



Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Local and Regional Workforce Plan

January 1, 2025 – December 31, 2028

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Date Submitted: October 1, 2024

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INTRODUCTION

These instructions provide directions for local and regional workforce development plans (plans) submitted under [Public Law 113-128, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act \(WIOA\) and Chapter 445.003, Florida Statutes](#). WIOA requires each local workforce development board (LWDB), in partnership with the appropriate chief local elected official(s), to develop and submit a comprehensive four-year local plan to the state. If the local workforce development area (local area) is part of a planning region, the LWDB will submit its regional plan as part of the local plan and will not submit a separate regional plan. The local and regional plan provides the framework for local areas to define how their workforce development systems will achieve the purposes of WIOA, pursuant to 20 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 679.500 and 20 CFR 679.540.

Additionally, local and regional plans must be modified at the end of the first two-year period of the four-year local plan to reflect changes in the labor market and economic conditions and other factors affecting the implementation of the local plan. Federal regulations require states and LWDBs to regularly revisit and recalibrate local and regional plan strategies in response to changing economic conditions and workforce needs of the state (20 CFR 676.135).

WIOA emphasizes the importance of collaboration and transparency in the development and submission of local and regional plans. LWDBs provide leadership, and should seek broad stakeholder involvement, in the development of their local and regional plans. Chief local elected officials, LWDB members, core program partners, combined planning partners, mandatory one-stop career center partners, and local economic development entities are an integral part of the planning process. WIOA encourages an enhanced, integrated system by including core and combined programs in its planning and performance requirements. Affected entities and the public must have an opportunity to provide input in the development of the plan. LWDBs must make the plan available electronically and in open meetings to ensure transparency to the public.

In addition to the specific requirements outlined in these instructions, local plans must:

- A. Identify and describe policies, procedures, and local activities that are carried out in the local workforce development area (local area), consistent with the strategic and operational elements of the state's WIOA combined plan and [CareerSource Florida Strategic Policy 2021.12.09.A.1 – Comprehensive Employment Education and Training Strategy](#).
- B. Align with the CareerSource Florida Board of Director's (state board) business and market-driven principles to be the global leader for talent. These principles include:
 - Increasing the prosperity of workers and employers.
 - Reducing welfare dependency.
 - Meeting employer needs.
 - Enhancing productivity and competitiveness.
- C. Address how the LWDB coordinates service delivery with core programs of the Florida Department of Education's Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Division of Blind Services and Division of Career and Adult Education, and the following combined state plan partner programs (per WIOA § 103(a)(1) and (2)):

- **Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)** authorized under 42 United States Code (U.S.C.) § 601 et seq. (Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF)).
- Employment and training programs in the **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)** authorized under Section 6(d)(4) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. § 2015(d)(4)). (DCF).
- **Work programs authorized under Section 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008** (7 U.S.C. § 2015(o)). (Florida Department of Commerce (FloridaCommerce) and DCF).
- **Trade Adjustment Assistance for Workers** program authorized under Chapter 2 of Title II of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. § 2271 et seq.). (FloridaCommerce).
- **Jobs for Veterans State Grants (JVSG)** program authorized under 38 U.S.C. § 4100 et. seq. (FloridaCommerce).
- **Unemployment Insurance (UI)** programs, known as Reemployment Assistance in Florida, (UI Federal-State programs administered under state unemployment compensation laws in accordance with applicable federal law). (FloridaCommerce).
- **Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)** authorized under Title V of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. § 3056 et seq.) and updated by the OAA Reauthorization Act of 2016, Pub. L. No. 114-144. (Florida Department of Elder Affairs).
- **Employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG)** Act (42 U.S.C. § 9901 et seq.). (FloridaCommerce).

D. Be based on current and projected needs of the local workforce investment system, with an increased emphasis on coordination and collaboration at all levels to ensure a seamless system for employers and job seekers, including veterans, SNAP and TANF benefit recipients, individuals with disabilities, and individuals residing in rural areas.

