational attainment is for those that have earned a Bachelor's degree or higher (2.2%).

Income

The number of households in the region increased slightly from 2014 to 2019 by .04%, estimated at 72,079 for 2019. The highest percentage of households (32.8%) earned between \$50,000 to \$99,999. The second highest percentage of households (25.6%) earned \$25,000 to \$49,999.⁵ The median household income in 2019 is reported as \$53,617 for the region compared to the state median income at \$61,744. In 2019, 11.2% of households were reported to have an income below poverty level in the past 12 months, of those households 37.2% were reported to be in the labor force.

Employment

³ Source: EMSI (Economic Modeling Specialists, International), 2020.4

⁴ Source: EMSI (Economic Modeling Specialists, International), 2020.4

⁵ Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates; 2015-2019

PY 2021-24 WIOA Multi-Year Regional Plan

In 2019 the Northern Tier Labor force was 82,800 of which 81,000 were employed. Unemployed individuals accounted for 4,000 resulting in an annual average unemployment rate of 4.7%. In January 2020 the unemployment rate was reported as 5.1%. At the start of the pandemic, unemployment started to fluctuate and peaked to 13.9% in April. Rates started to recover in the fall and as of December 2020 the unemployment rate for the region was reported at 5.9%, not far from the rates at the start of the year. The December unemployment rate for the Northern Tier was below both PA (6.7%) and US (6.5%) for the same time period.

Of the initial unemployment claims filed in 2020, the highest were seen for those in the Construction Industry (19.9%) followed by Leisure and Hospitality (17.8%) and Manufacturing (14.8%). Comparatively, initial claims for 2019 also were highest in Construction (24.8%) followed by Manufacturing (16.1%) and Trade, Transportation and Utilities (14.3%). Leisure and Hospitality made up only 6.7% of the initial claims in 2019.⁶

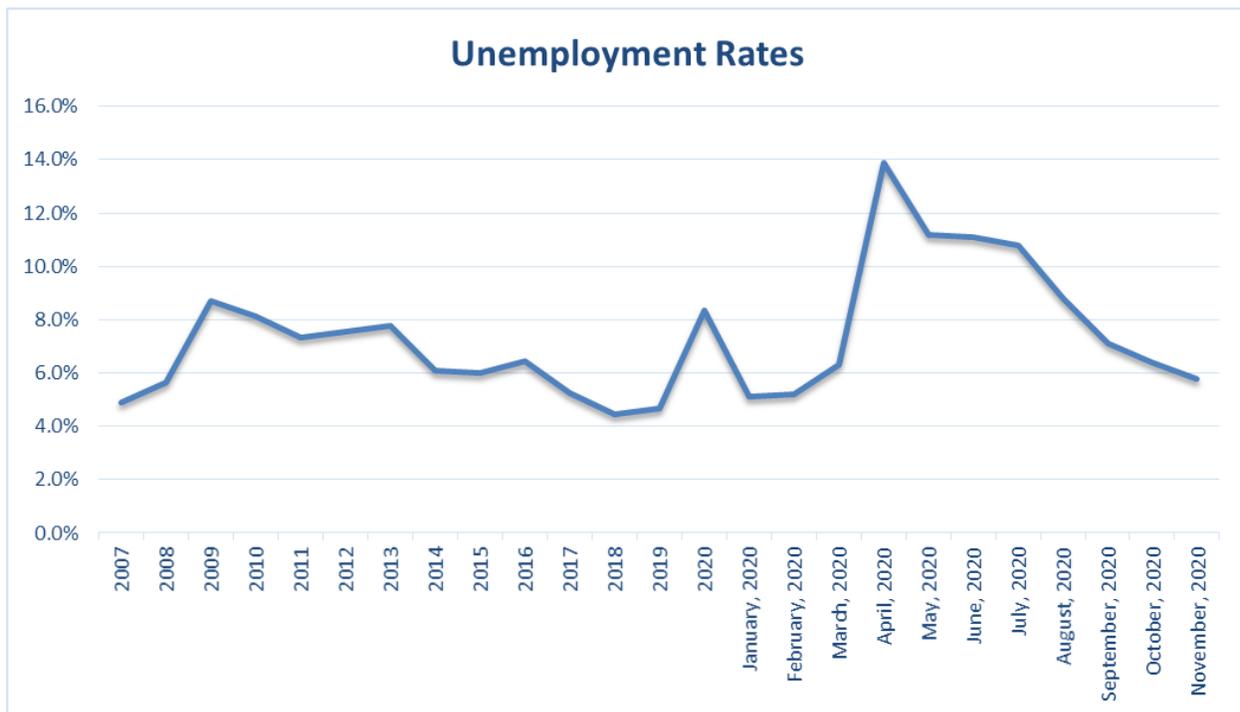


Figure 2: Unemployment Rates
Source: CIWA Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS)

Overall the general population of the Northern Tier Workforce Development Area is declining in the region while those remaining are older than the Commonwealth average or median. The per capita income is lower than the state with most families. General observation of employment indicates broad categories that largely require minimal education (i.e., less than a bachelor degree) compared to other sectors across

⁶ Source: Center for Workforce Information and Analysis

PY 2021-24 WIOA Multi-Year Regional Plan

the Commonwealth. This usually portends a population that is generally stable and wishes to maintain their residence and work in their current community with minimal commuting.

