

INTRODUCTION

1. STRATEGIC PLANNING: Local Area Workforce and Economic Analysis

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

The West Central Workforce Development Area (WCWDA) Demographic and Labor Market Information are evaluated in order to provide accurate and up-to-date information for the West Central Workforce Development Board (DBA West Central Job Partnership), Staff, Partners, and local employers. Similar to many other suburban and rural communities, the WDA has a population that trends older, poorer, less diverse, and more age-dependent than the Commonwealth and Country. The following economic analysis and the trends present an opportunity to create and adjust talent acquisition and skill advancement strategies for the local workforce. The Board will utilize this information and the data that follows in order to inform programmatic and funding decisions.

Population

The WCWDA is comprised of Lawrence and Mercer counties in western Pennsylvania. The counties join the Northwest Workforce Development Area to form the Keystone Edge Planning Region. The population in the WCWDA was 200,012 per American Community Survey data for 2014-2018. According to the United States Census July 1, 2019 Population estimates, the two counties' population is 194,936. This is a decline of 0.7% or 1,327 individuals annually. The decreasing population trend has taken place regionally over the past three decades, a trend that expected to continue over the next five years with a small decrease of 2.8% to 189,364 by 2025 (Attachment 4: Local Workforce Development System Supporting Data Table 1).

While this projection is based upon the continuation of the declining population, more up-to-date data from the results of the 2020 census and the impacts of expanded telework from COVID-19 could slow this trend as individuals move from urban centers to lower cost of living areas. With the expansion of telework this trend may shift as individuals look for geographies with a lower cost of living. The Pew Research Center for Social & Demographic Trends notes that while Urban Centers have been outpacing Suburban counties in education, labor market, income, and housing metrics since 2000, there is some preliminary evidence that the COVID-19 outbreak may have altered people's residential choices between city versus suburbs.

Age Distribution

The median age of WCWDA residents (45.3) is nearly 5 years older than the rest of the state (40.8). Looking at the age distribution of the population, 20.8% is under 18, 58.0% is 18 - 64, and 22.3% is 65 years or older. This is anticipated to increase over the next five years with the age distribution projected as 19.8% under 18, 56.6% 18 - 64, and 26.4% 65 years or older. Additionally, while 37.6% of the population is aged 55+ currently, it is projected that 40% will be 55+ in 2025.

Education

Of the total 141,038 individuals 25 and older in the WCWDA, 9.7% have no High School Diploma, 43.2% are High School Graduates, 16.2% have Some College, No Degree, 10.9% hold associate degrees, 16.2% hold bachelor's Degrees, 24.7% have some college or an associate degree, and 22.4% have earned a bachelor's degree or higher. While the Area has a higher number of High School Graduates than the Keystone Edge Region (42.6%) and state (34.7%), it has significantly fewer individuals with Bachelor's Degrees and higher at 23.7% regionally and 31.4% statewide. Expected growth rates for occupations vary by the education and training required. While all employment in the WCWDA is projected to grow 1.0% between 2018 and 2028, occupations typically requiring short-term On-the-Job Training are decline by 0.7% while all other education levels are expected to increase: Long-term Training 2.0%, Post-secondary Education or experience 1.5%, Associates Degree 4.9%, Bachelor's Degree 4.1%, and Advanced Degrees 8.6%.

Employment Status

American Community Survey data for 2014-2018 notes the Area's civilian labor force as 94,450 with a participation rate of 57.0%. As of September 2020, the area's total Labor Force is 85,500 with a seasonally adjusted Unemployment Rate of 9.1%. The Area's unemployment rate hit its highest point in April 2020 at 18.1%, which was higher than the peak of 11.1% in June 2009 during the Great Recession, but lower than the high-water mark of 21.8% in January 1983. While, as of September 2020, Pennsylvania had lost 2.9% of its labor force, the WCWDA has lost 9.0% of its pre-pandemic workforce or 5,100 individuals; June – September's labor force is the smallest the region has had since before January 1976.

Within the two-county Area, 37,846 individuals live and work in the two counties, 32,568 live in the WDA but work outside of the Area, and 23,583 live outside of the Area but commute into work in Lawrence and Mercer counties. This is a net outflow of 8,985 workers.

According to PA WorkStats, the largest sector in the West Central PA Workforce Development Area is Health Care and Social Assistance, employing 15,289 workers. The next-largest sectors in the region are Manufacturing (11,878 workers) and Retail Trade (9,229). High location quotients (LQs) indicate sectors in which a region has high concentrations of employment compared to the national average. The sectors with the largest LQs in the region are Manufacturing (1.87), Health Care and Social Assistance (1.36), and Utilities (1.21).

Barriers to Employment

Individuals with barriers to employment are more susceptible to unemployment, underemployment, and poverty – this further affects quality of life aspects including physical and mental health, academic achievement, involvement in the criminal justice system, etc. not only for the individual, but their entire household. Even when individuals with barriers obtain employment, they are often the first to be let go during economic downturns. These populations are often more difficult to serve and face common challenges like Transportation, Technology, Childcare/Family Care, Limited Availability during traditional work hours, and Employer culture.

In the WCWDA, Low-income individuals, Individuals with disabilities (including youth), Older individuals (age 55 and older), Ex-offenders, Single parents (including single pregnant women), and Long-term

unemployed individuals (unemployed for 27 or more consecutive weeks) are significant populations in the Area and identified for targeted interventions.

Low-income individuals

The counties' per capita income is \$27,073 and its household income is \$48,876. This is on-par with the Keystone Edge Region, but lower than the state average. The Area has a Poverty level of 14.2% with 17.3% of Households Receiving Food Stamps/SNAP, a greater percentage of the population than the region and state at 12.8% and 13.2% respectively. Poverty tracks higher in the WDA with 15.5% of the population in poverty compared with the state and national average of 12.0% and 10.5% respectively. Low-income individuals are dispersed in pockets of poverty within the Area. According to the Future Ready PA Index District Fast Facts, the percent of Economically Disadvantaged Students in the two counties ranges from the lowest of Neshannock School District at 23.1% to the highest at 100.0% of Farrell Area School District.

Of those aged 16 and older, 12.1% live in poverty compared to 13.1% in the Keystone Edge Region and 11.2% statewide. The Labor Force Participation rate for those in poverty in the WDA is 40.9%, slightly higher than the Keystone Edge Region as a whole (39.1%) and statewide (38.7%). Across the different areas, one-third of those in poverty are employed, with 30.2% in the WCWDA, 30.9% in the Keystone Edge Region, and 29.7% statewide.

Individuals with disabilities

Individuals with disabilities aged 16 – 64 comprise 15.1% of the population in the WDA, a greater percentage than both the Keystone Edge Region and state average of 13.9% and 11.3% respectively. While statewide individuals with disabilities of the Working Age (16 – 64) have a Labor Force participation rate of 42.6%, in the West Central WDA and Keystone Edge Region, it is 41.5% and 40.6% respectively. This data is based on the American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates (2015 – 2019) and does not reflect the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic which is anticipated to have a significant effect on this demographic. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, since March 2020, 1 in 5 workers with disabilities have been dismissed from employment, compared with 1 in 7 in the general population.

Older individuals (age 55 and older)

As mentioned previously, the age distribution of the two-county Area skews significantly older than the rest of the state and nation. Thirty-six percent of the WDA population is age 55 and older, compared to 34% in the Keystone Edge Region, 31.6% in Pennsylvania, and 28% nationwide. As this increases over the next five years, there will be a growing need for workers to replace those retiring from the workforce as well as an anticipated increase in the need for health care and family assistance for this population.

Ex-offenders

One in three adults in the US has a criminal record. The PA Department of Corrections notes that 90% of inmates will be released at some point. This statistic emphasizes the importance of investment into reentry programs as recidivism is correlated with a lack of employment opportunities and can create a vicious cycle. Individuals transitioning from the criminal justice system often face difficulty reconnecting

to employment. According to the National HIRE Network, nearly 75% of formerly incarcerated individuals are still unemployed a year after release.

Single parents (including single pregnant women)

Of all children in the WCWDA 35.7% or 13,243 are in single-parent families. Of the total 19,953 households with children, 5,454 or 27.3% are single-parent households, compared with 24.2% statewide. Lawrence and Mercer counties have the fifth and seventh highest percentage of Single-parent Households of all the counties in Pennsylvania, respectively. Single parents are more likely to be living in poverty. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics this disproportionately affects women, as mothers are less likely than fathers to participate in the workforce when they have children under the age of 18, with participation decreasing with the age of the child.

Long-term unemployed individuals (unemployed for 27 or more consecutive weeks)

The total unemployment rate for the West Central WDA was 8.3% in October 2020, compared with 7.3% statewide. According to the Center for Workforce Information & Analysis, the Regular Unemployment Compensation Benefits for November 2020 for the WCWCA were 22,260, an increase of 19.4% over the previous month and 260.2% over the prior year. Initial Claims also were up from 1,600 in the Area in October 2020 to 2,480 in November 2020.

Why certain populations are hard to serve

The targeted populations mentioned above are each unique but share common challenges to gaining employment with family sustaining wages and/or progressing in a career pathway. These include: Transportation, Technology, and Childcare/Family Care.

Transportation

Far fewer individuals (0.6%) commute to work via public transit in the WCWDA than in the Keystone Edge Region (1.0%) or state (5.6%). According to the Pennsylvania Public Transportation Performance Report Fiscal Year 2018-19, the New Castle Area Transit Authority (NCATA) and the Mercer County Regional Council of Governments (MCRCOG) served 577,092 and 88,617 passengers respectively. With lack of access to public transportation, the rural nature of the Area, limited availability of ride-sharing services, and even lack of pedestrian/cyclist paths, individuals are dependent on their own vehicle or shared vehicle for transportation to and from work. Looking at commuting patterns, the mean travel time to work is 23.5 minutes in Lawrence County and 21.4 minutes in Mercer County. Additionally, while 61.6% of those employed in the WDA also live in it, those commuting within the counties are often commuting to and from areas which are not served by public transit or the transit schedules are not conducive for usage for their work commute. This necessitates access to a vehicle which, even shared among a household can be cost-prohibitive.

Technology

While technology can be utilized to overcome distance and transportation needs and reach more people through virtual services, many individuals in the Area lack access to these technologies. In the two-county area, 15.1% of the 83,395 households did not have a computer, compared to 12.0% statewide and 9.7% nationwide. The Area also had fewer households (21.8% or 18,245 households) without a

broadband internet subscription. Additionally, many individuals do not have the requisite level of digital literacy to utilize virtual offerings or gain employment with work-from-home availability.

Childcare/Family Care

Another barrier to employment that working individuals face is the demand of providing care to family members. In Lawrence and Mercer counties higher percentages of individuals with a disability, greater age dependency ratio, and larger numbers of single-parent households are often a barrier for those who are working, want to work, or want to work more hours. This has been exacerbated during the COVID-19 pandemic, as schools implement virtual learning and children need to be supervised and/or assisted with completing online school.

The higher percentage of individuals with a disability and greater age dependency ratio in the WDA can also impact the labor force, as working individuals face the demand of providing care to family members. McKinsey & Company's 2020 "Women in the Workplace" report notes that this responsibility disproportionately falls on women and that women are leaving the workforce at higher rates than men. With 51.0% of its population and 70.5%⁶ of the area's Labor Force being female, the impact could further this divide.

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

Skill Gap Analyses are conducted by looking at current and projected skill requirements and future industry and occupational employment projections. Labor Market Information (LMI) sources including the U.S. Census, Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), and reports from the PA Center for Workforce Information and Analysis (CWIA) also inform Skill Gap Analysis discussions and strategies. In addition to the data-driven assessment of the Skill Gaps, real-time information provided by Area Employers and Partners advises the organization and its committees so that critical needs can be discussed and addressed. Private sector members of the Board and sector partnerships are pivotal in their assessment and input of in-demand skills and realized skill gaps.

Looking at the Top Job Skills by Projected Employment and Demand West Central Workforce Development Area for 2016-2026 (Attachment 4: Local Workforce Development System Supporting Data Table 1), the majority of the Detailed Work Activities are related to front-line occupations and reflect the high concentration of the Area's Retail Trade and Accommodation and Food Services sectors. Employees must be able to obtain information, communicate with colleagues and work directly with customers.

Assessing the Tools and Technologies that are in-demand by employers 2026 (Attachment 4: Local Workforce Development System Supporting Data Table 2), the ability to use technology and computer software are in highest demand. With over half of annual job openings requiring the use of software and computers, technical aptitude will be critical for the future workforce.

Through quantifying and discussing the defined current and projected skill gaps, the Board and its local and regional partners employ a variety of strategies to address these workforce needs. These include

work done through Industry Partnerships, investment in educational initiatives like Career Fairs, Job Shadowing, Work-based Learning, Internships, Individual Training Accounts, On-the-Job and Incumbent Worker Training, and expansion of Credentialing, Registered Apprenticeship and Pre-Apprenticeship models. Often, the Board has spearheaded efforts to obtain competitive grant funding in support of projects to support these goals. Approaches that have been developed collectively and put forth include recruiting from non-traditional labor pools (including those with barriers to employment), training workers, and collaborating with education and training providers to improve graduate employability.

While examples of the above efforts are enumerated in the following sections, the primary strategy behind each effort is combining the qualitative data with real-time input from a variety of sources and addressing proposed approaches collectively. Thoughtful and proactive communication and meetings allow ties to be made to multiple programs and agencies, as the collaborative spirit of partners on the Board and its Committees, Business Service Teams, Industry Partnerships, inspire information and activity sharing as well as new connections.

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

In assessing the Labor Market Information and through the input of Employers and local and regional partners, multiple challenges related to education and training can be identified. Many of these challenges have been recognized for some time but may further exacerbated by the lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Declining Population and Aging Workforce

With a steadily decreasing population and a greater share of the workforce over 55, it is challenging for employers to recruit individuals with the skills required to remain competitive. Fewer young people available to enter the labor force increases the difficulty for employers to find and attract new talent to fill open positions. With the ever-increasing demand for computer and software skills, training for incumbent workers will be necessary for those remaining in the workforce as well as sustainability and succession planning to ensure that those leaving the workforce are not taking away irreplaceable institutional knowledge.

Poverty

Individuals in poverty face many challenges in obtaining and maintaining employment with family-sustaining wages. Families are living from paycheck to paycheck and without savings or a safety net that would enable them to pursue opportunities. Even when the cost of education and training is covered for the individual, the hours that classes take place (especially for those working a shift schedule) may interfere with their employment or child/family care responsibilities. Additionally, in instances where education and training lead to incremental wage increases, some participants receiving income-based public assistance benefits, express they would lose benefits that would not be offset by the wage increase for a substantial amount of time.

Access to Transportation

It is notable that the top certification in the online job posting data (CWDIA October 2020) is a Driver's License. Because of the ruralness of the counties outside of their main population centers, and the lack of widespread public transportation or even ride-sharing services present, reliable transportation is a requirement demanded by many employers. Issues directly related to access to transportation, such as tardiness and excessive absences, are one of the main reasons employers voice for terminating employees.

Location Challenges

Along with the diffuse population outside of the counties' larger communities being a challenge for Transportation to the workplace, it can be an issue for individuals seeking education and training as well. Additionally, the WDA being contiguous with a state border and divided into different groups poses a unique challenge for those in the area. For entry-level positions, the discrepancy between Pennsylvania (\$7.25) and Ohio's (\$8.30) hourly minimum wage rates makes commuting across the state line attractive for those with available transportation.

In addition to employment, depending on the individual and the education or training they are seeking, they may have to travel a significant distance to access a program. A common example in the past has been in the trades Joint Apprenticeship Training Councils; the Area is served by a JATC, but the training hall is located a significant commute outside of the counties.

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

With a competitive labor market, the increase in the need for technological aptitude driven by telecommuting, and individuals staying in the labor force longer, employers will need to invest in employee training to meet their workforce needs. The WCWDB utilizes a number of strategies aimed at education & training:

Partnerships

The WCWDB recognizes the importance of relationships with the variety of different community-based organizations in the two-county area. These collaborative efforts lead to the sharing of information across different subject-areas and the development of innovative projects to serve the needs of job-seekers and employers. These partnerships include those with PA CareerLink® mandated partners like the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation which serves individuals with disabilities to assist them in obtaining and maintaining self-sufficient employment under WIOA Title IV.

Local Education & Training Providers

The WDA is home to a number of post-secondary education institutions including Butler County Community College, Grove City College, Penn State Shenango, Thiel College, and Westminster College whose enrollment exceeds 5,000. Additionally, two larger institutions of higher education, Slippery Rock University and Youngstown State University are both within ten miles of the county lines and matriculate more than 20,000 undergraduate and graduate students. Local Technical Education & Training Providers including Jameson School of Nursing, Laurel Technical Institute, Lawrence County

Career & Technical Center, Lenape Technical School, Mercer County Career Center, New Castle School of Trades, and Sharon Regional School of Nursing, provide occupation-specific training to prepare individuals for high-priority and in-demand occupations.

Adult Education staff are co-located at the LWDA's PA CareerLink® centers in order to connect with individuals in need of literacy and numeracy services. The local Adult Education & Literacy fiscal partner is Butler County Community College (BC3) collaborating with providers: Adult Literacy Lawrence County (ALLC) and the Grove City Education Center for Adults (GCECA). Together these partners accept referrals from the PA CareerLink® and refer individuals to the One Stop centers for programs including Youth Reentry.

For those with a High School Diploma or GED who wish to further work on their literacy and/or numeracy aptitude, the Worldwide Interactive Network® (WIN) software is available. Following WIN Training, individuals may take the WorkKeys® assessments in Applied Math, Graphic Literacy, and Workplace Documents to earn a National Career Readiness Certificate®. This credential measures relevant cognitive skills and helps to identify applicants who have the skills needed to acquire job-related skills and meet the needs of employers.

While English as a Second Language needs are not significant demand in the two counties, the Literacy providers have ESL classes available when the need arises. The PA CareerLink® centers use Propio interpreter services for any individual with limited English proficiency. All partner agencies located at each PA CareerLink® were trained to use the Propio system and regular training is provided to all staff once per year at capacity training on how to access Propio.

Employer Engagement

Participation of the private sector is critical for identifying skill sets and providing input and feedback to education and training providers. As emerging technology increases and gaps in existing competencies are identified, employers and their subject matter experts work with educators to introduce new training programs or modify existing programs to address gaps and enhance competitiveness. Employers and educators are convened around these conversations as well as for regular events including job-shadowing, Career Fairs, and Internships and Work-based Learning opportunities in order to directly communicate local opportunities with young people.

Credentialing

Promoting short-term and stackable credentials is a career pathway strategy that can help individuals to quickly begin or change careers. Many Dislocated Workers cannot commit a substantial amount of time to training and wish to reenter the workforce as soon as possible.

Apprenticeship

The WCWDA has undertaken a number of initiatives promoting the use of Registered Apprenticeship Programs to employers who are looking to invest in their workforce. The State Apprenticeship Expansion, American Apprenticeship Initiative (AAI), the Workforce Opportunities for Rural Communities (WORC) grants have all provided resources to engage and educate employers on the benefits of Registered Apprenticeship and Pre-Apprenticeship programs, the demonstrated return on investment, and how it addresses their need to obtain and train employees.

These Registered Apprenticeship activities have initially focused on the largest industry sectors of Manufacturing and Healthcare and on expanding the number of individuals entering these career pathways, particularly those with barriers to employment. The “earn while you learn” model of Apprenticeship programs offer an attractive option for those who are unable or unwilling to pursue further education on their own. This includes those who could not afford further education, those who cannot attend due to childcare, and those who lack transportation. The structured nature of Apprenticeships also allows for a meeting of the minds between worker and employer on the skill and wage progression, setting clear benchmarks and a pathway by which they can be achieved. Apprenticeship models are also proven to promote diversity and inclusion in the workplace; Sponsors commit to providing Equal Opportunity to apprenticeship applicants and participants as well as maintaining efforts to recruit, train, and retain a diverse workforce.

1.5 Describe strategic planning elements including a regional analysis of economic conditions.

Looking at data from CWIA’s 2018-2028 Long-Term Projections (Attachment 4: Local Workforce Development System Supporting Data Table 3), total employment in the WCWDA is projected to increase 1.1% from 82,560 to 83,460. While still an increase in the labor market, this is a notably smaller increase from the previously projected 2016-2026 increase of 3.8% and reflective of a more-conservative optimism for economic conditions.

While Area employment is dominated by the Services-Providing sector, this trend is expected to increase 1.8% with nearly three out of every four jobs (61,940) in 2028 to be Service-Producing. The largest amount of growth is expected in the sectors of Health Care & Social Assistance (8.7%), Self-Employed Workers (7.9%) Construction (5.5%), Accommodation & Food Services (5.0%), Arts, Entertainment & Recreation (4.2%), and Professional & Technical Services (3.3%).

The largest labor sector in the WCWDA is Health Care and Social Assistance, employing 15,289 workers. The next-largest sectors in the region are Manufacturing (11,878 workers) and Retail Trade (9,229). High location quotients (LQs) indicate sectors in which a region has high concentrations of employment compared to the national average. The sectors with the largest LQs in the region are Manufacturing (1.87), Health Care and Social Assistance (1.36), and Utilities (1.21). (Attachment 4: Local Workforce Development System Supporting Data Chart 1),

Sectors in the WCWDA with the highest average wages per worker are Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction (\$104,114), Utilities (\$97,001), and Management of Companies and Enterprises (\$86,342). Sectors with the best job growth (or most moderate job losses) over the last 3 years are Construction (+499 jobs), Management of Companies and Enterprises (+308), and Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (+187).

Over the next 3 years, employment in the Area is projected to contract by 2,334 jobs. The fastest growing sector in the region is expected to be Health Care and Social Assistance with a +0.3% year-over-year rate of growth. The strongest forecast by number of jobs over this period is expected for Health Care and Social Assistance (+126 jobs), Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction (-16), and Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation (-17).

