



# Quarterly Meeting Briefing Book

August 12, 2020  
10:00 AM to 2:00 PM

**Tom Wolf**  
Governor

**Jeff Brown**  
Chair



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### Quarterly Meeting

Wednesday August 12, 2020

10:00 AM to 2:00 PM

Online

### Agenda

- 10:00 AM Welcome, Introduction, and Roll Call, Chair Jeff Brown
- 10:05 AM Chair's Updates, Jeff Brown
- Approve May 5, 2020 Quarterly Meeting Minutes – **VOTE**
- 10:10 AM PA WDB Committee Updates (*full text of recommendations provided in Briefing Book Appendices*)
- Youth, Chair Chekemma J. Fulmore Townsend
  - Continuous Improvement, Chair Brian Funkhouser
  - Industry Partnership and Employer Engagement, Chair John "Ski" Sygielski
  - One Stop Service Delivery, Chair Sarah Hollister
  - Career Pathways and Apprenticeship, Chair Richard Bloomingdale
    - Presentation: Dr. Stephen Herzenberg, Keystone Research Center
    - Career Pathways Recommendation – **VOTE**
  - Healthcare Workforce Ad Hoc, Chair Matt Yarnell
    - Temporary Nursing Assistant Recommendation – **VOTE**
    - Frontline Professional Worker Recommendation – **VOTE**
  - Reentry Ad Hoc, Chair Jeff Brown
    - Presentation: KayLynn Hamilton, KayLynn Hamilton Consulting
    - Government ID Recommendation – **VOTE**
    - Digital Literacy Recommendation – **VOTE**
    - Technology Device Access Recommendation – **VOTE**
    - Board of Pardons Capacity Recommendation – **VOTE**
- 12:00 PM Agency Updates
- Office of Governor Tom Wolf
  - Department of Education
    - Presentation: Amanda Harrison, Adult Education, PDE

- Department of Labor and Industry
- Department of Aging
- Department of Agriculture
- Department of Community and Economic Development
- Department of Corrections
- Department of Human Services
- Department of Vocational Rehabilitation

1:30 PM Public Comment Period

2:00 PM Adjourn - **VOTE**



## Pennsylvania Resources for COVID-19

### Office of Governor Tom Wolf

<https://www.pa.gov/guides/responding-to-covid-19/>

### Pennsylvania Department of Health<sup>1</sup>

<https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/disease/coronavirus/Pages/Coronavirus.aspx>

### Pennsylvania Department of Aging

<https://www.aging.pa.gov/Pages/covid-guide-for-older-adults.aspx>

### Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture

<https://www.agriculture.pa.gov/Pages/COVID-19.aspx>

### Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development

<https://dced.pa.gov/resources/>

### Pennsylvania Department of Corrections

<https://www.cor.pa.gov/Pages/COVID-19.aspx>

### Pennsylvania Department of Education

<https://www.education.pa.gov/Schools/safeschools/emergencyplanning/COVID-19/Pages/default.aspx>

### Pennsylvania Department Human Services

<https://www.dhs.pa.gov/providers/Providers/Pages/Coronavirus-2020.aspx>

### Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry

<https://www.uc.pa.gov/COVID-19/Pages/default.aspx>

<sup>1</sup> While the Pennsylvania Department of Health (DOH) does not have representation on the Pennsylvania Workforce Development Board (PA WDB), we wanted to ensure DOH resources are available to all PA WDB Members

## PA WDB Quarterly Board Meeting

Wednesday, May 5, 2020

10:00AM to 1:12PM

Skype

### Meeting Minutes

#### Attendance

**Members:** Chair Jeff Brown, Idayat Adewunmi, Denise Andahazy, Shannon Austin, Tim Bean, Richard Bloomingdale, Julene Campion, Rep. Morgan Cephas, Wendie DiMatteo-Holsinger, Chekemma Fulmore-Townsend, Brian Funkhouser, Commissioner Robert Harvie, Jr. , Brad Hollabaugh, Sarah Hollister, Timothy James Peter Klein, Marguerite Kline, Rep. Ryan Mackenzie, Bob McAuliffe, Secretary Teresa Miller, Henry Nicholas, Secretary Jerry Oleksiak, Jodi Pace, Secretary Russell Redding, Gregg Riefenstahl, Secretary Pedro Rivera, JoAnne Ryan, Robert Scaer, Jessica Trybus, Dionne Wallace-Oakley, Laura Wand, Sen. Linsey Williams, Matt Yarnell, Deputy Secretary Allison Jones for Governor Tom Wolf, David Miles for Secretary Robert Torres, Amy Schwenk for Secretary John Wetzel

**Presenters:** Chair Matt Yarnell, Healthcare Workforce Ad Hoc Committee; Chair Chekemma Fulmore-Townsend, Youth Committee; Chair Brian Funkhouser, Continuous Improvement Committee; KayLynn Hamilton, KayLynn Hamilton Consulting; Chair Richard Bloomingdale, Career Pathways and Apprenticeship Committee; Executive Director James Martini, Industry Partnership and Employer Engagement Committee; Deputy Secretary Allison Jones, Governor's Office; Secretary Jerry Oleksiak, PA Department of Labor and Industry; Dan Kuba, Bureau of Workforce Development Administration; Ruben Pachay, Bureau of Workforce Partnership Operations; Secretary Pedro Rivera, PA Department of Education; Deputy Secretary Carol Kilko, PA Department of Community and Economic Development; Secretary Teresa Miller, PA Department of Human Services; Amy Schwenk, PA Department of Corrections; David Miles, PA Department of Aging; Sara Gligora, PA Department of Agriculture; Executive Director Shannon Austin, Office of Vocational Rehabilitation

**Staff:** Executive Director James Martini, Deputy Director Tracey Turner, Shuana Davis, Michelle Lengel

#### Welcome and Introductions

Chair Jeff Brown called the Quarterly Meeting to order at 10:02AM.

#### Chair's Updates

Chair Brown noted that the meeting was being recorded and that it was open to the public. Chair Brown asked Mr. Martini to take the roll call. Chair Brown said that the PA Workforce Development Board is now in a different situation because they went from almost everyone was employed and low unemployment to high unemployment. He remarked that the agenda was oriented to help the state overcome its challenges.

Chair Brown announced that he was looking for a motion to approve the February 5, 2020 PA WDB meeting minutes.

**MOTION:** Mr. Matt Yarnell moved to approve the February 5<sup>th</sup>, 2020 minutes. Mr. Bob McAuliffe seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Chair Brown then introduced the two new Board members. Commissioner Robert Harvie, Jr. noted that this was the first board meeting he was able to attend as he had another commitment for the February Board meeting. Commissioner Harvie also remarked that he had just been elected as a Commissioner for Bucks County in November and he had been township supervisor of Falls Township in Bucks County for sixteen years previously. His regular day job was that he was a public school teacher for 26 years and for most of that he had been the Social Studies department chair at Bucks County Technical High School. He helped students decide what career they wanted to go into in that capacity. He noted that southern Bucks was more of an urban atmosphere and the northern part was more rural. Chair Brown said that he would be an excellent addition to the Board. He then introduced Laura Wand who said she was from York, Pennsylvania. She elaborated that she had recently retired from Johnson Controls where she was running the York air conditioning business. She said she had the interesting experience of having half of her team in PA and the other half was in China. She said she was looking forward to being on the Board. Chair Brown thanked her for joining the Board and noted that her experience would be wonderful.

#### **Committee Update- Healthcare Workforce Ad Hoc**

Chairman Matt Yarnell gave the Healthcare Workforce Ad Hoc Committee Update. He noted that they had been working for a year and a half on a crisis statement as relating to professional care givers across the commonwealth. He noted that he thought they were at a point where they wanted to put it before the whole committee. He remarked that he wanted to share his deep gratitude for the committee's work. He noted that when they talked about the crisis statement they wanted to focus on professional caregivers which is inclusive of many workers. He wanted to note that the full impact of COVID-19 has not been realized for this workforce but that they wanted to get the crisis statement out there as they were experiencing the crisis before the global pandemic and the pandemic will only exacerbate the issue. He commented that PA had been in a crisis in the form of a shortage and that was pre-COVID. He noted that there was two factors: there was an increased demand of services and there is a difficulty to retain the individuals in the occupation. He noted that the jobs are going to grow two and a half times more than the average job prior to the pandemic but now they are going to need more the 50,000 workers by 2026. They also know that major things driving people away are low wages and lack of access to job advancement and lack of benefits. The workforce is also primarily women and women of color. He noted that the statement doesn't provide solutions but states that there is a crisis and hopes that the ad hoc committee can continue to meet to provide collective solutions to the problem. Ms. Idayat Adewunmi asked Mr. Yarnell if they had considered adding pharmacy technicians to the group. Mr. Yarnell said he couldn't remember if that group came up but that they had wanted to focus on individuals providing direct care. He noted it is something they can look at but the list they had put together was the list they wanted to move forward on. Representative Cephias asked for consideration of midwives and doulas especially since COVID-19 had more expectant mothers considering homebirth. Mr. Yarnell said they were mostly trying to focus on the workers list they had and noted that going forward they could maybe be an opportunity to discuss other groups. Deputy Secretary Allison Jones said she didn't want to preempt Secretary Oleksiak but that she wanted to flag that the Department of Labor and Industry had made available competitive money for National Emergency Dislocated Worker grant and the department submitted an application to help individuals with employment and training opportunities to get people back into the workforce. She noted the caveat was that the grant was meant to connect individuals with

roles that directly help the commonwealth's disaster recovery and humanitarian assistance. With the grant they propose setting aside about 4 million to support the direct care workforce as they have seen many cases in long term care facilities. She noted that it seemed like a good opportunity to connect the dots with ongoing and emergent challenges in the direct care workforce. She noted that the crisis statement supports the thought process and how it was put together. Chair Brown clarified that she was saying that the crisis statement helps support the cause. Deputy Secretary Jones said that she did. She noted that as people got COVID they had to isolate particularly in the long-term care setting. Mr. Yarnell said that because of the challenges in the sector, that the workers were working around the clock and were worried about getting their family sick and wondering if they wanted to continue to do the work. He also said that it is the same group of workers that were already struggling before the pandemic and that the statement doesn't cover everything but it is an important place to start the conversation. Chair Brown asked if they could include something in the statement that the Board can amend the job list from time to time to reflect the dynamics of the industry. Mr. Yarnell said that he wasn't opposed to that idea and that he didn't want to lose the focus of the group. Chair Brown asked if that would satisfy the group. Ms. Adewunmi responded that it did.

Chair Brown sought a motion to approve the statement.

**MOTION:** Mr. Yarnell moved to approve the statement. Senator Lindsey Williams seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Yarnell asked to reup the ad hoc committee so that they could create recommendations about the crisis. Chair Brown said that he approved of it.

#### **Committee Update- Youth**

Chekemma Townsend presented on the Youth Committee. She said that they have started to shift their focus to the new goals on the state plan that was approved at the February Board meeting. Goal 3.1 focused on promoting evidence based models and effective practices and they feel like that is important to state on the same page and approach what is an effective program and noting that all programs approach it differently. She noted that Results for America had submitted comments and the committee got a presentation from Results for America. They spent time talking about the need for increased training and technical support for a definition to become a reality. They also talked about qualitative and quantitative data that should go into policy making and funding allocations. The committee also talked about the need to engage and increase youth voice in making programs effective for them. They came to the agreement that they would endorse the definition that Results for America had created. She noted that next steps were identifying the next priorities because it is a significant collaboration. She also said they are trying to establish a work plan for the committee.

#### **Committee Update- Continuous Improvement**

Chair Brian Funkhouser gave the report for the Continuous Improvement Committee. He noted that Chekemma had addressed the recommendation. He also remarked that the committee was focusing on barriers and defining those and the brand. He commented that the barriers had been put on the back burner a bit but they were once again looking at the barriers of the customers and it allows the state to examine what the customers look like so they can determine what resources need to be made available. The branding project was being looked at but there were no details yet. The issue is looking at the PA

CareerLink® and making sure they are recognizing the service and who is providing it. He said that the Continuous Improvement committee also had the presentation from Celeste Richie about the evidence of effectiveness.

Celeste Richie from Results for America then presented. She noted that she runs the workforce development portfolio for Results for America. She remarked that they are a non-profit and partner with governments so that can use data and evidence to make better decisions with funding. Ms. Richie commented that their strategies set a standard for excellence. She noted that they work all over the place and are in more than 150 cities, as well as working with state and counties. She noted that she runs the state and local workforce fellowship and there are several fellows from PA. There is a peer network of states and other people involved and there is support and 1 on 1 coaching and they have a success spotlight. She then talked about why shared evidence is important and remarked that it is important to determine if what a group is doing is effective. Ultimately, there are different parts of evidence and that all groups find themselves in different parts of the spectrum. It also provides a goal post for how to move forward. Once the definitions are adopted it allows to anchor the work and decide what the next period of learning is going to look like. She then discussed the proposed evidence definitions. She said the main point was that there was a ramp up. James Martini commented that this is the first step in the process and looking at what strong evidence is is an essential starting point. James noted that Deputy Secretary Allison Jones, Erica Mulberger, and Dillon Moore were also fellows in the program. Deputy Secretary Jones said that she is looking forward to hearing what discussion was like in the Continuous Improvement and Youth Committees about the topic and that she was grateful to Ms. Richie for presenting. She said she thinks the work is exciting because WIOA prioritizes evidence based strategies and the definition sets a high bar for where the state will want to go. It allows the state to invest its efforts the state can prove and support great workforce outcomes. She reemphasized the it is just the beginning. Ms. Fulmore-Townsend added that the Youth Committee spent a significant amount of time discussing it. She said they were optimistic about it but were also cautious at the same time. One caution they had was that by moving to a stringent level of evidence, they would be limiting the creativity of new programs. She said they spent time talking about the path to effective evaluation. They were also worried about the cost of evaluation. They also spent time talking about the need for a strong foundation to roll the recommendation out. She commented that after two meetings they felt the first step was critical to changing mindset behavior and investment levels and they were committed to learning what next steps should be to empower programs to move forward and they saw some major benefits. One is having a solid foundation across investments so there was level language. They saw it as a way of leveling the playing field for organizations to be held to the same standard. They also saw the level of technical assistance that will be required will be a benefit to programs if the state would take a position on delivery across practitioners. Mr. Funkhouser echoed what Ms. Fulmore-Townsend said and said that since there is a significant dollar amount spent on programs, it is important to have a standard of evidence of effectiveness. They also had a concern of if the definition fit for every program depending on size. Mr. Martini added that they wanted to ensure that adopting a definition meant to not crowd out the smaller programs, it would be to be provide technical assistance to those programs to move them along the spectrum. Chair Brown said that he sees the recommendation as a way to create a common definition of something as good.

Chair Brown asked if anyone had comments or concerns. There were none.

Chair Brown sought a motion to approve the evidence of effectiveness definition.

**MOTION:** Chekemma Fulmore-Townsend moved to approve the evidence of effectiveness definition. Brian Funkhouser seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

### **Committee Update- Reentry Ad Hoc**

Chair Brown provided the update for the Reentry Ad Hoc Committee. He noted that they had been going around and hosting meetings with employers but because of the pandemic, those stopped. The committee also hired Kaylynn Hamilton of Kaylynn Hamilton Consulting. Ms. Hamilton presented on the work that she and her team had completed so far. She noted that they were contracted to survey agencies across the commonwealth to get a landscape of reentry services. They worked with the Board and committee staff and identified potential agencies to send a survey to capture information focusing on coordination and collaboration, partners services, overlap, gaps in services, and successful programs. She said they conducted two rounds of the survey and the initial was sent to 220 people and received 83 responses. Round Two invited 94 respondents and they got 40 responses. Both rounds had identical questions. She then summarized what they said. Regarding coordination and collaboration, the majority of respondents said they were working with others to provide services like PA CareerLink®, probation and parole offices, criminal justice organization. She noted that the most provided for services were workforce preparation, community related services, but there was also supportive services for clothing, housing, and basic transportation and employment placement. They also asked about the overlap by service providers. Most had said they didn't feel there was much of an overlap and they did see one, it was among supportive services but was not seen as problematic. However, there was a gap in services including funding, systemic coordination of needs, and skills gap. Transportation and housing were the most identified gap in services for reentry citizens. There were also gaps in timeliness of counseling and a more efficient and aligned system of service. The second round saw less of a gap but in the same issues. Most services collaborate with PA CareerLink® and the ones that responded no were more likely to be ones that did not provide direct service. Many appear have established partnerships that have a referral system. Some are co-located in the PA CareerLink®. Successful programs were identified but they were often not able to provide evidence of effectiveness. Respondents noted that there is no shared definition of successful outcomes so each organization has their own. Some notes were that it was difficult to track success since outcomes are not made public. They finished the data collection phase of the project by doing phone interviews where they invited 12 respondents to do a 1 hour interview and 10 agreed to it. Interviewees included local workforce development board staff, representatives from chambers of commerce, Title I and Title II, and community based organizations. Some were follow-up and others were the first time speaking. The interviewers typically saw themselves as connectors and agreed that there was not a lack of service but that accessing service was problematic. Many suggestions included warm handoffs. She said that more information would be available in the full report.

Chair Brown asked if there were any glaring opportunities from the research that they had conducted thus far. Ms. Hamilton said that they heard a lot of best practices but they did hear that the Lancaster workforce development area had promising practices and that there was some work in the county jails (Allegheny County) that was noteworthy.

### **Committee Update- Career Pathways and Apprenticeship**

Richard Bloomingdale presented the Career Pathways and Apprenticeship Committee update. He noted that the day before was his first committee meeting as chair and the February Board meeting was his first quarterly meeting with the Board. He noted that they had talked about the goals that were submitted to

the federal government and what they were going to do with apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship. He remarked that there were overlaps with the Youth Committee. He said that Dr. Steve Herzenberg was working on a project for the committee and that they did go over the goals for the committee. James added that they wanted to put out a funding opportunity for programs to build out some career pathways programs. He said they were working on a “Chevrolet vs Cadillac” plans depending where funding is.

### **Committee Update- Industry Partnership and Employer Engagement**

James Martini presented the Industry Partnership and Employer Engagement Committee update. Mr. Martini noted that the committee had been focused on hosting a Next Gen IP summit. He said that it would look different than what they had in mind and said they were hoping to explore virtual options but at the moment it was on hold. He remarked that the committee surveyed all of the committee’s members on priorities that they wanted to see in awareness documents of promoting the workforce system. Mr. Martini said the top ranked opportunities were shared with workforce development partners at the Department of Labor and Industry as well as the communications team. He remarked that the list was provided in the Board packet with the committee summary.

### **Governor’s Office Update**

Deputy Secretary Allison Jones presented for the Governor’s Office. She started by thanking all of the members and the general public that were a part of the meeting. She said that the last six weeks had been very challenging for the State, but that Pennsylvanians had stepped up to be a part of the solution. She said that they were working hard to make sure that Pennsylvanians knew that their government was working for them. She remarked that she would defer to the Secretary reports from the different departments. She commented that Secretary Oleksiak would be able to talk more about what they had done to scale up capacity in Unemployment Compensation. She remarked that Secretary Rivera would be able to talk about how the Department of Education had supported schools and school districts in continuity of education and that Secretary Redding could talk about the severe food distribution and food security issues that they were actively trying to resolve. Deputy Secretary Jones noted that all of the agencies had been working collaboratively and as they worked towards reopening the economy that Pennsylvanians could safely go back to work.