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

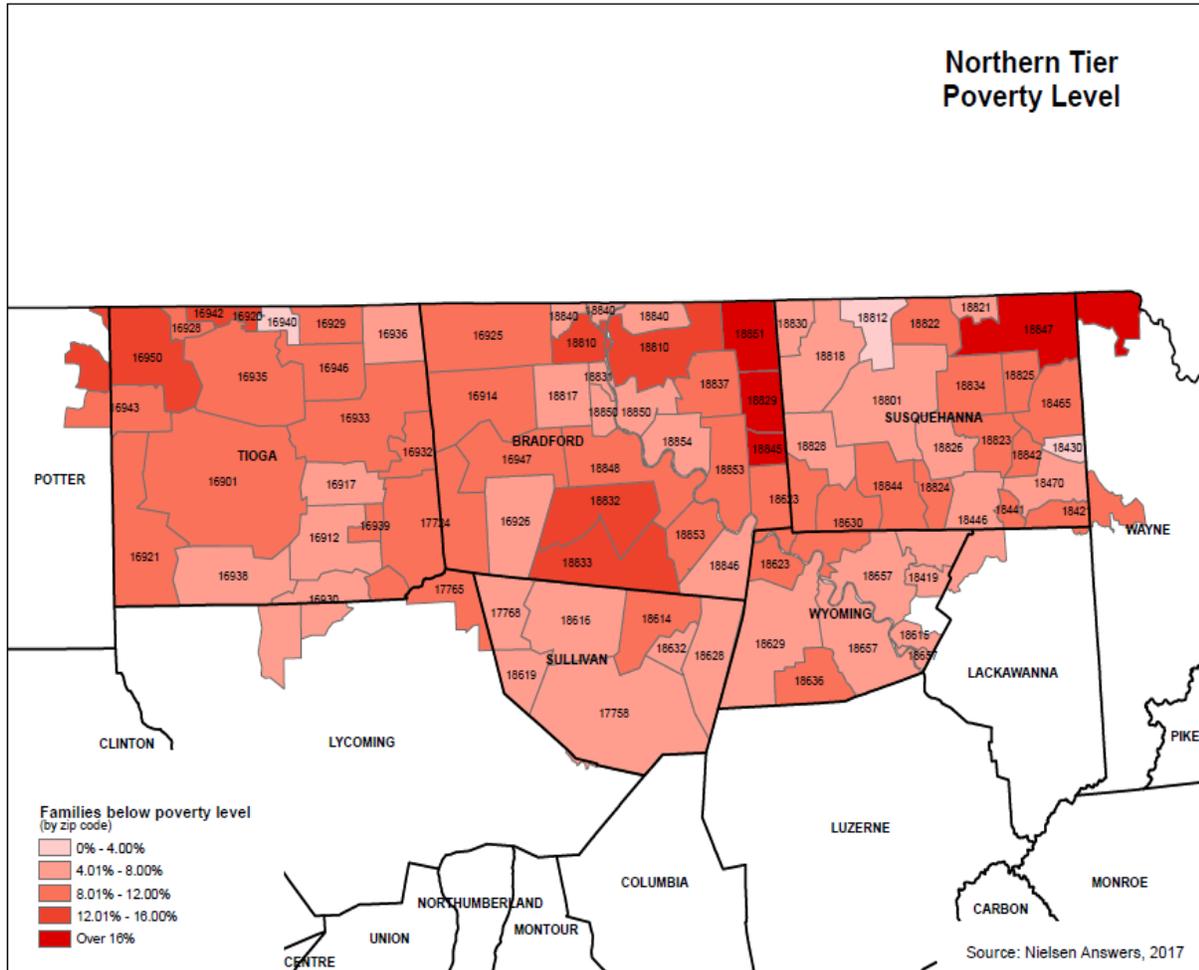
POPULATIONS WITH BARRIERS

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

Poverty

Poverty does not work in a vacuum or silo on its own, it is often the foundation for other challenges that impact those with barriers. Poverty is a place to start, but this also encompasses other barriers. Among the factors that often contribute to poverty are unemployment and underemployment. Many people live in poverty because they have multiple barriers and are unable to find or retain employment. In 2019, 11.2% of the Northern Tier population were reported to be living with income in the past 12 months below the poverty level which is a slight decrease from the 11.9% estimated for 2014. Of those living in poverty 37.2% are in the labor force showing a significant number of underemployed or working poor. Single parents are more likely to be living in poverty, with 23.2% of households (11,113) in the region considered single parent households.⁷

⁷ Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates; 2015-2019



Formerly Incarcerated

According to the Urban Institute⁸, 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

⁸ Urban institute is a non-profit organization dedicated to elevating the debate on social and economic policy. They conduct research and offer evidenced based solutions to improve lives and strengthen communities (www.urban.org).

PY 2021-24 WIOA Multi-Year Regional Plan

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.