While economic prediction data provides a starting point for conversations, WCJP is strategically focused on convening stakeholders and is vested in being an active partner at the table to hear directly from employers and partners on current business and workforce challenges. These include ongoing ventures like the Oh-Penn Interstate Region, Tristate Energy and Advanced Manufacturing (TEAM) Consortium, GR8T Manufacturing Next Gen Sector Partnership. Staff also participate in, partnering on, and presenting at numerous local and regional summits including the October 2019 Rising Rust Belt: A Regional Revitalization Economic Summit coordinated by the Shenango Valley Chamber of Commerce, the Lawrence County Regional Chamber of Commerce, and the Youngstown-Warren Regional Chamber. While COVID-19 impacted planned large in-person events, more-focused conversations have continued virtually and are expected to resume on a larger scale in late 2021.

Both data and employer input underscore the need for skilled employees that the local workforce delivery system must continue to address. Along with investment in pre-employment education and credentials, Incumbent Worker Training strategies are necessary to strategically plan for the future workforce. Connecting with WEDnetPA providers to increase the knowledge and use of the program by employers in the two counties in order to invest in the upskilling of entry-level employees up a career pathway and opening those positions to new employees.

2. STRATEGIC PLANNING: Vision and Goals

Section 2: Vision and Goals

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

The West Central Workforce Development Board (WCWDB) works together with the six Local Elected Officials (LEOs) of Lawrence and Mercer Counties who comprise West Central's Governing Board (GB). The Board maintains fiduciary and policy oversight and guidance in accordance with the Area's overall workforce development strategies. The Board is responsible for the approval of budgets, selection of service providers, and all program and performance outcomes. Local and Regional Workforce Development efforts are aligned with economic development, educational, and community-based investments to maximize the reach of the efforts and impact on the community. Paramount to these efforts are communication and collaboration with area Chambers of Commerce, Economic Development, Human Services Organizations, and Sector Partnerships.

The mission statement of the WCWDB, as developed through its strategic planning work, is: "To provide information and services relevant to the needs of employers and job seekers; comprised of employment opportunities, education and training options, and economic development linkages and resources throughout the local area." In service to this mission, the Board and its staff will leverage and maximize resources available to develop, retain, grow, and attract businesses to the region.

Cooperative planning with local and regional economic development organizations is imperative to maximizing and leveraging the resources necessary to develop a high-demand skilled workforce in support of employers' workforce needs. Toward this end the West Central WDB will build on and expand the relationships it has developed with key organizations to conduct proactive approaches. These include bringing business to the table to discuss shared needs and priorities in all areas of their

industry, not only workforce. Partners work together towards cross-coordination of programs and services to connect employers to the network of resources and meet their needs.

Workforce development needs are often one of the top priorities of employers including the recruitment, retention, and advancement of employees. Business partners are engaged to identify existing and anticipated skill sets needed in their businesses and industry to reach or maintain competitiveness. Identification of employer skill gaps, and introduction of new or revised training programs in the local area should provide employers with a pipeline of skilled individuals that lead to jobs with family sustaining wages. Working together with education and training providers with employer feedback and labor market information, existing training programs are updated, and new courses and programs are created to address identified gaps.

On-the-Job experience is also critical to impart skills that are learned outside of the classroom. The WDB will continue to work to provide integrated, Work-Based Learning opportunities for Youth and individuals with barriers to employment. By structuring experiences with case manager and mentor support, this allows individuals to guide and advise individuals as well as provide guidance and engender confidence in those starting their careers.

Investment in training that will lead to post-secondary or industry related credentials, integrated work-based opportunities for individuals (including youth and individuals with barriers to employment) and family-sustaining jobs should translate to the local workforce development area meeting or exceeding indicators of performance.

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 WCWDB works closely with the Title I Career Services Provider, Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, and Bureau of Workforce Partnership & Operations and Adult Literacy Providers to serve individual and business customers. In accordance with the Mission, which is posted in the lobby of each location, the partners coordinate to provide relevant information, referrals, and services to job seekers and employers. Co-located in the PA CareerLink® centers, partner staff coordinate the WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, and Wagner-Peyser core programs.

The One-Stop Operator serves as an intermediary to all the partnering agencies in the PA CareerLink® centers and convene regularly scheduled meetings of the partners to review center performance and progress as well as engender dialogue around business and individual customer needs. Staff from the co-located WIOA providers attend the PA CareerLink® morning meetings as well as weekly capacity building meeting convened by the Site Administrator in order to foster communication between frontline staff. The supervisors of these agencies are included in the monthly PA CareerLink® center supervisor meetings. Representatives from the Title I Career Services Provider, Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, Bureau of Workforce Partnership & Operations and the West Central Adult Education and Literacy collaborative are members of the WDB and its One-Stop Committee.

In addition to collaboration on the staff and supervisory level, standing WDB Committees act as a forum where partners discuss and coordinate relevant local and regional initiatives across organizations and report out and make recommendations to the Board. The purpose of the One-Stop Operations

Committee is to recommend a strategic approach to connecting community organizations, educational institutions and businesses to the public One-Stop workforce system. The purpose of the Youth Committee is to recommend a strategic approach to reaching out and reintegrating Out-of-School Youth (OSY) to the workforce and focus In-School Youth (ISY) on careers pathways and opportunities for employment sustainability along with other funding streams related to Youth.

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 state's workforce development system, as well as any of the goals and strategies articulated in the regional plan?

In alignment with the Commonwealth's 2020-24 WIOA Combined State Plan, the WCWDB will strategically align its efforts in support of the broader Regional and Statewide goals. This includes continuing to embrace the alignment and collaboration across local and regional agencies and workforce development partners. Pennsylvania has prioritized five broad goals for the workforce development system:

Statewide Goal 1: Career Pathways and Apprenticeship - *Develop a comprehensive career pathways system in PA and expand career pathways as the primary model for skill, credential, degree attainment, with an emphasis on assisting individuals to address barriers to employment, earn a family-sustaining wage, and advance their career.*

The establishment of career pathways has been a continued focus of the WCWDB as a model for skill and credential obtainment and advancement by providing individuals with a roadmap to jobs with family-sustaining wages. Local stakeholders convene and provide feedback into the development and execution of initiatives furthering these investments. The career pathways system encourages leveraging of funding and programmatic integration to ensure supportive services are available to meet the critical needs of individuals including accommodations to eliminate barriers to employment for individuals with disabilities. Key stakeholders work with the Board's Youth Committee to continue discussions on the progress of the local and regional career pathways system.

Career pathways information and guidance are provided to individuals in the PA CareerLink® centers as well as information on High Priority Occupations (HPOs) and programs available on the State Eligible Training Provider List. These resources, along with Case Manager guidance, assist customers in making informed choices in selecting programs and providers. Follow up services are provided to clients after job placement to help them retain and advance along their selected career pathway.

Utilizing Pre-Apprenticeship and Registered Apprenticeship as a model to promote career pathways and learn as you earn occupations, is also a specific focus the WCWDB has cultivated for the past several years. Developing Apprenticeship pathways programs under the American Apprenticeship Initiative (AAI), Workforce Opportunities for Rural Communities (WORC), and State Apprenticeship Expansion grants have been a major investment not only for the local workforce, but regionally. The WCWDB will continuously evaluate the impact of these programs and seek opportunities to build out additional Apprenticeship programs in non-traditional industries. One of the ways the WCWDB will leverage existing Apprenticeship programs and work with employers to develop new programs to expand work-based training goals and strategies is through participation in the Apprenticeship Navigator program. This program trains workforce intermediaries to reach out to employers on Registered Apprenticeship and Pre-Apprenticeship, provide assistance on developing and formalizing Standards for registered

programs, and connect them with the resources and guidance offered by the PA Apprenticeship and Training Office. The WCWDA's inaugural participants were selected members of their respective county's Business Service Teams to further awareness of these opportunities among partner agencies.

This effort will dovetail with push to further educate individuals, especially those with barriers to employment, on the opportunity for Pre-Apprenticeship and Apprenticeship programs available. In the PA CareerLink® centers, staff assists job-seekers in developing Individual Employment Plans and conducting career exploration related to their interests and aptitudes. Those interested in training are encouraged to utilize the Statewide Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) which includes the Eligible Apprenticeship List.

Statewide Goal 2: Sector Strategies and Employer Engagement - *Engage employers and industry clusters through innovative strategies to improve the connection and responsiveness of workforce programs and services to labor market demand, including recruiting, training, and retaining talent.*

Ensuring that businesses are continuously engaged in the comprehensive workforce development system, especially in the industries identified in the Local Area Workforce and Economic Analysis that are leading employment and growth, is paramount to maintain effective response strategies tied to labor market needs. The WCWDA has a long history of establishing effective public-private partnerships through enhanced business engagement strategies including: targeted industry focus groups and sector partnership development, PA CareerLink® Business Service Teams, and Regional Business Retention and Expansion Network.

Targeted industry focus and sector partnerships serve as the foundation to identify training needs of an industry and develop effective and responsive training solutions to enhance the cluster's competitiveness. The WCWDA has worked with employers in the key industries of Advanced Manufacturing, Healthcare, Building & Construction, and Transportation & Logistics since the beginning of Industry Partnership strategic investments in Pennsylvania and served as a best practice in bringing partners together to discuss opportunities and workforce needs. Pursuing the opportunity for sector strategies and Next Gen Sector Partnerships to put Employers at the helm of identifying priorities will continue to be a strategy of the Board. Recruiting, training, and retaining talent initiatives have been a main focus and continuous strategy in each of these sectors and investments have been undertaken in focused outreach, job and career fairs, and Incumbent Worker Training.

Communication through the two counties' Business Service Teams (BST), allow community partners a recurring forum to review the latest labor market information and partners' programs and services, update the collaborative on the needs that they hear directly from business, and strategize on coordinated responses to employer and industry needs. At an individualized level, members of the BST are able to utilize their existing relationships with employers to both inform them of the wider offerings available through the comprehensive workforce system and bring real-time information to the group to reduce duplication of effort and better align resources.

On a wider regional level, the WCWDB participates in Business Retention and Expansion networks like the Partnerships for Regional Economic Performance (PREP) led by the Northwest Pennsylvania Regional Planning and Development Commission. Participating organizations include the Northwest Industrial Resource Center (NWIRC), Gannon University and Duquesne University Small Business Development Centers (SBDC), The Ben Franklin Technology Partners of Central, and Northern Pennsylvania and Catalyst Connection (SWIRC). Many of these PREP partners participate on the local PA CareerLink® BSTs

in addition to the PA Engage! Program. The Engage! Program team reaches out to regional businesses to perform a needs assessment then prepares a plan of action and makes referrals to appropriate partners. These approaches (employer engagement through retaining business participation, repeat business customers, and employer penetration rate) will all serve as indicators to inform the WCWDB on the effectiveness of serving the businesses community.

Statewide Goal 3: Youth - *Increase opportunities for all youth to experience work-based learning through summer employment, pre-apprenticeship, Registered Apprenticeship, internships, job shadowing, mentoring, and other experiences in the workplace, including developing employability skills.*

Over the past several years, the WCWDA has successfully increased opportunities for youth in work-based learning and summer employment. The alignment with the career pathways system discussed in Goal 1 includes work-based learning in a comprehensive system that will include instruction on soft-skills and employer expectations, adult basic education for remediation or GED obtainment, occupational training that offers participants leads to various industry recognized credentials at the various levels in the system and a work-based learning component.

The area leverages multiple funding streams in order to maximize the number of youth placements (WIOA Youth, TANF Youth, SLIP, SIG, Youth Reentry, AAI, etc.). Early employment helps young people to develop good work habits, responsibility, organization, and time management. Case managers work with youth to create Individual Employment Plans, register and familiarize them with the PA CareerLink® website, and connect them with employers. By working closely with local employers, these placements connect the youth with mentorship on the job and offer more structured support than employment opportunities they may find alone. Additionally, the individuals become familiar with the PA CareerLink® services as they are beginning their career journey.

Statewide Goal 4: Continuous Improvement of the Workforce Development System - *Identify and enact system changes and improvements that enhance the collaboration and partnership between agencies and partners in the workforce development system.*

Enhancing collaboration between local and regional partners is pivotal for a comprehensive workforce strategy. The WCWDA seeks to build upon its strong existing relationships and work with others on initiatives to enhance services to individuals and business customers as well as the community at large. As mentioned in Goal 2, core partners are involved in both the BSTs and PREP in order to serve business customers effectively and reduce duplicative efforts. Technology and best practices to best serve business and individual customers, measure engagement, and collaborate with partners is frequently evaluated and implemented.

Recently the need was identified by partners related to additional Labor Market Information for Employers looking to relocate or expand within the area. To address this, several data tools were evaluated and subsequently the WCWDB partnered with the two leading Economic Development Agencies in Lawrence and Mercer counties to jointly purchase licenses to access the Chmura Economics & Analytics JobsEQ - Labor Market Data system. The platform will further enable data sharing across partner agencies and provide additional reports and in-depth metrics relevant to business and site selector requests.

Statewide Goal 5: Strengthening the One-Stop Delivery System - *Implement improvements to one-stop service delivery to better serve all customers, including job seekers and employers.*

The WCWDA works closely with the core partners to ensure the PA CareerLink® centers are customer-focused and integrates service delivery as a comprehensive American Job Center. The investments between partners noted in Goal 4 to improve the Workforce Development System contribute toward strengthening the One Stop Delivery System as well. The PA CareerLink® centers strive to coordinate between core and outside partners to provide optimal service to both individual and business customers.

The WCWDA is committed to implementing a plan for continuous improvement that engages all partners operating at the site and solicits input from customers and partner agencies. Interagency staff communication takes places continuously in order to make client referrals and co-enrollments to facilitate increased access to additional programs and supportive services. PA CareerLink® Site Administrators oversee meetings of staff and supervisors from the various core programs to discuss the comprehensive approach to assure that the philosophy radiates to the staff involved in the point of service to participants.

With feedback from partner staff and leadership, the standing One-Stop Operations Committee makes recommendations to the Board regarding remote access points as well as ways and means for continuous improvement regarding centers and system program delivery. Over the past year, these have included enhancements for customers seeking services during the COVID-19 related closure of the physical locations. Responding to the needs of employers and job-seekers necessitated the expansion of virtual services through staff training, updating technology, and providing additional assistance in the Career Resource Areas.

Customer service training for frontline staff training for has been provided to support the focus on individualized and personalized support to customers. The WCWDA also participates in piloting programs like the Dislocated Worker Outreach initiative to further responsiveness and individualize services for individual customers, especially those with barriers to employment. Customer needs are assessed via feedback mechanisms at the centers and make recommendations to the Board for continuous improvement. Employer customers also are surveyed and provide feedback through participation in the BSTs.

The Keystone Edge Region identifies various strategies to help achieve specific regional goals in service of the broader statewide goals. The WCWDB and the Northwest PA WDB have identified the goals below to maximize and leverage resources and increase coordination to develop a high-demand, skilled workforce which will support the needs of business and industry across the region. A detailed breakdown and sub-strategies of the goals below can be found in Section 1.4 of the Keystone Edge Regional Plan.

Regional Goal #1: *Create and grow a competitive workforce by engaging knowledgeable, employer-focused leadership that promotes and advocates for business and industry to address the critical workforce challenges of the region.*

This goal is in alignment with the WIOA Combined State Plan Goal 2 of increasing employer engagement through sector strategies to help close skill gaps, assist with curriculum development, increase work-based learning opportunities, and develop industry partnerships to address in-demand skill needs. The WCWDB will collaborate with the Northwest PA WDA as well as other neighboring workforce areas to increase awareness of needs, opportunities, and the assistance that is available for multi-region and

multi-agency customized solutions to meet needs. Through the Oh-Penn Interstate Region with neighboring Ohio workforce areas, the WCWDB has championed collaborative sector-based approaches to employer outreach, laying the foundation for broader application with employers.

Regional Goal #2: *Continually enhance the workforce development pipeline by promoting high-demand industry sectors, career pathways, and building a pipeline of talent through outreach.*

In alignment with the Governor's goals of developing the workforce pipeline, improving career pathways, and increasing work-based learning opportunities, the WCWDB works interminably to identify and address skills gaps using multiple approaches. This has included the Workforce Innovation Fund (WIF) grant, Northwest Commission Regional Skills Gap Analysis and subsequent American Apprenticeship Initiative and Workforce Opportunities for Rural Communities projects. The Board has established Career Pathways as the primary model for building talent pipelines in high-demand sectors and occupations. Continuing to collaborate with neighboring areas will build upon these initiatives to increase public awareness of career opportunities and education and training programs that prepare individuals for these jobs.

Regional Goal #3: *Maintain a commitment to continuous improvement of the workforce development network by increasing data sharing across various WIOA and partner programs.*

In order to foster continuous improvement of the Workforce Development System as a whole and strengthening of the One-Stop System, the two WDBs are committed to consistently meeting and sharing both qualitative and quantitative information. Data entered into PA's workforce development system of record allows for consistency in tracking employer and job-seeker metrics across the Keystone Edge Region. These will become more important as additional WIOA Performance Indicators and Measures are implemented and refined, including those measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers. As noted above, both WDBs participate in the Regional PREP program and Project Engage! as a unified approach to employer engagement and service and will work to further expand the use of the approach in the future.

The WDBs have a strong history of collaborative projects to serve individual and business customers in regional approaches and are currently engaged in AAI, WORC, and Youth Re-Entry grants. These projects allow for the sharing of best practices and expanding successfully piloted programs from one area to another. Regionally implemented projects also highlight novel and innovative approaches to the scalability of these programs on a broader scale.

Regional Goal #4: *Increase the alignment of education and training programs with employer demand.*

Strategies are underway regionally to align with the Governor's goals of improving career pathways and engaging employers to help close skills gaps. Throughout the eight counties, the WDBs are on the forefront of multiple efforts to engage in sector partnership development and expansion. These approaches bring employers together for conversations to prioritize industry needs and identify any gaps in current educational opportunities. Bringing the broader employer demand to education and training partners allows them to reassess programs for efficacy and maximum impact. This process also allows for employers to discuss any barriers to hiring or promoting employees they are experiencing, including work-readiness challenges that can be addressed in pre-employment interventions.

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

The WCWDA's negotiated local performance standards are attached in Attachment 1 - WCWDA WIOA Title I Programs Performance Accountability.

Performance outcomes are critical in providing a quantitative base on which to judge past and current progress and to set future goals. The Board's alignment of performance to the goals informs the direction of its initiatives and ensures local contribution towards larger regional and statewide objectives. The WCWDB strives to exceed set performance and remain a high-performing board while maximizing and leveraging the resources necessary to develop a high-demand skilled workforce. Working with WIOA Partners and other community-based organizations, the WCWDB will increase support to individuals, especially those with barriers to employment, while continuing to provide career services to other job seekers requiring less intensive navigation and supportive services to advance through pathways to employment. The ability to meet and exceed negotiated performance levels are included conditions in the procurement and contracting of One-Stop Operator and WIOA Title I Career Services subrecipient vendors. The WCWDB will seek new approaches to address the changing needs of employers and job seekers. Unique local and regional challenges, including those highlighted in the Section 1 discussion of barriers to employment and harder-to-serve groups will necessitate distinctive partnerships and perspectives.

The goals of the WCWDB to convene community stakeholders to identify employer needs and align training curricula to meet those employer needs and lead to jobs with family sustaining jobs will be a critical factor to meet federal performance accountability measures. This same stakeholder model includes the creation of career pathways that offer job seekers various on-ramps to training that leads to industry-recognized credentials that will allow them to obtain higher skill-level jobs within the local economy thereby creating job openings for individuals who have not yet achieved that level on the career pathway.

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

Section 3: Local Workforce Development 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.

The West Central Workforce Development Area's organizational structure was modified prior to the successful procurement of the One Stop Operator and clarification of roles pursuant to WIOA and state rules. To create the appropriate separation of duties under the law, separate lines of reporting were created in the West Central Job Partnership, Inc. structure. That change is reflected in the organizational chart attached as Attachment 2 - WCWDA Workforce Development System Organizational Chart.

As part of this Local Plan, and in accordance with Workforce System Policy 02-2015, the West Central Governing Board/Chief Local Elected Officials and the WCWDB in consultation are requesting from the

PA Department of Labor & Industry a continuation of the structure exception model for WIOA Title I Career Services and PA CareerLink® Operator for West Central Job Partnership, Inc., which has been granted since the inception of the Workforce Investment Act. The current structure exemption was accepted by the Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry on December 18, 2019 through June 30, 2021 as part of the West Central 2017-2020 Local Plan.

A model was implemented that instituted distinct divisions within the corporation each independently reporting to the corporate board through a Division Chief. The Administrative Division operates under an Administrative Division Chief/Chief Financial Officer (CFO) who reports directly to the Chair of the CEOs and whose major WIOA responsibilities cover WIOA Fiscal Agent and Administrative Duties in addition to providing staff services to the West Central Workforce Development Board, the latter is a non-incorporated advisory council proscribed by federal/state WIOA regulations to establish a budget and target allocated funding for workforce investment activities. The Program Division Chief reports directly to the Vice Chair of the Chief Elected Officials and has primary responsibility for implementation of WIOA Title I operations. The Operations & Special Projects Division is responsible for implementing and developing policies and procedures that will coordinate the partners' activities and resources into a seamless workforce delivery system for high quality, customer services related to job-seekers and employers who use PA CareerLink® services. The Chief of the Operations & Special Projects Division reports directly to the Secretary/Treasurer of the Chief Elected Officials.

While meeting the specified separation of functions under WIOA, this structure also promotes flexibility and cost efficiencies such that one-stop fiscal agent responsibilities and LWDB staffing are performed by Administrative Division employees thereby maintaining functional insulation from the WIOA Title I and One Stop Operator duties.

The WIOA Title I Career Services Provider was competitively procured through a publicly advertised Request for Proposal issued on December 1, 2020 with a deadline of 12:00 PM EST on January 29, 2021. WCJP's Program Division met the Request for Proposals deadline was reviewed by the Executive Committee on May 18, 2021, and the committee presented its recommendation to the full WDB at its May 27, 2021 meeting where it passed unanimously.