### **Agency Report- Department of Labor and Industry**

Secretary Oleksiak presented for the Department of Labor and Industry. He remarked that the Department began getting ready for the impact of the virus as soon as it became clear that there would be an impact. The Department started preparing in late February with an internal work team of what could be done. The challenge that Sec. Oleksiak gave them was what would they do if the Capitol Complex was closed the next day. He said they had two weeks to get ready. He commented that staff had been incredible doing all they can to respond to the unprecedented need that they were facing. Numbers in context: since March 15 there were 1.7million new UC claims and in the three weeks prior there were 40,000 and in the highest year of the recession (2009) there was 960,000 new UC claims. The state went from record low unemployment to record high unemployment. He said they have been able to distribute about \$4 billion in unemployment benefits since March 15<sup>th</sup>. Secretary Oleksiak remarked they were also responsible for administering parts of the federal CARES Act including the extra \$600 known as the Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation and they have process 2.5 million payments for a total of about \$1.4 billion. The next phase of implementing the federal CARES act was the Pandemic Unemployment

Assistance (PUA) and it covers people that not traditionally covered by Unemployment Compensation like independent contractors, self-employed, gig workers, etc. The system went live on April 18<sup>th</sup> and they basically had to build an independent system. So far they had accepted 150,000 applications and by the end of the next week they would be live for weekly filing and shortly thereafter would begin to receive their benefits under that program. He noted that they had done a lot in 7 short weeks as they went had been staffed and funded for traditionally low unemployment. He said that that is not all they had been doing, he noted that OVR had closed the order of selection but they have since opened a rolling process of reopening the order of selection and they did that on May 1<sup>st</sup>. Through the Safety and Labor Management Deputate, they had to move the entire of BDD (Bureau of Disability Determination), where they work with the Social Security Administration to determine eligibility for Social Security benefits, to working from home. He said they have also worked with the Department of Health on guidelines for construction workers going back to work on May 1<sup>st</sup>. SWIF also didn't miss a beat in getting medical bills paid and working with claimants. He said as an update that they had over 1,914 COVID claims under the Workers Compensation system and almost 1,273 were related for first responders.

Secretary Oleksiak said that they had been very busy in workforce. He then asked Dan Kuba and Ruben Pachay to give an update on the Displaced Workers Grant and on the Rapid Response teams working to help people adjust when their employer closes. Dan Kuba thanked the Secretary for the time to go over the National Dislocated Worker Grant. He said that once federal government and the state declared emergencies, within WIOA there is a component where they set aside a set amount of money to federal award that is available for states to submit grant opportunities to tackle issues. He said that it is the only grant that also allows areas of employment and training activities in the same arena. The National Dislocated Worker Grants that was submitted highlighted areas that were available to states. One of them was under the humanitarian area for temp jobs and allowed states to solicit and get funding to support occupations under the disaster declaration. In PA, instead of just submitting an emergency application, they decided to do more of a thorough review and approach and they were able to identify areas like the public health workforce and the direct care workforce. They submitted an application for \$21 million. They were looking at three major areas in the grant. The first is that they wanted to build a contact tracing and public health workforce so that they can make sure that they can keep up with all of the COVID cases and that was being done through the Department of Health. Approximately \$11.8 million would go to support that piece. They wanted to support the direct care workforce in the commonwealth and were working with the local workforce development boards. A lot of the money would go to support funds to hire and train dislocated workers impacted by the COVID 19 pandemic in the direct care workforce. The third component of the grant is to implement COVID-19 social distancing strategies at the PA CareerLink®. One thing that was clear is that workforce development would be changing but they needed to provide the local areas with support. They had each local area put together a post-pandemic strategic plan. Through those plans they were able to collect information about what the locals needed. One of the main concerns was security and having people that can help maintain social distancing. It was also important to have staff to support triage and having resources to help people get back into the workforce. He said that they needed to ensure that touch surfaces were being cleaned on a routine basis. They submitted the proposal to US DOL Region 2 and they were pleased with the overall product and adjusted the proposal based on the feedback they had provided. They showcased that they have a plan in place to satisfy a bunch of large areas that are considered immediate needs. He said that it would take the federal government 3 to 5 weeks to review and provide notification of award.

Ruben Pachay then presented about Rapid Response. He noted that it is a unit within the Workforce Deputate that provides assistance to employers and workforce that are experiencing layoff or closure. It is one aspect that the Rapid Response team is heavily involved in. Pre-Covid, when the state had low unemployment, they were venturing out into layoff aversion and it is intended to help businesses maintain a healthy outcome throughout the business cycle. Their attention has now turned to meet the immediate need of a workforce that has been affected by temporary or permanent layoffs. He remarked that at the time most of the companies they were working with were in a temporary layoff. He said that some employers that were aligning their reopening plans to that of the Governor's were not taking in the full amount of staff that they had prior. He said that Rapid Response was keeping a close eye on the employees that may be affected by not returning any time soon or at all. The information that they were providing to employers was immediate access to information on how to file for unemployment compensation, how to access public assistance in their local communities, how to access food banks and other organizations that provide services when income is immediately cut. They also provide information on health care and what options are available if the employer is not continuing health care during the time that they are closed. They were providing the information online and providing the information to employers so that they could share it with their workforce. If they have a couple of days to share information with them and their employees they provide virtual meetings for the employers that are tailored to their needs and is tailored to their workforce (age, demographic, etc.). They had been actively working with 200 companies and they were continuing to expand more as the need arose. He noted that even though the PA CareerLink® were closed, they were able to virtually provide employer services. There is also the job portal and overall had been a good opportunity for employers that provide essential services to post jobs that they are hiring for and the response was overwhelming. They were trying to make sure they had the job portal updated on a daily basis. Rapid Response was looking at working on layoff aversion and being able to help employers through Rapid Response funds to expand their workforce whether it be retraining or upskilling. Secretary Oleksiak noted that since March 15<sup>th</sup> they had not stood still with the current complement of staff as they kept looking to bring people in. The Department brought back 70 retirees, they hired about 120 intake interviewers, got a lot of support from others within L&I to help with UC claims and emails, and got a lot of support from fellow agencies who provided staff to Labor and Industry. They also upgraded technology and were being very careful with it. The Department was also utilizing virtual assistance from IBM. Secretary Oleksiak stated that the Department was doing all it could to respond to the unprecedented number of claims that they received and build the system that they needed to build for people that are non-traditionally eligible. He remarked that it is important to follow the rules and regulations and stay on budget but it is as equally important to remember that there are real people at the end of the process that need help more than ever.

Secretary Oleksiak said he would be willing to open it up to questions. Representative Mackenzie thanked the Secretary and said he knew the employees of the Department of Labor and Industry were doing a lot of hard work on behalf of the people of Pennsylvania to get benefits paid out. He remarked that he wanted to talk about PUA and the federal CARES Act that had been authorized over a month ago. He mentioned that there are over 150,000 struggling Pennsylvanians that are eligible for the program but that have not received any payment. He was hearing about their struggles every single day and the lack of benefits. He remarked that the majority of states had systems that are making payments and many were struggling with old computer systems as well. Representative Mackenzie said he spoke with the Department about three weeks ago and offered a different computer solution which other states had implemented successfully and been paying benefits for several weeks. Rep. Mackenzie said that he was rebuffed and

told that the solution was going to be handled and implemented in a week or two. He said that that didn't happen and that the deadline was pushed back several times. Rep. Mackenzie asked Sec. Oleksiak how confident he was that benefits would be paid out, what the timeline was, and who is ultimately accountable for the failure. Secretary Oleksiak responded that ultimately the people of the Department of Labor and Industry are and as the Secretary, that is him, and he is fully prepared to be held accountable for the work they had done. He said that part of the delay was that they had to wait for guidelines from the federal government that they received in bits and pieces. He noted that it can't mix with the traditional funding so they had to have a separate system to work on it. They have been working with the vendor, GSI, who has been working with them on the benefits modernization program and they felt that April 18<sup>th</sup> was the day to launch the first phase of the new system. In two weeks, they created a new system. The first phase was to accept the new applications, the next phase they hoped to go live at the very latest the week after the Board meeting, and within a few days of filing, people should be receiving benefits. There are states that are ahead of PA but there are states behind PA. Secretary Oleksiak noted that they had not had some difficulties that other states with outdated systems had where they shut down their system. Secretary Oleksiak said he knows there have been delays but there have been very few glitches and when they have made changes, the system had responded effectively. The IT, the UC, and HR folks were working around the clock to keep the system going. The Department wants to give out the benefits and are not in the business of slowing things down but there are a lot of federal regulations to follow and they have been able to get a few state ones waived but they are doing everything they can. He fully expects that they will be held accountable but looks forward to telling the story and when the numbers are in perspective. He is thrilled they have been able to do the work they have been able to do and understands the frustration and difficulty that many people are experiencing. Chair Brown asked Rep. Mackenzie if that answered his question. Rep. Mackenzie said that he appreciated the answer and the challenges that the Department is facing but reiterated that other states have made payments. He asked what the anticipated exact time when constituents would start receiving benefits was. Sec. Oleksiak said that the system should be functioning by the end of the week and next week they expect to be able to get benefits out the door. Chair Brown asked that in a week to ten days there would be checks in people's houses. Sec. Oleksiak responded in the affirmative and reiterated that it is for the PUA benefits and that most people typically get direct deposits. Chair Brown asked if the checks would take a bit longer than direct deposit and Sec. Oleksiak responded that that is the Treasury Department's purview. Chair Brown asked if they were three weeks behind would they get the whole amount straight up. Secretary Oleksiak said yes and that anyone facing delays would not be punished and that people would be made whole. Secretary Oleksiak also said that with the \$600 payment would be made at a separate time. Chair Brown said that he has gotten questions over the last few months and asked when the extra \$600 would end. Secretary Oleksiak said that the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance runs throughout the calendar year. Chair Brown also asked how they determine if COVID is workers comp. Secretary Oleksiak asked Deputy Secretary Scott Weiant to answer that question. Mr. Weiant said that there are two avenues in which can pursue a claim in the workers compensation system. One avenue is through the catch-all provision under Occupational Disease under Section 108 and that applies to all other diseases and they can relate that to the occupation and if the incidence is greater they establish their claim from that. The second way is through the conventional disease injury claim under section 301 of the Worker's Comp Act and they can go in and testify if it is denied that they have rebuttal presumption that the claim was indeed related to their workplace. Most situations that they are seeing right now are a little over 1,900 claims and they can see how many denied or accepted. They said that the majority of insurers are accepting those claims. There are a small portion

being denied and those cases would then go in front of a Worker's Compensation judge to adjudicate the matter and they would have two paths they could go down through to provide evidence to establish their claim under the system. Chair Brown asked if anyone had any other questions. Chair Brown thanked the Department for their work. Secretary Oleksiak thanked the chairman and said that they were responding as effectively as they could.

### **Agency Report- Department of Education**

Secretary Pedro Rivera then presented for the PA Department of Education. Secretary Rivera cautioned not to follow the clickbait as relates to the Department of Education. They were planning and preparing for worst case scenario when schools open this fall. They had shared that they are planning for the best but preparing for the worst. They had created a comprehensive list of questions and answers and are constantly updating the site and go onto the Department of Education's website to access it. The first area of response they had to engage in was food security. They worked with school districts, intermediate units, and communities to ensure that everyone had access to meals. He noted that that has been an amazing partnership with PA Department of Agriculture, DHS, DCED and a number of agencies. They also worked to expediate approval of available waivers to ensure that all kids had the resources that they needed to continue education. They put in place continuous education plans and there were three to four specific areas where they were supporting schools. One was through online modules and worked with the intermediate units to provide a free online module through Odysseyware and a little over 380,000 students had signed onto that platform to help support families provide that level of instruction. They had also waived the 180 day instructional day mandate so that they could plan and prepare accordingly. They worked with modules for paper and pen blizzard packs for rural communities that might not have access to connectivity so they have some level of instruction. Through a partnership with PBS they had been making instructional content available through television. There had been a lot of work to provide early childhood programs in certain areas where there is critical staff that can't be home or have access to resources. They had been working with districts to provide differentiating instructional programs to students that might need additional support because their families are essential staff. They were working through the governor's subcommittee with their plan for opening schools and all of the considerations that need to be taken into place. The most important thing is to understand that it is not a one size fits all approach. That will be guideline for schools from early ed, K-12, and higher education institutions. They were also celebrating Teacher Appreciation Week and there was nice feature on an adult education teacher from the Altoona area and their work around helping students getting their GED. All agencies were working extremely hard to ensure that continuity of education was continuing for all ages. Chair Brown asked if anyone had any questions and there were none.

### **Agency Report- Department of Community and Economic Development**

Deputy Secretary Carol Kilko then presented for DCED. She said they were trying to keep their businesses as healthy as they can. She noted that they had been doing a lot with manufacturers and they have a manufacturer portal and it relates to PPE and healthcare facilities that are looking for masks, ventilators, and other personal protective equipment that is needed every day. She noted that the information is on their website in their resources section. They have a Manufacturing Call to Action portal where they were trying to match manufacturers with distributors for PPE and assist manufacturers with their workforce needs. The Workforce Initiatives Director, Gwen Ross, had been working with Ruben Pachay and their website. They were also identifying manufacturers that could and were willing to pivot to meet the needs

of PPE. As of the meeting, through the action portal there had been 874 submissions and they were actively working with 243 of those. Another part of that portal focused around for critical and medical supplies and that is for procurement and is surrounding medical supplies needed and they have had quite a few suppliers across the state be involved in that portal providing information about the availability of the PPE. The Business to Business (B2B) Interchange Directory is a portal where manufacturers and companies can get on and look for PPE. She then touched on some loan programs. She remarked that they set up a program for small businesses and were able to put together a \$61million pot and immediately go out under a program that existed but they had to change their forms. They were oversubscribed by about \$11 million and they were still reviewing applications and put about \$36 million on the street. They hoped to have the rest of the funding out by the middle of the next week. The CARES Act is providing funding to all the hospitals but there was a concern of how long that funding would take to get there so PA set up a loan program working with PENNVEST and it is .5% to each hospital as bridge financing and is short-term. They had been asked to start with PEMA, DOH, and DGS on a lot of programs. Another program is leveraging what PA has to get enough testing kits for phased opening of the economy. She remarked that DCED has been working on the waiver process and said that she would be more than willing to answer questions about that. Wendie DiMatteo-Holsinger said that it has been difficult as a food manufacturer and they understood PPE going to healthcare but it had become increasingly frustrating with restrictions in trying to implement temperature screening without having priorities to get those things. She said they actually had to work through other states. She said it was difficult for the food industry as they were essential. She said they were hoping that there was some way that the food industry could get some recognition as a second priority to access some of the supplies. She asked if there was anything in the future that was looking promising in that perspective. Deputy Secretary Kilko said that couldn't comment and said that she would take it to the attention of the people working on that project. Ms. DiMatteo-Holsinger said that she thought it was important for the state to hear that as it was coming other manufacturers as well and that they want to continue to go down the road of recovery for everyone but that the food industry could be in the position of not showing good results if things didn't start happening. Mr. Martini commented that Dawn Cowan from Representative Cephas's office shared a question and asked if there would be another opportunity for businesses (childcare, daycare centers, small businesses, etc. ) to apply for a waiver to open during the continued required state shutdown. Deputy Secretary Kilko said that she would have to get back to them as she hadn't been deeply involved in the waiver process so she couldn't answer that question. She said that if there are specific requests, they can send that request in to her and she can get that to the correct people to be looked at. Deputy Secretary Jones commented that the Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL) is the state entity that regulates childcare providers and they set up a process for childcare providers to open in particular if they are serving kids and families of essential businesses and workers. She recommended that child care providers go to the OCDEL website. She said that the website has information about the process that childcare providers can take and they had been proactive and doing early outreach to childcare providers to make sure that they know it is an option and that it is important as counties transition to yellow. Chair Brown commented that it is going to be a struggle for employers to find PPE and that it would be useful to have a portal that businesses could go to find potential vendors. Deputy Secretary Kilko mentioned that that is a function of the Business to Business Interchange Directory and that is for PPE.

#### **Agency Report- Department of Human Services**

Secretary Miller presented for the Department of Human Services. She remarked that COVID-19 had given a lot of agencies an opportunity to work together in so many more ways. She said that there was three areas that she wanted to talk about. The first was the role that the department had been playing in providing support for people to meet their basic needs. The second was the status of the workforce initiatives. The third was the challenges and opportunities they were seeing as they moved forward. Starting with the first area, many of the services that DHS provides are more critical now than ever before. She commented that they are a safety net when unforeseen circumstances occur and when people see changes in their economic status that require additional support. She noted that during their presentation at the February meeting with United Way about the benefits cliff and the ALICE project, they talked about how any bump in the road can drive a major part of the population into poverty. The pandemic and the associated economic impact is much worse than a bump and as the long-term nature of it evolves, they anticipate a continued rise in the need for services both to fill the gaps as people wait for unemployment checks and in changes in the job market. They have worked to make sure that people have coverage they need for healthcare, cash assistance, and food assistance. She said that food security has been one of their most prevalent concerns and they took a number of steps to address it. The first is that they had been granted approval to continue issuing emergency SNAP allotments each month until the public health emergency declaration is rescinded. The second is that they were planning on participating in an online grocery purchasing pilot through SNAP. Amazon, Walmart, and ShopRite would be available for online payment. They were also waiting for approval of their pandemic electronic benefit transfer program (PEBT). It will assist families that are eligible for free or reduced price meals to have access to those meals while schools are closed. They also received a grant to provide EBT processing equipment to farmer's markets and they are working with farmers markets and their vendors to make them aware of that option. Gov. Wolf recently sent letters to PA's Congressional delegation and US Department of Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue, requesting greater flexibility in reconsideration in some of their waivers that were denied. They requested waivers for better SNAP access for households with college students, broader issuance of emergency payments, allowing self-attestation of documents when needed, and allowing states to exclude the new pandemic unemployment compensation from the SNAP benefit calculation. They were also in the process of establishing an emergency cash assistance program to extend support to families with low incomes. The program would be open to families with a child under the age of 18 or a woman who is pregnant. Eligible families would receive a one-time payment equal to 2 months of TANF benefits for their household size. They also intended to begin a LIHEAP crisis program to help with home energy bills but they were still waiting to hear from the federal government how much additional funding PA would receive. Regarding mental health, on April 1<sup>st</sup> in partnership with the Center for Community Resources they launched a 24/7 statewide mental health and crisis support helpline. They also know that childcare is a critical support for working families. She remarked that she wanted to echo Deputy Secretary Jones' that their Office of Child Development and Early Learning was able to implement a waiver system to allow childcare facilities that were serving families of essential workers to continue their operations and they have a childcare map to identify open childcare locations. They hold a call each week with stakeholders and legislators to keep them apprised of the efforts of the Department of Human Services. Secretary Miller then stated that she would be moving into part two of her report which was their workforce initiatives and how they were impacted by COVID-19. She said that their Medicaid Work Supports Initiative launched in early February in collaboration with the Department of Labor and Industry, local workforce development boards, their managed care organizations, and county assistance offices. The initiative created a systematic way to connect Medicaid enrollees interested in employment to local