According to the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections, approximately six in ten released inmates are rearrested or reincarcerated within three years of release from prison. Those returning to rural areas are more likely to be reincarcerated. More than half of those who return to prison within three years of release do so within the first year. The first year is the highest risk period for recidivism. Younger released inmates are more likely to recidivate than older inmates.⁹ A released inmate under 21 at time of release is twice as likely to recidivate within three years.

Individuals with a Disability

According to the Division for Social Policy and Development Disability, in developing countries, 80% to 90% of persons with disabilities of working age are unemployed, whereas in industrialized countries the figure is between 50% and 70%. Persons with disabilities are frequently not considered potential members of the workforce.¹⁰ 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.

According to the American Community Survey 5-Year 2019 estimates, when looking at the region, 15.7% of the population has a disability of which 19.3% have an income below poverty rates. This poverty rate is below that of the state (21.3%) and the nation (20.5%).

The regional labor force participation rate for individuals with a disability 37.8%, which is slightly below both the state (42.6%) and the nation (42.2%).

In the region, unemployment is higher for those with a disability (12.1%) compared to those without a disability (4.9%). Wyoming County has the largest labor force participation rate for individuals with disabilities at 44.4% and Tioga has the highest unemployment rate for persons with disabilities (13.2%).¹¹

Foster Care

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

Teen Pregnancy

⁹ Pennsylvania Department of Corrections

¹⁰ The Division for Social Policy and Development is part of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs

¹¹ Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates; 2015-2019

PY 2021-24 WIOA Multi-Year Regional Plan

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

According to the PA Department of Health Birth Statistics 2014-2018, the teenage pregnancy rate for the Northern Tier Region ranges between a low of 17.8 in Wyoming County to a high of 27.8 in Bradford County. These ranges are higher than the state level of 16.3 for the same time period.¹²

Homeless

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.

Homeless shelters are few and far between in the Northern Tier Region. The PA CareerLink® works with organizations that will temporarily assist the homeless and agencies they can call upon in the case of an emergency.

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

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

Additional Barriers

Populations with barriers typically do not have just one barrier but often multiple barriers. Key populations include generally those in poverty, disability and returning citizens. Emphasis on some youth/young adult populations could include teen pregnancy (depending on the county), youth aging out of foster care, and TANF. Labor market information demonstrates the need for ongoing priorities of those with barriers as they relate to WIOA. Strong partnerships with community organizations are key to ensure

¹²Source: PA Department of Health Birth Statistics 2014-2018

PY 2021-24 WIOA Multi-Year Regional Plan

those with barriers are referred to appropriate services. Other barriers found in our region are related to substance abuse, transportation and lack of sufficient child care.

REGIONAL EMPLOYER OVERVIEW

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

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

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

Industry Cluster Statistics for Northern Tier WDA												
	Agriculture and Food Production	Advanced Manufacturing	Building & Construction	Bio-Medical	Business Services	Education	Energy	Healthcare	Hospitality, Leisure & Entertainment	Logistics & Transportation	Real Estate, Finance & Insurance	Wood, Wood Products & Publishing
2019 Employment	2,946	4,628	4,463	114	3,347	5,388	4,083	9,084	5,009	2,555	1,577	3,593
Percent WDA Employment	5.27%	8.27%	7.98%	0.20%	5.98%	9.63%	7.30%	16.24%	8.95%	4.57%	2.82%	6.42%
Employment Growth (2014-2019)	191	-633	-169	4	240	-466	-770	31	17	125	-3	-604
Percent Growth (2014-2019)	6.9%	-12.0%	-3.6%	3.6%	7.7%	-8.0%	-15.9%	0.3%	0.3%	5.1%	-0.2%	-14.4%
2019 Average Wage	\$43,857	\$54,267	\$47,055	\$53,117	\$60,108	\$45,856	\$85,455	\$52,323	\$15,412	\$51,770	\$52,164	\$59,988
2019 National Location Quotient	1.46	1.12	1.17	0.17	0.47	1.02	3.57	1.08	0.73	1.17	0.51	4.74

Source: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages

Those industry clusters with high concentrations in the region are Wood, Wood Products & Publishing, Energy, Agriculture and Food Production, Building & Construction, Transportation & Logistics and Advanced Manufacturing. Given the history of extraction industries including Wood, Wood Products & Publishing and Energy, particular attention may need paid to these clusters.

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

According to Long-Term Industry Projections for the Northern Tier Workforce Area total employment is expected to increase by 2.2%, adding 1,390 total jobs. The greatest employment change by percentage is within the Education and Health Services and Construction, both projected at 6.5%, however Education and Health Services account for many more jobs at an estimated 14,490 for 2028 compared to 2,290 construction jobs. Those Industries predicted to decrease in jobs are Manufacturing, Financial Activities and Federal, State & Local Government and Other Services, Except Public Admin. Of those

PY 2021-24 WIOA Multi-Year Regional Plan

industries predicted to decline, Manufacturing faces the biggest loss of employment by volume at -140 jobs.