WCJP's Operations & Special Projects Division, the competitively procured One Stop Operator, responded to a publicly advertised Request for Proposal issued on January 19, 2020 with a deadline of 12:00 PM EST on March 19, 2021, was reviewed by the Executive Committee on May 18, 2021, and the committee presented its recommendation to the full WDB at its May 27, 2021 meeting where it passed unanimously. The One Stop Operator will supervise and direct a Site Administrator to manage one stop operations in the PA CareerLink® centers located in Mercer and Lawrence Counties. The 501(c)(3) under the auspices of the corporate board has sought federal and foundation funding to support the workforce development aims and strategic vision allowing the WCWDB to focus on its work of oversight and directing proper utilization of the Title I and other WIOA funds as well as stewardship over the maintenance and development of the one stop workforce system in the two-county area.

A Governing Board, consisting of the elected or appointed County Commissioners of Lawrence and Mercer counties, has been established to govern and implement the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) in the WCWDA. This model is still applicable under WIOA with the maintenance of required firewalls. This organization was incorporated as a 501(c)(3) Not-for-Profit Corporation and does business under the name West Central Job Partnership, Inc. The Governing Board will carry out all

responsibilities assigned to the Local Elected Officials (LEOs) under Title I of the Act. The role of the LEOs in the governance and implementation of the Act in the local area includes, but is not limited necessarily to: designating the fiscal agent for all funds made available to Lawrence and Mercer counties under the Act; establishing a Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) in the two county area in accordance with the Act and the Rules and Regulations promulgated for the implementation of the Act; entering into a written agreement with the LWDB which details clearly the partnership between the two entities for the governance and oversight of activities authorized under the Act; authorizing the establishment of a standing youth committee as a subgroup of the LWDB and approving nominations of members for appointment by the WCWDB to that subgroup; approving or disapproving, in partnership with the WCWDB, the designation or certification of any PA CareerLink® operators within the Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA) and approving or disapproving the termination of the eligibility of such operators; providing input and oversight to the LWDB regarding the negotiating and reaching agreement with the Commonwealth's PA Workforce Development Board (PAWDB) on local performance measures; reviewing and approving or disapproving, in partnership with the LWDB, any plan pertaining to workforce development or job training, any modifications to such plans, and any other documents required by the State or Federal government prior to submission; determining the apportionment of funds and liabilities between the involved counties and approving all adjustments to allocations; approving or disapproving any contract with any entity for the performance of services required or needed pursuant to the implementation or operation of any program or project authorized under the Act unless otherwise stipulated and agreed and, conducting oversight, in partnership with the LWDB, of the operations of any local Title I funded programs of Youth, Adult, and Dislocated Worker activities and the PA CareerLink® delivery system.

A Chairperson of the Governing Board is elected, together with a Vice-Chairperson and a Secretary/Treasurer, by a majority vote of the six members of the Governing Board. The Officers serve for a two-year term, beginning January 1, and ending December 31, or until replaced. In the event that both the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson are absent from a meeting, those members present may elect a member to serve as temporary Chairperson. Four members of the Governing Board constitute a quorum, which shall be necessary for the transaction of business at meetings and may be met by telephone, virtual conference, or similar means. All matters brought before the Governing Board may be resolved by a simple majority of the total votes present at each meeting. Each member shall have one vote with no proxy.

Fiscal Agent – The Administrative Division of WCJP was designated by the Local Elected Officials and attested to by their duly elected Chairperson who acts as the Chief Local Elected Official (CLEO) for purposes of the Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act in NW#145 in the aforementioned LEO LWDB Agreement for Lawrence and Mercer counties. The contact information for the fiscal agent is as follows:

Gregg K. Dogan Administrative Division Chief/Chief Financial Officer
West Central Job Partnership, Inc.
217West State Street, Third Floor Sharon, PA 16146
Phone: 724-347-7855 Fax: 724-347-2109
Email: gdogan@wcjp.org Website: www.wcjp.org

Local Workforce Development Board - The chief role of the WCWDB, as the LDWB for the two-county workforce area, is to develop policy, establish a budget and provide oversight for the workforce system

under its jurisdiction. This includes approving a system and budgeting for training activities under Title I of WIOA, determining the number and operational structure for the PA CareerLink® comprehensive centers for Lawrence and Mercer counties, acting in consultation with the LEOs to align workforce resources within the LWDA to be in line with both state and local economic development targets. Additionally, the WCWDB ensures that monitoring of funded activities under its purview occurs periodically and meets regulatory standards on both the programmatic and administrative levels such as, one stop operations and procurement of services both for vendors and sub-recipient contractors. As an appointed advisory board for the combined commissioners of Lawrence and Mercer counties, they act in collaboration with the LEOs in a public-private partnership to maintain and adapt a flexible workforce system capable of investing assets to competitively position the businesses and populace of the jurisdiction to benefit in both regional and global markets.

Currently there are 29 members on the WCWDB. Private sector members are identified by the six Chambers of Commerce in the two-county area and their names are submitted to the appropriate county Board of Commissioners for consideration. To maintain the private sector majority required under the Act, the counties select a total of 15 private sector members. The County Commissioners, working with the Chambers and LWDB staff make an effort to align the private sector representation with the Industry Clusters identified for the two-county areas. Appointment and reappointment letters are mailed to the selected individuals and a copy of that letter kept on file at WCJP's Corporate Office. When appointing other mandated members to the Board, the County Commissioners consult with the appropriate group in the local area for nominations. These groups recommend representatives from local central labor councils, community-based organizations, local economic development agencies, local educational entities and other mandatory members. When two representatives are required, each county selects a representative to the Board. The CLEO appoints the WIOA Title I representative. Initially the Board appointments are for two-, three-, or four-year terms. After the initial appointments, the Board terms are for a three-year period and are staggered, with approximately 1/3 of the Board up for re-appointment each year.

Executive Committee - Composed of the four WCWDB officers, the past Chair and up to four additional Board members selected by the WCWDB chair, the Executive Committee acting as the liaison to the Local Elected Officials (Governing Board), are empowered to act on time-sensitive issues between LWDB meetings, and its members usually chair various LWDB subcommittees. Any issue acted upon by the Executive Committee will be placed on the agenda for the next regularly-scheduled WDB meeting for a motion to ratify the action taken by the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee will also oversee the Community Outreach strategies for the WCWDB and PA CareerLink® centers.

Finance Committee - Composed of the members of the Executive Committee discussed above and the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Governing Board. The Finance Committee members review the Title I WIOA allocations, the PA CareerLink® budgets and expenditure reports and provide oversight on the funding resources to be allocated to ITAs, OJTs, incumbent worker training and other training initiatives.

Youth Committee - recommends a strategic approach to reaching out and reintegrating out of school youth to the world of work and focusing younger youth on careers and opportunities for employment sustainability.

One Stop/Operations Committee - recommends a strategic approach to connecting community organizations, educational institutions, and businesses to the public one-stop workforce system. The

One-Stop/Operations Committee will meet regularly with the One-Stop operator for discussion and input regarding the daily operations and strategic goals of the PA CareerLink® system.

Individuals responsible for duties related to equal employment opportunities and civil rights protections are:

<p>Cynthia Myers, EO Officer West Central WDA</p> <p>217 West State Street, Third Floor Sharon, PA 16146 724-347-7855 x308 cmyers@wcjp.org</p>	<p>John Bunnell, EO Liaison PA CareerLink® Mercer County 217 West State Street Sharon, PA 16146 724-347-9257 x202 jbunnell@pa.gov</p>	<p>Stacie Harmon, EO Liaison PA CareerLink® Lawrence County 101 S Mercer Street, Suite 101 New Castle, PA 16101 724-656-3165 x216 sharmon@wcjp.org</p>
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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 following programs work together to provide an array of employment services and to connect customers to work-related training and education directly in the PA CareerLink® offices or by referral (the six core programs identified by WIOA are shown in bold):

- **WIOA Title I Adult – WCJP Program Division**
- **WIOA Title I Dislocated Worker – WCJP Program Division**
- **WIOA Title I Youth – WCJP Program Division**
- **WIOA Title II Adult Education and Literacy – Adult Literacy Lawrence County (ALLC), Grove City Education Center for Adults (GCECA), and Butler County Community College (BC3) as fiscal agent for both counties**
- **WIOA Title III Wagner Peyser – Bureau of Workforce Partnership and Operations (BWPO)**
- **WIOA Title IV Rehabilitation Act – Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR)**
- Senior Community Service Employment Program – PathStone Corporation
- Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) – BWPO
- Jobs for Veterans State Grant, Veterans and Disabled Veterans – BWPO
- Community Services Block Grant – Department of Community & Economic Development, Lawrence County Community Action Partnership, and Community Action Partnership Mercer County
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) – referrals to County Assistance Offices (CAO) in Lawrence and Mercer Counties
- Unemployment Compensation Programs – BWPO staff-assisted, dedicated computer for individuals to open claims or submit requests for assistance with PA Department of Labor & Industry – PA Unemployment Compensation
- Rapid Response – BWPO
- Foreign Labor Certification – BWPO

- Native American Programs – Three Rivers American Indian Center
- National Farmworker Jobs Program – PathStone Corporation

All required federally mandated programs have entered into the One-Stop Partner Memorandum of Understanding for these PA CareerLink® centers. Career services for WIOA Title I Adult, Dislocated Workers and Youth as well as access to training services through Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) are provided here. Career services under Wagner-Peyser, chapter 41 of Title 38 United States Code (Veterans Programs), Unemployment Compensation and Trade Act Programs are present. Career services under the Community Services Block Grant, Title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and TANF Employment and Training Programs as well as Title II Literacy Programs are also available. Career services can be accessed for Title V of the Older Americans Act.

Core program providers (WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth; Wagner Peyser; Adult Basic Education; and Office of Vocational Rehabilitation) continue to meet regularly to coordinate and align program services to meet the needs of eligible individuals. Supervisors meet to discuss program services and how they are integrated into PA CareerLink® activities. Front-line staff meet every morning to review job orders and scheduled activities for the PA CareerLink® for the day. Weekly meetings are held for frontline capacity training for partner agency staff to learn about specific programs and services.

Partner Collaboration

The One-Stop Operator convenes meetings with the PA CareerLink® Site Administrators and the One-Stop Committee (comprised of the mandatory partners and several WCWDB members) on a quarterly basis to review the overall operations of the PA CareerLink® centers. The One-Stop Committee reviews performance and plans, and then makes recommendations of the delivery of career services. The One-Stop Operator and Site Administrators coordinate with any appropriate committees of the WCWDB. The One-Stop Operator and Site Administrators attend the Board meetings and address any questions raised by Board members related to delivery of services. PA CareerLink® partners periodically attend the WCWDB meetings to discuss programs and services offered by their organizations.

Several mandated partners are not located in the local workforce development area (Job Corps, Youth Build) or not funded for programs in the local area (Second Chance Act, Career and Technical Education programs at the post-secondary level authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006, employment and training activities carried out by the Department of Housing and Urban Development). These partners, as well as other community-based organizations, participate in local workforce development activities in a variety of ways in partnership with the WCWDB, the One-Stop Operator, and the Site Administrators. Examples of participation include:

- Pittsburgh Job Corps has regular monthly recruitment sessions;
- PA District Probation and Parole holds monthly meetings/classes for individuals recently released from prison to introduce them to all PA CareerLink® services and activities;
- Butler County Community College schedules occasional classes (such as pre-manufacturing certificate course) at the PA CareerLink® centers;
- WCWDB facilitated a meeting between the Mercer County Housing Authority (HUD agency) and the New Castle School of Trades that resulted in six Housing Authority employees receiving training and certifications to handle refrigerants at little cost to the agency.

One-Stop Operator's Functional Relationships

West Central Job Partnership, Inc.'s Corporate Board consists of the six Local Elected Officials (LEOs). The One-Stop Operator reports directly to the Secretary/Treasurer of WCJP's Corporate Board. The One-Stop Operator convenes regular meetings with the PA CareerLink® partner agencies to discuss customer flow and delivery of all workforce development services in the local area. The One-Stop Operator coordinates the service delivery of required partners and service providers. Within that role, the One-Stop operator is responsible for ensuring that the integrated service delivery system at the PA CareerLink® centers support the WCWDB policies related to oversight and implementation of the One-Stop delivery system. Additionally, the One-Stop Operator is responsible for ensuring that the service delivery system at the PA CareerLink® centers fully integrates the products, protocols, and quality standards that conform to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's State Plan.

Alignment with Regional and State Plans

The WCWDB is fully committed to implementation of the four goals presented in the Keystone Edge Regional Plan in partnership with the NWPADB in order to ensure alignment with the regional plan and support of the state plan, current priorities for implementation include:

- Collaboration between the two LWDBs on Next Generation Sector Partnership proposals that engage employers on a regional basis;
- Establishment of sector-based employer advisory committees on a regional basis to provide consistent input on career pathways to all education and training providers;
- Coordination of a regional awareness campaign in the region;
- Continuance of a communications structure between the two WDBs at both the leadership level for strategy development and the operations levels for consistent quality of customer services; and
- Empowerment of conveners for region-wide development of policies, procedures and tools for coordinated and streamlined customer services for employers, job seekers, and students in the region.

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

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

As described above, the local workforce development system works together through meaningful partnerships between agencies to maximize knowledge of and access to resources for employers and job seekers. The WCWDB endeavors to reinforce and strengthen its collaborations and strategies necessary for One-Stop centers to provide job seekers and workers with the high-quality career services, education and training, and supportive services they need to get good jobs and stay employed, and to help businesses find skilled workers and access other supports, including education and training for their current workforce.

PA CareerLink® Orientation workshops occur weekly in order to inform individuals about and provide an overview of the programs and services available. Workforce professional Employment & Training Specialists are committed to customer service and provide individualized help and guidance to those contacting the centers. Referrals between co-located and outside partner agencies are conducted through multiple facets including PA's workforce development system of record, in-person or telephone introductions, or referral to pre-application forms. Referrals and warm handoffs are also made electronically between partner agencies in order to further expedite and expand access to customers remotely. Foot traffic is also tracked based upon the number of unique and total individuals accessing services as well as a breakout of the reason for their visits including: ABE/GED, Assessment & Testing, Career Resource Area, Center Workshops, Employer Job Fairs, Interviews, and Recruitments, Orientations, and Partner Workshops. This report is shared regularly at Workforce Development Board meetings so that all partners are up to date on center statistics and trends.

The Title I Career service provider coordinates the delivery of WIOA Adult, Youth, and Dislocated Worker programming in Lawrence and Mercer counties. The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) assists customers with disabilities and barriers to employment. Eligible OVR customers receive multiple services that may include but not be limited to; diagnostic, vocational counseling and guidance, vocational evaluation, restoration, training, job placement, individualized support services; and pre-employment training services for eligible and potentially eligible high school students with disabilities. OVR also provides multiple services to the business community designed to assist businesses with onboarding pre-screened qualified employees with disabilities. Eligibility to receive services under WIOA Title IV may only be determined by a qualified OVR Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor. Adult Education and Literacy partners offer adult education classes and instruction. Representatives of the core partners sit on the WDB as well as on its standing committees in order to ensure their organizations are involved in actions taken to expand access to the PA CareerLink®.

Over past year, significant effort has been made to broaden the reach of PA CareerLink® to serve individuals during COVID-19. Investments have been made in hardware and software, including extending on-site wireless network access, webcams, video conferencing, electronic document signing, and a cloud-based product suite. These endeavors have allowed case managers to continue to connect with clients who are unable to come to a physical center, while providing expanded in-person availability to individuals who visit the centers who need computers, internet access, and/or staff assistance. Clients are also able to virtually job interview with prospective employers who are not conducting in-person recruitment.

The WCWDB plans to continue to invest in emerging technology in order to further meet individual and employer needs and maximize access to workforce development services. An outreach plan and committee are in development to better inform the community about the full array of PA CareerLink® services through both traditional and online platforms to increase the number of individuals who are aware and have access to resources.

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

In alignment with Local, Regional and Statewide goals enumerated in Section 2 of this Plan, the WCWDA promotes career pathways as a key local workforce development activity aligned with high-employment and growing industries as well as identified High Priority Occupations. The career pathways system encourages leveraging of funding and programmatic integration to ensure supportive services are available to meet the critical needs of individuals including accommodations to eliminate barriers to employment for individuals with disabilities. The Board provides oversight and guidance to One-Stop staff to explore and integrate strategic options for cross-program utilization whenever possible. For example, individuals who are both WIOA and OVR eligible receive coordinated services to enhance benefits and resources. Tuition may be paid by WIOA Title I and books and supplies by OVR thus maximizing benefits to the client and minimizing cost to both programs. Similarly, individuals eligible for Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) and Trade Readjustment Act (TRA) programs are dual enrolled into WIOA Dislocated Worker Programs to receive assessment, supportive services or training services as appropriate once again maximizing benefits while minimizing cost. Referrals are taken for WIOA services for Veterans, individuals receiving Unemployment Compensation, Older Workers and other populations. In addition, all WIOA participants are required to apply for other funding for which they may be eligible, including Pell, PHEAA, work opportunity grants, cultural diversity grants that are offered at some universities, etc.

Career services in the PA CareerLink® centers will include career exploration activities that illustrate career pathways to family-sustaining jobs in the local area as well as the on- and off-ramps to the education/vocational training and the credentials that can be obtained along the pathway. Stackable credentials, industry-recognized credentials, and Pre-Apprenticeship and Apprenticeship programs are promoted as part of an employment readiness strategy on-ramps aimed at increasing the pipeline of workers. Individual Employment Plans (IEPs) and case management allow individuals to set both short and long-term employment goals to increase successful outcomes over time.

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

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

The WCWDB strategically implements employer engagement approaches through collaborative efforts with partner agencies. This coordination will be facilitated through retail and wholesale business service strategies and is critical to connecting qualified businesses to appropriate services. As a wholesale approach, employers are engaged in activities dealing with broader sector topics including Next-Gen Sector Strategic Planning. Retail engagement of employers seeks to provide employment services to businesses on an individualized basis. Through the combination of the wholesale and retail engagement strategy the Board will provide macro and micro information regarding trends and challenges relevant to workforce needs in the WCWDA. Community based organizations and education are likewise engaged at both the retail and wholesale levels within the PA CareerLink® and on the local workforce development board to maintain the strategic goal of two-way communication insuring that information flows into and out from the workforce development system.

In providing these coordinated regional services utilizing both the retail and wholesale approaches described above, we have identified some key implications for the workforce system, including:

- Encouraging a deeper relationship with the employer and serves to create a positive perception of the workforce system by the employer
- Focusing on demand first, with partners then focused on a coordinated supply-side response
- Expanding service strategies beyond just acquisition of talent approaches
- Obtaining real-time demand data Employer discussions
- Applicability of this model has for neighboring workforce development boards and their partners in building regional collaborations and in creating more effective approaches for business services under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

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

Through the above-mentioned strategies in place to meet the needs of businesses, the locally-based Business Service Team (BSTs) and regional-based Partnerships for Regional Economic Performance (PREP) will engage employers through activities to develop and maintain robust business engagement. BSTs have been established by each PA CareerLink® in Lawrence and Mercer counties to focus specifically on services to employer customers. The mission of the Business Service Team is to provide guidance, resources, and strategic workforce solutions to employer customers. Through collaborative efforts, the BST will maintain a customer-friendly process to identify and access resources in response to specific business needs. The BST will promote industry stability and growth while serving as a central hub from which businesses can obtain coordinated assistance in recruiting, training and development of new or existing workers. Through these efforts, the BST will develop a flexible delivery of business services to better forecast, evaluate, analyze, and respond to the rapidly changing needs of businesses.

BST membership is comprised of representatives from multiple partners with a variety of resources and community connections to foster business engagement. With Apprenticeship Navigators on both Lawrence and Mercer county's BSTs and housed in the PA CareerLink® locations, they are able to be on the forefront of discovering employers needs through their own outreach and through partner information sharing and referrals. This allows for the awareness of Employers who are accessing workforce development programs like Incumbent Worker, On-the-Job, and Customized Training programs as well as the opportunity to leverage and braid funding with Registered Apprenticeship and Pre-Apprenticeship programs. This positioning helps to reach additional who are ready to engage in worker training so they can provide information on and support for Pre-Apprenticeship and Registered Apprenticeship programs. Additionally, representatives are able tailor their approach and share relevant ROI based upon the most pressing issues identified by the employer.

Individual members of the PA CareerLink® have also worked in tandem with key regional PREP partners in workforce development. Through collaboration, partnerships have been established that focus on the identification of regional industry needs in addition to local, county by county workforce needs. The WCWDA will align and utilize all available resources to support local workforce and economic efforts to retain and attract business in the region. Joint planning with regional and local economic development organizations is critical to maximizing and leveraging the resources necessary to develop a high-demand

skilled workforce in support of business and industry's workforce needs. Toward this end the Board will build upon and expand the existing relationships it has developed with key partners in order to construct proactive approaches and continue to convene local and regional employers to identify skill sets required for various High Priority Occupations.

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

As members of both local BSTs and the regional PREP partnership, economic development agencies are part of the Workforce Development Agency's wholesale and retail, two-tier approach in the PA CareerLink® centers as described above. As part of this strategy and as members of the LWDB the economic development agencies stay well informed of the PA CareerLink® partner agencies' missions and available services. Noted in the Sector Strategies and Employer Engagement and Continuous Improvement of the Workforce Development System statewide goals, this includes connecting employers with businesses through coordinated engagement efforts. The BSTs in Lawrence and Mercer counties have developed common outreach materials to be utilized by the partner agencies to introduce the partnering agencies and available programs and services. Partners meet regularly to discuss the progress of their individual and organizational efforts and contributions toward the collaborative strategies. Regionally, the PREP partners also meet regularly to update all partners on advancement towards individual agency and overall initiative goals. The PREP partners also utilize the customer management system Executive Pulse through the Engage! program to coordinate, refer, and follow up with employers and coordinate with other partners in service of collaborative approaches.