resources and support services. While the program did run for several weeks, COVID-19 put a strain on their outreach capacity and the various components of the system shifted to respond to immediate health and safety needs as well as social distancing requirements. However, they were able to adapt the program to still ask about employment interests and to let people know that outreach would continue at a later date. Also in February they released, for applications, their Parent Pathways Initiative which is a collaboration with the Department of Education and is two generation initiative in supporting student parents in pursuing secondary education and training. Due to budget needs to address COVID-19, they had to pull back the funding and cancel the RFA but they do know that they will be facing a challenging economy and importance of supports for training will become even more crucial. They were currently exploring an option to issue a needs assessment to identify alternative ways the state might support community collaboration. They reached out to the Institute for Women's Policy Research, the Hope Center, and also Ascend. She noted that they were still proceeding with the redesign of their TANF employment and training programs which would be implemented July 1<sup>st</sup>. As the statewide closure was implemented, DHS provided guidance to their workforce partners in March and held follow-up calls to address immediate changes needed to their programs. On Friday May 1<sup>st</sup>, they issued a questionnaire to providers to further understand the landscape of current services and future anticipated changes for them as everyone embarks on reopening. They were also developing a multi-level plan to monitor, evaluate, and report on their redesign progress. She then stated that the last thing that she wanted to mention was their employment first work. As all systems were mobilized to focus on health and safety needs, some of the employment services and reporting were put on hold. However, as everyone thinks about supporting businesses and people returning to work, people with disabilities cannot be left behind. Several employment services were able to be offered remotely including supported employment and benefit counseling and their offices were working with providers regarding those options. Their Office of Long-Term Living was regularly sharing resources with the employment leads at the managed care organizations and their Office of Developmental Programs issued a survey to providers for feedback on innovative solutions that include not just short term plans but also how it might positively impact long-term service delivery. They were continuing to collaborate with the Employment First Oversight Commission in the implementation and evaluation of the state's three year plan including impact pre and post COVID-19. She then said that she wanted to use the rest of her time to mention the opportunities and challenges they saw going forward. As they begin to think about reopening, childcare could be a significant concern, childcare facilities are businesses and are not immune to the economic climate. Some industry experts have estimated that one in three childcare facilities will not reopen. For available childcare, the primary resource for individuals seeking certified childcare is [www.findchildcare.pa.gov](http://www.findchildcare.pa.gov) and should be used once the stay at home order is lifted. They were reviewing data and considering stakeholder input for a plan to best direct stimulus funds from the CARES Act through the child care development fund. DHS was also partnering with Penn State Harrisburg on a study looking at the impact of COVID-19 on childcare providers and the results of that study will inform future investments and allocation of resources. Technology access is also a critical component for people to be able to participate in a remote environment. With schools going online, workplaces requiring remote work when possible and continued social distancing requirements, people who do not have access to adequate devices, broadband, or digital literacy are at risk of being left behind. Training access will also be necessary as people may be out of jobs and not returning and as new jobs and types of working emerge in response to COVID-19 so they need to think about flexibility in terms of broader access to funding as well as delivery options. She remarked that they also needed to focus on the direct care workforce and the issue has been

greatly exacerbated by the pandemic. Finally, she said that they know that people may be eligible for the safety net services and many of the people that may be may not be familiar with DHS and that is one of the things that she has been concerned about is stigma in regards to their programs and the people they serve. She said they were really hoping to reimagine and rebrand DHS so that people understand that it is okay to need help and in a pandemic, people are going to need help that haven't before. They are working on redeveloping their marketing and targeting people that may not be familiar with DHS to understand the supports that they provide. Chair Brown asked if anyone had questions for Secretary Miller. Chair Brown said that it seems like they have a lot of things going on and Secretary Miller replied that they do and it is going as smoothly as she supposed it could go.

#### **Agency Report- Department of Corrections**

Amy Schwenk said that she wanted to echo the sentiment of all of the agencies working together. She said that they had been working with all of the other agencies to help their population with the continuation of vocational and educational programs inside, and religious activities and other things that they need to provide. She commented that correctional facilities don't necessarily bode well for social distancing so they have all of their own challenges that they need to focus on. Particularly for the reentry population, specifically the reprieve process that they have been going through. Secretary Wetzel worked with the Governor to try to reprieve as many inmates as possible, letting low-risk inmates that were within a few months of a release date leave and give them some population breathing room in their institutions. Reentrants on the streets are part of that vulnerable population that work in restaurants and retail so they were seeing a significant reduction in employment rates with reentrants so they were trying to connect reentrants to as many resources as they could. They were also struggling to place reentrants in places like halfway houses because disease can spread very quickly. They had really focused on home plans. Parole agents also changed the way which they are supervising. In addition to focusing on inmates, they really focused on their staff as all staff are essential employees and families often work together in institutions. They partnered with the Department of Education to develop resources that those families could utilize for their homeschooling opportunities with their children and also connecting them to childcare facilities that are open. She also said they were also focusing on supplying their employees with proper PPE. She remarked that their correctional industries had ramped up production and shifted the way they were thinking with mask production, gown production, cleaners for facilities, as well as soap. They provided all staff and inmates with several sets of masks and they worked with PEMA and the Governor's office to provide employees that might have to return to the office with masks as well. They did have positive COVID cases within two of their facilities but they were able to maintain it and kept staff COVID positive to a minimum. Idayat Adewunmi asked if inmates got tested before they were released. Ms. Schwenk commented that they were tested prior to release.

#### **Agency Report- Department of Aging**

Dave Miles presented for the Department of Aging. He noted that their SCSEP program, which is their employment and training program, was basically shut down as they deal with the most vulnerable citizens to COVID-19. The participants were authorized for paid sick time and were able to stay home and keep their SCSEP stipend. There are no new enrollees. They recently received \$35 million funding from the federal government to increase their spending on essential services for seniors. They will be for supportive services to help alleviate some issues with the crisis. They were working closely with the PA Council on Aging and Senator Casey's office in order to see specific areas of concern around the state to be able to

help older citizens as much as possible. It is mostly in-home services and community meals that have switched to in-home meals.

### **Agency Report- Department of Agriculture**

Sara Gligora presented for the Department of Agriculture. At the Department there had been a number of issues arise affecting the agriculture workforce due to the pandemic. The first that they saw was with the H2A program. PA has guest workers that fill temporary jobs in agriculture. Last year they had nearly 2,000 H2A workers and due to the pandemic, and they had some concerns if farmers using the program would be able to get the workers that they need. Routine immigrant and non-immigrant visa services had been temporarily suspended, however H2A visas were determined to be mission critical and were being processed to the extent possible. To ensure that H2A visas could be processed, the US Department of State issued a interview waivers for possible H2A workers. If a individual was not eligible for an interview waiver, they would not be granted the H2A visa. Overall, it was only affecting a few PA farmers that they were aware of and those employers were unable to get workers because of the aforementioned ineligibility for the interview waiver. They were continuing to monitor the situation. Many of the H2A workers were housed in farm labor camps and to ensure the health and safety of the workers in the camps, PDA had provided enhanced requirements to farmers to provide housing for their workforce. There are over 360 permitted seasonal farm labor camps in PA and PDA's Bureau of Farm Safety oversees the camps. The new guidelines focused on maintaining social distancing within living quarters. The new guidance also included steps to take if a worker is diagnosed with COVID-19. Finally, the Department of Agriculture had been involved in discussions regarding the meat processing plants. PA Department of Agriculture, PA Department of Health, and PEMA had a call with meat processing plants on April 17<sup>th</sup> to discuss industry specific workforce safety. Guidance was provided to help maintain worker safety. It included daily temperature checks and symptom screening, paid sick time without penalty, increasing the frequency of cleaning, social distancing, and staggered breaks. On April 28<sup>th</sup>, the White House signed an executive order invoking the Defense Production Act to keep meat processing open and following CDC and OSHA guidance. Plants will have access to additional federal planning resources and those in compliance and following through with worker safety plans are expected to have access to additional PPE and priority testing. PA has been a national leader in demonstrating effective collaboration across DOH and PDA and would be working with DOH and L&I to support PA meat producers in developing their safety plans. PA Food Safety had been inspecting and following up on worker safety complaints for food processors and warehouses in PA. Also, agriculture workers had been given priority testing in certain regions so workers supporting Pennsylvania's food supply chain in select areas of eastern PA would be admitted as priority for testing at the Montgomery County mass test site or the federally funded Luzerne County test site. The priority testing was available to any symptomatic adult working in agriculture or food supply who lives or works in Montgomery County or Northeast PA. H2A workers were considered eligible for priority testing as well. Chair Brown asked if it was possible to achieve social distancing in meat plants. Ms. Gligora said that it is one that they continue to discuss and they did put out guidance along with DOH and PEMA.

### **Agency Report- Office of Vocational Rehabilitation**

Executive Director Shannon Austin then presented for the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR). She remarked that OVR from the very beginning internally put together a COVID taskforce. They tried to focus on core areas like communications internally and externally so that people understood what services were available and the direction that the staff should be going. They also focused on having a continuity of

service. The taskforce identified on some key things on the front end like selfcare and platforms, making sure staff was up to speed with telework. OVR's offices, the Bureau of Vocational Rehab Services and the Bureau of Blind and Visual Services continue to be in a telework status. They were still engaging with individuals on their case load and continued to serve a little over 30,000 people across the state. For Blind and Visual Services, their instructional staff were not going into the home but were continuing to do counseling and guidance via phone. They were sending out equipment and walking them through the processes like assistive technology that would benefit them. The Hiram G. Andrews Center which is the comprehensive rehab center started its summer term and they had been in the virtual status since March. The students in current programs would continue in those programs through the summer. At some point they would do a hands-on element and at that point they would hope to bring students on site with the necessary CDC measures. The Office of Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services from the beginning had been involved in PEMA, the DOH, Governor's office and the daily hearing to make sure that information is being disseminated to the deaf and hard of hearing community. They heard tremendous feedback from those across the state about their efforts. They also had collaboration with L&I communications and the DOH in developing a visual card for hospitals, first responders and others who need to communicate with the deaf and hard of hearing community for healthcare in general. They collaborated with UC to ensure that interpreters were available via video phone once a week for assistance. Labor and Industry also worked with the Governor's Office and other agencies to make sure that documents, literature, websites, presentations, etc. are accessible. She noted that OVR has had a closed Order of Selection but "they are still open for business" as they were still serving individuals. As of May 1<sup>st</sup>, they had released over 5,000 individuals from the waiting list and those were individuals that had applications prior to Jan. 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020. Moving forward, the goal is to move to a rolling release of individuals. They also helped submit the state plan and continue to give clarifying questions on everything from measurable skill gain to pre-employment transition services. They do have one change that could impact employers and individuals with disabilities that is effective on July 1<sup>st</sup> and those that currently have a job, have a documented disability, and have immediate or job jeopardy issues, OVR will have the ability to potentially step in and serve those individuals. They would still have to go through the application process but would not be sitting on the list if they are deemed eligible for services. They also worked with several of their providers like DHS in trying to make sure that they had a state-mandated strategy that measures and addresses a lot of their providers. They also developed guidance concerning 22 of their project search sites that are employer driven to programs to establish a protocol. They also were working with the Bureau of Special Education and National Technical Assistance Center of Transition and the Workforce Innovation Technical Assistance Center and working through an interagency agreement hopefully to be implemented between the school year 2020 and 2021. Their hope is to better align themselves to serve those students with disabilities from 14-21 years of age that are impacted by WIOA. As of last year they had placed 7,485 individuals into employment and were currently at 83% of their goal for the year since July 2019. They were watching the numbers and the pandemic and were looking at trends and therefore how to best serve individuals. Their initial numbers was that they know there is going to be a heavy impact in the service industry where they place many individuals so they would continue to monitor that going forward. Chair Brown asked if there were any questions and there were none.

### **Public Comments**

Chair Brown then asked if there were any public comments. There were none.

Chair Brown then thanked everyone for their patience as technology is learned and remarked that he personally thought it was an informative meeting.

Chair Brown sought a motion to adjourn the meeting.

**MOTION:** Chekemma Townsend moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. McAuliffe seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting ended at 1:12pm.

## Youth Committee

### Quarterly Update

August 12, 2020

The Youth Committee continues to support all youth-related sub-goals of Pennsylvania's 4-year WIOA Combined State Plan, which took effect on July 1, 2020.

The committee initially prioritized a key element of Sub-goal 3.1, regarding endorsement of statewide evidence of effectiveness definitions, which was approved by the PA WDB membership during the quarterly board meeting on May 5, 2020.

Following this approval, the committee moved forward with work on developing a survey to assess the evidence of effectiveness of several of the Commonwealth's workforce-related grants and programs. The survey questions have been finalized and are being sent out to stakeholders of participating state agency programs for response. These results will be compiled, reviewed, and shared.

#### Youth Committee Next Steps

- Determine next steps and priorities following the results of the evidence of effectiveness survey.
- Examine and prioritize the elements of the four sub-goals specifically related to opportunity youth:

**3.1: The commonwealth will identify and promote evidence-based models and effective practices for engaging opportunity youth.**

**3.2: The commonwealth will increase co-enrollment of opportunity youth in WIOA Core and partner programs, when relevant, to ensure that appropriate funds are leveraged to provide necessary services to these individuals. The commonwealth will also encourage the use of Individual Training Accounts when serving opportunity youth.**

**3.4: The commonwealth, via PennSERVE, will promote and encourage service opportunities with AmeriCorps and require all WIOA regional and local plans to include AmeriCorps, when available, as a referral option for young people, particularly opportunity youth.**

**3.5: The Commonwealth will promote and encourage opportunities in YouthBuild and Job Corps programs and require that these priorities be included within all WIOA regional and local plans, when available.** The Department of Labor & Industry will prioritize opportunities for these programs and measure the number of youth, and specifically opportunity youth, enrolled in these programs. Pennsylvania will require these programs to be part of WIOA regional and local plans.

Chekemma Fulmore-Townsend, Chair  
Youth Committee

## **Continuous Improvement Committee**

### **Quarterly Update**

August 12, 2020

The Continuous Improvement Committee continues to support the goals of the WIOA Combined State Plan, specifically those goals related to the overall improvement of Pennsylvania's Workforce Development system.

#### **Evidence Survey**

The committee worked with the Youth committee to develop a survey that will be sent to workforce programs to learn more about the current status of those programs with respect to evidence. Through this survey we will be able to learn how well programs feel they are able to utilize evidence in evaluating their programs, where challenges exist, and where the Commonwealth can provide support to help programs move up the evidence continuum adopted by the Board in May.

#### **Barrier Identification and Remediation**

Initial research on human-centric design, as well as additional customer focused topics, has been shared with the Labor & Industry program staff for incorporation into system improvements related to customer intake. The committee will continue to engage on this topic with the state team.

#### **Newsletter**

The committee was in the process of developing a workforce development newsletter to be shared with stakeholders. While this project was tabled while some more pressing issues were addressed, we plan on picking this work back up.

#### **Continuous Improvement Committee Next Steps**

- Evidence survey results, evaluation, and dissemination
- Continue to engage with state team on intake process improvements
- Newsletter

Brian Funkhouser, Chair  
Continuous Improvement Committee

## Industry Partnerships and Employer Engagement Committee

### Quarterly Update

August 12, 2020

#### **Encourage use of and Increase awareness of the One-Stop System (WIOA Combined Plan Goal 2.4)**

The committee discussed the need to increase awareness of the State's One-Stop system. The committee identified and ranked priorities in the order of importance with marketing the PA CareerLink system as its highest priority. A marketing tool has since been created and directed to employers with the goal of increasing the use and awareness of the State's One-Stop system.

#### **COVID-19 Job Portal Survey**

An employer survey for the users of the COVID-19 essential employer job portal went live on August 7, 2020 and will close on August 21, 2020. The results of the survey will guide the committee's next steps in formulating a plan on how best to serve employers.

#### **The Commonwealth will align resources, policies and strategies between state, local and regional systems to increase employer awareness of the One-Stop system. The Commonwealth will increase engagement and develop awareness with business and industry on diversifying their workforce by hiring Pennsylvanians with barriers to employment and provide additional information on the benefits of using the one-stop system. (Priority of Focus)**

The committee discussed the need to identify the strengths and weaknesses of employer engagement within the workforce system and determine how best to increase employer engagement in the system. The committee also identified a need to identify and support policies that focus on re-entry citizens and track employment gains of that population. A policy review will be discussed at the next meeting.

John J. "Ski" Sygielski, Ed.D., Chair  
Industry Partnership and Employer Engagement Committee

## Career Pathways & Apprenticeship Committee

### Quarterly Update

August 12, 2020

#### **Keystone Research on Career Pathways**

Steve Herzenberg, of the Keystone Research Center, has been leading the research for the Career Pathways and Apprenticeship Committee. The research has taken shape and will inform the committee of creating or expanding career pathway system. The research includes 39 interviews and shows the state has some great promise in the expansion of career pathways work.

#### **Career Pathways Grant Program**

The committee membership prioritized regionalizing grants for pilot programs in two categories to include barriers that individuals may be facing to get onto a career pathway.

The Career Pathways and Apprenticeship Committee recommends prioritizing funding for a grant program (if and when funding is available) to assist individuals in the Commonwealth in the following categories; entering and progressing along a career pathway, career awareness activities (careers in two-engaging students and parents together), employer engagement in K-12 and expanding access for counselors and teacher to business and industry (*full language of recommendation included in the appendices*).

**The Career Pathway and Apprenticeship Committee continues to support Goal 1 of the WIOA Combined State Plan. Establish career pathways as the primary model for skill, credential, and degree attainment, and provide all Pennsylvanians, with an emphasis on Pennsylvanians with barriers to employment, an opportunity to obtain a job that pays.**

The committee membership has discussed the need to increase exposure to career awareness, exploration opportunities for K-12 and postsecondary and engaging students and parents.

Rick Bloomingdale, Chair  
Career Pathways and Apprenticeship Committee

# Progress Report: Keystone Research Center Career Pathways Project for the Pennsylvania Workforce Development Board

August 10, 2020

Note: The Keystone Research Center has been commissioned by the Pennsylvania Workforce Development Board to write a report on career pathways and to identify ways the state can support the development of strong career pathways statewide. Below is a draft summary of KRC key findings followed by the report outline. The full KRC draft report will be vetted with the report's informants (50+ interviewees) and by the relevant committees of the PA WDB, and then shared with the board. Comments and questions should be directed to Stephen Herzenberg ([herzenberg@keystoneresearch.org](mailto:herzenberg@keystoneresearch.org); 717-805-2318).

## Summary of Key Findings

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania commissioned this study to identify ways the state can support the development of strong career pathways statewide. To address this question, the Keystone Research Center conducted over 50 interviews including with members of the career pathways and youth committees of the Pennsylvania Workforce Development Board, local workforce development board directors and staff, K-12 and post-secondary educators, and managers of career pathways programs, including pre-apprenticeships and apprenticeship programs.

**A shared broad understanding of career pathways exists in the field.** At the outset of the study, a perception existed that educators, trainers and other workforce practitioners use the phrase career pathways in a variety of different ways, and that there is no common definition or understanding of pathways purposes and benefits. The interviews revealed that most applications of the concept of career pathways do fall within a broad common sense definition—i.e., an occupational progression in the labor market, usually within an industry, that leads towards family sustaining employment, tied to a sequence of education and training offerings that enable participants to develop skills required to advance. In some cases, the education and training lead to industry recognized credentials as well as academic credit. In addition, career pathways in practice tend to offer multiple “on ramps” and “off ramps”—they are not rigid routes to good jobs but allow participants to access jobs and careers at whatever points and for however long those jobs serve participants’ interests and/or needs.