Long-Term Industry Projections for Northern Tier WDA (2018-28)

Industry	Employment (2018)	Projected Employment (2028)	Employment Change (2018-28)	
			Volume	Percent
Total Jobs	62,930	64,320	1,390	2.2%
Goods Producing Industries	15,240	15,440	200	1.3%
Agriculture, Mining & Logging	4,690	4,890	200	4.3%
Construction	2,150	2,290	140	6.5%
Manufacturing	8,390	8,250	-140	-1.7%
Services-Providing	43,290	44,510	1,220	2.8%
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	12,020	12,030	10	0.1%
Information	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Financial Activities	1,770	1,740	-30	-1.7%
Professional & Business Services	3,540	3,720	180	5.1%
Education & Health Services	14,030	14,940	910	6.5%
Leisure & Hospitality	4,690	4,990	300	6.4%
Other Services, Except Public Admin.	2,450	2,440	-10	-0.4%
Federal, State & Local Government	4,230	4,130	-100	-2.4%
Self-Employed Workers	4,410	4,380	-30	-0.7%

Source: Long-Term Industry Employment Projections (2018-28)

*Data may not add due confidentiality

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

Employment and Occupations

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

Occupations related to the Healthcare industry and Food Service are at the top of the list for fastest growing occupations in the Northern Tier.

PY 2021-24 WIOA Multi-Year Regional Plan

Fastest Growing Occupations in the Northern Tier WDA (2018-2028)

By Volume Change:

Occupational Title	Employment Change (Volume)
Personal Care Aides	220
Combined Food Preparation & Serving Workers	160
Registered Nurses	100
Cooks, Restaurant	100
Heavy & Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	90
Construction Laborers	60
Medical Assistants	50
Laborers & Freight, Stock & Material Movers	40
Janitors & Cleaners	40
Teacher Assistants	40
Elementary School Teachers	30
General & Operations Managers	30
Medical & Health Services Managers	30
Secondary School Teachers	30
Maintenance & Repair Workers, General	30
Physician Assistants	30
Nursing Assistants	30
Medical Secretaries	30
Nurse Practitioners	20
Bus Drivers, School or Special Client	20

Source: Long-Term Occupational Employment Projections (2018-28)

Long-Term Occupational Projections show the largest increase in Healthcare Practitioners, Technicians and Support at 8.4% employment change followed by Protective, Food, Building and Personal Service at 5.9%. and Construction and Extraction at 5.2%. A decline in Office & Administrative Support (-5.2%), Production (-3.3%) and Sales & Related (-.09%) are anticipated.

PY 2021-24 WIOA Multi-Year Regional Plan

Long-Term Occupational Projections for Northern Tier WDA (2018-28)

Occupational Title	Employment (2018)	Projected Employment (2028)	Employment Change (2018-28)		Annual Demand
			Volume	Percent	
Total, All Occupations	62,930	64,320	1,390	2.2%	7,511
Management, Business & Finance	6,270	6,380	110	1.8%	594
Computer, Engineering & Science	1,510	1,560	50	3.3%	130
Education, Legal, Social Service, Arts & Media	4,870	5,060	190	3.9%	476
Healthcare Practitioners, Technicians & Support	5,620	6,090	470	8.4%	482
Protective, Food, Building & Personal Service	11,080	11,730	650	5.9%	1,757
Sales & Related	5,860	5,810	-50	-0.9%	851
Office & Administrative Support	7,750	7,350	-400	-5.2%	841
Farming, Fishing & Forestry	1,230	1,250	20	1.6%	202
Construction & Extraction	3,880	4,080	200	5.2%	480
Installation, Maintenance & Repair	3,330	3,470	140	4.2%	336
Production	6,110	5,910	-200	-3.3%	667
Transportation & Material Moving	5,410	5,630	220	4.1%	696

Source: Long-Term Occupational Employment Projections (2018-28)

*Data may not add due confidentiality

High Priority Occupations

The NTWDB works with local training providers to ensure that there is an adequate supply of trained workers for these high priority occupations. The 2020 High Priority Occupations provide a confirming view of the occupations that will lead toward quality jobs in the Northern Tier Region. The High Priority Occupation List for the Northern Tier provides educational attainment needs, average wages and annual openings for jobs highest in demand for our region. The highest projected number of annual jobs in the Northern Tier is for Heavy & Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers which requires post-secondary education. The second highest with annual openings is for Construction Laborers which requires short-term and/or OJT and the third is Nursing Assistants which requires post-secondary education. Of those occupations on our High Priority list only 10% require a Bachelor’s degree.

While the demand for CNA’s is great, these jobs are typically one of the hardest to fill. They require post-secondary certification and are typically low paying compared to the responsibilities of the job. CNAs or Nursing Assistants projected annual openings are expected to grow by 7.2% for 2026. Entry level wages for CNAs are reported at \$24,360 for 2019.