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

While Work Search and Work Registration requirements had been temporarily suspended for all UC claimants during the COVID-19 pandemic, the anticipated reinstatement of these requirements and the Reemployment Services & Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) orientation workshops is expected to increase Dislocated Worker traffic to the PA CareerLink® centers. This orientation includes a group session as well as a one-on-one meeting with the RESEA Coordinator and WIOA Title I staff who will explain programs and funding available through the WIOA programs. To further connect with those Unemployment Compensation claimants, the WCWDA will participate in programs like the Dislocated Worker Outreach initiative to further responsiveness and individualize services for individual customers, especially those with barriers to employment.

The PA CareerLink® centers in Lawrence and Mercer counties host regular Employer Advisory Council (EAC) meetings on topics related to timely subjects relevant to business interest. The Office of UC Service Center Sections have been invited to speak at the EAC meetings and other ½ day seminars on UC topics and employer rights and responsibilities. Additionally, information on the Shared Work program

which allows an employer to temporarily reduce work hours rather than laying off any employees, is shared with local businesses directly and distributed by Business Service Team members.

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?

As part of the Keystone Edge regional goals, the WCWDB coordinates with the Northwest Pennsylvania Regional Planning and Development Commission, PREP committee, and composite members to link the workforce development system operative in this jurisdiction with other providers of Business Services. Regional work is also being done through multi-area projects like the Greater Oh-Penn and TEAM Consortium, among others, in order to ensure local alignment with larger trends and employer needs. Local private-sector businesses are recruited to serve on regional employer committees and sector partnerships to represent the two-county area and voice their existing and anticipated workforce needs along with informing the direction of proposed solutions.

With the projected increase in Self-Employment by 2028, additional focus on business development and promotion of entrepreneurial skills is taking place. The WCWDB promotes entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services offered by the local Small Business Development Centers as well as business Incubators including the eCenter@LindenPointe, Penn State Shenango's co-located VenturePointe, Westminster College's Entrepreneurship Lab, Thiel College's Haller Enterprise Institute, the Shenango Valley Fab Lab at Laurel Technical Institute, and other local initiatives. Regularly scheduled First Step workshops are offered by the Duquesne and Gannon SBDCs and have recently been expanded to be offered virtually to reach a larger audience. Additional business development topics offered include Business Structure and Formation; Fictitious Name Registration; Insurance; Environmental Concerns; Financing Options; Taxation Requirements; Major Components of the Business Plan; Financial Statements & Projections. The PA CareerLink® centers are equipped with computers with webcams for individuals who wish to attend these workshops virtually and, as in-person services resume, the WDB staff will coordinate with the PA CareerLink® Operator and Site Administrators to explore if other workshops could be offered at the centers.

4. OPERATIONAL PLANNING: Local Area Workforce Delivery System

Section 4: Local Workforce Delivery System

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

The West Central Workforce Development Board competitively procures for a One Stop Operator for the two PA CareerLink® locations in the Area. WCJP's Administrative Division issued a Request for Proposal on January 19, 2021. The bidder's notice was distributed to Workforce Development Board members, Local Elected Officials, 30 local organizations, and the full RFP was published on WCJP's

website at www.wcjp.org with a deadline of March 19, 2021. Proposals were received and evaluated by the Executive Committee on May 18, 2021.

The Executive Committee determined that the received proposal(s) met all state and federal requirements as well as the requirements of the RFP. A cost analysis determined that the quoted price met the fair and reasonable standards. Based upon the recommendation of the Executive Committee, the Board awarded a contract to WCJP's Operations & Special Projects Division to act as the One Stop Operator in Lawrence and Mercer counties effective July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022 with the option for renewal for three additional one-year terms.

A PA CareerLink® Site Administrator is responsible for the coordination of service delivery of One-Stop partners and service providers within their county. Key Stakeholders include core partners:

- WIOA Title I Adult – WCJP Program Division
- WIOA Title I Dislocated Worker – WCJP Program Division
- WIOA Title I Youth – WCJP Program Division
- WIOA Title II Adult Education and Literacy – Adult Literacy Lawrence County (ALLC), Grove City Education Center for Adults (GCECA), and Butler County Community College (BC3) as fiscal agent for both counties
- WIOA Title III Wagner Peyser – Bureau of Workforce Partnership and Operations (BWPO)
- WIOA Title IV Rehabilitation Act – Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR)

Additional Program Partners/Providers include:

- Senior Community Service Employment Program – PathStone Corporation
- Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) – BWPO
- Jobs for Veterans State Grant, Veterans and Disabled Veterans – BWPO
- Community Services Block Grant – Department of Community & Economic Development, Lawrence County Community Action Partnership, and Community Action Partnership Mercer County
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) – referrals to County Assistance Offices (CAO) in Lawrence and Mercer Counties
- Unemployment Compensation Programs – BWPO staff-assisted, dedicated computer for individuals to open claims or submit requests for assistance with PA Department of Labor & Industry – PA Unemployment Compensation
- Rapid Response – BWPO
- Foreign Labor Certification – BWPO
- Native American Programs – Three Rivers American Indian Center
- National Farmworker Jobs Program – PathStone Corporation

The One-Stop Operator convenes meetings with the PA CareerLink® Site Administrators and the One-Stop Committee (comprised of the mandatory partners and several WCWDB members) quarterly to review the overall operations of the PA CareerLink® sites. The Committee evaluates performance and plans and puts forth recommendations of the delivery of career services. The One-Stop Operator and Site Administrators coordinate with any appropriate committees of the WCWDB. The One-Stop Operator and Site Administrators attend the Board meetings and address any questions raised by members related to delivery of services. PA CareerLink® partners periodically attend the WCWDB

meetings to discuss programs and services offered by their organizations. Local advocacy groups, including the Shenango Valley Urban League, LARK Enterprises, and United Way of Mercer County, participate on the Workforce Board, its committees, and partner on programs and initiatives related to their missions and the community at large.

The identity and role of the individuals responsible for ensuring equal employment opportunities and civil rights protections can be found in prompt 3.1 on page 21.

The Grant Recipient’s procurement system has been developed to promote fair and open competition among providers. WCJP may utilize any one of the procurement methods including: micro-purchasing, small purchase procedures, competitive proposals and noncompetitive proposals. The GR will use the RFP procedure for the procurement of training programs over \$250,000.

The WCWDB staff is involved in a variety of undertakings with key community stakeholders and groups and regularly participates in meetings and conferences as detailed in Section 2.2.

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

Partners and their respective roles are shown below with Partner Point of Contact information included in Attachment 3: WIOA Local Workforce Development Delivery System Program Partner-Provider List.

Partner Program	Partner Organization	Roles & Services Offered
WIOA Title I Adult	WCJP Admin Division (partner) WCJP Program Division (provider)	In accordance with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) West Central Job Partnership, Inc.’s Administrative Division is a mandatory partner of the PA CareerLink® system. WCJP’s Administrative Division focuses on the delivery of Career Services in which there are 3 types: basic, individualized, and follow up. WCJP’s Basic Career Services programming will include: Determination of whether the individual is eligible to receive assistance from the Adult, Dislocated Worker, or Youth programs, including co-enrollment among these programs. Outreach, intake, and orientation to information and other services available through the One-Stop delivery system including TANF assistance. Initial assessment of skill levels, including literacy, numeracy, English language proficiency, as well as, aptitudes, abilities (including skill gaps), and supportive service needs. Labor exchange services, including Job Search and placement assistance, and when needed by an individual, career counseling including the provision of information on in-demand industry sectors and occupations; information on non-traditional employment; information from career profiles and interest inventories, and referrals to other programs and services as needed. Provide Labor Market Information, skills needed for High Priority Occupations, earnings for local occupations, and training providers available in the local area,

		<p>as well as the projected cost to attend training. Providing information and referrals on available supportive services including childcare, child support, medical or CHIP program, SNAP/TANF cash referral, housing, clothing and transportation provided through other programs. Assistance is also given with information needed to apply for financial aid assistance for training and education programs. Referring participants to the UC system for guidance in filing a claim. Individualized Career Services programming will include: Comprehensive and Specialized Assessments which can include diagnostic testing, in-depth interviewing and evaluation to identify employment barriers and employment goals, development of an Individual Employment Plan, group counseling, individual counseling, career planning, short term pre-vocational services such as learning skills, communication skills, interviewing skills, punctuality, and personal maintenance. Work Based Learning opportunities that are linked to career pathways such to Financial Literacy services, English Language acquisition programs, referrals to OVR for programs geared to those with disabilities. Assisting with Individual Training Accounts for High Priority Occupations being offered through the training providers list on the PA CareerLink® system. Follow-up Career Services will be provided, as appropriate, for Adult, Youth, and Dislocated Worker program participants who are placed in unsubsidized employment for up to 12 months after the first day of employment. Youth who enter the military or post-secondary training will also be followed up on to provide support and supportive service referrals as needed to assist in long term retention.</p>
WIOA Title I Dislocated Worker	<p>WCJP Admin Division (partner)</p> <p>WCJP Program Division (provider)</p>	Same services as Title I Adult
WIOA Title I Youth	<p>WCJP Admin Division (partner)</p> <p>WCJP Program Division (provider)</p>	<p>Same services as Title I Adult.</p> <p>Youth are main streamed through the regular PA CareerLink® processes and activities and appropriate referrals to other programs and services are made. Initial assessment of skill levels, including literacy, numeracy, English language proficiency, as well as, aptitudes, abilities (including skill gaps); information from career profiles and interest inventories; provide Labor Market Information, skills needed for High Priority Occupations, earnings for local occupations, and training providers available in the local area; comprehensive and specialized assessments which can include diagnostic testing; career planning; short term pre-vocational services such as learning skills, communication skills, interviewing skills, punctuality, and personal maintenance; referrals to Financial Literacy services</p>

WIOA Title II Adult Education	Adult Literacy Lawrence County, Grove City Education Center for Adults, Butler County Community College (BC3) is fiscal agent for both counties.	Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) Program. Adult Basic Education & General Education Diploma (GED) instruction. The PA CareerLink® centers will seamlessly offer adult basic education training to individuals who need to obtain their GED or upgrade their basic skill levels. Referrals will be made to the adult education training providers co-located in the PA CareerLink® centers or to other adult education training provider locations closer to the individual's residence.
WIOA Title III Wagner Peyser	Bureau of Workforce Partnership and Operations (BWPO)	Job seeker services: job search & placement assistance; career counseling; development of individual employment plans; case management. Employer services: assistance in developing & posting job orders; referral of qualified job seekers to openings; organizing job fairs. Labor market information is provided to job seekers & employers.
WIOA Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation*	Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR)	Eligible OVR customers receive multiple services that may include but not be limited to: diagnostic, vocational counseling and guidance, vocational evaluation, restoration, training, job placement and pre-employment training services for eligible and potentially eligible high school students with disabilities. These individualized services are designed to prepare OVR customers to become qualified trained members of the workforce. OVR provides multiple services to the business community designed to assist businesses with onboarding pre-screened qualified employees with disabilities. OVR onboarding supports for a qualified new hire can include: reasonable accommodation consultation, initial probationary period wage reimbursement (On-the-Job Training), 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. Our statewide business services staff can identify resources to assist any organization on how to improve access compliance and steps to diversify their workforce to include citizens with a disability.
Senior Community Service Employment Program	PathStone Corporation	Authorized under Title V of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3056 et seq.) Referrals are made to contractors for program information and assistance. Older individuals are mainstreamed through the regular PA CareerLink® processes and activities. All Title I programs are open to older individuals without bias. Any older individuals determined to be "job ready" will be referred to BWPO staff for job matching and referrals.
Trade Adjustment Act	BWPO	Individuals who meet qualifying criteria may receive: job training, income support in the form of Trade Readjustment Allowances (TRA), job search & relocation assistance allowances; Health Coverage Tax Credit (HCTC) as determined by the Internal Revenue

		Service (IRS); and for workers age 50 and older, a wage supplement in the form of Reemployment Trade Adjustment Assistance (RTAA) and Alternative Trade Adjustment Assistance (ATAA); employment & case management services.
Jobs for Veterans State Grants	BWPO	Jobs for Veterans State Grants (JVSG) authorized under chapter 41 of title 38, U.S.C. Specialized counselors work directly with disabled veterans in the provision of labor exchange services, securing appropriate training services and obtaining employment at a family sustaining wage. JVSG allows Local Veterans Employment Reps to provide employer outreach and promote veterans as job seekers with highly marketable skills and experience.
Community Services Block Grant (CSBG)	Department of Community & Economic Development Lawrence County Community Action Partnership Community Action Partnership Mercer County	Employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant Act (CSBG) (42 U.S.C. 9901 et seq.) CSBG agencies provide community engagement services to remove obstacles that block the achievement of self-sufficiency. Contribution to the workforce development system may include: participate on local and regional planning groups; engage in Business Service Teams activities; have print materials available in the PA CareerLink® centers; be linked to local workforce websites on computers; potentially hold meetings at PA CareerLink® centers; conduct joint employer outreach sessions as necessary; and seek to leverage grant funding opportunities.
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)	County Assistance Offices Lawrence & Mercer Counties	Authorized under part A of Title IV of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.) All low-income individuals are referred to the County Assistance Office (CAO) for assistance in removing barriers that may prevent them from attending training or obtaining and/or retaining employment. TANF recipients will also be referred to partner agencies and/or community agencies for assistance in other areas such as drug and alcohol counseling, housing issues, etc. TANF customers and low income individuals may be referred for WIOA application if more intensive career services are deemed appropriate.
Unemployment Compensation (UC)	BWPO staff-assisted PA L&I UC	BWPO staff provides some direct assistance to UC claimants and employers at the PA CareerLink® centers. Computers are available for individuals to open claims or contact the call centers for assistance. The UC Board of Review utilizes space in the PA CareerLink® Lawrence County for UC appeal hearings.
Rapid Response	BWPO	Early intervention business services that assist workers and employers during the entire business layoff cycle. Rapid Response coordinates layoff aversion and outplacement services for employers and workers impacted by layoffs, plant closures, or natural disasters.

Foreign Labor Certification	BWPO	H2A (Temporary Agricultural Program) and H2B (Temporary Non-Agricultural Program) help U.S. employers fill jobs while protecting U.S. and foreign workers.
Native American Programs	Three Rivers American Indian Center	Programs authorized under title I of WIOA - Native American programs WIOA, Title I, Sec. 131. Academic, occupational, and literacy activities to assist Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian participants preparing to enter, reenter, or retain unsubsidized employment leading to self-sufficiency and to promote economic and social development of Native American communities.
National Farmworker Jobs Program	Pathstone Corporation	The National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) provides grants to community-based organizations and public agencies that assist migrant and seasonal farmworkers (MSFWs) and their families attain greater economic stability. The program helps farmworkers acquire the skills they need to retain agricultural jobs or start new careers.

Several mandated partners are not located in the local workforce development area (Job Corps, Youth Build) or not funded for programs in the local area (Second Chance Act, Career and Technical Education programs at the post-secondary level authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006, employment and training activities carried out by the Department of Housing and Urban Development). These partners, as well as other community-based organizations, participate in local workforce development activities in a variety of ways in partnership with the WCWDB, the One-Stop Operator, and the Site Administrators. Examples of participation include:

- Pittsburgh Job Corps has regular monthly recruitment sessions
- PA District Probation and Parole holds monthly meetings/classes for individuals recently released from prison to introduce them to all PA CareerLink® services and activities
- Butler County Community College schedules occasional classes (such as premanufacturing certificate course) at the PA CareerLink® centers
- WCWDB facilitated a meeting between the Mercer County Housing Authority (HUD agency) and the New Castle School of Trades that resulted in six Housing Authority employees receiving training and certifications to handle refrigerants at little cost to the agency.

The West Central WDB maintains an updated Resource Sharing Agreement (RSA) within its local Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that details the financial plan that the one-stop partners, the CEO and the Local WDB have agreed to which will be used to achieve their goals of delivering services in the local area. The One Stop Operator coordinates the programmatic and in-kind contributions outlined in the MOU and the Resource Sharing Agreement Budget.

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

The WCWDB oversees the operation of a comprehensive One Stop Center in each of its counties. The buildings are located in areas with high population, business density, and proximity to public transit in order to maximize accessibility. The Lawrence County site is in the City of New Castle with a total

population of 21,618 (2,801 per square mile) and the Mercer County site is in the City of Sharon, with a total population of 12,933 (3,723 per square mile). The information for the PA CareerLink® centers is:

PA CareerLink® Lawrence County
101 S. Mercer Street
New Castle, PA 16101
724-656-3165
TTY 724-598-2075
Site Administrator: Colleen Chamberlain x221

PA CareerLink® Mercer County
217 West State Street
Sharon, PA 16146
724-347-9257
TTY 724-983-5822
Site Administrator: Nathan Hamilla x200

The lease for the PA CareerLink® Lawrence County building ended in July 2019 and, due to difficulties in day-to-day operations due to loud noises and other environmental concerns from a neighboring business, the Governing Board recommended that other locations should be considered. A Site Selection Committee was formed in order to perform a full evaluation of the prospective sites and provide recommendations. Considerations for the facility included: Location, Accessibility, Configuration, Space for co-located Learning Center, Security & Safety, and Operational Risk Assessment. The Site Selection committee produced a comprehensive report on its methodology and recommendations and made the final suggestion of the Central Building based on the individual attribute scoring, compatibility with ideal facility configuration, and individual committee member reviews. Both the Governing Board and Workforce Development Board concurred with the Committee's findings and voted at their September 2019 meetings to allow WCJP to proceed with negotiations for the new site. WCJP worked to negotiate lease and modifications with a planned relocation date of April 2020 but was extended due to COVID-19. The PA CareerLink® Lawrence County opened to the public at its new location on August 18, 2020. Signage, press releases, print advertisement, a virtual ribbon cutting video, website, and social media updates were made to inform the public of the change.

When the Centers are open to the public, normal hours of operation are Monday – Friday from 8:30 AM – 4:30 PM. In-service hours for staff are reserved one day each week (Wednesdays in Mercer County and Thursdays in Lawrence County) for capacity training for all center staff and the centers open at 10:00 AM. Both PA CareerLink® centers are also available by appointment outside of normal business hours or in the evenings to accommodate partner agencies or employer testing.

Individuals may access PA CareerLink® services virtually through internet connections available through the public library system, local educational agencies, partner agency sites, and business or home computers. Additionally, customers may access information about all services at the comprehensive PA CareerLink® sites. Customers, who require little or no assistance or support, will have self-service access. Staff-facilitated assistance, however, will be available on-site for customers who are reluctant or unable to access those services directly. A customer may also access services through telephone or personal contact with the mandated PA CareerLink® partner agencies.

In order to meet the needs of all customers, including those with barriers, programs and facilities within the local workforce development area are compliant with WIOA Section 188 and the Americans with Disabilities Act. Communication access for individuals with disabilities is available. TTY telecommunication device and the availability of a Pennsylvania certified American Sign Language Interpreter is available upon request for Deaf and Hard of Hearing participants. Assistive technology for computer access, including enlarging and screen reader software, is available for sight impaired individuals. A written policy is in place regarding effective communication with persons of Limited English Proficiency (LEP). Language assistance is available through Proprio. The West Central WDA EO Officer, identified in section 3.1, ensures program and center compliance through regular monitoring

along with regularly conducted state audits. The EO officer receives ongoing training on EO topics and updates as well as providing training to staff, providers, and contractors. Employer Advisory Council (EAC) meetings are also regularly presented on EO topics about improving outreach and service to various populations. Additionally, affirmative outreach is conducted through schools and community groups, and consulting with community service agencies.

The Employment, Advancement and Retention Network (EARN) program is operated by the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services (DHS) in order to address the needs of eligible clients with barriers to employment. EARN clients are referred to the PA CareerLink® through the County Assistance Office (CAO) and paired with an EARN Case Manager. The Case Manager works with clients to address and resolve barriers to employment and works with the individual to move toward self-sufficiency and unsubsidized employment.

Clients are directed to Case Managers related to their goals and program eligibility. Services include, but are not limited to: job search, job placement assistance, career counseling, needs and interest assessments, proficiency testing, workshops, and individual employment plans. Individuals are provided with job opening, high priority occupations, and labor market information related to their expressed career interest, or interests which are determined through interest assessments. Career Pathways information is shared on established industry sectors, including: Manufacturing, Healthcare, Building/Construction trades, and Hospitality, Leisure & Tourism. The WDB will continue to work with employers in its industry sectors to determine the skill sets needed for entry-level employees and further define and refine career pathways.

Partners will cross-refer customers, who fail to meet a partner's eligibility requirements or who request services that are unavailable through a partner's programs, to the comprehensive PA CareerLink® for enrollment into Title I or services available through other partner programs including those mentioned in section 4.2 and Attachment 3: WIOA Local Workforce Development Delivery System Program Partner-Provider List.

Information on Participant and Employer services are entered into PA's workforce development system of record by Title I and BWPO staff. Additional partner case management systems, including those maintained by Unemployment Insurance, Adult Education, and the Department of Human Services are in use in the WDA and data entry into those systems is conducted by staff of the respective agencies. While other systems are utilized, participant data is moved into PA's workforce development system of record in order to ensure that timely and relevant information is coordinated across agencies. This further establishes compliance with federal and state statutes, regulations, and policies for data security, personally identifiable information security, workforce-system data entry, user management, and tracking participants, employers, and providers. Shared information and data agreements are utilized to support access to information and information sharing among partners as allowed by authorizing law and regulations. Data entry complies with WSP No. 01-2015 for accurate and timely entry of information within 30 calendar days of the actual date of occurrence.