**Distinct applications of career pathways exist for K-12 school students, adults, and populations with barriers.** Distinct, narrower applications of the broad career pathways concept associate with different age groups and different categories of workers. The first parts of career pathways in K-12 education offer career exposure and exploration—allowing students to learn more about the great variation that exists in jobs and careers, and how their classroom knowledge gets applied in the real world. In Adult Basic Education (ABE), career pathways aim to integrate academic education with occupational training so that participants can acquire, in many cases, a GED, improve their basic skills, AND increase their chances of securing a job that is the first step on a ladder not a dead end. In health care, an industry with more uniform occupations backed by regulation, the professions more broadly, in apprenticeship for a growing number of occupations and in new pre-apprenticeships that connect tightly to high-quality apprenticeships, career pathways deliver industry recognized credentials that help individuals secure jobs and/or advancement. For other populations with barriers—e.g., returning citizens or immigrants—career pathways, as with ABE, seek to integrate services that address the group’s specific barriers with skills training that gives participants a chance to get a job that could lead to a family supporting wage.

**High-quality career pathways connect education and training to the world of work, yielding motivational, learning, and employment payoffs.** All the applications of career pathways have in common an effort to connect education and training more deeply to the world of work, overcoming a separation with historical roots in the formation and scaling of high-volume U.S. manufacturing from the late 1800s to about 1980. Over that century, early in which mass schooling began, Americans took for granted, especially in retrospect and from the 1950s to the 1970s, a sequential not interwoven view of education and work: life started with schools—K-10 or -12 for working people, college for the professions and some managers—and was followed by decades of employment. White men often landed a one-company career by some point in their twenties. This oversimple story about education followed by work got a new lease on life because of the divergence in wage trends for college and non-college workers in the late 1970s and early 1980s, focusing the energies of the most privileged third of Americans—and hence of our schools—on getting their children into college.

What all the applications of career pathways also have in common is a conviction that better connecting education and training to the world of work makes sense for individuals, for employers, for our economy. Strengthening this connection is good pedagogy. Most students, even those at the top of the class who thrive without linking classroom learning to its real-world application, gain motivation, engagement, and intellectual curiosity from understanding how their math, writing, and other skills get used to build our economy and society. Most students, in fact most people, also learn most things by doing them, sometimes with a little help from their friends, not by understanding the theory of how to do them. (In his late sixties, my father, a physicist, tried to learn both wind surfing and downhill skiing on cross-country skis (don't ask) by thinking through the interplay of forces involved. He never became very good at either sport.) Applied learning to acquire specific skills and knowledge that the learner regards as valuable has the potential to increase learning especially for individuals who are bored or lack confidence in traditional classroom-only approaches—whether in grades 10-12 or classes for adults seeking a credential (e.g. a GED) or a job. Further, many interviewees suggested that work-based learning better develops “21<sup>st</sup> century” skills that employers today most prize—communications, social skills, problem-solving, etc.—skills which also increase workers' resilience and adaptability. Work-based learning does this for the simple reason that many of 21<sup>st</sup> century skills are used much more in the workplace—in the context of accomplishing practical tasks a business needs done—than when completing classroom assignments divorced from any practical application. Two last advantages of connecting education and training to jobs and careers: better employment outcomes—less joblessness, higher compensation, greater advancement—for individuals and a more productive and stable workforce for employers.

To sum up, the message from our interviews regarding the meaning of career pathways is that Pennsylvania educators, trainers, and workforce practitioners are more on the same page—or at least in the same chapter—than they realize. The field of career pathways in Pennsylvania is primed to focus not on terminology but on doing good work. In the words of one CEO, “the concept of career pathways—people are aware that they are on a journey to a living-wage career—is a really great idea. We just need to get on with it.”

**Substantial high-quality career pathways work exists in Pennsylvania.** The amount of high-quality career pathways activity in Pennsylvania today (prior to COVID 19) is impressive. By way of comparison, in 2018, leaders of the most prominent career pathways learning network in the country published a book with five career pathways case studies aimed at making the concept of career pathways concrete. Fully profiling all the good career pathways work in Pennsylvania today would take many volumes. The body of this report highlights a small fraction of this good career pathways work broken down into three main categories.

First, we profile broad and narrow programs within K-12. By broad programs we mean high schools (primarily) that have revamped grades 9-12 around the concept of career pathways (sometimes called “guided career pathways”). These pathways first expose students to a variety of career areas often defined loosely by industry (such as health care, manufacturing, or construction). Once students and their career advisors select an area in which students have more aptitude and interest, some portion of the curriculum will reflect that choice (although students can change their mind and their career pathway later in high school). Students interested in manufacturing and machining might take higher math, physics, and metals—and know why they were taking them. Health careers students might take anatomy, chemistry, and physiology, dual enrolling for some higher-level courses at a local State System of Higher Education school so that they end high-school with college credits as well as foundational knowledge for a health care career. These broad career pathways exist within comprehensive high schools that cater to most Pennsylvania high-school students in an area as well as within Career and Technical Centers (CTCs), although they have longer historical roots in the latter.

Narrower career pathways, aimed primarily at 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade students, often connect more tightly to specific employment opportunities. In the Wolf Administration, a growing number of these narrower pathways register as formal pre-apprenticeship programs—with the primary bottleneck on even more pre-apprenticeship registration the absence of a formal apprenticeship program to feed into (a requirement for state registration of pre-apprenticeship). Narrower career pathways often do NOT lead to most students entering employment in their pathway immediately upon completing high school, with other options including postsecondary education or jobs in a related (or unrelated) field. In some cases, narrower career pathways DO lead to family sustaining jobs, either immediately upon graduation or a few years later when young people have tried a succession of low-wage jobs and are readier to settle down.

Second, we profile workforce development career pathways now being more formally developed in many parts of the state, including through countywide collaborations among workforce boards, K-12 schools, and higher education. These efforts aim to map a consensus view of practical advancement paths within local industries above entry-level rungs, and to identify education and training sequences that allow people to move up to better paid employment or to acquire additional credentials and academic credit. This countywide work builds on the workforce systems knowledge of local industries and relationships with local employers during two decades of investment in industry (training) partnerships.

Third, we profile career pathways within Adult and Basic Education (ABE). Practitioners and state policymakers in ABE see their community as having brought the concept of career pathways to Pennsylvania. Within ABE, career pathways aim to help participants avoid getting locked into dead-end jobs. Formally or less formally using “integrated education and training,” ABE providers aim to achieve two traditional ABE goals: enhancing basic skills (e.g., English and math) and enabling participants to acquire a General Equivalency Diploma (GED). They simultaneously use career pathways to help participants aspire to, and then get, a job that has the potential to lead to a family sustaining wage. One policymaker analogized ABE career pathways to getting help so that you can reach the bottom of a fire escape from the street level.

Additional variants of career pathways address populations with specific barriers to acquiring family sustaining jobs, such as returning citizens, immigrants, and opportunity youth (18-24 years old without a high-school degree in neither jobs or further education). As with the ABE population, the generic approach is to address the unique barriers of each sub-group and to help participants get that first job that can lead to a better one.

Many practitioners and policymakers point out that the career trajectories of adults in the labor market are often not linear, some highlighting with a smile that they would not want to diagram how they got to their own current job in workforce development or education. In some sectors, such as health care — which has many occupations recognized industrywide, some backed by regulation—career ladders or lattices are more predictable and standardized. In other sectors, such as manufacturing—which has a bewildering amount of heterogeneity in jobs and job titles—there is very little standardization, sometimes even within a sub-sector or even a single firm. Furthermore, the advancement paths adults actually follow often transcend industry boundaries, capitalizing on portable foundational skills (communications, social skills, project management), and driven by the fact that acquiring a family sustaining wage may require leaving a sector with a high share of low-wage positions.

The reality of adult career trajectories led some interviewees to worry that “career pathways” communicates a misleading sense of predictability. More interviewees, however, saw the concept of career pathways as having benefits that outweigh concerns about its accuracy as a description of the job market. Particularly for low-income or other vulnerable populations—with limited family supports and financial resources and no margin to go into debt for college or training that do not pay off—there is an urgency about training leading to a higher-paying job. In addition, career pathways can get people who might get stuck in a low-wage job to think about how they might progress over time. Most ambitious, some interviewees perceived a goal of career pathways as helping people become their own career coach so they can exercise “informed choice:” i.e., gaining an understanding of jobs, employers, and the social process of advancement sufficient to enable them to make smarter choices about which jobs to take, when to change employers—and when not to, and which education and training to pursue.

One dimension of “informed choice” highlighted by several interviewees was that there are “other ways to win” besides going to a four-year college. These interviewees pointed out high tuition and living costs can saddle young people with significant debt but does not guarantee a good job. At the same time, the retirement of the baby boom is creating high-paid openings in many “middle-skill” jobs. Career pathways provide a tool that allows young adults and their parents to analyze all their choices, including in these middle-skill jobs, with more information.

Within all variants of career pathways, wide recognition exists of the crucial need for strong connections to employers. These connections make it possible to transcend the historic separation of education and training from work. Business connections provide firsthand knowledge of jobs and careers so that curricula are up-to-date with industry. In younger grades and more exploratory school career pathways, business connections can yield workplace visits and job shadowing opportunities. By the latter part of high school or in programs for postsecondary students or other adults, employer connections can yield employment (sometimes paid) in internships, co-ops or pre-apprenticeships, summer jobs, formal mentoring by from experienced workers, guidance from industry insiders on how to get job, and opportunities to apply for and secure permanent jobs. In some cases, business connections identify teachers from industry to deliver related instruction (in apprenticeships) or other classroom training (in other programs). Business connections can also produce opportunities for teachers to work in industry—as in “educator in the workplace” programs—to gain or refresh “real-world” knowledge.

With regard to high-quality career pathways and the strong connections to employers on which they depend, a challenge in Pennsylvania is one of scale. While examples of exemplary career pathways programs, many schools and workforce providers do not fully integrate these into their work. One role for state policy is to change that.

Several current policies in Pennsylvania support high-quality career pathways.

- The Wolf Administration’s development of the [Future Ready PA Index](#), and the incorporation in the index of [Career Readiness Standards](#), have elevated career readiness as a goal of Pennsylvania’s public schools. They communicate that schools should not just focus on four-year college but help all students succeed in college AND career.
  - Pennsylvania’s tradition of industry driven education and training indirectly supports high-quality career pathways by strengthening the collective voice of industry and fostering industry driven partnerships and intermediaries that can partner with educators, trainers, and the workforce system. In the Wolf Administration, with support from the legislature, investments in apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship, and restoration of some funds for industry partnerships, have strengthened partnerships with industry that provide a foundation for effective career pathways.
  - The Pennsylvania [teacher in the workplace](#) connects educators with local business leaders and employers. It enables teachers to visit local employers, learn about industry trends and skill requirements, and industry trends, and keep their curricula up to date.
  - PAsmart has also created 10 dynamic new “STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) ecosystems,” that could help spread career pathways linked to STEM careers. This dimension of PAsmart takes place within a broader state and national movement that has rediscovered the power of “learning-by-doing,” including in higher-paid professions—a context conducive to more universal acceptance of concepts like CTE for all and Career Pathways for all.
- Challenges to Scaling High Quality Career Pathways
    - Employer and industry association capacity to engage with educators and the workforce system: the “free rider” problem
    - Policies that support experimentation but not systems change
    - Job quality: the lack of respect for all work and all workers
    - Funding
  - Policy: Towards an Industry-Driven, Worker- and Student-Centered Vision—Reinventing Grades 11-14 and Beyond
    - Develop a common definition of career pathways and common definitions of how concept is operationalized in schools, for adults, and with different vulnerable groups
    - Institutionalize industry driven education and training—scaling sectoral strategies and high-quality career pathways
      - An industry partnership and group apprenticeship tax credit
      - Make IPs/group apprenticeships employer representatives on curriculum committees
      - Scale the RA Navigator apprenticeship and other capacity development and peer learning for workforce intermediaries
      - Consider recreating the Center for Health and Center for Advanced Manufacturing Careers and other industry Centers, leveraging private and philanthropic funds—use these to identify and disseminate best practices for career pathways, industry partnerships, and group apprenticeship practices; and competency models and curricula (building on experience within CTE)
    - Promote CTE and career pathways for all, with work experience and education more deeply integrated starting with high school
    - Create a statewide system of post-secondary education in PA, leveraging federal funds
    - Dashboards: measure and monitor progress to drive the team effort to improve
    - Achieve Gov. Wolf’s goal of integrating workforce programs across agencies
    - Engage stakeholders—including education and training professionals—in fleshing out a vision and implementation plan

## **Healthcare Workforce Ad Hoc Committee**

### **Quarterly Update**

August 12, 2020

The Healthcare Workforce Ad Hoc Committee finalized its Crisis Statement on the Shortage of Professional Care Workers, which was approved by the PA WDB membership during the quarterly board meeting on May 5, 2020.

Following this approval, the board agreed that this ad hoc committee should refocus its purpose on the development of recommendations to address the crisis shortage of professional care workers in Pennsylvania.

The committee's first two recommendations to address the crisis shortage of professional care workers are included in the briefing book for consideration by the PA WDB membership during the August 12th quarterly meeting.

Matthew Yarnell, Chair  
Healthcare Workforce Ad Hoc Committee

## Reentry Ad Hoc Committee

### Quarterly Update

August 12, 2020

The Reentry Ad Hoc Committee of the Pennsylvania Workforce Development Board has continued to engage with several stakeholders in the reentry space, including, but not limited to, Pennsylvania's Local Workforce Development Boards, the Pennsylvania Reentry Council (PARC), the Department of Corrections (DOC), the Department of Labor and Industry (L&I), and the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD).

#### Recommendations

Many returning citizens often face multiple barriers when looking to secure self- and family-sustaining employment. Evidence shows that reentrants who are working are substantially less likely to recidivate. The following recommendations will help to address the needs of returning citizens as they work to reenter the workforce (*full language of recommendations is included in the appendices*):

**Recommendation 1:** Assist county jails in working to increase access to government issued IDs when exiting county jail.

**Recommendation 2:** Increase digital literacy skills for returning citizens so they can succeed in an increasingly virtual world.

**Recommendation 3:** The commonwealth should support reentrants in identifying resources to assist those individuals in acquiring technology devices that will enable their success in the workforce.

**Recommendation 4:** Increase the capacity of the Board of Pardons (BOP) to both decrease the amount of time for an application to be considered and to increase the number of individuals who can have their pardons heard within one year.

#### Reentry Research Project

KayLynn Hamilton Consulting finalized the *Comprehensive Inventory of Reentry Services Across Pennsylvania* report. This research helps to provide a better understanding of reentry activities and initiatives across Pennsylvania. The final report identifies best practices, services provided, and gaps in services from the perspective of local stakeholders and providers.

#### Employer Roundtable Listening Sessions

Due to the impact of COVID-19 and the limitations on in-person meetings, the in-person roundtable events have been put on hold. The committee is hopeful to continue to engage employers in a virtual setting in the near future.

#### Reentry Ad Hoc Committee Next Steps:

- Determine how to best engage employers virtually
- Develop a toolkit for employers looking to hire reentrants

Jeff Brown, Chair  
Reentry Ad Hoc Committee

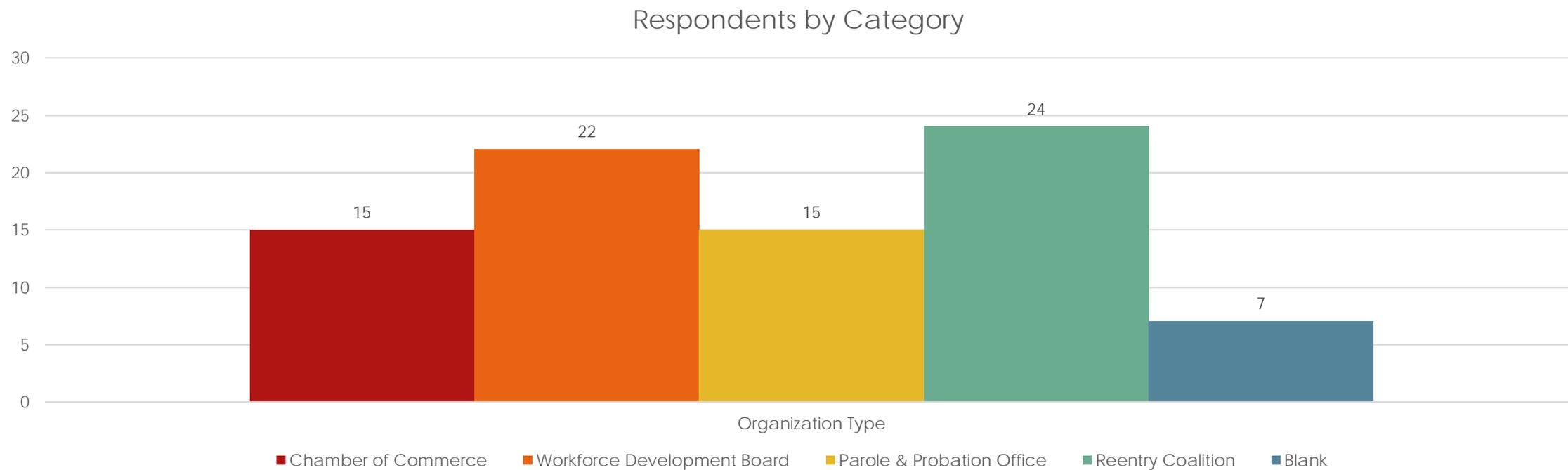
# A Comprehensive Inventory of Reentry Services Across Pennsylvania

PREPARED FOR THE PA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

# Plan

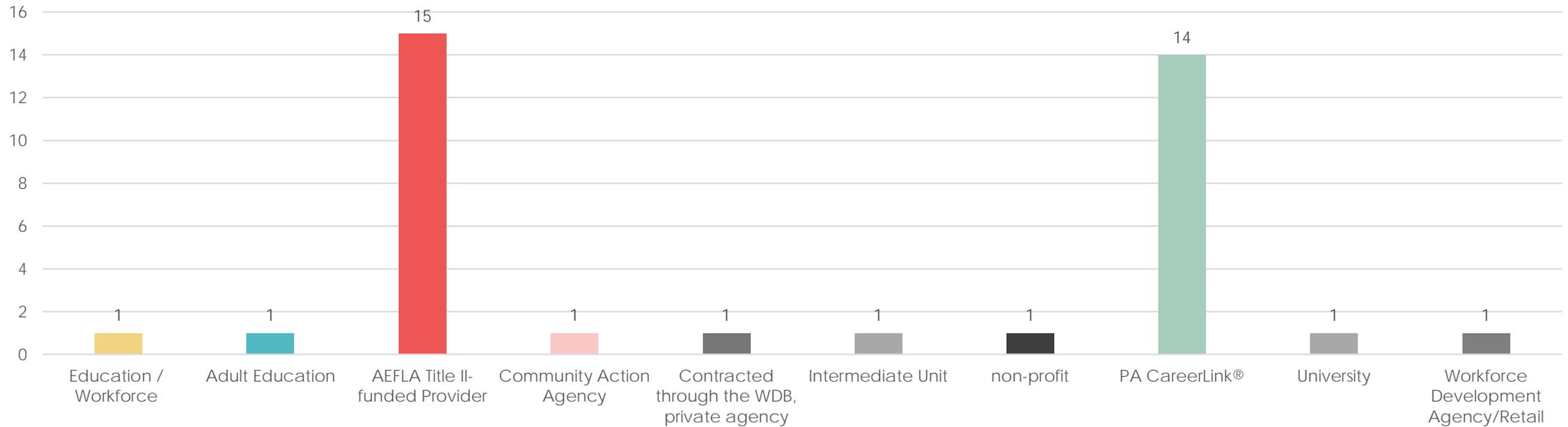
- ▶ Survey the 22 Local Workforce Development Boards, Reentry Coalitions, Chambers of Commerce, and Parole and Probation Offices
- ▶ Survey of additional reentry stakeholders
  - ▶ PA CareerLink® staff
  - ▶ Title II adult education providers
  - ▶ Phone interviews
    - ▶ Chambers of Commerce
    - ▶ Community-based Organizations
    - ▶ Local Workforce Development Board staff
- ▶ Compile all information gathered in items (1) and (2) in a comprehensive report