E. Set forth a strategy to utilize all allowable resources to:

- Assist Floridians with securing employment that leads to economic self-sufficiency and reduces the need for public assistance.
- Provide opportunities for Floridians to develop skills intended to meet the present and future needs of employers.
- Ensure that workforce-related programs are responsive to present and future needs of business and industry and complement the initiatives of state and local economic development partners, including SelectFlorida in relation to:
 - Job training,
 - The attainment of a credential of value identified pursuant to Section 445.004(4)(h)4. c., Florida Statutes (F.S).
 - The attainment of a postsecondary degree or credential of value; and
 - Any other program that has, at least in part, the goal of securing employment or better employment for an individual and receives federal funds or a state appropriation.
- Prioritize evidence-based, results-driven solutions to improve outcomes for Floridians and Florida businesses.
- Develop collaborative partnerships that leverage multiple sources of funding to provide services to all customers seeking assistance, especially Florida's vulnerable populations.
- Identify barriers to coordinating and aligning workforce-related programs and develop solutions to remove such barriers.

- F. Identify the education and skill needs of the workforce and the employment needs of the local area and include an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of services provided to address identified needs. Assessments include the best available information, evidence of effectiveness, performance information for specific service models and a plan to improve program effectiveness by adopting proven or promising practices as a part of the local vision.
- G. Provide a comprehensive view of the systemwide needs of the local area.
- H. Address how LWDBs foster strategic alignment, improve service integration and ensure the workforce system is industry-relevant, responding to the economic needs of the local workforce development area and matching employers with skilled workers.
- I. Achieve greater efficiencies, reduce duplication, and maximize financial and human resources.
- J. Address current and future strategies and efficiencies to address the continuous improvement of Florida's workforce investment system and its focus on simplified access to quality customer service.

KEY DATES

Florida Combined Plan Public Comment	February-March 2024
Florida Combined Plan Reviewed by Federal Agencies.....	April-June 2024
Local Plan Guidelines Issued	April 29, 2024
Final Revisions and Approval of Florida Combined Plan.....	July-August 2024
Regional and Local Plans Due.....	October 2, 2024
Regional and Local Plans Approved by State Board.....	December 2024
Regional and Local Plans Effective.....	January 1, 2025

PUBLIC COMMENT PROCESS

Prior to the date on which the LWDB submits a local and regional plan, the LWDB must provide an opportunity for public comment on the development of the plan. To provide adequate opportunity for public comment, the LWDB must:

- (1) Make copies of the proposed plan available to the public through electronic and other means, such as public hearings and local news media (WIOA §108(d)(1) and 20 CFR 679.550(b)(1)).
- (2) Include an opportunity for comment by members of the public, including representatives of business, labor organizations, and education (WIOA §108(d)(2) and 20 CFR 679.550(b)(2)).
- (3) Provide no more than a 30-day period for public comment on the plan(s) before its submission to FloridaCommerce, beginning on the date on which the proposed plan is made available (WIOA §108(d)(2) and 20 CFR 679.550(b)(1)).
- (4) Submit any public comments that express disagreement with the plan to FloridaCommerce. WIOA §108(d)(3) and 20 CFR 679.550(b)(1).

PLAN SUBMISSION

ONLINE FORM

Each LWDB must submit its local plan in coordination with the regional plan, as appropriate, required attachments and contact information for primary and secondary points of contact for each plan submitted via the state's established method for WIOA plan submissions. **Hard copies of plans or attachments are not required. All local and regional plans must be submitted no later than 5:00 p.m. (EDT) on Wednesday, October 2, 2024.**

Please carefully review these instructions prior to submitting plans.

Prior to plan submission, please ensure:

- **The LWDB members and chief local elected official(s) reviewed the plan.**
- **The LWDB chair and the chief local elected official signed the appropriate documents. For regional planning purposes, the chief local elected officials of all units of local government that make up the planning region must sign the regional**

plan to demonstrate that the request specific to the regional planning area is the consensus of all the units of local government involved.