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 WCWDB maintains an Equal Opportunity Officer responsible for monitoring ADA and EEO compliance that is monitored annually concurrent with regular monitoring of PA CareerLink® services. The Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry, Office of Equal Opportunity (OEO) also conducts annual compliance monitoring to ensure the sites are operating within the current federal guidelines and providing services to applicants, participants and registrants in accordance with the Equal Opportunity and nondiscrimination requirements of WIOA. The WCWDB completed the most-recent Monitoring Survey Compliance Review, which assesses compliance with the nine elements of the State's nondiscrimination Plan and submitted it to the OEO on July 20, 2020. Based on the Monitoring Survey findings, the WCWDA has been determined to be in compliance as of December 29, 2020 through December 31, 2021.

As noted above in Section 4.3, the PA CareerLink® centers work to meet the needs of all customers, including those with barriers. Programs and facilities within the local WDA comply with WIOA Section 188 Nondiscrimination and the Americans with Disabilities Act. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. The PA CareerLink® centers in Lawrence and Mercer counties are required to be fully accessible to any individuals who may be interested in accessing employment and training opportunities. Overall, the Board promotes full accessibility by requiring that its One-Stop Operator, One-Stop Partners, and Site Administrators:

- 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, such as the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation 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® sites and throughout the local area and coaching them on how to apply for needed resources
- Provide access to Propio interpretive services to assist customers with language barriers
- Maintain a Limited English Proficiency Plan to provide assurances and demonstrate that customers of the PA CareerLink® Mercer County are being provided meaningful access to program information, benefits and services although the customers may be limited in their English Language Proficiency
- Provide TTY telecommunication device and availability of a Pennsylvania certified American Sign Language Interpreter to assist customers who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing
- Provide Enlarging and screen reader software to assist customers who are sight impaired
- 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, with assistance from OVR staff
- Help individuals with disabilities who may require additional assistance with the registration process, making referrals as appropriate to OVR while maintaining access to all services for the individuals
- Maintain required federal and state notices and postings at all service sites

- Seek additional guidance from Pennsylvania’s Office of Equal Employment Opportunity for technical assistance and training needs

The WCWDB works with its partners to conduct affirmative outreach (29 CFR § 38.40) to ensure equal access to WIOA Title I financially-assisted programs and activities, including but not limited to:

1. Advertising the recipient's programs and/or activities in media, such as newspapers or radio programs, that specifically target various populations
2. Sending notices about openings in the recipient's programs and/or activities to schools or community service groups that serve various populations; and
3. Consulting with appropriate community service groups about ways in which the recipient may improve its outreach and service to various populations.

In the WCWDA, local community service groups include The Arc of Lawrence County, The Arc of Mercer County, Challenges: Options in Aging, Mercer County Area Agency on Aging, Disability Options Network, Community Resources for Independence, Lawrence County Community Action Partnership, Mercer County Community Action Partnership, Keystone Blind Association. These organizations are engaged with through the PA CareerLink® Site Administrators, WCWDA Staff, and Board members who serve on local committees and act as ambassadors to the workforce system through the dissemination of information.

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

The WCWDB works with local employers to identify skill sets that job applicants need but do not possess when interviewed for High Priority Occupation (HPO) job openings. Once skills are identified, the LWDB staff will survey the local schools and training providers in the local area to determine if similar HPO training is available and could be added to the Commonwealth’s ETPL. If HPO training is not available on the State ETPL, the LWDB will meet with the schools or training providers to request they design and develop training that meets the HPO needs of the specific employer or industry cluster. The Board staff will follow the procedures outlined in Workforce System Policy 04-2015, *Eligible Training Providers* and develop a score card to measure and evaluate employment and earnings outcomes. All information will be entered into PA’s workforce development system of record for tracking purposes.

The Board, through regular meetings with various partner agencies, (Sector Partnership employers; Board employers; Workforce Innovation Fund Grant’s Competitiveness Council members; PA CareerLink® Operator; etc.) keep their pulse on the needs of local employers. In the past, WCJP conducted a survey of the Advanced Manufacturing Industry Partnership employers regarding their immediate needs for welders. The results of the survey led WCJP to issue a Request for Proposal (RFP) for short term welding training that led to manufacturing industry recognized credentials, such as American Welding Society’s (AWS) Certified Welder credential.

Pre-Apprenticeship and work readiness career pathway projects will focus on skill gaps when identified by local employers or industry clusters such as Healthcare and Hospitality sectors.

One of the key goals of the Oh-Penn Pathways to Competitiveness Project (funded by a Workforce Innovation Fund (WIF) grant awarded by the US Department of Labor) was to conduct a skills gap analysis in the manufacturing sector to identify specific needs of the current workforce involving both employers and training providers. The training needs of the workforce were matched to what training was being provided. Any ensuing gaps identified would allow for curricula to be aligned with employer needs and, if necessary, for new training to be developed. Regional training providers also participated in the analysis of their current program so that gaps related to employer critical skills needs would be recognized. The survey identified a total of 32 employers in each of the five counties who expressed a need for training production workers but only two training programs were identified: one adult program in Trumbull County in Ohio and one high school program in Mercer County, PA. As a result, several local career and technical education centers are in the process to add Manufacturing Skill Standards Council's (MSSC) Certified Production Technician (CPT) to their schools' course offerings. This work is continuing to be built upon through subsequent AAI and WORC grant projects, ensuring that regional employers workforce needs are being addressed by Education & Training Providers and that feedback is provided and integrated into programs of study for prospective job-seekers and incumbent workers.

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.

Prior to each fiscal year, the WCWDB meets with Board Staff to review material obtained through surveys of key industry components, economic development projects both imminent and underway in the local area and contiguous regions as well as assess reports and interview the One Stop Operator, PA CareerLink® Site Administrators, Title I Program Operator and other One-Stop partner staff to provide oversight and recommend program and service modification or alignment. Material under review includes but is not limited to economic and labor market analysis, population demographics and concentration, input from the LWDBs sector partnership groups, reports from chambers of commerce and other business intermediaries as well as studies and guidance by relevant state and federal agencies. Committee findings are brought back to the full LWDB which may result in directing the fiscal agent to allocate funds under its auspices to a particular service or project, establishment of a policy or guidance to the One-Stop Operator for implementation in the PA CareerLink® centers, issuance of a Request for Proposal (RFP) or Invitation for Bid (IFB) for a program or service. The Site Administrators act as staff to the One Stop Operator and receive LWDB meeting minutes to ensure that the policy and oversight direction of the Board is translated into practical application at the point of service delivery. Customer (both employer and job seeker) primary products and services vary among the basic, individual, and training services as follows:

Employer Services:

- Recruitment assistance and interviewing space
- Internet resume access
- Direct job order placement via the internet
- Training information and assistance
- Labor market information
- Tax credit information
- Technical assistance (ADA requirements, labor law compliance, etc.)
- Updated resource directories

- Orientation to PA CareerLink® system and services
- Applicant screening/testing for jobs
- Referral of qualified applicants
- Hiring Incentives
- Information regarding unemployment compensation law and employer requirements

Job Seeker Services:

- Orientation to PA CareerLink® system and services
- Internet job search capabilities
- Creating a personal folder
- Assessment of basic education levels (reading and math), interest, and aptitude levels
- Development of an individual employment plan that includes an outline of steps to be achieved to reach the individual's goals toward education and/or employment
- Information regarding filing claims for unemployment compensation
- Job listings and referral services
- Skill assessment and aptitude testing
- Resume building, interviewing skills and job search assistance
- Career counseling
- Adult education and literacy instruction
- Job readiness instruction
- Work-based learning opportunities
- Occupational skills training
- On the Job Training (OJT)
- Incumbent worker training
- Apprenticeship opportunities
- Evaluation for assistive technology
- Worksite accommodations
- Follow-up services
- Case management services

Supportive Services:

Supportive services may be available (depending on funding levels) to all WIOA clients based on a needs assessment that is documented in case notes as part of the Individual Employment Plan. Supportive services will be provided on a first-come/first-serve basis as long as funds are available.

Supportive services and the assessment/eligibility include that all clients are enrolled in WIOA-funded training:

1. Needs-Related Payments (NRPs)—It is determined that attending training incurs a cost to the client for meals as well as transportation expenses. While some clients are employed or are receiving unemployment, others have no income source to maintain their enrollment. Therefore, West Central will provide a Needs-Related Payment to help defray the costs of attending training.

Eligibility to receive NRPs is different for Adult and Dislocated Workers. Payments will be provided based upon an assessment of the client and his/her income sources documented in the Individual Employment Plan and payable upon documented attendance and progress. All eligibility criteria must be presented and approved prior to administering payment. WCJP reserves the right to cease payments based upon funding restrictions and/or changes in the eligibility guidelines which will render an individual ineligible. For those individuals who must travel more than 2 miles round trip per day a \$10 payment will be provided to cover the extraordinary costs of meals and transportation. Transportation needs shall be determined during the initial assessment for payment eligibility.

2. Car Repairs—maximum of two payments which combined may not exceed \$800 when no other types of transportation is available, are less practical or are more costly. Clients must not be employed under the Act (i.e. OJT, Work Experience, Customized Training, etc.).
3. Child Care – up to a maximum of \$5,000/client will be reimbursed to licensed daycare centers for clients who are not eligible to receive such assistance elsewhere.
4. Eye Care –Up to \$200 per enrollment for eye exam and glasses.
5. Uniforms and Tools – as required by the approved training program.
6. Health Care – maximum of two payments, which combined, may not exceed \$500 per enrollment year for dental, hearing aids and other emergency health care.
7. Youth Incentives are available to youth who meet certain benchmarks or programmatic goals such as receiving a certificate or degree.

All basic, individual and training services are available to all individuals with disabilities, Limited English Proficiency (LEP), and those with significant barriers. Disabilities and barriers are identified by various methods. Some disabilities or barriers such as LEP, missing limbs, etc. can be identified through observation. Referrals of observable barriers will be made to appropriate partner agencies such as literacy providers, OVR, etc. Disabilities and barriers not observed during regular contact with individuals will be identified at various points through the PA CareerLink® service delivery system by various assessments administered, such as Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS); Provelt; WorkKeys; etc. Again, depending on the barrier and/or disability, referrals will be made to appropriate partner agencies to provide assistance in the elimination of barriers to ensure there is universal access to all PA CareerLink® services and activities.

As described in paragraph 4.5 above, the WDB will continue to meet with employers to determine what skills sets may have changed for HPOs in specific industry sectors. The WDB will facilitate discussions with local training providers to determine if current programs can be revised to include instruction to cover the new skill sets needed by local employers. The WDB will also explore whether other programs in contiguous counties offer training programs that could possibly be delivered virtually.

It is WCJP's policy that **priority of service** will be given to four groups of targeted individuals when approving individualized career services or training services for WIOA eligible participants. The four groups are as follows:

1. Veterans and eligible spouses
2. Other individuals (not veterans or eligible spouses) who receive public assistance
3. Other low income includes individuals; and
4. Individuals who are basic skills deficient

Currently the LWDB has not identified a local discretionary priority for another level of priority for services. However, the WDB will periodically review trends of the labor market to determine if new priority groups should be established. WCWDB does utilize the flexibility to transfer program funds between Adult and Dislocated Worker programs. The WDB via the Administrative Division provides WIOA allocations to the Program Division by title of funding (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) as well as a WDB's authorization by type of training (ITAs, OJTs and paid work experience). The Administrative Division Chief/Chief Financial Officer periodically reviews expenditure reports and requests the WDB to authorize transfer of funds from Adult to Dislocated Worker or vice versa.

4.7 How will training services be provided using individual training accounts, or ITAs, fund programs of study, or through the use of contracts for training services fund work-based trainings.

Courses and Programs of Study included on the State's Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) are connected to High Priority Occupations within the State of Pennsylvania and each WDA within the state. HPOs are job categories, within selected industry clusters, that are in demand by employers, require higher skill levels, and are likely to provide family-sustaining wages. These HPOs are developed by the Center for Workforce Information and Analysis (CWIA). Individual Training Accounts will only be funded by WCJP if the provider and the program appear on the State's ETPL.

Businesses need a skilled workforce and individuals need increasingly higher levels of education and knowledge to compete in today's global economy. Targeting only Course/Programs on the ETPL and teaching occupational skills related to an HPO, assists workforce education and training programs in Pennsylvania to align with the actual skills required of jobs today and in the future. Training Providers may use the HPO list to create new training course/programs for the new and emerging HPOs the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to add onto the ETPL. These new training Course/Programs will assist in meeting the needs of employers and industries by providing skilled and knowledgeable workers ready for employment.

Training providers as well as each Course/Program must meet performance benchmarks established by the Commonwealth. To ensure that workforce development investments yield the best possible results, PA has developed this Performance Management Plan for evaluating the performance of workforce programs. The plan is not designed to simply measure program performance; rather it is aimed at improving the outcomes from these investments. This plan sets forth the framework to monitor trends in key economic, workforce, and education indicators, and gathers quantitative data using common measures.

The HPO list is reviewed by the WCWDB yearly when distributed by CWIA. Training Providers may petition the LWDB to add programs to the High Priority Occupation list by providing documentation that local employers are currently hiring individuals in the occupation and the wages are family sustaining.

Currently, the ITA cap is \$8,000 limited to tuition and fees. WCWDA periodically reviews the ITA cap for the local area to determine if any changes are needed to the policy. Costs of books, tools, uniforms, etc. required for training are over and above the cap. All grants (Pell, PHEAA, etc.) received by the participant are deducted before WIOA funds are applied. Participants may request ½ of their Pell grant be released to cover the extraordinary training related expenses. The participant must complete a budget showing the household income and expenses to document need. Each request is reviewed and approved on a case-by-case basis. The periodic review of the ITA cap entails comparing the ITA caps of other WDAs in the local region as well as other contiguous WDAs. A report is given to the WDB at the beginning of a Program Year for discussion whether the ITA cap should remain at \$8,000 cap over a two-year training period or if other issues, i.e. lack of training funds warrant a change in the cap.

The WDB will utilize contracts for services instead of ITAs when one or more of the five exceptions outlined in §680.320 of the WIOA final rule dated August 19, 2016 apply:

1. When services provided are OJT, customized training, incumbent worker training, or transitional jobs
2. There are insufficient number of eligible training providers in the local area to accomplish the purpose of a system of ITAs
3. There is a training program of demonstrated effectiveness offered in the area by a community-based organization or other private organizations to serve individuals with barriers to employment
4. When it is possible to contract with an institution of higher education or other training provider in order to facilitate the training of multiple individuals in in-demand industry sectors or occupations, provided that the contract does not limit consumer choice
5. When considering Pay-for-Performance contracts

The WDB is considering the use of exception number 4 in the design and implementation of industry sector trainings outlined in 4.6 above. The WDB may later determine to utilize other allowable exceptions earlier outlined.

All training, regardless of whether it is delivered as ITAs, OJTs, other work-based training opportunities, or by contract for a cohort of trainees will be explained to all WIOA eligible individuals and will not infringe upon participant choice of training.

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

Prior to WIOA, the Youth program had primarily focused on providing drop-out prevention, career exploration and pre-employment soft skill services to In-School Youth (ISY). Youth contractors worked in most school districts in the two-county area, collaborating with school counselors, teachers, students (some with Individual Education Plans), parents and OVR when necessary. The main thrust was to help high school students and parents make informed decisions about the academic and career pathways and to aid in the elimination of barriers for those students who were at-risk of not graduating high school.

While these services are still provided to the In-school Youth population, now under WIOA the focus is to prioritize at least 75% of Youth funding toward Out-of-School Youth (OSY) and concentrate on providing services beginning with career exploration and guidance, continued support for educational attainment, opportunities for skills training (including pre-apprenticeships or internships) and culminating with employment, enrollment in postsecondary education, military service enlistment, or a Registered Apprenticeship.

This effort requires collaboration and coordination with youth program partners, educators, employers, and other stakeholders. The WCWDB maintains a standing Youth Committee as a forum for these continuous conversations, implementing strategies for recruitment, and setting the direction of the design and direction of Youth Programs in the Area. WCWDB and its Youth Committee are very committed to designing and implementing a strategic plan in Lawrence and Mercer counties that aligns all youth activities and services (regardless of the funding source) to promote skill development and work-based learning experiences that result in a talent supply for area industries and employers. The WCWDB and/or Youth Standing Committee membership includes representatives from community-based organizations that serve youth, the juvenile justice system, various education agencies, Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR), County Assistance Office (CAO), public housing authorities, etc.

These representatives act as ambassadors to promote the WIOA programs and the education/training assistance that is available to eligible youth including youth with disabilities. WCJP staff attends various community meetings (superintendent and guidance counselor meetings, Lawrence County School-to-Work, Prevention Coalition, Council of Community Services, etc.) and provide information on WIOA program activities to recruit youth who would benefit from the education/training assistance available through WIOA funding and other PA CareerLink® partner agencies.

Developing relationships and expanding direct outreach through PA CareerLink® Job Developers and members of the Business Services Teams to increase work experience opportunities for Youth. Sharing success stories and testimonials from individual and employer participants in work experience programs has been a successful vehicle for recruiting additional employers to offer these openings. Showcasing youth through social media and press releases also brings Youth to the centers for specific opportunities, which then introduces them to the broader array of PA CareerLink® offerings.

The WCWDA competitively procures for WIOA Title I Career Services. A Request for Proposal issued on December 1, 2020 with a deadline of 12:00 PM EST on January 29, 2021. WCJP's Program Division met the Request for Proposals deadline was reviewed by the Executive Committee on May 18, 2021, and the committee presented its recommendation to the full WDB at its May 27, 2021, meeting where it passed unanimously. The contract for Title I Career Services for Adults, Dislocated Workers, and Youth will be effective July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022 with the option to renew based on performance and monitoring.

Youth services/elements not provided directly by WCJP Program Division will result in referrals to community resources, so all 14 elements are available to eligible youth on an as needed basis.

The focus under WIOA is to serve OSY and concentrate on providing work-based learning opportunities. The One-Stop basic and individualized career services and the RFP for additional services were structured to serve the OSY target population in accord with WIOA requirements and guidance. The vision is to develop a program that provides pre-apprenticeship activities that are relevant to any apprenticeship program as the core component and then "spiders" out to various apprenticeship

programs or in-demand occupations in the local area. The core program activities would be combined with various types of work-based learning opportunities. One Stop basic and individualized career services or procured youth services must either provide directly or make referrals to community resources so that all 14 elements are available to youth on an as-needed basis.

The 14 elements are:

1. Tutoring, study skills, drop-out prevention & recovery strategies toward H.S. Diploma or GED
Providers are selected by appropriate school district or Title I for the Worldwide Interactive Network (WIN) remediation software. Activities take place year-round on an as-needed basis for youth who need to improve literacy/numeracy and advance to the next grade or to complete their H.S. Diploma or GED.
2. Alternative secondary school or drop out recovery services
WIOA Title II Adult Education providers Adult Literacy Lawrence County and Grove City Education Center for Adults with Butler County Community College (BC3) acting as fiscal agent in both counties offer GED preparation for dropouts
3. Paid & unpaid work experiences which include:
 - a. Summer employment opportunities (year-round)
 - b. Pre-apprenticeship programs
 - c. Internships & job shadowing, and
 - d. On the job training opportunities

WIOA Title I Career Services provider WCJP Program Division offers work experience opportunities year-round for Youth to provide an increased knowledge of employer/workplace expectations and career readiness, career exploration, and resume building.

4. Occupational skill training
WIOA Title I Career Services provider WCJP Program Division through Paid Work Experience Opportunities and Supportive services for those in need of Dual Enrollment post-secondary credits and National Career Readiness Certificates.
5. Education offered concurrently with and in same context as workforce preparation activities & training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster
WIOA Title I Career Services provider WCJP Program Division Case Managers assist Youth in the exploration of local industries and development of Individual Employment Plans for short and long-term career pathways to increase the skills and employability of participants within their planned industry and/or occupation.
6. Leadership development activities
Local Young Professionals Organizations including Mercer County Young Professionals, Thrive Shenango Valley, and Leadership Lawrence County provide the opportunity for Youth interested in developing leadership skills through community involvement to participate in their organizations.

7. Supportive services
WIOA Title I Career Services provider WCJP Program Division submits requests for supportive services to the Fiscal Agent including tuition for Dual Enrollment with Higher education institutions, uniforms and tools required by Career & Technical Education programs of study, and WorkKeys® assessment needed to obtain the National Career Readiness Credential.
8. Adult mentoring
Along with case management provided by WIOA Title I Career Services provider WCJP Program Division, Employers participating as work experience sites provide mentorship and supervision through direct worksite experience.
9. Follow-up services
WIOA Title I Career Services provider WCJP Program Division delivers follow-up Career Services As appropriate, for Youth program participants who are placed in unsubsidized employment for up to 12 months after the first day of employment. Youth who enter the military or post-secondary training will also be followed up on to provide support and supportive service referrals as needed to assist in long term retention.
10. Comprehensive guidance and counseling
Youth in need of comprehensive guidance and training, including substance abuse, are referred to Behavioral Health partner organizations including the Lawrence County Drug & Alcohol Prevention and Mercer County Behavioral Health Commission.
11. Financial literacy education
WIOA Title I Career Services provider WCJP Program Division utilize Managing Your Money software to educate youth on the importance of budgeting and prioritizing expenses. Financial Literacy Workshops are offered in partnership with local banks and financial agencies and Youth are encouraged to attend.
12. Entrepreneurial skills training
Local Small Business Development Centers: Gannon SBDC and Duquesne SBDC as well as local business incubators provide resources to individuals interested in entrepreneurship including a First Step Program.
13. Labor market and employment information about in-demand occupations in the local area: career awareness; career counseling; and career exploration services
WIOA Title I Career Services provider WCJP Program Division Case Managers assist Youth in locating relevant and timely Labor Market Information from sources including the Center for Workforce Information & Analysis, My Next Move, High Priority Occupation Lists, and local sources including virtual job shadowing and occupation/industry content to inform youth about in-demand career pathways.
14. Activities that help youth prepare for and transition to post-secondary education and training

WIOA Title I Career Services provider WCJP Program Division assist Youth in preparing to transition to post-secondary education and training through the development of Individual Employment Plans and providing on Career Pathways information to inform and guide Youth on next steps on their career journey.