PY 2021-24 WIOA Multi-Year Regional Plan

Center for Workforce Information & Analysis
8/1/19

2020 High Priority Occupations for Northern Tier Workforce Development Area

SOC Code	SOC Title	Educational Attainment	Wages (2019)			Employment			
			Entry Level	Annual Average	Exper. Level	Estimated 2016	Projected 2026	Percent Change	Annual Demand
11-1021	General & Operations Managers	BD+	\$49,840	\$96,160	\$119,310	610	660	8.2%	55
13-2011	Accountants & Auditors	BD	\$39,900	\$59,910	\$68,420	380	410	7.9%	37
17-3025	Environmental Engineering Technologists & Technicians	AD	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
17-3031	Surveying & Mapping Technicians	MT OJT	\$32,530	\$43,270	\$48,640	20	20	0.0%	1
21-1021	Child, Family & School Social Workers	BD	\$30,300	\$37,600	\$41,110	310	320	3.2%	32
29-1141	Registered Nurses	BD	\$52,050	\$64,380	\$70,550	1,170	1,320	12.8%	78
29-2061	Licensed Practical & Licensed Vocational Nurses	PS	\$35,240	\$44,000	\$48,370	370	360	-2.7%	25
31-1014	Nursing Assistants	PS	\$24,360	\$28,940	\$31,230	830	890	7.2%	100
31-9092	Medical Assistants	PS	\$27,000	\$32,880	\$35,810	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
31-9097	Phlebotomists	PS	\$28,070	\$36,380	\$40,530	20	20	0.0%	2
33-3051	Police & Sheriff's Patrol Officers	MT OJT	\$27,360	\$54,670	\$68,170	420	440	4.8%	29
39-5012	Hairdressers, Hairstylists & Cosmetologists	PS	\$18,480	\$20,340	\$21,260	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
41-1011	Supervisors - Retail Sales Workers	WK EXP	\$23,600	\$40,690	\$49,230	610	630	3.3%	68
43-3021	Billing & Posting Clerks	MT OJT	\$24,310	\$33,600	\$38,240	260	290	11.5%	29
43-3031	Bookkeeping, Accounting & Auditing Clerks	PS+	\$20,700	\$32,270	\$38,060	730	700	-4.1%	74
43-4111	Interviewers (Contact Tracers)	ST OJT	\$24,560	\$35,470	\$40,920	90	90	0.0%	11
43-6013	Medical Secretaries & Administrative Assistants	MT OJT	\$24,350	\$32,340	\$36,330	290	330	13.8%	37
45-2091	Agricultural Equipment Operators	MT OJT	N/A	N/A	N/A	200	210	5.0%	33
47-1011	Supervisors - Construction & Extraction Workers	WK EXP	\$42,120	\$69,070	\$82,540	390	420	7.7%	41
47-2031	Carpenters	LT OJT	\$31,480	\$40,430	\$44,900	440	470	6.8%	44
47-2061	Construction Laborers	ST OJT	\$25,140	\$36,260	\$41,820	870	970	11.5%	103
47-2111	Electricians	LT OJT	\$41,230	\$55,710	\$62,950	140	150	7.1%	16
47-4051	Highway Maintenance Workers	MT OJT	\$27,980	\$38,190	\$43,290	440	460	4.5%	47
49-1011	Supervisors - Mechanics, Installers & Repairers	WK EXP	\$47,490	\$67,060	\$76,840	270	290	7.4%	28
49-3021	Automotive Body & Related Repairers	LT OJT	N/A	N/A	N/A	110	120	9.1%	12
49-3023	Automotive Service Technicians & Mechanics	PS	\$23,280	\$33,080	\$37,980	450	480	6.7%	45
49-3031	Bus & Truck Mechanics & Diesel Engine Specialists	LT OJT	\$32,140	\$43,290	\$48,870	290	320	10.3%	30
49-9021	Heating, A/C & Refrigeration Mechanics & Installers	PS+	\$31,790	\$41,760	\$46,750	140	150	7.1%	16
49-9041	Industrial Machinery Mechanics	LT OJT	\$37,620	\$49,930	\$56,080	320	340	6.3%	30
49-9043	Maintenance Workers, Machinery	LT OJT	\$29,130	\$52,160	\$63,670	180	170	6.3%	18
49-9071	Maintenance & Repair Workers, General	MT OJT	\$22,680	\$33,690	\$39,200	710	730	2.8%	72
51-1011	Supervisors - Production & Operating Workers	WK EXP	\$34,820	\$57,970	\$69,550	430	440	2.3%	43
51-2022	Electrical & Electronic Equipment Assemblers	MT OJT	\$25,340	\$35,440	\$40,490	300	260	-13.3%	29
51-2092	Team Assemblers	MT OJT	\$17,790	\$25,080	\$28,730	470	400	-14.9%	44

PY 2021-24 WIOA Multi-Year Regional Plan

Center for Workforce Information & Analysis
8/1/19

2020 High Priority Occupations for Northern Tier Workforce Development Area

SOC Code	SOC Title	Educational Attainment	Wages (2019)			Employment			
			Entry Level	Annual Average	Exper. Level	Estimated 2016	Projected 2026	Percent Change	Annual Demand
51-4121	Welders, Cutters, Solderers & Brazers	MT OJT	\$35,140	\$48,860	\$55,730	170	180	5.9%	21
51-9023	Mixing & Blending Machine Setters/Cprs/Tenders	MT OJT	N/A	N/A	N/A	200	190	-5.0%	21
51-9061	Inspectors, Testers, Sorters, Samplers & Weighers	MT OJT	\$23,170	\$34,630	\$40,370	230	220	-4.3%	24
53-3022	Bus Drivers: School or Special Client	ST OJT	\$25,460	\$30,820	\$33,500	410	430	4.9%	52
53-3032	Heavy & Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	PS	\$34,710	\$48,250	\$55,030	1,700	1,870	10.0%	204
53-7051	Industrial Truck & Tractor Operators	ST OJT	\$27,220	\$32,310	\$34,860	310	330	6.5%	37