# Stakeholder Reentry Survey 1 Analysis



# Local Providers Reentry Survey 2 Analysis

Respondents By Organizational Category



# Reentry Interviews Analysis



**Eight virtual interviews via Zoom  
(survey follow up & new)**



**The interview questions focus:**

- Describe provided services
- Essential partners
- Successful activities
- Gaps in system
- Possible solutions

## Identified Gaps in Service

Theme: Facilitated Transition

Theme: Characteristic or  
Qualifications Needed for Staff

Theme: Essential Services  
Needed for Reentrants

# Identified Best & Promising Practices

- ▶ Philadelphia County Workforce Development Area
- ▶ Lancaster County Workforce Development Area
- ▶ Allegheny County Jail partners
- ▶ McKean County Good Growing Gardens
- ▶ South Central Workforce Development Area
- ▶ Southern Alleghenies Workforce Development Area
- ▶ Bucks County Workforce Development Area

# Nationally Recognized Best & Promising Practices

- ▶ **The Housing Authority of Baltimore City**
- ▶ **St. Leonard's Ministries Grace House**
- ▶ **The King County Housing Authority**
- ▶ **Minnesota Comprehensive Offender Reentry Plan**
- ▶ **Compass Rose Collaborative**

# Recommendations

- ▶ Create a More Consistent and Supported Reentry Process
- ▶ Create a Common Measurable Definition of Reentry Service Success
- ▶ Create Stronger Communication Flow Across Local Reentry and State Systems
- ▶ Begin the Reentry Process Prior to Leaving the Correctional Facility
- ▶ Structure the Transition Process
- ▶ Work with Partners and Service Providers to Offer Full Services
- ▶ Boost the Image of Reentering Citizens



# Quarterly Meeting Agency Update

August 12, 2020

## Pennsylvania Department of Education

**The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) is committed to providing school communities with ongoing guidance, resources, and information on COVID-19 and related mitigation efforts. Additional information is available on the [PDE COVID-19 Guidance and Resources for School Communities](#) page.**

### **Title II Adult Education**

PDE's Bureau of Postsecondary and Adult Education, Division of Adult Education held a competition for WIOA Title II Section 243 Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education grants for a grant contract period of July 1, 2020-June 30, 2023. The division awarded six grants totaling \$1,557,284. Grantees are Delaware County Literacy Council, District 1199C Training & Upgrading Fund, Lancaster-Lebanon IU 13, Lehigh Carbon Community College, Northampton Community College, and Tri County OIC.

Adult education and family literacy programs funded through the Division of Adult Education are in the process of implementing a blend of in-person and remote services to meet the needs of their communities while ensuring the safety of staff and students. Program providers are receiving a total of \$500,000 in federal CARES Act funding to assist with these efforts.

Staff from the Division of Adult Education, together with staff members from two Title II-funded professional development projects, are leading an interagency workgroup to develop a series of online cross-training modules for workforce development system partner programs at the state, regional, and local levels, including PA CareerLink® staff. The Division of Adult Education invested \$13,500 of Title II state leadership monies to fund the development of the first module, Introduction to the PA CareerLink® System, as proof of concept. Contingent on availability of funding, the Division plans to develop a series of modules focused on the activities and services provided by the PA CareerLink® partner programs and other workforce development system partners. The introductory module will be presented at the Pennsylvania Workforce Development Board meeting on August 12, 2020.

### **Career and Technical Education**

On July 1, 2020, the U.S. Department of Education approved the Perkins V state plan submitted in March as part of the Pennsylvania Combined Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) State Plan.

PDE has updated the [Industry-Recognized Credentials for Career and Technical Education Programs Resource Guide](#) to reflect the addition of 35 industry credentials for the 2020-21 academic year. The resource guide is organized by career cluster and is designed to assist schools in identifying portable, industry-recognized credentials that validate that a student successfully demonstrated skill competencies in a core set of content and performance standards in a specific set of work-related tasks. The tasks and assessment must connect to workforce demands.

On August 6, the Governor announced \$10.5 million in Governor’s Emergency Education Relief (GEER) Funds will be distributed to career and technical centers (CTCs) to support effective continuity of education and industry credentialing for students enrolled in CTCs negatively impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. A list of [the 78 CTCs receiving awards](#) is available on the PDE website.

### **Elementary and Secondary Education**

PDE continues to focus on ensuring high school graduates are career ready and that all students have access to preparation for careers in STEM.

- PDE is currently assisting the Pennsylvania State Board of Education with reviewing the state *Academic Standards for Science and Technology* and *Academic Standards for Environment and Ecology*. For the past several months committees comprised of educators and experts have been reviewing and drafting revisions based on stakeholder feedback, academic research, past and current Pennsylvania academic standards, and national and international best practices. The draft revised standards will be presented to the State Board of Education at the September meeting. Pending approval, a public comment period to provide feedback on the proposed standards is expected in the fall of 2020.
- In 2019-20, more than 1,200 K-12 educators participated in virtual professional learning related to computer science education.
- The first cohort of 26 secondary educators to prepare for the Computer Science Praxis exam completed the teaching certification preparation course with a 100% pass rate. The second cohort of 70 educators, all of whom received 2019-20 PAsmart Grants, began to meet virtually in June 2020.
- More than 300 education stakeholders attended the CSforALLPA Summit via Zoom over three days in June to collaborate on how to expand access to computer science education equitably and effectively throughout PA.

### **Postsecondary and Higher Education**

On August 6, the Governor announced postsecondary institutions in Pennsylvania would receive \$24.5 million in Governor’s Emergency Education Relief funding to implement their Health and Safety Plans (e.g. PPE, sanitation, monitoring, etc.) for the 2020-21 academic year. The list of [grant recipients](#) and allocations is available on the PDE website. An additional \$3 million in targeted emergency support was awarded to the state’s Historically Black Colleges and Universities – Lincoln University and Cheyney University – that were significantly impacted by the pandemic.



# Cross Training Module

Amanda Harrison  
Chief, Division of Adult Education



1



## New Training Opportunity for WIOA staff

- Ensure that all staff can make informed referrals that meet the needs of one-stop system clients, especially those with barriers to employment.
  - Online
  - On demand
  - Interactive
  - Developed with guidance from all WIOA partners



2

## History

- Operationalizing Co-enrollment Cohort
  - Federal technical assistance project
  - PA WDB-led
  - Cross-departmental cohort
  - Action planning, including development of cross-training opportunities



3

## Companion User Guide

- Supplemental materials that can be used before, during, and after completion of the module
- Facilitator led or self-directed
- Glossary of terms



4

## Next Steps

- Proof of concept
- Additional modules
- Integration
- Funding
- Learning Management System



5

## Contact/Mission

For more information on Title II Adult Basic Education and Family Literacy, please visit PDE's website at [www.education.pa.gov](http://www.education.pa.gov)

*The mission of the Department of Education is to ensure that every learner has access to a world-class education system that academically prepares children and adults to succeed as productive citizens. Further, the Department seeks to establish a culture that is committed to improving opportunities throughout the commonwealth by ensuring that technical support, resources, and optimal learning environments are available for all students, whether children or adults.*



6

Menu Transcript Resources

- Introduction
  - Introduction to the Module
  - Navigation
  - User Guide
  - Name Entry
  - Select a Program
  - Common Vocabulary
  - Module Overview
  - Module Objectives
  - Select Program Referrals
  - End of the Introduction
- The PA CareerLink® System
  - Introduction to the PA CareerLink® System
  - Warm-Up
  - WIOA
  - Four Titles and Six Core Programs



## Introduction to the PA CareerLink® System: WIOA Core Programs and Referral Best Practices

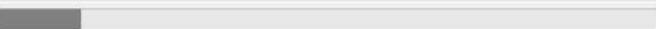


**pennsylvania**  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



**pennsylvania**  
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR & INDUSTRY

The content of this module is available in an accessible PDF.

Search...      NEXT >

## Warm-Up

**Directions:** Rate your familiarity with Title II's purpose, services, and eligibility.

	Not Familiar	Somewhat Familiar	Very Familiar
<b>Purpose</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Services</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Eligibility</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Title II: Adult Education and Family Literacy**

## Best Practices for Referring

Creating Partnerships

Identifying Customers

Referring Customers

Supporting Customers

Referral Best Practices

### Case Study #1

The PA CareerLink® business services team had worked with a recruiter from a local trucking company for several years, developing a working relationship and assisting with their hiring needs. The recruiter was recently laid off and selected to participate in the RESEA program.

[Read More](#)



Referral Case Studies and Benefits



## Reflection

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**Directions:** Check on one or more areas where you'd like to improve your efforts to support referrals to other WIOA core programs.

- Building partnerships.
- Identifying referrals.
- Making referrals.
- Supporting referrals.
- Other

**Introduction**

# Quarterly Meeting Agency Update

August 2020

Agency: PA Department of Labor & Industry

## Re-opening of PA CareerLink®

The workforce deputate began working on a reopening plan in late March 2020. Despite the continued evolution of COVID-19, it was critical for the deputate and its workforce partners to look at what strategies/planning were needed for an eventual reopening. The Department of Labor & Industry (L&I) established weekly calls with local workforce development board leadership to address immediate and long-term concerns. Each workforce area submitted a local pandemic plan that highlighted the continuation of job seeker and employer services during the pandemic. After a review of the local pandemic plans, L&I set up a series of technical assistance (TA) calls with every local region to discuss:

- Pre-opening steps for physical PA CareerLink® sites
- Service Delivery of workforce services
- Communication to internal/external customers

The TA calls were held between April – June 2020 and provided an opportunity for local areas to discuss measures to keep staff/customer safe on-site, development of virtual services/platforms, unemployment assistance, and using local media/social media outlets to inform the public of available PA CareerLink® services.

L&I provided personal protective equipment, or PPE, so that each of Pennsylvania's 62 PA CareerLink® centers met the requirements for a safe opening for both center staff and the public. A vendor was procured to fully sanitize each center prior to the doors opening. L&I provided at least five (5) desk shields to each center to ensure a safe exchange between those offering services and those receiving those services. Finally, L&I provided enough signage to each center (English and Spanish) regarding safe operations during this pandemic.

## Virtual PA CareerLink® Services

The Dept. of L&I continues to support and identify virtual services with workforce partners throughout the 23 local workforce areas. At present, L&I and its workforce partners offer virtual services such as:

- One-on-One virtual appointments with job seekers to help with:
  - job search assistance
  - Labor Market Information
  - Resume preparation and critique

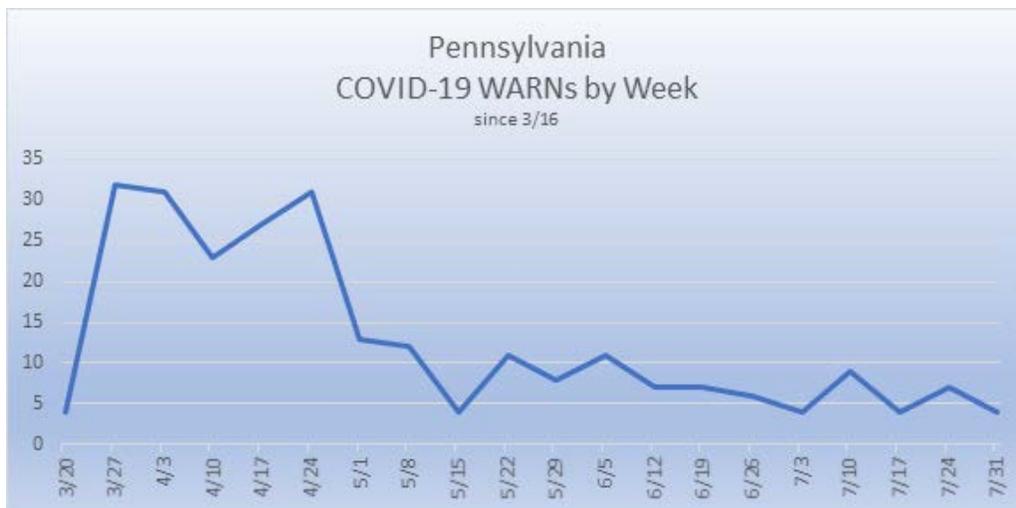
- Interviewing practices/techniques
- Virtual workshops
- Unemployment Assistance
- Training contracts: On-the-Job trainings/online training
- Employer assistance: recruitment, virtual job fairs, job-postings

L&I has seen an increase in online self-services available through PA CareerLink® online. For the month of June 2020, the department surpassed the 5 million CWDS/PA CareerLink® online users, with over 18,000 new registered customers (please see infographic for more data points).

L&I is currently taking inventory of various technology tools that have been adopted by workforce partners to enhance virtual services. There is a strong focus on the ability to facilitate screen-sharing between staff and customer (remote access), testing “drive-thru” or “curbside workforce assistance”, a virtual platform that staff can use to communicate with customers while simultaneously capturing automated services for performance, and introducing BOT and Chat capabilities on CWDS in the near future. Finally, stakeholders should expect a “fresh” new look to the PA CareerLink® website with added features for a better customer experience. The enhancements added were in part made possible by the recommendation of the state board. L&I hopes to showcase the new website redesign in the next board meeting.

**PA Department of Labor & Industry Rapid Response Services:**

Since March 2020, the Rapid Response team has received 263 WARN notices affecting temporarily and, in many cases, permanently, over 48,000 Pennsylvanians. The following graph provides a snapshot of WARN activity;



The Rapid Response team and partners are currently providing Rapid Response Information Meetings via Zoom, Skype, WebEx, and other platforms to engage employers and affected workers. The team is also releasing a pre-recorded information meeting that will be accessible for a customer that would like to

review the highlights of a “live” meeting or unable to attend a specific session. Given the magnitude of layoffs in such a short time period, L&I is working on an outreach plan to contact customers who have filed a UC claim and did not have an opportunity to engage with Rapid Response and the PA CareerLink®. This is a joint effort between Unemployment Compensation, Press Office, and the Governor’s Office. The outreach plan will link a claimant to a PA CareerLink® staff member that will serve a coach/navigator for workforce services. The outreach plan will enter a pilot stage by September 2020.

### **Supporting Employers, Supporting Employees in Recovery: Penn State Project Echo**

Penn State’s Project ECHO (Extension for Community Healthcare Outcomes) connects specialists with community members across Pennsylvania and beyond. Together, they discuss de-identified cases and develop best practices and recommendations for care. Over time, participants become the experts. The heart of the ECHO model™ is a hub-and-spoke, knowledge-sharing system. It is a guided, virtual learning community aimed at practice improvement: employers receive resources, mentoring and feedback, strengthen their skillset related to more complex systematic scenarios, and retain responsibility for their employees, policies and procedures. As a result, employees can have access to the resources they need, when they need it and close to home.

We understand the demands that employers are facing, and how these demands make it difficult to pursue continuing education opportunities. That’s why we’ve made it as simple as possible to participate in Project ECHO through the Zoom video conferencing platform.

The Supporting Employers, Supporting Employees (SESER) ECHO series will launch September 16, with sessions taking place every other week – 10 one-hour sessions. We will be offering two time slots (8:00-9:00 a.m. and 9:00-10:00 a.m.) for participants to choose from. Please only register for one series. In partnership with the Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry and Pennsylvania CareerLink®, Penn State Project ECHO is taking steps to equip employers with resources and strategies to support employees in recovery. The focus of these sessions will come from participants who present systematic or de-identified employee cases to each other and our multi-disciplinary specialist team in order to increase education and awareness to employers across the Commonwealth and encourage the success of their employees in recovery. These sessions provide brief lectures covering topics such as drug screens, employer concerns with Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT), medical marijuana in the workplace, policies, hiring, implementing a recovery-friendly workplace, etc.

We still have slots available at 9 a.m. for employers to register. See the attached flyer.

### **COVID-19 Grant Awarded to PA Department of Labor & Industry for \$6,993,000**

To support Pennsylvania’s workforce and disaster response needs, Pennsylvania requested \$21 million in Disaster Recovery National Dislocated Worker Grant (NDWG) funding to provide disaster relief and humanitarian assistance employment, thus minimizing the employment and economic effect of the declared public health emergency. L&I was awarded a National Dislocated Worker Grant for \$6,993,000.00 to serve 128 dislocated workers in temporary disaster relief employment positions.

### **Build a Contact Tracing and Public Health Workforce**

As of Aug. 5, 2020, 115,009 Pennsylvanians, across all 67 counties, have tested positive for COVID-19, with 7,232 deaths attributed to the virus. As Pennsylvania begins to safely reopen the economy, it's critical that it has a strong virus-monitoring and data-surveillance program able to quickly identify and contain new COVID-19 cases, preventing further spread of the virus. This infrastructure will require additional contact-tracing capacity and a more robust public health workforce across the state. DOH estimates that Pennsylvania needs several thousand contact tracers, and this proposal to fund 68 positions is just one part of the commonwealth's strategy to build a contact-tracing workforce.

Pennsylvania proposes using \$5.1 million in NWDG funds to hire dislocated workers affected by the COVID-9 pandemic into disaster recovery and humanitarian assistance positions that will increase the commonwealth's contact-tracing capacity and enhance the public health workforce infrastructure needed to support the commonwealth's long-term economic recovery. These positions will contact and interview Pennsylvanians who newly test positive with COVID-19, record their symptomology, inventory their interactions with other people, provide public health information and connect them to healthcare providers and other social services as needed.

### **Implement COVID-19 Social Distancing Strategies at PA CareerLink® and Modify Service Delivery**

The COVID-19 pandemic temporarily closed all 60 American Job Centers, or PA CareerLink® one-stops. During this closure, the Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry (L&I) required a post-pandemic strategic workforce service-delivery plan from each of the 22 local workforce development boards (LWDB). These plans articulated the strategies each LWDB would implement when the necessary Stay-at-Home order lifted and PA CareerLink® one-stops reopened. All LWDBs were concerned that they wouldn't have the capacity or funding to serve a surge of COVID-19-affected dislocated workers and employers seeking services. LWDBs were also concerned that their already limited staff would need help providing high-quality services to customers and to incorporate social distancing measures into PA CareerLink® operations that would ensure the health and safety of customers and staff.

As the commonwealth reopens, including PA CareerLink®, LWDBs must implement social distancing and worker safety strategies recommended by the DOH. Pennsylvania proposes using \$1.5 million in NDWG funds to hire dislocated workers affected by the COVID-19 pandemic in temporary disaster recovery positions to support this transition, including security, customer triage, custodial and general support. These positions will help ensure a safe customer flow and social distancing in waiting rooms and resource centers, safe face-to-face interactions between customers and staff and enhanced cleaning and sanitation. These individuals will benefit from immediate employment opportunities and will be connected to the PA CareerLink® system to explore and pursue longer-term education, employment and training opportunities. L&I will partner with LWDBs to fill these temporary positions, making other PA CareerLink® staff available to expand the workforce development system's capacity to serve the expected increase in dislocated workers, long-term unemployed and individuals with barriers to employment.