All providers must reach performance benchmarks identified to date (employment, retention, median earnings) and those yet to be identified by USDOL and/or the Commonwealth (credential attainment, measurable skills gains and effectiveness in serving employers), and the WCWDB.

Contractors will be required to connect with Community Based organizations (CBOs) as well as private employers to place individuals with disabilities in work-based learning opportunities conducive to the job functions they are able to perform. Again, the contractors will collaborate with OVR to coordinate any services that will assist to eliminate any barriers for the individuals to be able to perform the necessary job functions. Contractors will also connect with community transportation services to assist individuals with disabilities to travel to and from the work-based learning sites. Through partnerships with multiple providers, the costs associated with serving individuals with disabilities will be shared as appropriate. Some individuals with disabilities may choose not to access OVR services; these individuals will still have access to the array of services from other partners as guided by their individual employment and training plans.

Youth with a self-identified disability or observable disability are referred to OVR. OVR and Title I staff coordinate and jointly develop an Individual Service Strategy (ISS) to maximize funding for youth with a disability. Title I funding maybe combined with OVR funding if skills training is deemed an appropriate activity for the individual. OVR may be able to provide hardware or tools to assist a youth with disabilities in the workplace. The WDB made the decision to limit WIOA youth funds to serve older, out of school youth. To be able to offer workforce services to additional youth, the WDB targeted TANF Youth Development Funds to serve TANF eligible in-school youth.

As a core partner, OVR collaborates with the WCWDB to provide in-school youth with disabilities opportunities to participate in pre-employment transition services and other services to gain skills and knowledge to enter the workforce. In partnership with the WDB and other youth services providers, OVR may provide both OVR eligible and potentially eligible in-school youth with disabilities services to enter competitive integrated employment. These meaningful opportunities allow in-school youth with disabilities to assess their own strengths and skills, while exploring vocational possibilities and removing barriers from employment.

Work based learning is an important component for in-school youth with disabilities to engage in so that they may be afforded opportunities to discover career paths. Other services that may be provided to OVR in-school youth with disabilities include:

- Counseling and guidance from professional vocational rehabilitation staff to explore career and training options as well as understand VR services
- Independent Living Skills training will allow students to gain knowledge to perform the daily tasks essential for maintaining or obtaining independence. Independent Living Skills can include: household budgeting and financial management, utilizing public transportation, navigating through the social services system, etc.
- Self-Advocacy Training to assist students with disabilities to gain knowledge on disability awareness, advocating during an IEP process, understanding transition processes, and

advocating for themselves in post-secondary education, employment, and coordinating social services

- Workplace Readiness Training will provide students with knowledge needed to find and maintain competitive integrated employment. Curriculums can include soft skills training, interview skills, job readiness, job-seeking skills, HR practices, and other skills needed to become “workplace ready”
- Job Shadowing will provide students with disabilities a one to five-day job shadowing experience, for a maximum of 25 hours per school year, in an occupation of interest within a community integrated setting. Students will be provided an opportunity to shadow employees and obtain an overview of the knowledge, tasks, and abilities needed to work in a variety of occupational fields.

Both PA CareerLink® centers in the LWDA are handicap accessible and have a variety of equipment to assist individuals with disabilities such as: TDD/TTY telephones to accommodate people with hearing impairments; furniture (tables) to accommodate people in wheelchairs; and magnification devices to accommodate people with visual impairments. If individuals need additional services beyond basic career services a WIOA Title I application will be taken. If determined to be eligible, all WIOA Title I programs will be made available without bias. Job Developers (WIOA Title I and OVR) will work jointly to develop work-based learning opportunities for youth with disabilities.

The Program Division is responsible for completion of WIOA applications and collection of eligibility verification documents for all youth applying for WIOA program services, as well as Adult and Dislocated Worker program services. The eligibility criteria, definitions and documents collected by the Program Division are those listed in Workforce Investment Information Notice (WIIN) no. 3-99, Change 2, Youth Eligibility Definitions WSG No 03-2015, for eligibility criteria and acceptable forms of verification and Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) No 22-15 to verify that documentation of each eligibility criteria is acceptable. The applications are forwarded to the Program Division’s Data Manager for a second review and approval to proceed to offer WIOA individual services.

The WDB definition for individuals who “require additional assistance to complete an education program or to secure and hold employment” criteria and allowable documents to verify category follows:

1. Lacks significant work history
 - a. Has no unsubsidized work history – PA CareerLink® resume, case notes and self-attestation; or
 - b. Has not worked for the same employer for longer than three consecutive months in the two years prior to application – PA CareerLink® resume, case notes and self-attestation;
2. One or more grade levels below the grade level appropriate to the individual’s age – TABE test reading and math levels
3. High School graduate making minimum wage, even if they’ve held a job for a significant period of time – current pay stubs; or
4. Recovering from addiction to opioids or other substances – documentation from the treatment facility of physician

The WDB decided to serve only older, out of school youth with WIOA youth funds. There could be exceptions to this scenario, i.e. an out of school youth enrolled in college requests WIOA assistance via

an ITA. In this case, the youth would be considered and in school youth. The Program Division's Data Manager tracks 5% of the ISY participants using a PA's workforce development system of record report. This report (if there are any 5% applications) is distributed to the Program Division Chief and the Administrative Program Chief on a quarterly basis.

Job Corps, Youth Build and AmeriCorps programs are not located within the LWDA. However, representatives from Job Corps come into both PA CareerLink® centers on a monthly basis to make program presentations and recruit youth. WIOA Title I staff have program brochures and refer age-eligible youth to the appropriate Job Corps representative in Pittsburgh.

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Youth Development Program (YDP) funding is leveraged to provide complementary services to eligible youth in addition to WIOA Youth funding. TANF YDF assists in serving ISY and Eligible Youth are WIOA co-enrolled so that participants in TANF-funded subsidized employment may also benefit from additional services such as occupational skills training and other relevant services. Recruitment of TANF Youth is done through presentations and workshop in the schools as well as outreach to community-based organizations who work with those populations. Employment, Advancement and Retention Network (EARN) clients referred by the CAOs are also informed of the availability of the TANF program for eligible youth in their household. PA CareerLink® center staff are updated on WIOA Youth and TANF programs during center meetings and refer individuals for eligibility screening.

Case Managers work to place TANF participants in high-quality work experiences related to their needs and Individual Employment Plans. Worksites are developed to offer mentorship to the Youth and provide real-world experience to individuals who are beginning their careers. TANF Youth also have the opportunity for dual-enrollment so that they may earn college credits while in high school.

The wage for TANF Paid Work Experiences is \$10.15/hour. The WDB has begun to pilot TANF Internships for eligible individuals who are further along their career path and are paired with an employer offering an experience closely-related to entry-level employment in the occupation/field. These experiences are paid a minimum of \$10.35/hour by the employer and reimbursed 75% by the WDB. The design is sought to encourage employers to keep the individuals on payroll and offer them permanent employment.

As with other Youth Programming, employers are recruited to participate as TANF worksites through relationships built by youth program partners, educators, employers, and other stakeholders. Outreach through PA CareerLink® Job Developers and members of the Business Services Teams expand the pool of worksites for all Youth. Many employers will also hear about Youth success stories through word-of-mouth, social media, or press coverage and contact their local PA CareerLink® center for additional information.

While the WCWDA does not utilize TANF Funding to offer Youth incentives at the current time, eligible individuals are co-enrolled in WIOA Youth and EARN where incentives may be utilized to promote youth attendance or participation in workforce programming.

TANF YDP activities and expenditures are tracked and reported by West Central Job Partnership's Administrative Division. The LWDB staff member responsible is Gregg Dogan, Division Chief who can be contacted by telephone at 724-347-7855 x310 or email at gdogan@wcjp.org.

TANF Youth Development Program – Youth Provider Sites in the WCWDA are the PA CareerLink® Lawrence County and PA CareerLink® Mercer County. The designated TANF Provider Contact Person is Tammy Barbati, West Central Job Partnership: Program Division Chief who can be contacted by

telephone at 724-656-3165 x209 or email at tbarbati@wcjp.org. The worksite location is based out of the PA CareerLink® Lawrence County at 101 S Mercer St, New Castle, PA 16101.

The staff member responsible for the compilation and submission of the DHS Qualification Spreadsheet on DocuShare is Mary Ann Moss, who can be contacted by telephone at 724-656-3165 x201 or email at mamoss@wcjp.org.

Monitoring of TANF Funding is conducted by West Central Job Partnership's Administrative Division Finance Assistant/EO Officer, Cynthia Myers who can be contacted by telephone at 724-347-7855 x308 or email at cmyers@wcjp.org.

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?

WCJP's Administrative Division provides staffing services to the LWDB for the Lawrence and Mercer LWDA jurisdiction and acts as fiscal agent. This Division thus coordinates directly with the PA Department of Labor and Industry (PDLI) Bureau of Workforce Partnership and Operations (BWPO) in applying for, receiving, and disbursing Rapid Response funds for local coordination with statewide Rapid Response activities. Additionally, the Administrative Division along with the One Stop Operator, PA CareerLink® Site Administrators and the Title I contractor receives communication from the BWPO Regional Rapid Response Coordinator of WARN notices filed that are relevant for the local workforce development area so that all facets of the local workforce system can be mobilized to address the catastrophic impact mass lay-offs may have on affected communities and citizens. The WCWDB provides oversight and strategic guidance to the One Stop Operator, one stop partners in addition to deploying funding to facilitate the transition activities of affected businesses and workers. When the Rapid Response proceeds to operational planning and delivery, the WIOA Title I Career Services Provider assumes programmatic responsibility for implementing the resources provided by the board for the specific activities. There is no direct interaction between the WCWDB or its designated staff regarding One-Stop program delivery function including WIOA Title I but, as all One Stop partners represented on the Board, there is individual interaction as a board member.

Once a WARN notice is filed on behalf of an employer, the PA CareerLink® partner agencies plan a Rapid Response session for all employees affected by the layoff. The Rapid Response team reviews all services available at the PA CareerLink® including retraining funds available through TAA and WIOA Title I Dislocated Worker programs. In addition to TAA and WIOA Title I Dislocated Worker staff, the Rapid Response team are comprised of staff from agencies which include: credit counseling, mortgage services, CHIPS, and Unemployment Compensation. The team explains PA CareerLink® services and is available to answer questions to employees who will be affected by the layoff. The Steel Valley Authority (SVA) is represented on the Regional Business Service Team which includes the One Stop Operator, PA CareerLink® Site Administrators and WIOA Title I Career Services Provider. Other individual WCWDB members are also part of this team such as the economic development agencies.

The SVA provides information and resources regarding TAA Lay-Off Aversion that are made available to eligible businesses in the LWDA jurisdiction. This provides a linkage for the local One-Stop centers and the Board to be in two-way communication with the regional organization charged with administering Lay-Off Aversion programs.

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

The Mercer County Career Center (MCCC) Executive Director is a member of the WCWDB and has a significant role on the standing Youth Committee. Through this relationship the LWDB has access to and meets periodically with all the Superintendents of the county public school districts. Additionally, staff participate in Career & Technical Centers Carl Perkins meetings and various other advisory committees. The Executive Director of Adult Literacy Lawrence County is also a member of the LWDB and a member of the Lawrence-Mercer Adult Education Coalition.

This structure forms the basis for the education sector to interface with the workforce development system. Through this nexus, the goal of using cross information to mutually focus leveraged resources toward meeting current industry needs by providing relevant training is sought. Proprietary educational institutions are also linked to the system as well as business supporters of the local One-Stop centers.

The West Central Adult Education Coalition has been meeting to develop ways in which the member agencies provide workplace preparation activities, career awareness and career planning for the clients they serve. The member agencies of the Coalition include: Adult Literacy Lawrence County; Midwestern Intermediate Unit IV; and the Grove City Education Center for Adults. Opportunities for offering integrated education and training activities (including participation in the Manufacturing Readiness Program), are being explored and the College and Career Readiness Standards for Adult Education are being implemented. This Coalition will play an integral part in the new American Apprenticeship Grant. The two Community Education Councils (CECs) of Pennsylvania (Keystone Community Education Council and Lawrence County Learning Center) will be included in dialogue to align training development efforts to increase the education and training delivery services to residents in Lawrence and Mercer Counties. The CECs will be encourage to participate in WCWDB's efforts to align high school career and technical education programs and post-secondary institutions to assure residents of Lawrence and Mercer counties have access to credential bearing training opportunities.

The career and technical education (CTE) center in Mercer County has adopted several tools utilized in the workforce development system/PA CareerLink® and integrated them into the regular high school curriculum at the CTC. WCJP was able to leverage funds from its WIF Grant awarded by the US Department of Labor to purchase a Worldwide Interactive Network® (WIN®) license for MCCC. WIN® is an internet-based curriculum the CTC students utilize to prepare to take the WorkKeys® assessment that leads to the National Career Readiness Certificate®(NCRC®) issued by ACT. ACT is known nationally for the ACT® college readiness assessment - the college admissions and placement test taken by more than 1.8 million high school graduates every year. MCCC has also been approved as an ACT testing center for proctoring the WorkKeys® assessments. MCCC students are able to graduate with multiple stackable credentials (high school diploma; NCRC®; OSHA; National Institute of Metalworking Skills (NIMS) certificates and/or National Occupational Competency Testing Institute (NOCTI) certificates in their career and technical programs of study. WIN®, WorkKeys®, and the NCRC® are tools that PA CareerLink® participants utilize and the NCRC® is a credential they strive to obtain. Much work has been done to educate local employers on the value of utilizing the NCRC® when hiring individuals for job vacancies within their companies.

MCCC instructors work with all high school seniors to facilitate enrollment on the PA CareerLink® online system. Students create or upload their resumes into the system and are shown how to conduct job

searches and apply to job orders in the system. The MCCC staff work with all school districts within the county to facilitate enrollment of all seniors.

The LWDB and the Youth Committee meet periodically to discuss a variety of topics that include:

- Secondary school career and education requirements (PA Department of Education's Career Education and Work Standards and Chapter 339 K – 12 requirements)
- Post-secondary school training programs
- Employer identified skill sets needed for various HPO job vacancies
- Ideas to coordinate and align workforce development services with programs offered in secondary and post-secondary education

The WCWDB is committed to designing and implementing a strategic plan that aligns all workforce development with local education programs/activities to promote career pathways. The WDB and Youth Committee goals include professional development for educators regarding career pathways as well as providing work-based learning opportunities for youth and young adults that result in the development of talent pipeline for area industries and employers.

Numerous meetings and collaborations resulted in the WC Administrative Division applying for a Business Education Partnership (BEP) grant that includes professional development for high school counselors, career education teachers, etc. on HPOs and opportunities in the local area. The BEP also allows for an expansion of the CTE centers' cooperative education program which places students at employers in the local area in jobs that are related to their vocational program of choice.

When approached by the local CTE centers the WDB will review the Perkins Act Section 134 biennial "CTE comprehensive needs assessment," to ensure CTE programs align with the WDB's regional and local plans and meet local economic needs including in-demand industry sectors and occupations.

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.

Career services provided by PA CareerLink® partners are for the most part delivered at the comprehensive One-Stop centers. The One Stop Operator charged Site Administrators with the task of integrating career services within the PA CareerLink® partner network. A standing committee of supervisors (including the Department's merit staff) meet regularly with the Site Administrator to devise methods to reduce duplication and promote integration of career services. Staff is informed by their direct supervisors the extent of integration agreed upon for their respective program in order to balance the required integrity set forth by enabling legislation with the need to reduce duplication. A prime example of the efficacy of this approach relates to the coordination of multiple Adult Literacy providers targeting efforts within the PA CareerLink® to client constituencies with differing learning needs there by allowing instructors to work with students grouped by math and reading scores. This ongoing analysis has resulted in multiple partners coordinating and engaging jointly in outreach and orientation activities for customers seeking employment and training services. Additionally, center scheduling of information workshops have aggregated cross program resources to provide regular and ongoing presentations to job seekers on topics such as Labor Market statistics, high priority and in-demand occupations, availability of supportive services and local area employment opportunities. Duplication of career

services for employers has been reduced by the establishment of Business Service Teams. Also, information on other services available to businesses has resulted in increased WEDnetPA awards locally. Joint outreach strategies and sharing of contact information has been a major benefit of PA CareerLink® collaboration and the LWDB's policy of aligning resources.

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

The PA CareerLink® centers in Lawrence and Mercer counties will seamlessly offer Adult Basic Education training to individuals who are in need of obtaining their GED or upgrading their basic skill levels. Referrals will be made to the Adult Education training providers co-located in each PA CareerLink® in the local area or to other adult education training providers closer to the individual's residence. Adult Basic Education providers serve as critical members on the WDB, Youth Committee, and One Stop Operations Committee providing valuable input and coordination to serve customers. Title II providers are involved in the development of the development of the WDA Local Plan and notably provide updates from the PA Department of Education, including information on updated guidance and procedures.

Procedures announced in 2018 by the PA Department of Education called for the local Adult Education proposers for services in the local area to submit applications directly to DOE. DOE performed an initial review to ensure compliance by the proposers with its established requirements. DOE shared applications related to each workforce area with the appropriate Workforce Development Board, along with the scoring framework. Local boards sent recommendations regarding local Adult Education provider proposals to the DOE for consideration during DOE's final review, scoring, and selection process. DOE final decisions and informed the local board so that representatives of Adult Education providers can be included in service coordination meetings led by the One-Stop Operator. The WCWDB anticipates participating in any review of Adult Education and Literacy provider applications requested by the DOE, should a future grant competition take place.

The current local review process calls for the Fiscal Agent to forward the Adult Education and Literacy applications to members of a committee (to be named by the Board Chair) for review. After reasonable time for review, the Fiscal Agent will convene a committee meeting for members to provide comments regarding the applications. The Committee Chair will present a report to the full WCWDB which will take action to approve the committee's recommendations for submission to the DOE. Once the WCWDB approves the committee recommendations, a letter signed by the Fiscal Agent will be sent to the Adult Education and Literacy providers announcing the WCWDB's recommendations that have been sent to the DOE for their final review and approval. Once final decisions are made, the WCWDB work with its One-Stop Operator to take appropriate actions to involve adult education representatives in local coordination meetings of service delivery partners.

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?

WCWDB's objectives, goals, and strategies for targeted populations prioritized as follows:

1. It is our objective to identify individuals locally within the groups identified below that:

- a. have been seeking employment for at least 90 days, but have been unsuccessful in their search
 - b. have had relevant problems identified that are likely sources for inhibiting hiring, and
 - c. are seeking cooperative solutions to address the agreed upon issues.
2. The goals pursuant to these objectives will be:
 - a. Placement in employment, or
 - b. a service to remediate a situation that requires a more intensive solution
3. Strategies to achieve these objectives and goals may include literacy/ESL referrals, case management, short-term or long-term training by way of work experience, on-the-job training, ITAs or referrals to outside organizations or agencies with specific expertise relevant to the particular issue

Targeted populations include:

Migrant Seasonal Farm Workers - The local area does not have a significant population of migrant and/or seasonal farmworkers. Migrant and Seasonal Farm Workers (MSFW) will receive qualitatively equivalent and quantitatively proportionate services equal to those provided to all other customers. MSFWs will receive the full range of employment services, benefits and protections including counseling, testing, and job and/or training referral services. In providing such services, all PA CareerLink® offices will consider the preferences, needs, and skills of individual MSFWs.

Individuals with disabilities - Both PA CareerLink® centers in the LWDA are ADA compliant and have a variety of equipment to assist individuals with disabilities such as: TDD/TTY telephones and Pennsylvania certified American Sign Language Interpreters available upon request for Deaf and Hard of Hearing participants; furniture (tables) to accommodate people in wheelchairs; and magnification devices to accommodate people with visual impairments. If individuals need additional services beyond basic career services a WIOA Title I application will be taken. If determined to be eligible, all WIOA Title I programs will be made available without bias. Title I staff will coordinate and jointly develop a plan with Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) to maximize funding for disabled individuals. Title I funding may be combined with OVR funding if skills training is deemed an appropriate activity for the individual. OVR can provide no-cost worksite accommodation consultations to assist employers as well as their employees. For example, Title I funding may be used to provide OJT training with an employer and OVR funding may be used to purchase a large print computer screen for a person with a vision disability to be placed at the employer's place of business.

WIOA Title IV OVR Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors provide their 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- to 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.

Veterans - All individuals who have served in the military are referred to BWPO's Veterans Services Representative for job matching and referrals. In addition, veterans may receive all other scheduled PA CareerLink® services and scheduled for workshops and other core services offered by any partner

agency and/or staff. Veterans may be referred for WIOA application if more intensive career services are deemed appropriate.

TANF Customers and Low-Income individuals – All low-income individuals are referred to the County Assistance Office (CAO) for assistance in removing barriers that may prevent them from attending training or obtaining and/or retaining employment. TANF recipients will also be referred to partner agencies and/or community agencies for assistance in other areas such as drug and alcohol counseling, housing issues, etc. TANF customers and low-income individuals may be referred for WIOA application if more intensive career services are deemed appropriate.

Displaced Homemakers - For the purpose of determining eligibility, a displaced homemaker is defined as an individual who has been providing unpaid services to family members in the home and who: has been dependent on the income of another family member but is no longer supported by that income and is unemployed or underemployed and is experiencing difficulty in obtaining or upgrading employment.

Women and Minorities - As part of career research activities, women are encouraged to review careers that are held predominately by men (non-traditional employment). They are instructed to compare wages of the non-traditional occupations to those more traditionally pursued by women. Employers are encouraged to hire women in non-traditional jobs. Employers who hire women to fill non-traditional employment vacancies via On-the-Job Training contracts (TAA and Title I) may receive an additional 40 hours of wage reimbursement. Minorities are mainstreamed into PA CareerLink® career services and all services and activities available in WIOA Title I funded programs.