Educational Attainment Abbreviations:

Short-term or Moderate-term training (ST OJT or MT OJT) – basic tasks and skills are learned through a period of on-the-job training. A high school diploma may be required.
 Long-term training (LT OJT) – a high school diploma and at least one year of on-the-job training or an apprenticeship.
 Related work experience (WK EXP) – a high school diploma and training gained through hands-on work in a similar occupation.
 Postsecondary training (PS or PS+) – training is gained through a postsecondary training program. Some period of related work experience may be required.
 Associate Degree (AD or AD+) – degree completed after two years of full-time schooling beyond high school. Some period of related work experience may be required.
 Bachelor's Degree (BD or BD+) – degree completed after four years of full-time schooling beyond high school. Some period of related work experience may be required.
 Master's Degree (MD or MD+) – degree completed after two years of full-time schooling beyond a bachelor's degree. Some period of related work experience may be required.
 Doctoral (PhD) or First Professional Degree (PROF) – degree programs requiring 3-6 years of education at the college or university level beyond a four-year bachelor's degree.

Page 2 of 2

Source: Center for Workforce Information and Analysis

These high priority occupations represent the occupations most likely to be considered by job seekers and be requested by employers throughout the Northern Tier Region. Based upon the occupational and sector demands, the key industries for consideration include health care, logistics and transportation, and construction. These occupations appear appropriate to the job seekers needs and capabilities based upon the demographics of the Northern Tier Workforce Development Area.

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

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

PY 2021-24 WIOA Multi-Year Regional Plan

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

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

Working with employers in existing or emerging industries to determine their skill needs is crucial in meeting the workforce needs of the local area. When skill needs for high-growth occupations are known, the local area is better prepared to work with the needs of under-skilled workers. In order to meet workforce needs, the local area works with educational entities and businesses to design training programs with the skills that businesses need. In addition, the local area works with jobseekers to identify the types of job opportunities that are available and what transferrable skills they have. This allows the businesses to get the candidates they need. By working together in industry partnerships, employers can more easily learn the resources available to help with business startup, hiring, and finance. In addition, the local area works with the local Small Business Development Centers in the region and often refer businesses to them for assistance. When possible, employers are encouraged to work together for cost savings and to develop training programs together when similar needs are present.

There are less than five employers who have Registered Apprenticeship programs in the Northern Tier Region. NTRPDC was approved as a Registered Apprenticeship sponsor in August 2018. The NTWDB, along with NTRPDC, worked toward sponsorship status to expand apprenticeship infrastructure in the region. There are currently three companies in the consortium. NTRPDC seeks to expand the model to targeted industries with in-demand occupations. The manufacturing industry was targeted first because of employers reaching out with a need for machinists. Healthcare has also been identified as an industry where the apprenticeship model would be beneficial. There are multiple healthcare occupations on the region's High Priority Occupation (HPO) list. DCED staff, along with PA CareerLink® Business Service Team (BST) members, refer businesses to NTRPDC for information sessions to learn more about the apprenticeship model.

The NTWDB's use of funds is geared to serving both the job seeker and the employer and to support the local area's vision for workforce development. The NTWDB supports the PA CareerLink® and attempts to eliminate duplication of services and funds through the coordination of services in the one-stop centers. The NTWDB offers Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) to qualified individuals in the high priority occupations in order to gain better employment, wages, and retention and leverages WIOA funds to serve as many people as possible. The NTWDB is active with the industry clusters in the five counties which assist in training jobseekers in the skills that employers need. As a result of the successful consortium groups, members have received additional sources of training funds for their respective clusters.

The Northern Tier Workforce Development Board is cognizant of the need to leverage WIOA funds where possible and allowable to support the local workforce development plan beyond the constraints of WIOA.

PY 2021-24 WIOA Multi-Year Regional Plan

Because the NTWDB has developed a level of local trust, many partners share information about potential funding streams with the NTWDB staff. The NTWDB works closely with the local economic development corporation, both county and regional, to remain current on economic designations and needs in the area which could affect eligibility for grant monies. Our vision of a responsive system, greater service of employers, increased outreach to education, and a prepared workforce is what leads the NTWDB, the staff, and the communication throughout the public workforce system.

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

Because our regional workforce area designation is the same as our local area, youth and individuals with barriers to employment are connected to career and training services in the same manner. Referrals are made based on assessments conducted with the participant to determine the most suitable course of action to lead the participant towards success. Already established relationships with programs such as Job Corp result in awareness of programs and the ability for staff to make sound referrals to these programs.

As referenced above, our regional workforce area designation is the same as our local area. The Northern Tier Business Services Team (BST) is already established on a regional level and is made up of partner staff including WIOA, Wagner-Peyser and OVR. NTWDB communicates overall goals including specific measureable goals determined for the BST on an annual basis.