### **WIOA Waivers**

Pennsylvania is resubmitting lapsed WIOA workforce system waivers. These include plans to expand training provider participation on the Eligible Training Provider List by waving the requirement to collect participant data for students who aren't paying for training with WIOA Title I funds, the ability use statewide activities funds for qualifying events to provide temporary disaster-relief employment without having to wait for a national dislocated worker grant, and the ability to use individual training accounts for some qualifying in-school youth. Also, Pennsylvania is submitted a WIOA workforce system waiver that, if approved, will allow Pennsylvania to reimburse employers of some qualified on-the-job training recipients at greater than 75 percent of their wages during that training.

## Quarterly Meeting Agency Update

August 12, 2020

Agency: Aging

The Department of Aging and the Senior Community Service Program (SCSEP) has reached the end of the program year. We are pleased to report that we were on target to meet or exceed every program target for the 2019 Program Year before COVID forced us to close the program. We have provided training services to 666 participants this program year which is 152% of SCSEP maximum enrollment. 263 participants have exited the SCSEP with 104 participants exiting due to employment. The 2nd quarter employment rate of 42.4%. Furthermore, 34.4% of the participants that found employment have retained employment through the fourth quarter after exiting the program. All these targets were affected by the COVID-19 emergency. For most of the final quarter of the 2019 program year, the SCSEP concentrated in keeping participants safe and ensuring training continued remotely as much as possible. Currently all program offices are in the process of call all enrolled participants back to on-site training with current COVID-19 guidelines being observed.

The PA Department of Aging has been approved by the US Department of Labor to continue administering the SCSEP grant into 2020 program year. Grant application was approved late in July 2020. This program year US DOL provided a \$33,049 increase to funding for the SCSEP. This brings the total SCSEP award to \$4,281,104.

# Quarterly Meeting Agency Update

August 12, 2020

Agency: PA Department of Agriculture

## **H2A Temporary Agricultural Workers and COVID**

- There was initially concern about how COVID would affect H2A visa holders and farms that employ them. In the initial days of the virus there was concern that employers would not be able to secure their usual workforce due to the suspension of routine immigrant and non-immigrant visa services. Fortunately, it appears that this was not a major issue for the majority of PA farmers. We received only a few reports of farmers that were not able to secure their usual H2A workforce.
- Currently the focus has been on the health and safety of these workers as many of them live in Farm Labor Camps where the virus could potentially spread very quickly. PDA provided enhanced guidance for Farm Labor Camps to ensure the health and safety of these workers and continues to provide guidance on how to keep workers safe.
- We have been closely monitoring both the workforce issues related to the H2A program and any potential outbreaks that may affect these workers.

## **Agriculture Apprenticeships**

- Another agriculture apprenticeship program has been registered and approved by the Apprenticeship and Training Council. The program sponsored by PASA is a two-year Dairy Grazing Apprenticeship.

## **PA Commission for Agricultural Education Excellence**

- The Commission approved the 2020 Report to the General Assembly at a special meeting in July. The report recaps the work of the Commission over the past year and plans for the following year. The report will be released within the next week or two.
- The commission staff, including PDA and PDE representatives, have continued to prepare more curricular items for K-8 ag literacy and career development for use on the PDE Standards Aligned System (SAS) curriculum portal.

## **PA Standards on Science and Technology and Ecology and Environment**

- PDA has been participating in the review and revision of the PA Standards on Science and Technology with PDE. Acting Executive Director of the PA Commission for Agriculture Education Scott Sheely and PAAE President Darla Rumberger continue to represent agriculture education on the review committees.

## **Other Workforce Initiatives**

- PDA continues to work with PA Farm Bill grantees to ensure that economic and workforce efforts continue, despite the pandemic. PDA is also working to prepare PA Farm Bill programs should we see another round of funding in the final 2020 budget.
- PDA continues to promote programs like the Fresh Food Financing Initiative and Hazard Pay program to stakeholders
- PDA is working with Econsult and Team PA on updating the economic impact report, and will make efforts to track the economic and workforce impact of ag across the state through various lenses

# Quarterly Meeting Agency Update

August 12, 2020

## Department of Community and Economic Development

### COVID-19 Action

- **Outreach Calls with Industry:** Since April, Secretary Davin has been hosting listening session calls with industry as well as partner organizations to hear firsthand what is happening at the local level and to create a mechanism to elevate any issues/concerns regions are having up to the administration. To date, over 30 calls have been hosted.
- **Manufacturing Call to Action Portal:** In the beginning of the pandemic, DCED launched the Manufacturing Call to Action Portal. The Portal called upon current manufacturers of supplies and products and manufacturers who could pivot their existing manufacturing capabilities to meet the necessary demand. The Portal **matches** manufacturers and distributors to fill specific supply chain needs to meet increasing demands for medical supplies and related products; **assists** manufacturers that have workforce needs or gaps and aid them in identifying skilled workers and **identifies** manufacturers that can pivot or innovate to fulfill the demand for medical supplies and related products. Since the launch, the Portal has helped provide the critical supplies to Pennsylvania's health care facilities as well as other businesses across the commonwealth so that businesses may provide a safe environment for their employees and customers.
- **CARES Act Funding Distribution:**
  - **County Relief Grants - \$625 million**
  - **Food Access Initiative - \$10 million**
  - **COVID-19 Relief Statewide Small Business Assistance - \$225 million**
  - **Cultural and Museum Preservation Grant (CFA) - \$20 million**
  - **Hazard Pay Program - \$50 million**
- **Other Funding Assistance Initiatives:**
  - **Hospital Emergency Loan Program (HELP):** HELP was established to provide critical working capital bridge financing to hospitals located within the commonwealth that were adversely impacted by the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. The loan funds were intended to provide a short-term financing solution for hospitals until federal grant funding through the Coronavirus Aid Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act was received by the hospitals. The program received 18 applications (representing 31 hospitals across PA) requesting \$323,921,009.
  - **COVID-19 Working Capital Access Program (CWCA):** The CWCA Program was administered by the Pennsylvania Industrial Development Authority (PIDA) and provided critical working capital financing to small businesses located within the commonwealth that were adversely impacted by the COVID-19 outbreak. The program approved 744 application in the amount of \$60,697,641.

**WIOA State Plan-Goal 2 Sector Strategies and Employer Engagement:** DCED serves as the lead agency for Goal 2 of the WIOA State Plan. The interagency committee reconvened in July to review the sub-goals. Discussions throughout the call highlighted how the pandemic has created more opportunities for engaging employers in the workforce system in new and innovative ways. The committee will continue meeting monthly to discuss the frequency and by which manner each agency responsible for a sub-goal will report the information.

**Workforce & Economic Development Network of Pennsylvania (WEDnet):** The WEDnet FY20/21 program opened in July and began accepting applications for the new fiscal year. The program made some changes for the new fiscal year to help make the program easier for companies to participate and partners to administer. Some of those changes include:

- Elimination of two different types of training with only one category: Job Skills Training;
- An increase in the amounts allowed per employee funding and per company funding;
- An increasing the number of eligible industries who can apply for funding;
- Opening the opportunity to receive training for the current job an individual has or for advancement or promotion; and
- All employee job titles and positions are eligible for training.

**Manufacturing Training to Career:** The Manufacturing PA Training-to-Career Grant program received \$1.9 million in funding for FY 20/21, based on the commonwealth's 5/12 budget. The program will continue to award grants for short-term training programs to help those with barriers to employment gain the skills necessary to obtain employment in the manufacturing industry.

**Next Generation Industry Partnerships:** Through the pandemic, the partnerships have continued hosting partnership meetings. They continue to work on the items identifies by the action teams, as well as, working together to address how the pandemic has impacted their region and industry. The partnerships use this forum as a way to share best practices for how to provide a safe working environment, to address supply chain issues, and much more.

# Quarterly Meeting Agency Update

August 12, 2020

Agency: Corrections

## Partnerships with Other Agencies

On May 19, 2020, the department's Workforce Development Specialist provided a presentation on the Benefits of Hiring Reentrants during a Networks for Training and Development workshop via Zoom.

In June 2020, Corrections/Parole was invited to participate in the Pennsylvania's State System of Higher Education (PASSHE) Workforce Steering Committee. The purpose of the Committee is to identify skills and competency needs/gaps within various industries by region. Subcommittees will identify regional needs and differences. Through Regional Assemblies (4 regions), which will include stakeholders from those regions and industries, regional differences and employer industry expectations will help develop competency skills maps in 2021. The Regional Assemblies are tentatively scheduled for September 2020.

On July 9, 2020, during the Pike County Reentry Coalition, via Zoom, the department provided a presentation on the Benefits of Hiring Reentrants and what Corrections/Parole offers for reentry inside and outside the SCI.

On July 22, 2020, the department had a conversation with the PA Apprenticeship Council on what Corrections/Parole is doing with pre-apprenticeships and apprenticeships. Our Workforce Development Specialist Dorenda Hamarlund shared the challenges we have faced with working with trade unions. The Council is interested in working with the department to alleviate those challenges. More conversations will be held in the future.

Corrections/Parole continues to assist with the WIOA State Plan by sitting on the committee headed up by Labor & Industry and Workforce Development Board.

## Reentry Services

Annually, each SCI coordinates and hosts a reentry job fair for inmates to participate. This event is generally hosted in the gym, classrooms or other large area within the institution and invites various community partners (employers, community service providers, BCC contractors and other agency representatives) to provide in-person information and presentations to the inmates. This information is vital for successful reentry planning. However, due to the COVID outbreak of 2020, these events have all been cancelled or rescheduled and the likelihood of facilitating these events in alignment with DOC COVID procedures and CDC guidelines will be difficult. Corrections/Parole is currently researching alternate, virtual presentation of reentry resources to the inmates planning for return to the community.

# Quarterly Meeting Agency Update

August 12, 2020

Agency: PA Department of Human Services

## **DHS support for people experiencing loss of income**

One of DHS's core functions is to ensure people are able to meet basic needs including access to food and healthcare. DHS support is available to people when the unforeseen occurs; the Department is continuously working during this time to increase awareness of resources for things like food and utilities as job losses continue. These resources provide people with temporary support until returning to work is feasible.

- Applications continue to be processed even while County Assistance Offices are closed to the public. People can apply online, or they can print an application from the website or call for an application to be mailed. Organizations can also request a set of applications.
- DHS implemented programs including the Emergency Assistance Program, the LIHEAP Recovery Crisis Program, and the Pandemic-EBT program, and also continued to work with federal partners to utilize waivers, in order to maximize access to resources.
- The Department worked with L&I to provide information to Unemployment Insurance recipients to ensure awareness of resources, particularly as the FPUC ended.
- In addition, the Department developed materials to make sure people are still aware of the ability to access federal stimulus payments.

## **Child Care – support for providers and for working families**

Child care is essential to both a healthy, functioning economy and the parents and families who rely on it for work and participation in employment and training activities. In addition to supporting the industry through a six-month period with a revised Child Care Works payment structure, the Administration prioritized investment of CARES Act dollars in child care providers. In June, \$51 million in CARES Act Child Care Development Funds was distributed to eligible providers. An additional \$53 million from CARES Act funding was announced in early July. DHS is also working with Penn State Harrisburg's Institute of State and Regional Affairs on an impact study to understand challenges for child care providers reopening and resuming operations during COVID-19. This study will inform distribution of a final \$116 million and other decisions moving forward.

## **Employment and Training Redesign launched July 1, 2020**

On July 1<sup>st</sup>, DHS, in partnership with all 23 local workforce development boards and multiple community action agencies, launched the TANF Employment and Training Redesign. The updated EARN and Work Ready programs are based on human-centered design that addresses participants and their families holistically. Programs use individualized case management and coaching, licensed counseling services, and expanded access to education and training opportunities to support families in reaching long-term economic stability. During COVID-19, participation has been remote as providers have been helping participants with life skills, household management, digital literacy, resources, and other referrals in addition to job related work activities and services. Over the next year, we will be working closely with our partners to deliver these new services and to evaluate how these changes impact families. This information will be used to inform future decisions regarding E&T programming.

### **Access to technology for education and training activities**

Work, school, and a notable portion of general activities currently require families to have adequate devices, access to the internet, and digital literacy. However, a significant number of low-income families do not have these resources. DHS recently issued a policy clarification indicating that TANF recipients pursuing credentials and meeting certain criteria can request financial support for purchasing devices in order to participate in programming. DHS also received \$35,000 from FNS to support laptop loan programs for SNAP E&T participants primarily served through the KEYS program at the PA community colleges. In addition, PWDA recently issued a survey to local workforce boards to identify additional resources for internet access options.

### **SNAP Employment & Training (E&T) State Plan**

The annual SNAP E&T State Plan is due August 17, 2020, covering 10/1/2020-9/30/2021. DHS is requesting funds to launch four new SNAP 50/50 sites which will serve over 170 additional participants in their first year. The plan provides additional support to the SNAP KEYS program as enrollments grow. This will be done via the laptop lending program grant, allowing SNAP KEYS students to enroll in online classes in the fall. This year's plan also debuts the new SNAP EARN partnerships, expanding high-quality SNAP E&T case management services and facilitating better engagement with the greater workforce system. If the Able-Bodied Adult without Dependent (ABAWD) work requirements are reinstated, SNAP EARN also provides a stronger framework to help ABAWDs meet the work requirements and maintain vital food assistance.

### **Employment First – reporting for long-term care employment services**

DHS's system of Managed Care for Adults in need of Long Term Services and Supports, Community HealthChoices (CHC), is now operational statewide. In accordance with the Governor's Executive Order on Employment First, CHC services include employment support to help participants in finding and retaining meaningful employment. The use of employment services will be tracked by DHS in an operations report which was released to the CHC Managed Care Organizations earlier this year. This reporting had been put on hold due to the public health emergency but will resume in August 2020. Full reporting of the months missed due to the pandemic is expected to be completed by December 2020. This will give DHS the first comprehensive look at employment services for CHC participants.

2018 Population		
Total Population	12,791,181	100.0%
Female	6,527,992	51.0%
Male	6,263,189	49.0%

Population by Race		
White	10,341,442	80.8%
Black	1,423,319	11.1%
Hispanic Ethn	905,156	7.1%
Other	1,026,420	8.0%

Population by Age		
Ages 0 to 17	2,675,330	20.9%
Ages 18 to 24	1,194,488	9.3%
Ages 25 to 34	1,667,748	13.0%
Ages 35 to 44	1,495,222	11.7%
Ages 45 to 54	1,731,294	13.5%
Ages 55 to 64	1,797,238	14.1%
Ages 65 to 74	1,236,019	9.7%
Ages 75 and Older	993,842	7.8%
Median Age	40.7	

Educational Attainment, Ages 18 and Older		
High School Diploma or Less	4,549,755	45.0%
Some College or Associate Degree	2,669,784	26.4%
Bachelor's Degree	1,802,262	17.8%
Graduate or Professional Degree	1,094,050	10.8%

Source: U.S. Census ACS 2014-2018 - DP05, B01001, and B15001

Help Wanted OnLine Job Postings			
June 2020	June 2019	Volume Change	Percent Change
116,616	90,561	26,055	28.8%

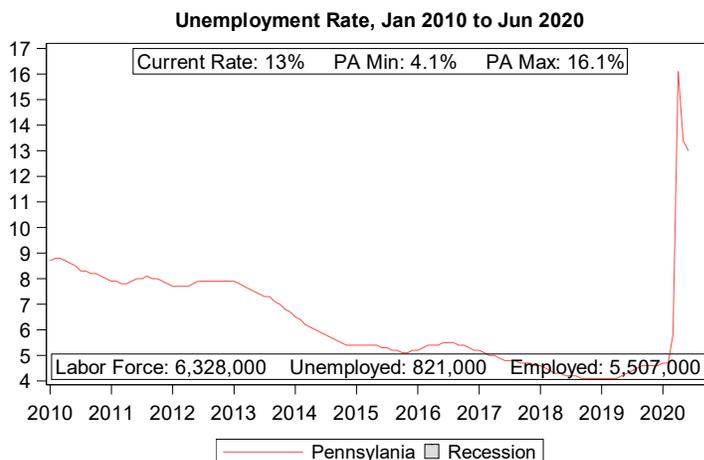
Source: Burning Glass Technologies Help Wanted OnLine™

U.S. Veterans		Median Income	
Total	Unemployment Rate	Veteran	Non-Veteran
782,682	5.1%	\$37,171	\$30,131

Source: U.S. Census ACS 2014-2018 (Table: S2101)

Income Measures			
Per Capita	Total Personal	Median Household	Median Family
\$56,225	\$720,073,441	\$59,445	\$75,477

Note: Total Personal Income is displayed in thousands.  
 Note: Median Incomes are in 2018 adjusted dollars.  
 Source: Personal Incomes - Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) - 2018  
 Source: Median Incomes - U.S. Census ACS 2014-2018 (Tables: B19013 & B19113)



### Top 25 Employers by Employment in Q4 of 2019

- Federal Government
- State Government
- Wal-Mart Associates Inc
- Trustees of the University of PA
- United Parcel Service Inc
- City of Philadelphia
- Giant Food Stores LLC
- Pennsylvania State University
- School District of Philadelphia
- UPMC Presbyterian Shadyside
- Amazon.com Services Inc
- PNC Bank NA
- Target Corporation
- University of Pittsburgh
- The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia
- Comcast Cablevision Corp (PA)
- Weis Markets Inc
- Giant Eagle Inc
- Lowe's Home Centers LLC
- PA State System of Higher Education
- Home Depot USA Inc
- The Vanguard Group Inc
- Merck Sharp & Dohme Corporation
- Wawa Inc
- Western Penn Allegheny Health

Source: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages

Unemployment Compensation (UC) by Pre-UC Industry	Jul 2019 to Jun 2020		Jun 2020 Initial (IC) and Continued (CC) UC Claims			
	Exhaustees	Percent	IC Total	IC Percent	CC Total	CC Percent
Natural Resources & Mining	1,320	1.4%	1,909	0.9%	26,572	0.8%
Construction	13,460	14.5%	12,672	5.7%	191,002	5.6%
Manufacturing	11,140	12.0%	32,525	14.7%	299,307	8.8%
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	17,500	18.8%	45,214	20.5%	698,247	20.4%
Information	1,310	1.4%	1,873	0.8%	36,315	1.1%
Financial Activities	4,740	5.1%	4,093	1.9%	82,585	2.4%
Professional & Business Services	16,510	17.8%	24,641	11.2%	374,926	11.0%
Education & Health Services	14,230	15.3%	41,269	18.7%	597,290	17.5%
Leisure & Hospitality	7,970	8.6%	29,940	13.6%	772,145	22.6%
Other Services	2,410	2.6%	5,938	2.7%	214,355	6.3%
Government	820	0.9%	2,208	1.0%	39,817	1.2%
Info Not Available	1,590	1.7%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>93,000</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>220,819</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>3,418,233</b>	<b>100%</b>

Notes: Percentages less than 0.5% will be displayed as 0.0%. Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding. Claims data are not comparable to claims data released in any other report.