Older Individuals –Referrals are made to Lawrence County Social Services for program information and assistance. Older individuals are mainstreamed through the regular PA CareerLink® processes and activities. All Title I programs are open to older individuals without bias. Any older individuals determined to be “job ready” will be referred to BWPO staff for job matching and referrals. Persons with Limited English Proficiency - Propio provides interpreter services for any individual with limited English proficiency. All partner agencies located at the PA CareerLink® were trained to use the Propio system. Recently, the Commonwealth notified all PA CareerLink® centers that the Propio service is available to all PA CareerLink® staff and the cost will be absorbed by the State. Training is provided to all staff once per year at capacity training on how to access Propio services.

Returning Citizens/Ex-Offenders – The PA Department of Probation and Parole hold weekly meetings at the PA CareerLink® centers for recently separated ex-offenders. These individuals are scheduled to attend PA CareerLink® orientations where all PA CareerLink® and partner services are explained. The recently separated ex-offenders are then mainstreamed through the regular PA CareerLink® processes and activities. All Title I programs are open to ex-offenders without bias. Any ex-offender determined to be “job ready” will be referred to BWPO staff for job matching and referrals. Services are also entered into the PA CareerLink® system.

Dislocated Workers – Title I staff checks the PA CareerLink® system to determine if a WARN notice has been filed for a dislocated worker’s former employer. If so, the BWPO staff and Title I staff will coordinate efforts to serve the Dislocated Worker. Title I staff will schedule and administer a full array of assessments for any individual who seeks funding (Title I and/or TAA) to attend training. Assessment results are reviewed to assure the client’s interests and aptitudes match the training for which they are seeking funding. If the client is suitable for training, an employment plan will be developed jointly by BWPO and Title I staff to maximize the funding package for Dislocated Workers and outline the steps needed to guide the client through training and lead them to employment. Referrals are made to all

appropriate supportive service agencies that could potentially assist in eliminating barriers in the training to employment process.

Trade Act Eligible Individuals - BWPO staff first meet with the individual affected by a layoff or downsizing and the company has a WARN notice on file. If an individual is interested in re-training and applying for TAA funding, they are first referred to the WIOA Title I provider for interest and aptitude assessment to assure the occupational field of interest is one in which they will be successful. WIOA Title I staff complete a WIOA application for services and schedules the individual for assessment. Once tested the WIOA Title I staff sends a recommendation to BWPO staff to approve or deny training along with the assessment results. BWPO forwards the TAA application for funding to the Commonwealth. Once approved the individual is co-enrolled in the PA CareerLink® system and WIOA systems. WIOA Title I staff will process an Individual Training Account (ITA) if the training is over and above the State's training cap. All WIOA Dislocated Worker and/or Rapid Response supportive services are available as needed to all co-enrolled individuals.

Youth - Are mainstreamed through the regular PA CareerLink® processes and activities. All Title I programs are open to Youth without bias. Any Youth who is deemed to be "job ready" will be referred to BWPO staff for job matching and referrals. Youth in need of additional assistance will be assigned a Case Manager who will work with the individual to develop an Individual Employment Plan and identify assessments and/or activities such as career research of HPO in the area and next steps toward becoming job ready.

Individuals Needing Literacy and/or Basic Skills Training - Will be seamlessly referred to the adult education training providers co-located in the PA CareerLink® centers or to other adult education training providers closer to the individual's residence. Individuals may also work at their own pace on the computerized WIN curriculum to upgrade their basic skill levels. Other activities, such as work-based learning may occur simultaneously with their scheduled literacy upgrade assignments.

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

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

Business and Employer needs are addressed through the PA CareerLink® Business Services Teams who meet on a regular basis to discuss and strategically address the real-time demand of our local business customers. BSTs align with the WCWDB's local and regional sector strategies by assisting in the recruitment and development of business customers to participate in sector focus groups and industry consortium activity for key driver industries. A result of local and regional cluster analyses, WCJP established partnerships in various high-demand industries. The mission of the BSTs is to provide guidance, resources, and strategic workforce solutions to employer customers. Through collaborative

efforts, the BST maintains a customer-friendly process to identify and access resources in response to specific business needs. The BST promotes industry stability and growth while serving as a central hub from which businesses can obtain coordinated assistance in recruiting, training and development of new or existing workers.

PA CareerLink® and WCWDB staff work together in their various roles and communications with employers. The composition of the BST consists of PA CareerLink® partner agency staff who deal most frequently, and most directly with the business customer, including WCJP, BWPO, OVR, as well as Lawrence County Economic Development Corporation and Penn-Northwest Development Corporation. Site Administrators serve as leaders of the internal BSTs and serve as a link between the BST and the WCWDB to ensure that local strategic plans and goals are communicated. BST members perform strategic outreach to companies and meet regularly to ensure that interactions are organized and coordinated between staff. The BSTs prioritize outreach to businesses that are classified as falling within designated industry sector groupings (high employment and wage growth). The BST maps resources frequently requested by employers to enable team members to refer customers to appropriate organizations that can meet their business needs.

Regional business outreach and work will continue to include the Northwest Pennsylvania Regional Planning and Development Commission, Northwest Industrial Resource Center (NWIRC), Gannon University and Duquesne University Small Business Development Centers (SBDC), The Ben Franklin Technology Partners of Central and Northern Pennsylvania and Catalyst Connection (SWIRC), the Shenango Valley and Lawrence County Chambers of Commerce, Penn Northwest Development Corporation and Lawrence County Economic Development Corporation. The regional business retention meets on a quarterly or semi-annual basis and provides information sharing and access to One-Stop center staff regarding available programs and resources.

Career services provided by PA CareerLink® partners are primarily delivered at the comprehensive One-Stop centers under the supervision of Site Administrators. A standing committee of supervisors meets regularly with the Site Administrator to devise methods to reduce duplication and promote integration of services. Staff is informed by their direct supervisors the extent of integration agreed upon for their respective program to balance the required integrity set forth, thus reducing duplication. Multiple partners coordinate and engage jointly in outreach and orientation activities for customers seeking employment and training services. Additionally, center scheduling of information workshops have aggregated cross program resources to provide regular and ongoing presentations to job seekers, site staff and employers on topics such as labor market statistics, high priority and in-demand occupations, availability of supportive services, and local area employment opportunities.

To ensure efficient and effective delivery and referral of services, the BST identifies and utilizes customer feedback as a measure for continuous improvement. The PA CareerLink® Site Administrators have developed a system to obtain customer feedback from employer customers regarding the services provided through the PA CareerLink® as well as services desired to obtain information regarding the satisfaction and needs of the business customer. Site Administrators and other BST members participate on advisory boards of local agencies and education providers to share and obtain information. Additional information is obtained via questionnaires, surveys, employer advisory councils, or targeted sector focus groups. Customer satisfaction is determined by providing pre- and post-employment follow up with business customers. By customizing quality services in response to individual customer needs, the BST has helped customers to improve their competitive advantage and retention. The BST stays informed of developments in local, national and international career trends and offers continuous development, implementation and evaluation to business customers.

Rapid Response communications are received by the PA CareerLink® Site Administrators so they can work with the Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry and Bureau of Workforce Partnership and Operations. Site Administrators coordinate the center staff's response, which provides presentations and information to the employer and individuals to assist them in transitioning from their current employment to future employment. Additionally, as the demand for Unemployment Compensation services has increased with the cuts in personnel in the Commonwealth's call centers, there have been an increased number of individuals utilizing the PA CareerLink® site computers to file their request for benefits or to get answers to inquiries about UC claims.

Individuals will also be directed to self-service elements in the centers. Those which require more intensive services will be referred to staff assisted services based on their need. Assessments will be available for individuals to determine literacy or educational/training needs. The PA CareerLink® administrators are at times called upon by business customers to arrange for Rapid Response services when local companies are in distress. In these rare but challenging times, staff prepares customized information sessions in order to prepare future dislocated workers for training opportunities or seamless reattachment to the workforce.

For WIOA Title IV eligible customers OVR provides these additional multiple services to the business community designed to assist business with onboarding pre-screened qualified employees with disabilities. OVR business services include reasonable accommodation consultation, OJT, referral on tax credits or deductions. OVR also offers no-cost consultation on the Americans with Disability Act (ADA), accessibility standards and helping a business to retain current employees following an accident, injury or disability.

WCJP's Administrative Division recently hired a Youth Career Coordinator (YCC) to work with school districts to align and connect their career readiness efforts to the WDB's youth programming efforts. The YCC recently conducted a survey on how the WDB could assist the school districts to meet their Career Education & Work Standards and their Chapter 339 plans. All 20 school districts responded to the survey. The YCC is currently working to develop an employer survey to identify the local businesses that are willing to host (in-person or virtually): student tours, job shadowing, work experience, and internship opportunities for high students. Business partners are also recruited to participate in business and career fairs and/or make presentations on the types of jobs available and the education and skill sets needed to fill those jobs.

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?

WIOA clients have access to Supportive services based on a needs assessment which is documented through case notes as a part of the Individual Employment Plan. These services are provided on a first-come first-served basis and are subject to the availability of funding.

Supportive services include the following:

- Childcare
- Eyecare
- Healthcare (including dental, hearing aids, and other emergency care)
- Car repair

- Clothing & uniform allowance (as required for training or employment)

If no WIOA funding is available, PA CareerLink® staff will make appropriate referrals to outside community-based organizations that also provide services including: the local County Assistance Offices, Community Action Partnerships, Housing Authorities, Pennsylvania’s Early Learning Resource Centers, etc.

Beyond the two-county area, services are also coordinated within the Keystone Edge Planning Region and can be found in the Regional Plan in Section 1.7.

5. COMPLIANCE

Compliance

Section 5: Compliance and Attestations

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.

WIOA services to PA CareerLink® customers are provided by partner agencies, both in-person and virtually, in alignment with the mission of the respective organizations and coordinated for the integration and leveraging of assistance. A Memorandum of Understanding between the West Central Workforce Development Board and the mandated PA CareerLink® partner agencies exists in order to formalize the vision, mission, system structure, terms and conditions and resource sharing agreement towards an integrated service delivery system. The One Stop Operator convenes PA CareerLink® partner agency leadership and staff on a regular basis to provide updates and staff cross-training.

It is further expected that the PA Labor and Industry and the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) will jointly develop and issue a template to be used in all Local Workforce Development Areas that will include State and Federal criteria. WCJP will work with State and regional offices to provide the services outlined in the agreement template. Cross-training will be offered to PA CareerLink® staff so the services are understood and the service benchmarks may be reached. LWDB staff will include a compliance review of this agreement during the regular monitoring of the PA CareerLink® centers.

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

The settlement of all debts resulting from fraud, malfeasance, or other serious violations or illegal acts must be paid from non-federal resources. In the event a debt is established, the debtor will be notified in writing by certified letter, return receipt requested.

A letter will provide the following information:

- Date on which the debt was established as a final decision;
- Request for payment within 30 calendar days of the final establishment of a debt. Two additional letters requesting payment will be sent to the debtor at no less than 30-day intervals;
- Date that the debt will be delinquent (30 calendar days from the date the debt was established as final, unless other arrangements are negotiated and approved by WCJP);
- Appeal rights (notification of the right to appeal the decision). The debtor must request a hearing within ten (10) calendar days of receipt of notice of debt to avoid sanctions or penalties.
- Sanctions and/or selected remedies if the debt is still outstanding after 90 calendar days, including but not limited to debarment, litigation or referral to a collection agency.

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

Continuing to meet and exceed performance goals as a high-performing board is a main focal priority of the WCWDB. As the Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry develops state-specific guidance for high-performing boards, the WCWDB will implement any necessary actions to maintaining its status. The LWDB negotiates its WIOA Title I program performance with the Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry and works with the WIOA Title I Career Services provider to ensure programs and services are meeting or exceeding set local goals, in advancement of the broader regional and statewide performance including the Governor's goals outlined in the Combined State Plan.

In addition to the Commonwealth's forthcoming guidance, the U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration has provided guidance and resources in best practices to drive the strategic focus of Workforce Development Boards and concentrates on four critical areas for board action and responsibility:

1. Advancing Vision, Creating Strategy, and Partnerships

Convening local partners, employers, and community members to maintain diverse representation and inform the direction of the strategies and vision of the Board is integral to guide the public workforce development system. In addition to the Board partnerships and committees, the WCWDB facilitates strategic collaboration through sector strategies and seeks diverse funding opportunities to support innovative approaches. This includes work with its partners to pursue unique opportunities for competitive funding through state, federal, and foundation grant sources for local and regional projects. With a history of successful obtainment and administration of funding, the WCWDB has enhanced investment in workforce strategies through collaborative efforts. This includes prior competitive U.S. Department of Labor federal grants, statewide, and Private Foundation funding opportunities.

2. Implementing Effective System Operations

High Performing Boards have a commitment to identify customer-driven solutions through strategic partnerships and collaborative service. Along with fulfilling the quantitative and qualitative requirements and conditions of formula funding, the LWDB works with its partners to pursue unique opportunities for competitive funding through state, federal, and foundation grant sources for local and regional projects in service to its employer and job-seeker customers. With a history of successful

obtainment and administration of funding, the WCWDB has enhanced investment in workforce strategies through collaborative efforts. This includes prior competitive U.S. Department of Labor federal grants, statewide, and Private Foundation funding opportunities.

3. Measuring Board Success

Evaluating the current workforce development system, demonstrating outcomes and return on investment is critical to maintaining responsive and effective programs and strategies. Metrics on qualitative and quantitative performance are reported to the Board regularly and key partners are continuously engaged to redesign and improve processes and programs to best serve individuals and businesses. Sharing success stories of program participants, such as the numerous local participants and employers recognized in the Governor's Achievement Awards, is another benchmark of success and exemplary of the positive work the WCWDA and workforce system supports in its community. These testimonials showcase employer engagement, job growth and retention, support of career pathways and jobs with family sustaining wages and illustrate how the system combines services and programs effectively.

4. Understanding Board Requirements

Workforce professional staff to the Board provide information to its members on WIOA regulations and updates and how they affect local, regional, and statewide programs and services. Staff also orient new Elected Officials, Board Members and Board Leadership to their collective and respective roles and responsibilities. The WCWDB will continue to support staff development, membership in professional organizations, and participation in conferences and seminars, in order to foster institutional knowledge and experience. Understanding the mandate of WIOA to focus beyond funding and individual programs to innovate and incorporate a comprehensive strategy to serve the community, Governing and Workforce Board leadership continue to solicit input to develop and implement progressive strategies to remain a high performing Board.

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

Input is solicited from the diverse members of the community for both Lawrence and Mercer counties' Local Plan and the Keystone Edge Regional Plan which includes the six counties in the Northwest LWDB: Crawford, Clarion, Erie, Forest, Venango, and Warren. While WCWDA staff received prompt requirements and expectations for WIOA Local and Regional Plans on September 14, 2020 and began the process of developing both, PA Department of Labor & Industry Leadership notified the Areas on November 4, 2020 that the submission deadline for the Plans had been extended from March 2, 2021 to April 2, 2021.

Stakeholder collaboration is the cornerstone of the workforce development system. Representatives provide input toward area workforce challenges, priorities, processes, benchmarks, and goals. The local plan incorporates contributions from labor organizations, economic development, OVR, education, and the business community from numerous forums taking place prior to and during the planning period. Since the time of the last local WDA Plan Modification, staff have regularly participated in meetings to

inform the direction of workforce development strategies moving forward and continuously capture partner input. These include:

- PA CareerLink® site closure and reopening plan meetings discussing the continuity of services and coordination among partner agencies
- PA CareerLink® Lawrence County Site Selection Committee meetings and report to the full Board which discussed numerous points related to partners, location, and accessibility
- West Central Workforce Development Board meetings: 9/10/20 and 2/25/21
- West Central One Stop Operations meetings: 5/5/20, 6/10/20 and 9/17/20
- West Central Workforce Development Executive Committee Meeting: 6/24/20
- West Central Workforce Development Youth Committee Meetings: 8/19/20, 10/14/20 and 1/13/21
- Rapid Response Outreach Initiative Kick-Off Meeting: 10/27/20
- Regional Plan Committee: input put forth at the December 3, 2020 and February 19, 2021 meetings on topics to be included in the WCWDA Local Plan and how it ties into the greater Keystone Edge Regional strategy

The WCWDA maintains strong relationships among local stakeholders, who regularly convene on Business Services Teams and are aware of the planning process and offer input on the plan content, strategies, and best approaches for meeting local, regional, and statewide workforce goals. These partners include: Economic Development Organizations, Small Business Development Centers, Adult Literacy, Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, Bureau of Workforce Partnership & Operations, WIOA Title I and One-Stop Operator representatives, Education, Labor, as well as community representatives.

The WCWDA 2021-24 Draft Local Plan was circulated electronically among the Business Service Teams, Local Elected Officials, Workforce Development Board members, and PA CareerLink® mandatory partners on Friday, February 19, 2021 with requests for review and input. Additionally, the current local plan is made available for public on WCJP's website during the full time it is in effect and comments from all interested parties are solicited during planning and modification periods.

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

The 2020-24 Local WIOA Plan and the Keystone Edge Regional Plan were posted on WCJP's website at www.wcjp.org on Friday, February 19, 2021. Notification was sent to BWPO, LEOs, WCWDB members, standing youth committee members, current contractors, PA CareerLink® partners and stakeholders, and WCJP staff as notice the plan had been posted to the website for review and comment. Comments are being accepted electronically to rmoder@wcjp.org until 8:00 AM EST on March 22, 2021.

No public comments were received for the regional plan.

The local area plan comments received suggested changes; responses on how the suggestions impacted the plan can be found below:

Comments and Questions

1. "Section 4.3 Identifies the local PA CareerLink® Site Administrators. Beginning April 3, 2021 (during the Plan's 30 Day Public Comment period) Nathan Hamilla replaced Christine Burger as PA CareerLink® Mercer County Site Administrator."

Contact information was updated to reflect this change.

2. "In Section 4.12 of the Local Plan, there is a description of the procedures for the WCWDB review of applications submitted to the DOE by prospective providers of adult education literacy services. These procedures related to the grant competition held in late spring 2018. The grants awarded at that time were for a period of four years and it is anticipated there will be a further competition in spring 2022 (although previous grant periods have been extended for up to three years). It may be appropriate to indicate that the WCWDB anticipates participating in any review of adult education literacy provider applications requested by the DOE, should a further grant competition occur during the Local Plan period. The procedures may be different to those required in 2018."

Language was modified to clarify this past procedure and that the Board expects to participate in review of prospective providers of Adult Education & Literacy services in alignment with future PA Department of Education guidance.

ATTESTATIONS

By checking the box adjacent to each line item, the local board attests to ensuring the compliance components and documents listed are (or will be) in place and effective prior to June 30, 2021.

The following components and documents, including local workforce system policies, must be reviewed and revised as to be aligned with WIOA for the current planning cycle. Each item must be available to L&I at any time during the planning process and monitoring or auditing processes. L&I is not requiring copies of such documents to be attached to regional or local area plans at this time.

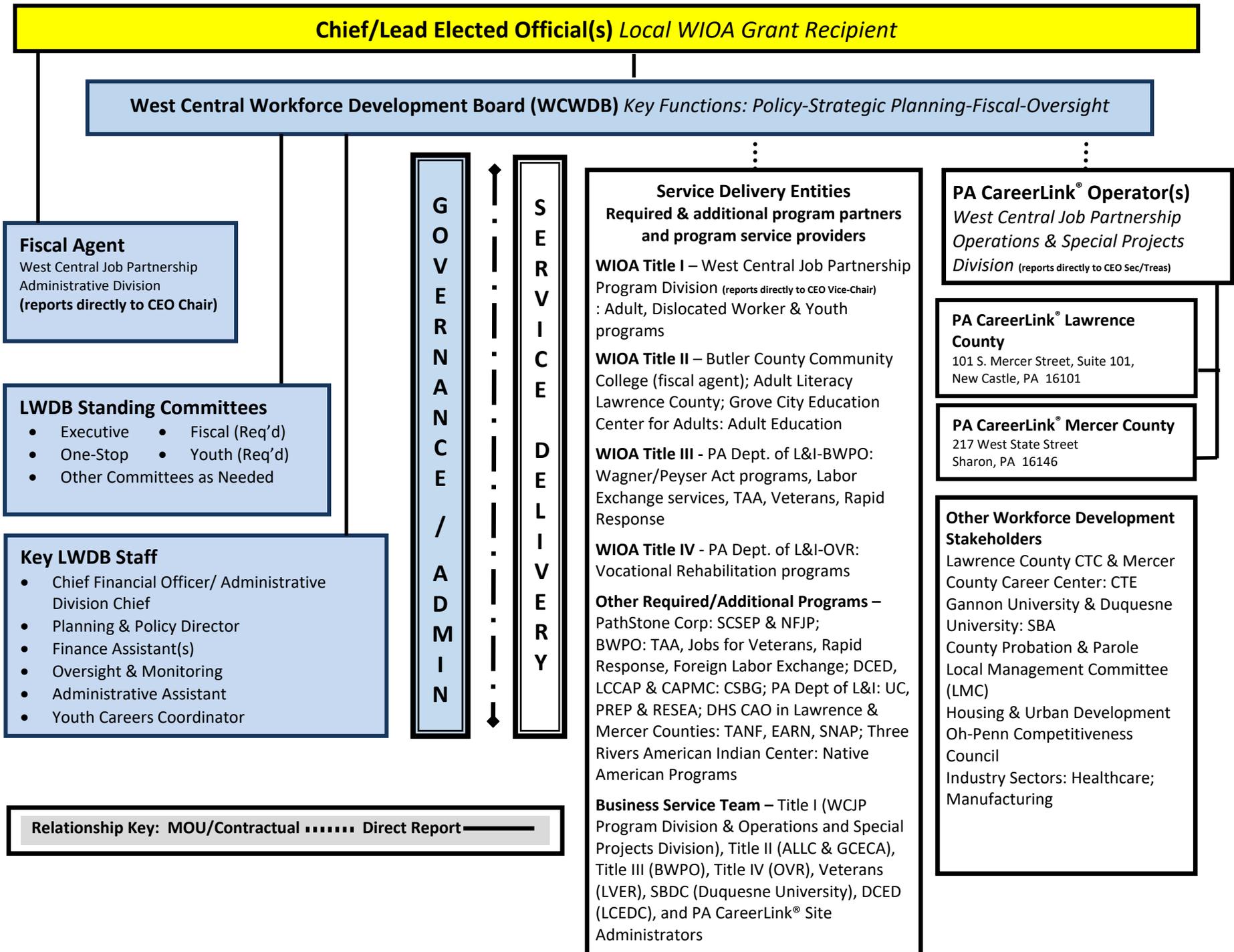
- The West Central Local Workforce Development Area attests that each of the below referenced policies contain any required language or content and were last revised, if necessary, by this plan's effective date.
- Agreement between all counties and other local governments, if applicable, establishing the consortium of local and chief elected officials.
- 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 LWDB.
- LWDB 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 that must describe formal procurement procedures.
- Local area MOU.
- 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 and certification random sampling; priority of service; stipends and incentives; 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; work-based training policies including incumbent worker training, OJT, CT, and apprenticeship.
- 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 and non-discrimination.
- Professional services contract(s) for administrative services such as staffing and payroll, if applicable.