The NTWDB works with both secondary and post-secondary institutions to align service and avoid duplication. Secondary school communication is often conducted by the Northern Tier Career Coaches which provide career readiness to youth. The NTWDB works with local colleges to support the development of short-term or credentialed training in order to meet the more immediate workforce demands of employers. For example, supporting the creation of a short-term manufacturing training developed by Lackawanna College to provide students with the basic foundational skills needed to gain employment in the manufacturing sector. NTWDB helped to create awareness of and made referrals to the program and also had an opportunity to speak with students about the occupational opportunities within the region.

As part of the Northern Tier Workforce Development Board, the Youth Committee seeks to coordinate local youth activities and policies, recommend eligible youth providers, oversee the Young Adult Program, assist to identify gaps in services to eligible youth, guarantee quality services and leverage financial and programmatic resources. The Youth Committee meets quarterly and consists of members from local school districts, BLaST IU 17, Career and Technology Centers, OVR, Job Corps, Title I providers, YMCA, probation, human services and local colleges. There are no YouthBuild or AmeriCorps programs in the region.

The diverse make-up of the Youth Committee helps connect NTWDB staff to programs and agencies beneficial to program participants. Committee members share relevant program information pertaining to youth in the Northern Tier. Outreach to opportunity youth and those with barriers is difficult in the

PY 2021-24 WIOA Multi-Year Regional Plan

region due its rural nature as there are no communal gathering spots and little for public transportation. However, the Youth Committee, along with a Youth Taskforce, works to connect and refer opportunity youth and those with barriers to programs for training, like Job Corps, and assistance, as needed.

NTWDB staff are on advisory boards for both of the career and technology centers (CTCs) in our region as well as those districts who house their own career and technical education programs. Advisory board meetings are held with multiple agencies and businesses in attendance to assist the districts and CTCs in implementing programs to enhance technical education for students. Perkins V Act funding is used for purchases of equipment and technologies is discussed and approved at the meetings. NTWDB staff often provides labor market information to districts in an effort to align programs to industry needs.

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

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

Partnerships include the Governor's Action Team (GAT), Partnerships for Regional Economic Performance (PREP) which include the Small Business Development Center (SBDC), local Chambers of Commerce and County Planners. Northeast Pennsylvania Industrial Resource Center (NEPIRC), and county economic development partners among others offer support to meet the needs of employers and jobseekers. Partnerships also include a very successful collaboration with the Northeast PA Region and their three Local Workforce Development Areas.

Based on employment figures, the largest industry sectors within the region area are Health Care and Social Assistance, Government (Includes public education), Manufacturing and Retail Trade. When reviewing figures for the largest average wages for these industries, Manufacturing, Energy, Health Care and Transportation and Warehousing have the largest salaries. Industries that have high location

PY 2021-24 WIOA Multi-Year Regional Plan

quotients in the area include manufacturing, health care, energy, and building and construction.¹³ In addition, the NTWDB utilizes the High Priority Occupation List when reviewing regional and sector strategies.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Continuously educating PA CareerLink® staff, service agencies and the community regarding the spectrum of available services both inside and out of the PA CareerLink® system is necessary to avoid duplication of services and maximize and leverage resources. The PA CareerLink® management team continuously examines ways to align the PA CareerLink® service delivery system to more directly address issues involving underemployment, business services, and service to special populations. This population includes dislocated workers including displaced homemakers, migrant/seasonal workers, opportunity youth, TANF customers, veterans, minorities, women and those with additional barriers to employment

¹³ Source: Economic Modeling Specialists, International (EMSI), 2020.4

PY 2021-24 WIOA Multi-Year Regional Plan

including older individuals, returning citizens, persons with disabilities and persons with limited English proficiency. The PA CareerLink® Management Team assists the NTWDB in ensuring availability of employment and training services to these special populations. They are well versed in the Northern Tier HPO and Pennsylvania's In-Demand Occupation lists and work with customers to make them aware of jobs that are in demand and/or training for those occupations. Services for these individuals are equal to any other including all of the PA CareerLink® workshops, one-on-one services with staff, testing, referral process, as well as online opportunities such as PA CareerLink®

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

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

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

The NTWDB addresses the issue with an increase in the hub and spoke concept, which sends staff to other community partners on a regular basis that will extend the services without bricks and mortar. The Title I providers travel to community facilities, like libraries, where they can meet with customers and provide PA CareerLink® services. During 2019, over 100 people were served through our mobile service that may not have otherwise had the opportunity to access service. Unfortunately, due to the pandemic, these services were prohibited during 2020, but plans to revive and expand upon this method of service exist for 2021.

Northern Tier has implemented a pilot a van program in Tioga County to assist individuals with their transportation barriers. The Pilot Van Program is to assist EARN (Employment, Advancement and Retention Network) participants to and from the learning centers and keep them engaged in required

PY 2021-24 WIOA Multi-Year Regional Plan

activities as mandated by their Agreement of Mutual Responsibility (AMR). The project goals are to increase program participation by eliminating a significant barrier for many individuals receiving cash assistance in the Northern Tier. This project is giving EARN Participants the helping hand to get to the Learning Center easing the burden of trying to find transportation while also limiting time spent on the bus for those that do have access to public transport. This service has improved participation which leads to greater placement and retention. Since the program began, Tioga County EARN program Work Participation Rate (WPR) has consistently increased and as of June 2019, Tioga County was number 1 with their WPR out of Pennsylvania State. There are plans to expand this program to Adult and Dislocated Worker. Unfortunately, due to the pandemic the program and expansion has been placed on hold during 2020, but plans to revive and expand upon this service exist for 2021.