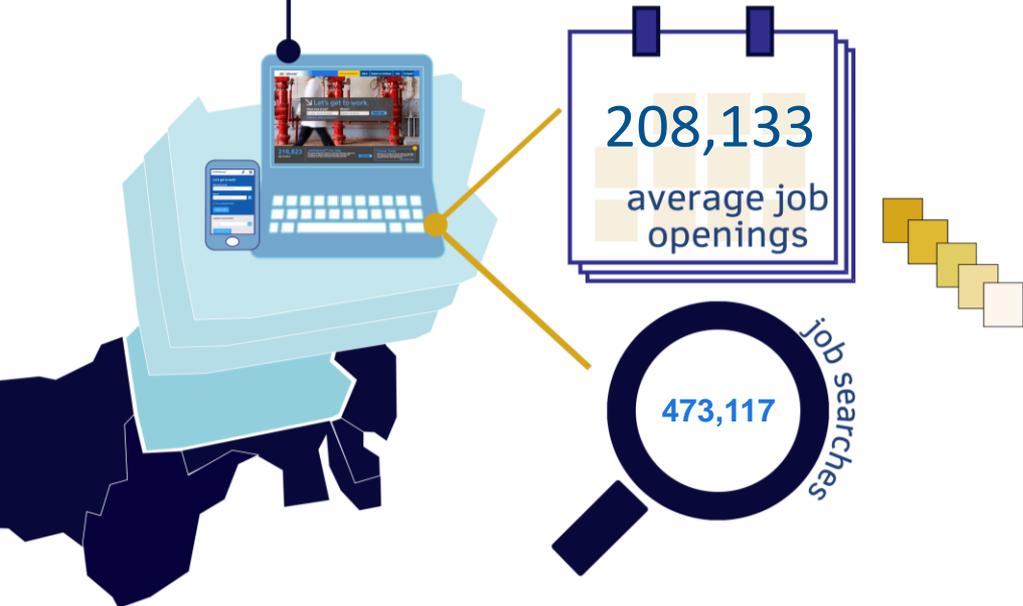
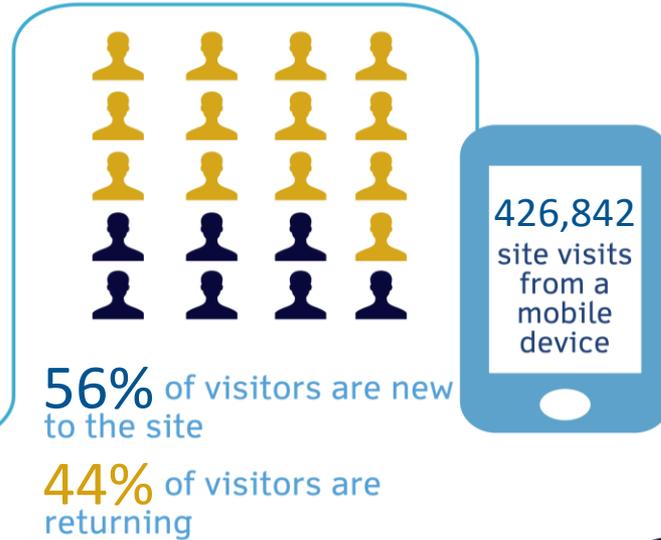
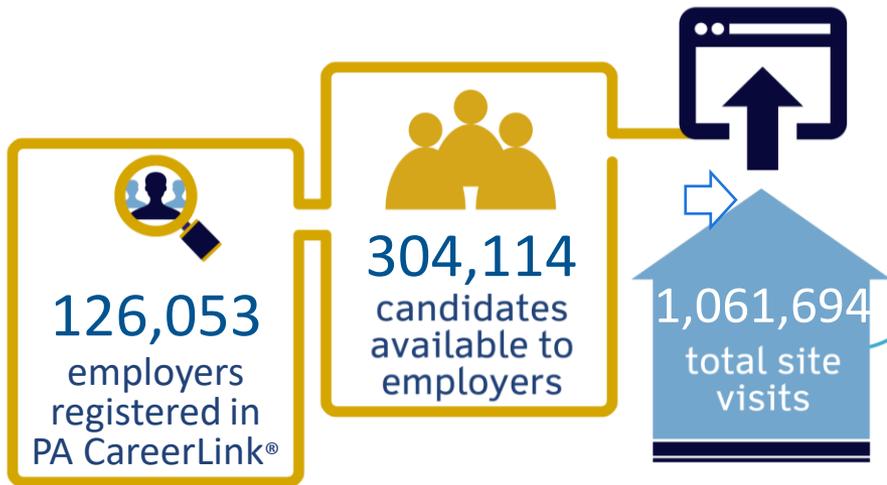
Source: Pennsylvania Unemployment Compensation System

Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, 2019 Annual Averages						
NAICS	NAICS Description	Establishments	Employment	Employment %	Average Wage	
	Total, All Industries	360,094	5,925,226	100.0%	\$57,497	
11	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	2,353	25,005	0.4%	\$36,708	
21	Mining, Quarrying, and Oil & Gas	1,280	28,048	0.5%	\$90,150	
22	Utilities	1,369	34,601	0.6%	\$99,268	
23	Construction	29,404	269,075	4.5%	\$68,117	
31-33	Manufacturing	14,456	575,465	9.7%	\$64,255	
42	Wholesale Trade	23,498	217,380	3.7%	\$82,096	
44-45	Retail Trade	40,971	614,444	10.4%	\$30,249	
48-49	Transportation and Warehousing	11,667	315,170	5.3%	\$50,186	
51	Information	5,459	90,513	1.5%	\$93,136	
52	Finance and Insurance	18,363	267,277	4.5%	\$97,383	
53	Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	11,009	65,410	1.1%	\$62,575	
54	Professional and Technical Services	41,925	367,640	6.2%	\$98,991	
55	Management of Companies and Enterprises	4,841	136,088	2.3%	\$135,584	
56	Administrative and Waste Services	18,270	321,969	5.4%	\$38,450	
61	Educational Services	9,078	484,685	8.2%	\$58,764	
62	Health Care and Social Assistance	53,856	1,090,128	18.4%	\$52,327	
71	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	5,450	103,172	1.7%	\$34,324	
72	Accommodation and Food Services	28,511	478,100	8.1%	\$19,451	
81	Other Services (Except Public Administration)	33,193	203,620	3.4%	\$35,239	
92	Public Administration	5,144	237,438	4.0%	\$62,888	

Company Ownership						
Total, All Ownership		360,094	5,925,226	100.0%	\$57,497	
Private Ownership		346,756	5,249,271	88.6%	\$57,227	
Federal Ownership		2,758	98,105	1.7%	\$77,436	
State Ownership		1,449	130,312	2.2%	\$64,185	
Local Ownership		9,132	447,538	7.6%	\$54,352	

Occupational Employment (2016) and Wages (2019)						
SOC Code	Major Occupational Group	Employment	Entry Wage	Average Wage	Experienced Wage	
	Total, All Occupations	6,181,960	\$23,070	\$51,340	\$65,480	
11-0000	Management	296,550	\$62,900	\$125,270	\$156,460	
13-0000	Business & Financial Operations	292,690	\$45,450	\$76,330	\$91,780	
15-0000	Computer & Mathematical	158,430	\$51,220	\$86,730	\$104,480	
17-0000	Architecture & Engineering	102,530	\$48,690	\$80,650	\$96,630	
19-0000	Life, Physical & Social Science	52,740	\$40,950	\$76,750	\$94,650	
21-0000	Community & Social Services	142,280	\$30,240	\$46,880	\$55,200	
23-0000	Legal	49,600	\$44,090	\$106,560	\$137,790	
25-0000	Education, Training & Library	341,210	\$28,380	\$61,790	\$78,500	
27-0000	Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports & Media	81,900	\$25,090	\$52,720	\$66,540	
29-0000	Healthcare Practitioners & Technical	395,930	\$40,130	\$77,730	\$96,530	
31-0000	Healthcare Support	198,080	\$22,230	\$29,760	\$33,520	
33-0000	Protective Service	126,170	\$23,540	\$47,580	\$59,610	
35-0000	Food Preparation & Serving Related	498,670	\$17,700	\$25,190	\$28,930	
37-0000	Building & Grounds Cleaning & Maintenance	209,280	\$20,730	\$30,500	\$35,380	
39-0000	Personal Care & Service	279,300	\$17,920	\$28,440	\$33,710	
41-0000	Sales & Related	601,030	\$19,550	\$42,680	\$54,240	
43-0000	Office & Administrative Support	965,560	\$25,470	\$40,460	\$47,960	
45-0000	Farming, Fishing & Forestry	35,670	\$20,240	\$34,810	\$42,090	
47-0000	Construction & Extraction	254,290	\$32,560	\$54,530	\$65,510	
49-0000	Installation, Maintenance & Repair	239,150	\$30,140	\$50,010	\$59,950	
51-0000	Production	400,560	\$25,610	\$40,640	\$48,160	
53-0000	Transportation & Material Moving	460,360	\$22,440	\$36,350	\$43,300	

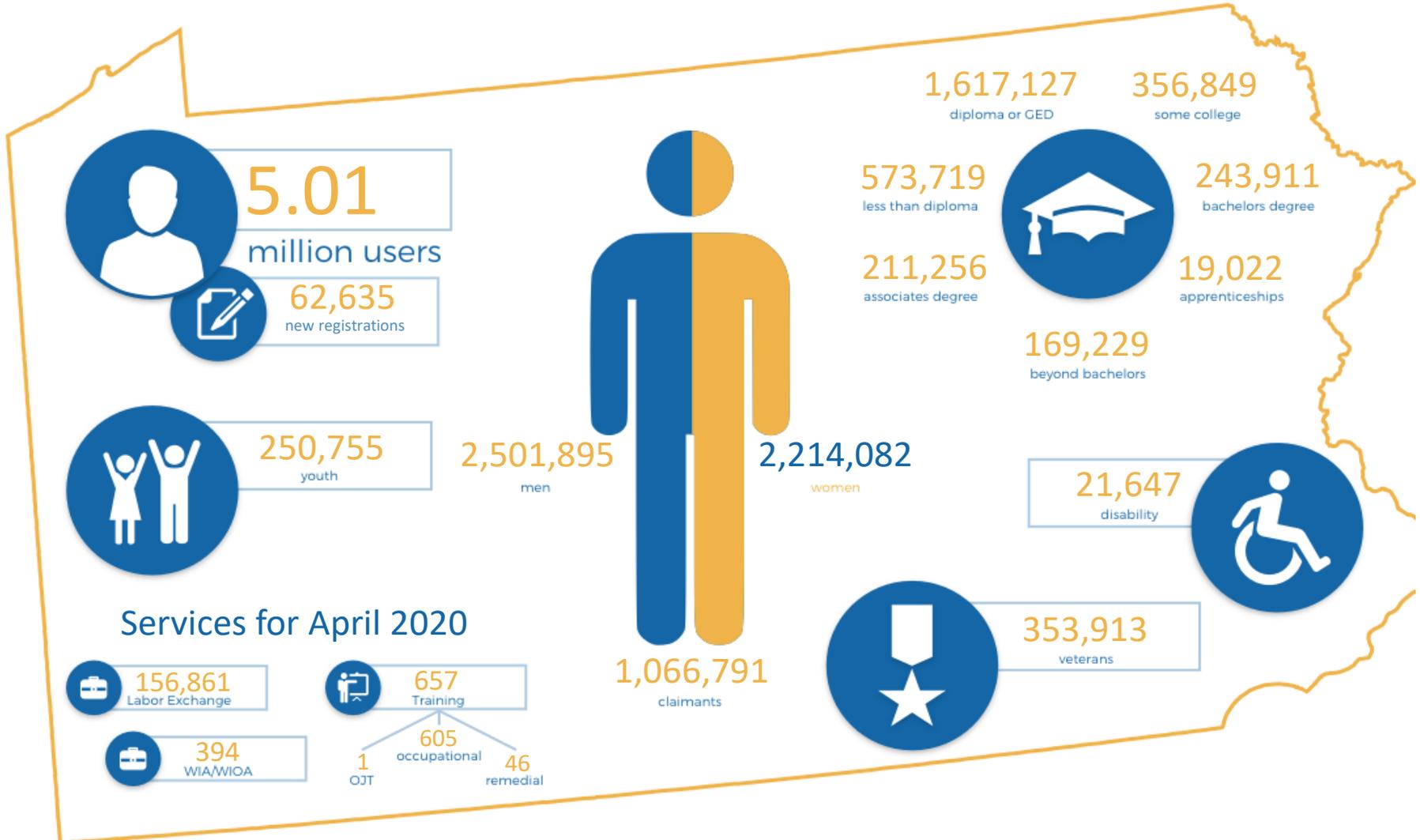
Note: 'ND' represents Non-Disclosable information.