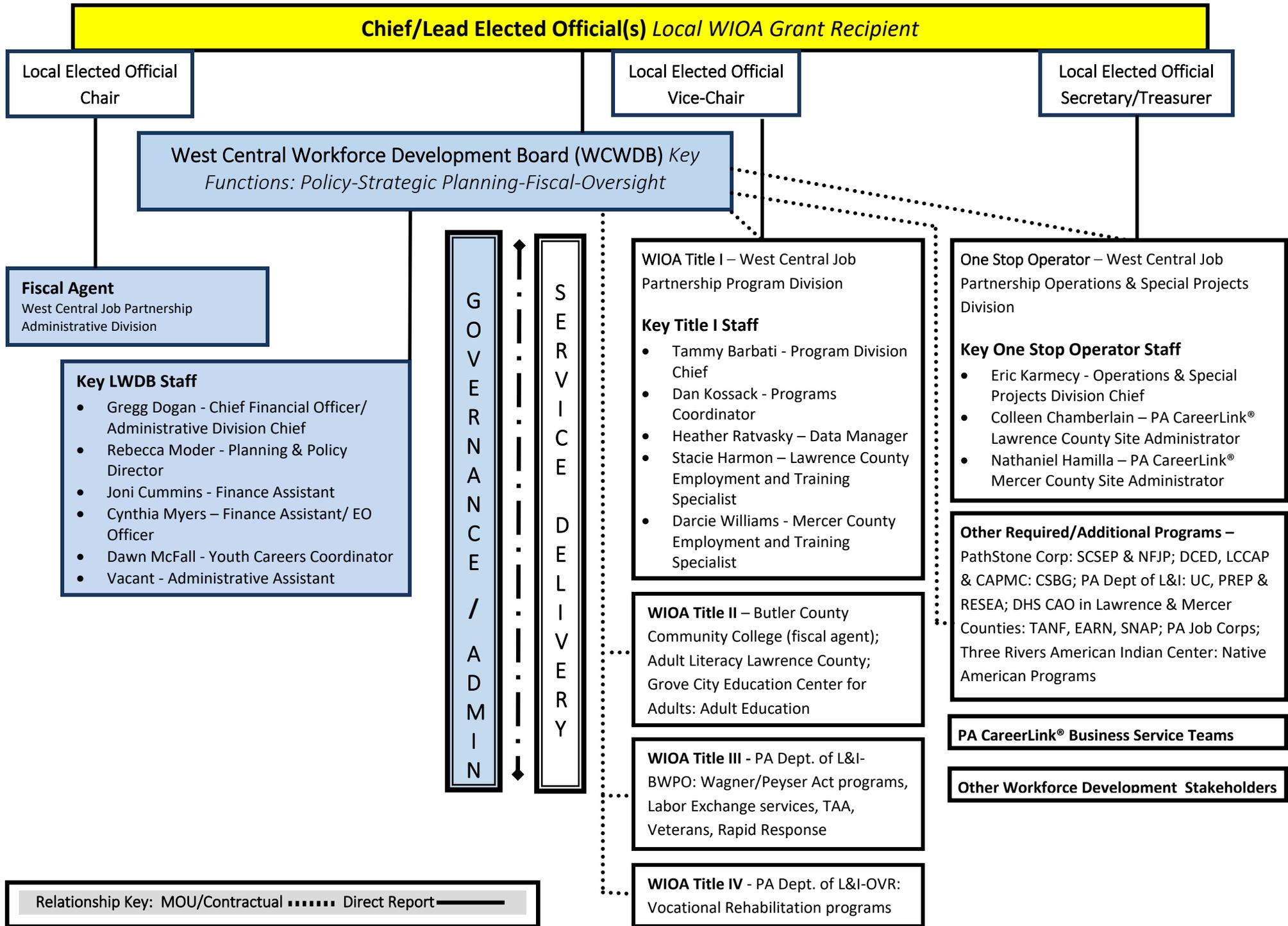
Attachment 1: WIOA Title I Programs Performance Accountability Table

The Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry, or L&I, negotiates WIOA Title I programs performance goals with the U. S. Department of Labor on a two-year program cycle, which aligns with the WIOA planning requirement of reviewing WIOA Local Area Plans every two years. In an effort designed to meet or exceed the state WIOA performance goals, PA negotiates these same goals with PA’s local workforce development areas, or LWDA, to optimally set each local area’s WIOA Title I performance goal levels so that, collectively, the state negotiated performance goals are met or exceeded.

The *WIOA Title I Programs Performance Accountability Table* is for the benefit of the public and must be updated accordingly. Local boards must edit the table’s two columns with the appropriate program year(s) to correctly match the most recent* LWDA-negotiated performance goals and attained performance results. This completed table must be publicly posted with the local area plan. The LWDB does not need to perform a WIOA plan modification as this table is revised; email notification to local area workforce development stakeholders will suffice.

LWDA Name: West Central Workforce Development Area		
WIOA Title I Programs (Adult-Dislocated Worker-Youth) Performance Measures	LWDA’s WIOA Title I Programs <u>Negotiated Performance Goals</u> - *Program Year(s): 2020 – 2021	LWDA’s WIOA Title I Programs <u>Attained Performance Results</u> - *Program Year: 2019
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	Negotiated Goals	Attained Performance
Adult	80.0%	86.3%
Dislocated Worker	81.0%	89.4%
Youth	68.0%	73.2%
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	Negotiated Goals	Attained Performance
Adult	78.0%	80.7%
Dislocated Worker	82.0%	87.6%
Youth	60.0%	68.8%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)	Negotiated Goals	Attained Performance
Adult	\$6,200	\$7,191
Dislocated Worker	\$7,900	\$9,034
Youth	\$3,500	\$4,957
Credential Attainment Rate	Negotiated Goals	Attained Performance
Adult	63.0%	69.0%
Dislocated Worker	70.0%	83.5%
Youth	65.0%	63.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	Negotiated Goals	Attained Performance
Adult	50.0%	76.5%
Dislocated Worker	50.0%	83.3%
Youth	52.0%	52.0%





Attachment 3: WIOA Local Workforce Development Delivery System
Program Partner-Provider List

Local Workforce Development Area name: West Central Workforce Development Area
Effective Date: 07/01/2021

Local Workforce Development Boards, or LWDBs, are requested to publicly post the PA CareerLink® Workforce Service Delivery System Program Partner/Provider List to address the public's need for access to service as mandated by the Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act, or WIOA. The LWDB should ensure that the Program Partner/Provider List reflects the current PA CareerLink® Memoranda of Understanding(s). Local area plan modifications concerning this subject matter are not required to be submitted to the Department if the list is posted on the LWDB public website.

Program Name	Program Authorization	Local Area Partner/Provider
POC address	POC telephone	POC website/email
WIOA Title I Adult/DW/Youth	WIOA Title I: Adult, Dislocated Worker & Youth program Services	West Central Job Partnership (WCJP) Administrative Division / WCJP Program Division
217 West State Street, Third Floor Sharon, PA 16146	724-347-7855	www.wcjp.org Gregg Dogan gdogan@wcjp.org
101 S. Mercer Street, Suite 101 New Castle, PA 16101	724-656-3165 ext. 209	Tammy Barbati tbarbati@wcjp.org
WIOA Title II Adult Education	WIOA Title II, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) Program	Butler County Community College/ Adult Literacy Lawrence County & Grove City Education Center for Adults – fiscal agent
107 College Drive Butler, PA 16002	724-287-8711 ext. 8839	www.bc3.edu Barbara Gade Barbara.gade@BC3.edu
Adult Literacy Lawrence County 927 Moravia Street New Castle, PA 16101	724-654-1500 Lawrence County	Gillian Maule gillmaule@gmail.com
Grove City Education Center 118 South Center Street Grove City, PA	724-458-7270 Mercer County	Sandy Marwick gcedcenter@gmail.com
WIOA Title III Wagner Peyser	Wagner Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 49 et seq.), as amended by WIOA Title III	Bureau of Workforce Partnership and Operations
651 Boas Street Harrisburg, PA 17121	717-787-6915	www.dli.pa.gov Steven Wolf stewolf@pa.gov
WIOA Title IV PA Office of Vocational Rehabilitation	Title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29U.S.C. 720 et seq.) other than section 112 or part C of Title I of such Act (29 U.S.C. 732, 741)	PA Department of Labor and Industry www.dli.pa.gov
1521 N 6 th Street Harrisburg, PA 17102	724-656-3070 Lawrence County	Gail Steck gsteck@pa.gov
1745 Frew Mill Road, Suite #1 New Castle, PA 16101	814-651-9607 Mercer County	Jack Hewitt jhewitt@pa.gov
3100 Lovell Place Erie, PA 16503		
Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)	Title V of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42	PathStone Corporation

	U.S.C. 3056 et seq.)	
421 McFarlan Road, Suite E Kennett Square, PA 19348	610-925-5600 Ext 103	www.pathstone.org Nita D'Agostino ndagostino@pathstone.org
Trade Adjustment Act (TAA)	Chapter 2 of Title II of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2271 et seq.)	Bureau of Workforce Partnership and Operations
300 Indian Springs Road Indiana, PA 15701	724-471-7235	www.dli.pa.gov Larry Fannie lfannie@pa.gov
Jobs for Veterans State Grants	Chapter 41 of Title 38, U.S.C.	Bureau of Workforce Partnership and Operations
300 Indian Springs Road Indiana, PA 15701	724-471-7235	www.dli.pa.gov Larry Fannie lfannie@pa.gov
Community Services Block Grant Act (CSBG)	Employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant Act (CSBG) (42 U.S.C. 9901 et seq.)	Department of Community & Economic Development Lawrence County Community Action Partnership Community Action Partnership Mercer County
300 Liberty Avenue Pittsburgh, PA 15222	717-720-1350	www.dced.pa.gov Lynette Praster lpraster@pa.gov
241 West Grant Street New Castle, PA 16101	724-658-7258	www.lccap.org Tom Scott tscott@lccap.org
75 South Dock Street Sharon, PA 16146	724-342-6222	www.capmercer.org Wilma Torres wtorres@capmercer.org
Unemployment Compensation	Programs authorized under PA Unemployment compensation laws (in accordance with applicable Federal law	PA Department of Labor & Industry – PA Unemployment Compensation
651 Boas Street Harrisburg, PA 17121	717-783-7107	www.uc.pa.gov Karen Campbell Karencam@pa.gov
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)	Part A of Title IV of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.)	Department of Human Services / <i>County Assistance Offices of Lawrence & Mercer Counties</i>
625 Forster Street Harrisburg, PA 17120	717-787-8307 - State	www.dhs.pa.gov
108 Cascade Galleria New Castle, PA 16101	724-656-3011	Alberta Dean adean@pa.gov
2236 Highland Road Hermitage, PA 16148	724-983-5012	Noel Shadley nshadley@pa.gov
Rapid Response		Bureau of Workforce Partnership and Operations
300 Indian Springs Road Indiana, PA 15701	724-471-7235	www.dli.pa.gov Larry Fannie lfannie@pa.gov
Foreign Labor Exchange		Bureau of Workforce Partnership and Operations

300 Indian Springs Road Indiana, PA 15701	724-471-7235	www.dli.pa.gov Larry Fannie lfannie@pa.gov
Native American Programs	Programs authorized under title I of WIOA - Native American programs WIOA, Title I, Section 131	Three Rivers American Indian Center
120 Charles Street Dorseyville, PA 15238	412-782-4457 ext. 219	www.cotraic.org Kerry Jevsevar kjevsevar@cotraic.org
National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP)	Programs authorized under WIOA Title I, Section 167	PathStone Corporation
421 McFarlan Road, Suite E Kennett Square, PA 19348	610-925-5600 Ext 103	www.pathstone.org Nita D'Agostino ndagostino@pathstone.org

Several mandated partners are not located in the local workforce development area (Job Corps, Youth Build) or not funded for programs in the local area (Second Chance Act, Career and Technical Education programs at the post-secondary level authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006, and employment and training activities carried out by the Department of Housing and Urban Development); however, these partners participate in local workforce development activities in a variety of ways in partnership with WCWDB, the one-stop operator, and the site administrators.

Attachment 4: Local Workforce Development System Supporting Data

Local area plans have multiple sections requiring various data methodologies needed to support narrative. When documenting data methodologies, plan drafters may reference the data location in the local area plan prompt narrative and move referenced data (e.g., charts, tables, etc.) to this attachment. The *Supporting Data* attachment must be submitted with the local area plan and publicly posted with all other supporting documentation as referenced in the WIOA Regional and Local Area Plan Guide.

Local boards must enter the prerequisite information (i.e. LWDA name, section number with prompt, input data referenced in the plan’s prompt narrative and cite data source) if using this form.

If a local board does not use this form, the LWDB must make note on this attachment that “all data is cited in the local plan narrative.”

LWDA Name: West Central Workforce Development Area

Section 1.1 Identify the composition of the local area’s population and labor force.

Table 1: West Central Population Projections 2014 - 2025	
Year	West Central WDA Population
2014	203,319
2015	201,746
2016	199,923
2017	198,019
2018	196,599
2019	194,936
2020	194,059
2021	193,170
2022	192,253
2023	191,318
2024	190,356
2025	189,364

[Source: JobsEQ®](#)

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 region and local area?

Table 1: West Central WDA Top 20 Job Skills by Projected Employment and Demand				
#	Detailed Work Activity	2026 Employment	Percent of Annual Demand	Annual Demand
1	Order materials, supplies, or equipment.	14,550	19.5%	1,930
2	Calculate costs of goods or services.	11,010	15.2%	1,505
3	Sell products or services.	10,430	14.4%	1,422
4	Clean work areas.	10,440	14.0%	1,386
5	Clean food preparation areas, facilities, or equipment.	7,580	13.2%	1,310

Attachment 4: Local Workforce Development System Supporting Data

6	Greet customers, patrons, or visitors.	9,310	13.0%	1,289
7	Serve food or beverages.	7,270	12.9%	1,274
8	Cook foods.	7,060	12.5%	1,234
9	Record operational or production data	9,670	12.0%	1,191
10	Process customer bills or payments	6,520	11.7%	1,159
11	Clean food service areas	6,180	11.3%	1,121
12	Arrange tables or dining areas.	6,160	11.3%	1,115
13	Monitor inventories of products or materials	8,960	11.0%	1,085
14	Communicate with customers to resolve complaints or ensure satisfaction.	5,910	10.6%	1,049
15	Answer customer questions about goods or services.	7,040	10.3%	1,019
16	Take customer orders.	5,490	10.1%	1,005
17	Answer telephones to direct calls or provide information.	7,800	10.1%	1,004
18	Maintain records of sales or other business transactions.	6,990	10.1%	1,004
19	Collect deposits, payments or fees.	8,770	10.1%	1,002
20	Collect dirty dishes or other tableware.	5,420	10.0%	994

Source: Center for Workforce Information and Analysis

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 region and local area?

Table 2: West Central WDA Top 20 Job Skills by Projected Employment and Demand

#	Tools & Technologies	2026 Employment	Percent of Annual Demand	Annual Demand
1	Spreadsheet software	69,670	79.3%	7,852
2	Data base user interface and query software	60,270	69.1%	6,845
3	Office suite software	62,020	68.7%	6,805
4	Word processing software	62,040	67.3%	6,667
5	Personal computers	58,450	64.3%	6,374
6	Desktop computers	53,270	57.8%	5,730
7	Electronic mail software	50,470	52.8%	5,232
8	Internet browser software	42,670	44.3%	4,389
9	Notebook computers	42,950	42.9%	4,251
10	Enterprise resource planning ERP software	34,380	37.1%	3,674
11	Presentation software	36,220	36.4%	3,607
12	Operating system software	30,180	35.8%	3,549
13	Accounting software	30,300	33.9%	3,354
14	Calendar and scheduling software	28,690	30.0%	2,977
15	Project management software	29,250	29.2%	2,890
16	Medical software	26,980	28.9%	2,867
17	Screwdrivers	23,820	28.2%	2,793
18	Point of sale POS software	18,820	28.1%	2,781

Attachment 4: Local Workforce Development System Supporting Data

19	Cash registers	17,920	27.7%	2,748
20	Bar code reader equipment	17,460	25.1%	2,488

Source: Center for Workforce Information and Analysis

Section 1.5. How are skills gaps defined in the local area? Provide a description of the skills that are required to meet the needs of employers in region and local area?

Table 3: Long-Term Industry Projections for West Central WDA (2018-28)

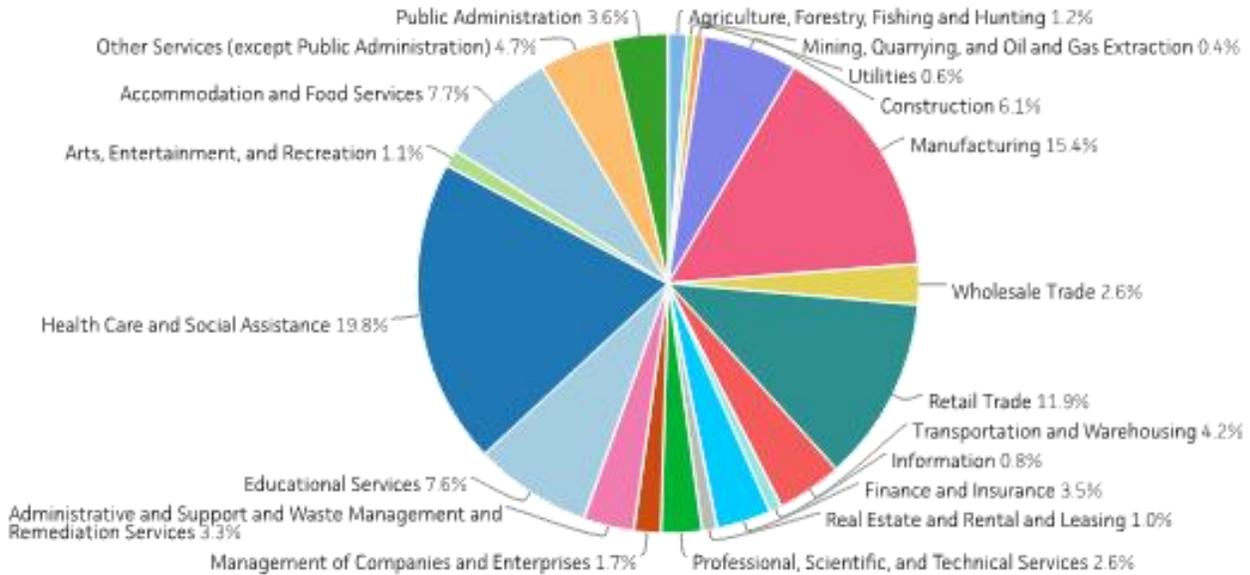
Industry Title	Employment*		Change		Avg Annual Change
	2018	2028	Level	Percent	
TOTAL ALL INDUSTRIES	82,560	83,460	900	1.1%	90
GOODS-PRODUCING	16,790	16,180	-610	-3.6%	-61
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	1,180	1,070	-110	-9.3%	-11
Mining, Quarrying & Oil & Gas Extraction	320	330	10	3.1%	1
Construction	3,460	3,650	190	5.5%	19
Manufacturing	11,820	11,140	-680	-5.8%	-68
SERVICES-PROVIDING	60,820	61,940	1,120	1.8%	112
Utilities	360	340	-20	-5.6%	-2
Wholesale Trade	2,040	1,970	-70	-3.4%	-7
Retail Trade	9,460	8,970	-490	-5.2%	-49
Transportation & Warehousing	2,730	2,800	70	2.6%	7
Information	580	530	-50	-8.6%	-5
Finance & Insurance	2,660	2,590	-70	-2.6%	-7
Real Estate & Rental & Leasing	580	590	10	1.7%	1
Professional & Technical Services	1,500	1,550	50	3.3%	5
Management of Companies & Enterprises	1,180	1,200	20	1.7%	2
Administrative & Waste Services	2,700	2,730	30	1.1%	3
Educational Services	5,950	6,090	140	2.4%	14
Health Care & Social Assistance	15,570	16,920	1,350	8.7%	135
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	720	750	30	4.2%	3
Accommodation & Food Services	6,780	7,120	340	5.0%	34
Other Services, Ex. Public Admin	3,950	3,890	-60	-1.5%	-6
Government	4,070	3,910	-160	-3.9%	-16
Self-Employed Workers	4,950	5,340	390	7.9%	39

Source: Center for Workforce Information and Analysis

Section 1.5. How are skills gaps defined in the local area? Provide a description of the skills that are required to meet the needs of employers in region and local area?

Chart 1

Total Workers for West Central PA Workforce Development Area by Industry



Source: Chmura Economics & Analytics JobsEQ - Labor Market Data system