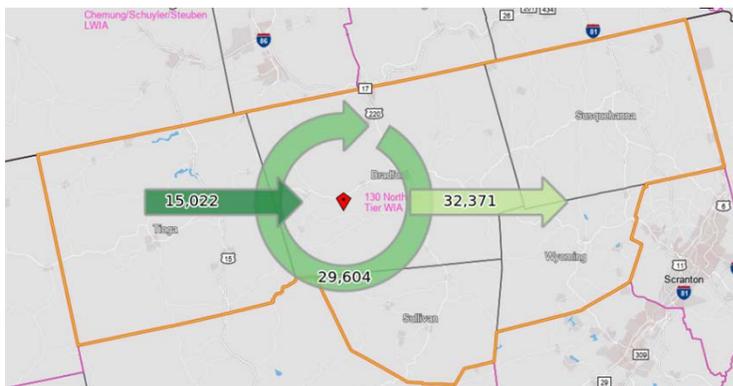
The following data and map outline the commuter patterns for the Northern Tier. Even though 15,022 workers commute to the region for employment, 32,371 (52.2%) travel outside the region for employment resulting in a net flow of -17,349.

Inflow/Outflow Report, Northern Tier WDA, 2018

	Count	Share
Employed in the WDA	44,626	100.0%
Employed in the WDA but Living Outside	15,022	33.7%
Employed and Living in the WDA	29,604	66.3%
Living in the WDA	61,975	100.0%
Living in the WDA but Employed Outside	32,371	52.2%
Living and Employed in the WDA	29,604	47.8%

Net Commuting In/Out*	-17,349
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*A positive number indicates the number of individuals working in the WDA but living outside is higher than the number of individuals living in the WDA but employed outside. A negative number indicates the opposite.



PY 2021-24 WIOA Multi-Year Regional Plan

The below chart shows data based on 2016-2018 average commuting patterns.

Northern Tier Commuting Patterns					
Home County	In-Commuters	Percent of In-Commuters	Work County	Out-Commuters	Percent of Out-Commuters
NON-COMMUTERS	34,839	--	NON-COMMUTERS	34,839	--
Lackawanna County, PA	2,163	13.2%	Lackawanna County, PA	5,067	14.2%
Luzerne County, PA	1,990	12.1%	Luzerne County, PA	3,349	9.4%
Tioga County, NY	1,593	9.7%	Broome County, NY	3,201	9.0%
Chemung County, NY	1,179	7.2%	Chemung County, NY	2,172	6.1%
Lycoming County, PA	1,116	6.8%	Lycoming County, PA	1,937	5.4%
Broome County, NY	698	4.2%	Steuben County, NY	1,332	3.7%
Steuben County, NY	544	3.3%	Tioga County, NY	1,175	3.3%
Wayne County, PA	530	3.2%	Montgomery County, PA	900	2.5%
Berks County, PA	266	1.6%	New York County, NY	811	2.3%
Potter County, PA	260	1.6%	Philadelphia County, PA	701	2.0%
Pike County, PA	217	1.3%	Dauphin County, PA	602	1.7%
McKean County, PA	194	1.2%	Lehigh County, PA	588	1.6%
Columbia County, PA	211	1.3%	Wayne County, PA	475	1.3%
Allegheny County, PA	187	1.1%	Monroe County, PA	465	1.3%
Lehigh County, PA	153	0.9%	Allegheny County, PA	437	1.2%
Monroe County, PA	177	1.1%	Berks County, PA	422	1.2%
Northampton County, PA	156	0.9%	Bucks County, PA	417	1.2%
Schuylkill County, PA	162	1.0%	Schuylkill County, PA	450	1.3%
Lancaster County, PA	151	0.9%	Lancaster County, PA	360	1.0%
Other Counties	4,485	27.3%	Other Counties	10,782	30.3%
Total In-Commuters	16,433	100.0%	Total Out-Commuters	35,640	100.0%
Total Jobs Held in Region	51,272	--	Total Workers Living in Region	70,479	--

1.8. Describe the region’s strategy to increase participation on the statewide eligible training provider list.

NTWDB staff collaborate with PA CareerLink® and Title I provider staff to align training providers with training needs in our region. When customers meet with Title I and PA CareerLink® staff and have specific training programs in mind (that align with HPOs) that are not currently on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL), staff contact the LWDB. NTWDB staff reach out to the training provider for them to apply. NTWDB staff work closely with training providers during the application process, offering assistance when needed. NTWDB staff communicate with ETPL providers throughout the year and offer assistance at any time.

There are a limited number of training providers in the region, so NTWDB staff also work with providers outside of the region. The WDA borders New York, so we work with training providers there. The addition

PY 2021-24 WIOA Multi-Year Regional Plan

of these training providers and their programs helps make the ETPL more diverse and gives customers options.

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

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

- 1.10. (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.**

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