Age of job postings are **60 days** or less

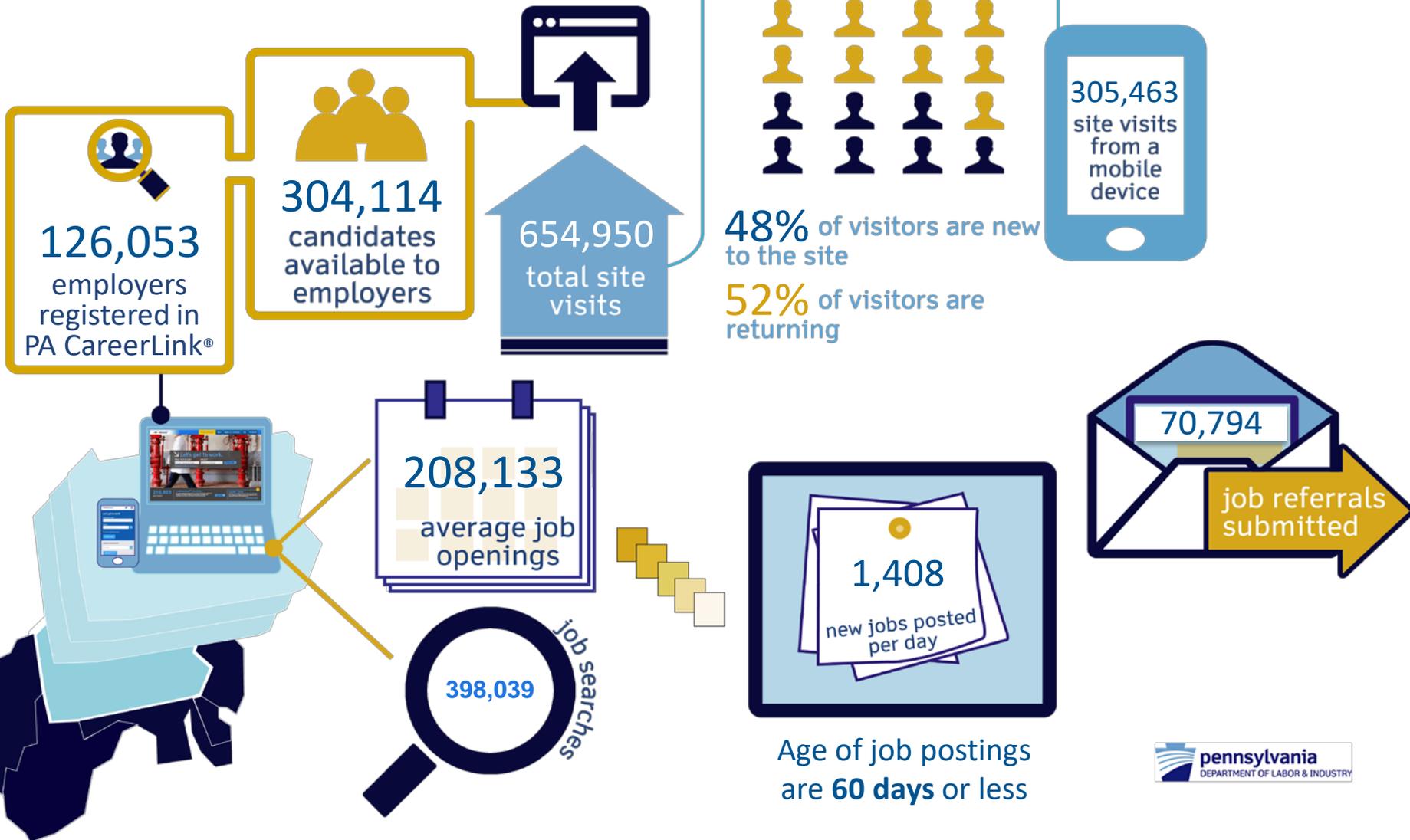


# CWDS/PA CareerLink® User Demographics & Services



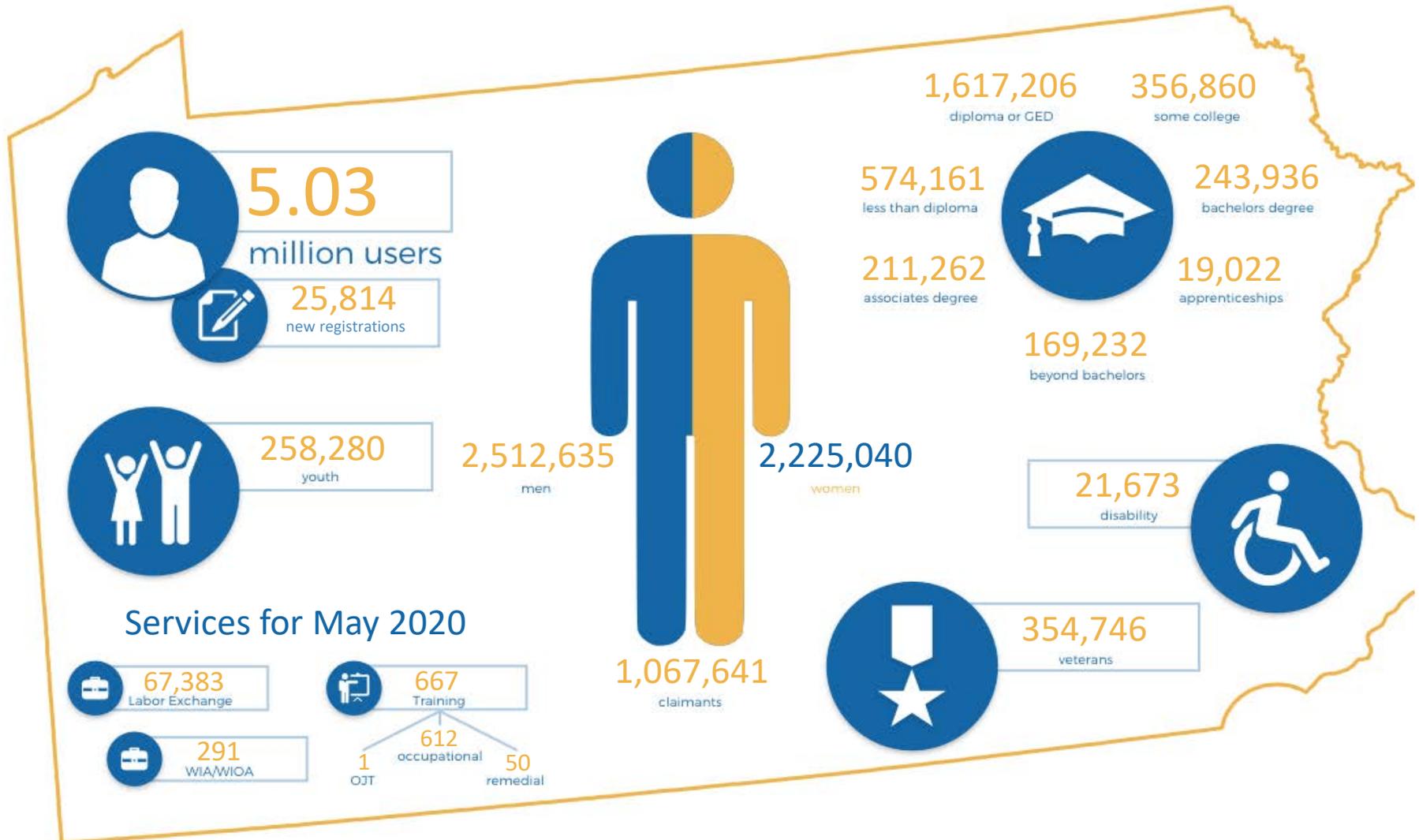
## Infographic Description

#	Metric	Description	Notes	Source	Source Detail
1	Employers registered in PA CareerLink®	Total Employer Profiles based on FEIN	Cumulative (Based on FEINs and SSNs)	CWDS Business Report	Employer #7: Employers -Total - TOTAL COUNT
2	Candidates available to PA employers	Job Seekers with "Want Employers to Find You" marked as "Yes"	Job seekers with job preferences enabled (cumulative)	CWDS Business Report	Participant #13: Participants with Job Preferences Enabled - TOTAL COUNT
3	Total site visits	Number of times PA CareerLink® was visited (includes new and return visits)	Per month	Google Analytics	PA CareerLink®: Customization: Dashboards: PA CareerLink InfoGraphic: Visits
4	Visitors new to the site	New visitors to PA CareerLink®	Per month	Google Analytics	PA CareerLink®: Customization: Dashboards: PA CareerLink InfoGraphic: New Visitor
5	Visitors are returning at least each month	Returning visitors to PA CareerLink®	Per month	Google Analytics	PA CareerLink®: Customization: Dashboards: PA CareerLink InfoGraphic: Returning Visitor
6	Total mobile site visits	Number of times PA CareerLink® mobile was visited (includes new and return visits)	Per month	Google Analytics	PA CareerLink®: Customization: Dashboards: PA CareerLink InfoGraphic: Private: PA CareerLink® Mobile Analytics: Visits
7	Average job openings	Current number of job openings based on the "Open Positions" value of job postings which are in open status	Current number of openings (Note: The average can be calculated by recording this number at the start, middle, and end of the month)	CWDS Business Report	Job Postings: Open Positions (Total openings for jobs in open status)
8	New jobs posted per day	New job postings based on posting date	Sum of Registered Employer and Job Feed Job postings posted (i.e. in "open" status) within the month	CWDS Business Report	Job Postings #6: All Jobs - Posted - AVG ON RPT DATES
9	Age of job posting	Length of time jobs are in open status (Note: There are variations based on type of job)	Job Feed Jobs and Registered Employer Unassisted are 60 days; Registered Employer Staff Assisted are 180 days	NA	NA
10	Number of job searches	Total number of times the Search Jobs screen is visited	Total number of times the job search screen is visited	Google Analytics	PA CareerLink®: Dashboards: Private: PA CareerLink® InfoGraphic Data: Pageviews by Page Title: PA CareerLink® - Search Jobs
11	Job referrals submitted	Number of job referrals created by either applying to a registered employer job or visiting the web site of a job feed job	Per month	CWDS Business Report	Referrals #1 - COUNT ON RPT DATES



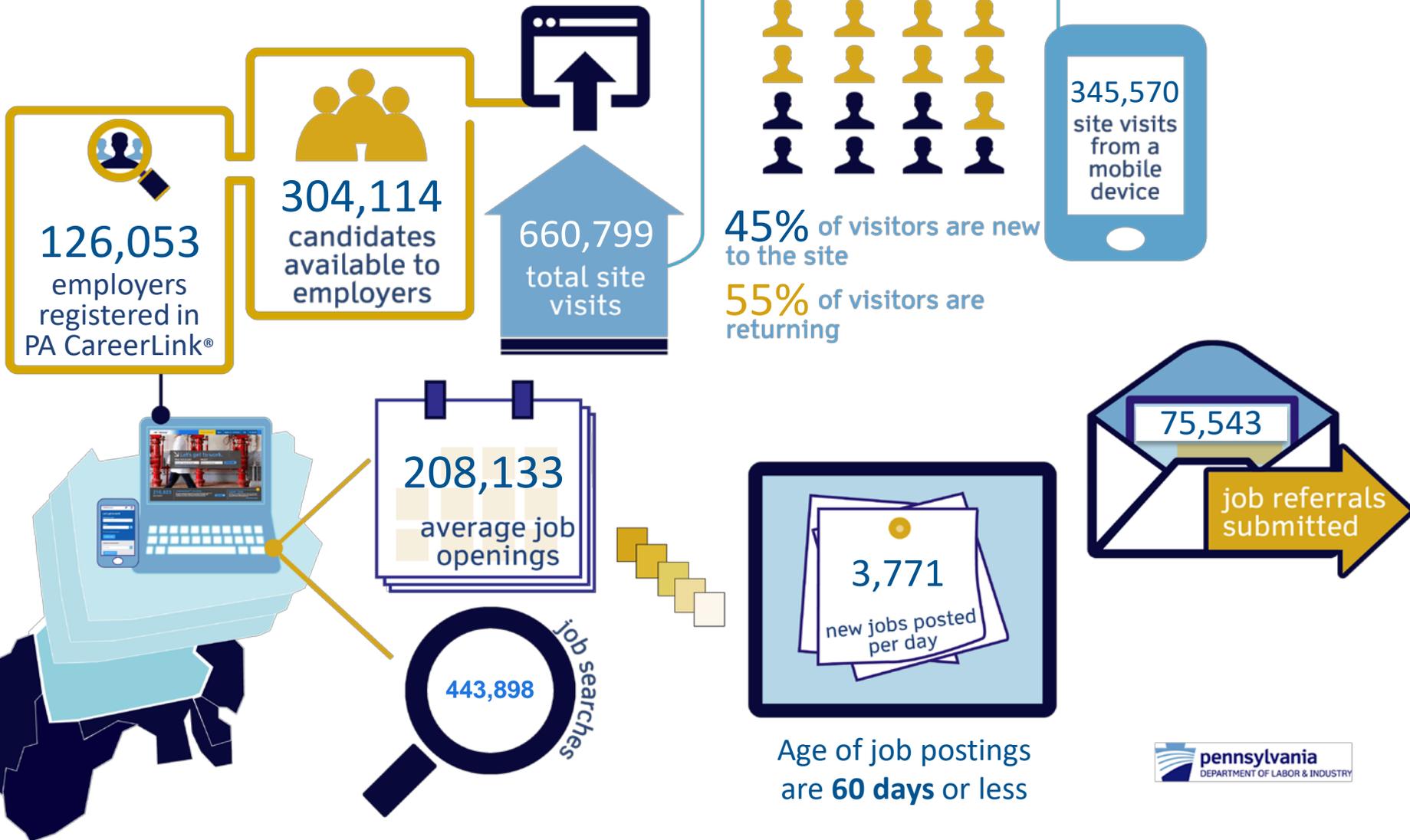


# CWDS/PA CareerLink® User Demographics & Services



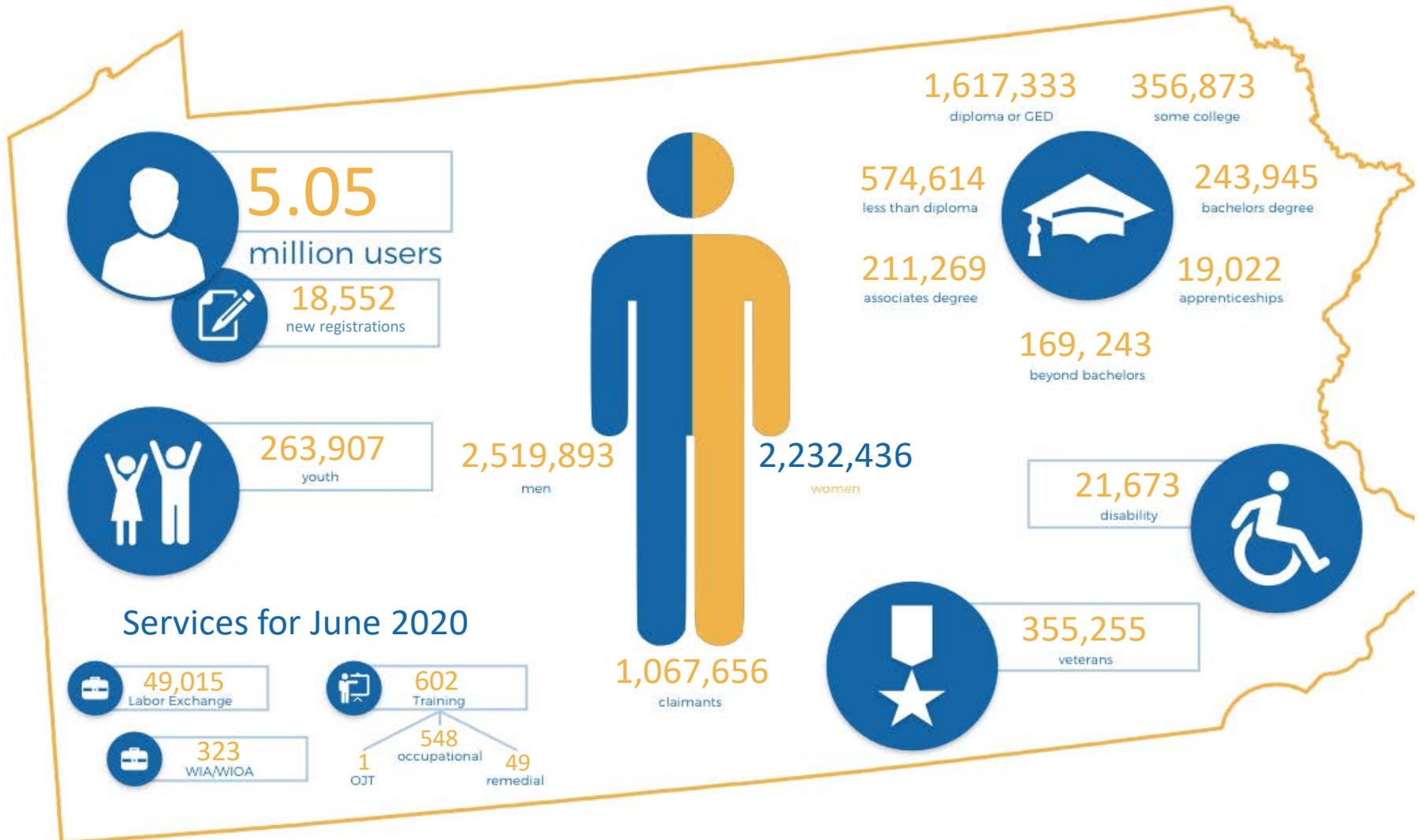
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# CWDS/PA CareerLink® User Demographics & Services



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## APPENDIX I

### Career Pathways & Apprenticeship Committee Recommendation

#### Provide Competitive Funding Opportunity for Regional Career Pathways System Development and Enhancements

The Career Pathways and Apprenticeship Committee recommends allocating funding for a competitive grant program (if and when funding is available) to assist individuals in the Commonwealth in entering into, and progressing along, career pathways. Grant funds should support the following career pathway related activities:

- Career Awareness Activities (including, but not limited to, those targeted towards job seekers, students, and parents of students)
- Business and Industry Awareness for Educators and Counselors
- Barrier Remediation
- Promotion of apprenticeship programs to business and employer community
- Support for consortium and group apprenticeship models
- Adult Education Services
- Subsidized Employment Opportunities
- Additional activities identified by the Career Pathways and Apprenticeship Committee (including those identified in the Keystone Research Center report on Career Pathways in the Commonwealth)

The Committee recommends that priority consideration be given to potential programs that focus on the following items:

- Strong plan to increase diversity and equity in access and participation of programs supported by the grant
- Leveraging additional funding, resources, and partnerships to support the activities proposed
- Collection of evidence on the program and participants to facilitate rigorous evaluation of the programs, outcomes and overall effectiveness

## APPENDIX II

### Healthcare Workforce Ad Hoc Committee Professional Care Worker Shortage Crisis - Recommendations

#### Recommendations to Address Crisis Shortage of Professional Care Workers - for Vote by Board:

##### **Recommendation 1:**

Over 2,300 individuals met the certification requirements to begin working as Temporary Nurse Aides (TNAs) under the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services' (CMS') COVID-19 emergency waiver. During the COVID-19 pandemic, CMS suspended federal regulatory and statutory provisions to assist in the hiring of TNAs to address staffing shortages. In accordance with the federal waiver, Pennsylvania authorized individuals seeking to be hired as nurse aides to complete an 8-hour online training, offered by the American Health Care Association (AHCA), or other comparable programs, and successfully pass the 50-question test (correctly answering at least 40 out of 50 questions).

As it currently stands, these individuals will no longer be able to continue working as nurse aides once the CMS COVID-19 emergency declaration waiver expires. They will be required to complete the 120-hour Nurse Aide Training and Competency Evaluation Program (ATCEP) and the test, prior to continuing their work.

**The Pennsylvania Workforce Development Board recommends prioritizing finding a solution that will allow these individuals to continue working as Nurse Aides, once the emergency waiver<sup>1</sup> expires, by adding those individuals to the Nurse Aide Registry. It is recommended that any solution, with respect to these workers, should acknowledge the knowledge and skills they have built and developed while doing the job. Additionally, any solution must prioritize ensuring that these individuals are qualified and capable of performing these jobs, both safely and effectively.**

The Board recommends consideration of the following methodology for granting placement on the state nurse aide registry:

1. *The individual successfully completed a training program and competency assessment authorized under the CMS COVID-19 pandemic waiver, including online training and an online examination,*
2. *The individual completed a minimum of 80 hours working as a temporary nurse aide, in supervised practical nurse aide training, on-the-job training, or regular in-service aide education during the declared COVID-19 emergency, under the supervision of a licensed or registered nurse, and*
3. *The individual's competency has been established by one of the following:*
  - a. *The successful completion of the state nurse aide examination,*
  - b. *Certification by a site administrator responsible for assessing students' competency skills as part of an approved apprenticeship program, or*
  - c. *Through an assessment in all areas of required nurse aide training as provided for in 42 cfr § 483.152 (b) by the hiring entity.*

*The Board recommends that an individual must meet all three numbered items listed above (including at least a, b, or c in item 3) in order to be added to the Pennsylvania Nurse Aide Registry.*

<sup>1</sup> The emergency declaration is currently set to expire on October 22, 2020, at which point it may be extended again, or simply expire.

**Recommendation 2:**

The current crisis has amplified what has always been true -- professional care workers are essential workers. Accordingly, the wages that these workers are paid must reflect the true value of the services and supports that they provide to some of the most vulnerable citizens of Pennsylvania.

Because of the COVID-19 global pandemic, the overall demand for and recognized value of these essential workers, particularly those outlined within the [Professional Care Worker Crisis Statement](#),<sup>2</sup> is increasing at a rapid rate in Pennsylvania and nationwide. Demand for workers to provide these varied services will only continue to increase, post-pandemic, due in large part to the state's aging population.

Self- and family-sustaining wages for these workers will assist with mitigating existing hiring, turnover, and retention challenges for these positions. Additional factors contribute to the need for increased pay for these workers including, but not limited to, the physically demanding nature of these jobs, the rising cost of living, infrequent access to employer provided benefits in some cases, and limited opportunities for advancement. Therefore, Pennsylvania must incentivize these workers with increased self- and family-sustaining wages to retain them in these often challenging, yet rewarding, positions. The Pennsylvania Workforce Development Board recognizes that these recommendations cannot be accomplished without the appropriate funding, especially since Medicaid reimbursement rates and other state-supported payments for long-term services and supports (LTSS) have not kept pace with the costs of doing business, as noted by the Pennsylvania Long Term Care Council's *A Blueprint for Strengthening PENNSYLVANIA'S DIRECT CARE WORKFORCE*.

***The Pennsylvania Workforce Development Board recommends prioritizing permanent self- and family-sustaining wages for frontline professional care workers. The Board also recommends additional public investment in these industries, in a way that ensures it reaches the individuals doing the work.***

<sup>2</sup> As approved by the PA Workforce Development Board on May 5, 2020.

## APPENDIX III

### PA WDB Reentry Ad Hoc Committee Draft Recommendations

Many Returning Citizens face barriers when looking to secure self- and family-sustaining employment. It is imperative to shift from a punitive to a restorative response that leads to healthy and thriving individuals and communities.

Evidence shows that reentrants that are working are substantially less likely to recidivate<sup>3,4</sup>. The following recommendations will help to address the needs of Returning Citizens as they work to reenter the workforce:

**Recommendation 1:** Assist county jails in working to increase access to government issued IDs when exiting county jail.

The Pennsylvania Department of Corrections works to ensure that all individuals exiting state prison have, upon release, a government issued driver's license or government issued identification card. Having access to these forms of ID are imperative to obtaining gainful employment. By supporting county jails to provide these individuals with proper identification, they will have one less barrier to entering employment.

**Recommendation 2:** Increase digital literacy skills for returning citizens so they can succeed in an increasingly virtual world.

Currently individuals incarcerated in state correctional facilities have limited access to technology through purchased tablets. While limitations are necessary due to security concerns, many of these limitations put reentrants at a marked competitive disadvantage when attempting to find gainful employments, as the ability to navigate technology is a crucial skill in today's workplace. The commonwealth can better serve these citizens by finding a way to integrate technological skill development in a manner that does not compromise security.

**Recommendation 3:** The commonwealth should support reentrants in identifying resources to assist those individuals in acquiring technology devices that will enable their success in the workforce.

Individuals exiting prison and reentering society are at a disadvantage if they do not have the ability to operate in a digital world. Without access to technology devices (e.g. smart phone, computer/tablet, internet access, etc.), reentrants will have a very difficult time submitting resumes to potential employers, setting up interviews, and even filing pre-employment paperwork. These individuals would be very well served if they were provided resources on how to access government and community-based organizations that can support these needs.

**Recommendation 4:** Increase the capacity of the Board of Pardons (BOP) to both decrease the amount of time for an application to be considered and to increase the number of individuals who can have their pardons heard within one year.

Applications for clemency increased greatly in 2019. Prior to 2019, the BOP never received more than 600 applications in a single year, while in 2019 saw more than 1,100 applications submitted. The most recent data shows that there is an existing backlog of more than 500 clemency applications.<sup>5</sup> Given that pardons issued between 2008 and 2018 enabled recipients to earn an estimated \$16 million in additional wages, and significantly lowered their recidivism rates (greatly reducing incarceration costs of these individuals)<sup>6</sup>, increasing the BOP's ability to process pardons makes economic sense for both the individuals and the commonwealth as a whole.

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.nber.org/papers/w25116>

<sup>4</sup> [https://iop.harvard.edu/IOP\\_Policy\\_Program\\_2019\\_Reentry\\_Policy.pdf](https://iop.harvard.edu/IOP_Policy_Program_2019_Reentry_Policy.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> [https://www.paauditor.gov/Media/Default/Reports/RPT\\_CJR\\_060920\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.paauditor.gov/Media/Default/Reports/RPT_CJR_060920_FINAL.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> [https://www.bop.pa.gov/news-references/Documents/plse\\_report.pdf](https://www.bop.pa.gov/news-references/Documents/plse_report.pdf)