- The name of the LWDBs are on the plan cover page.
- The plan submitted date as well as primary and secondary points of contact are on the cover page.
- The structure and numbering follow the plan instructions format.
- A table of contents with page numbers is included and each page of the plan is numbered.
- Text is typed, preferably in the fonts Arial or Calibri, with a font size of 11 or greater.
- The plan and all attachments are submitted in a searchable PDF format.²
- The plan is posted online for public comment and submitted in a format compliant with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act (29 U.S.C, Section 794) and is accessible to people with disabilities.³
- Responses to all questions are informative and concise. Questions should not be altered or rephrased, and the numbering should follow the plan instructions format.
- The name of the LWDB, the page number, and plan submission date are listed in the footer of the document.

ATTACHMENTS

Please provide a link to the local board’s website showing the attachments described below or upload attachments in a searchable PDF file with the local and regional plan:

- A. Executed interlocal agreement** that defines how parties carry out roles and responsibilities of the chief local elected officials (if the local area includes more than one unit of general local government in accordance with WIOA § 107(c)(1)(B).
- B. Executed agreement between the chief local elected official(s) and the LWDB.**
- C. Evidence of designation of the fiscal agent by the chief local elected official(s), if other than the chief local elected official(s).**

² A searchable PDF file is a PDF file that includes text that can be searched upon using the standard Adobe Reader “search” functionality [CTRL+F]. In Microsoft Word **ClickFile > Save As** and choose where you want the file to be saved. In the **Save As** dialog box, choose **PDF** in the Save as type list. Click **Options**, make sure the **Document structure tags for accessibility** check box is selected, and then click **OK**.

³ Best practices for making Word and other documents 508 compliant and accessible to those with disabilities includes using built-in title, subtitle, and heading styles; creating accessible lists; adjusting space between sentences and paragraphs and adding alt+text to visuals. For best results, use the [“Accessibility Checker”](#) in the **Review** tab in MS Word.

- D. Current by-laws** established by the chief local elected official(s) to address criteria contained in 20 CFR 679.310(g) and [Administrative Policy 110 –Local Workforce Development Area and Board Governance](#).
- E. Current board member roster**, meeting minutes for the local plan agenda item, discussions about the plan, and the board’s vote on the local plan.
- F. Organizational chart** that outlines the organizational structure of the local area including the local workforce development board staff, one-stop operator, direct provider of workforce services, youth service provider and jointly managed FloridaCommerce staff. The organizational chart should identify specific roles defined in the Grantee-Subgrantee

Agreement to include:

- (a) Regional Security Officer.
- (b) Chief Ethics Officer.
- (c) Custodian for purchased property and equipment.
- (d) Personnel Liaison.
- (e) Public Records Coordinator.
- (f) Equal Opportunity Officer.
- (g) Person who promotes opportunities for persons with disabilities.

G. Agreements describing how any single entity selected to operate in more than one of the following roles: local fiscal agent, local board staff, one-stop operator, or direct provider of career services, will carry out its multiple responsibilities, including how it develops appropriate firewalls to guard against conflicts of interest. Also, attach copies of any processes and procedures that clearly detail a) how functions are sufficiently separated; b) descriptions of the steps the local area has taken to mitigate risks that could lead to impropriety; c) firewalls (physical, technological, policies, etc.) created to ensure such risks are mitigated; and d) oversight and monitoring procedures.

This was Attachment F in Mod.

H. Executed Memoranda of Understanding for all one-stop partners (Section III(b)(2) of the State of Florida WIOA Unified Plan). **Not sure if they have been updated or are the same as the Mod.**

I. Executed Infrastructure Funding Agreement with all applicable WIOA required partners (Section III(b)(2) and Section IV(a)(1)(d) of the State of Florida WIOA Unified Plan). **This needs to be updated by SARA or RICHARD**

J. Executed cooperative agreements which define how all local service providers, including additional providers, will carry out the requirements for integration of and access to all services available in the local one-stop delivery system. This includes cooperative agreements (as defined in WIOA section 107(d)(11)(B) between the LWDB or other local entities described in WIOA section 107(d)(11)(C) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C 721(a)(11)(B)) and the local office of a designated state agency or designated state unit administering programs carried out under Title I of such Act (29 U.S.C. 721(a)(11) with respect to efforts that enhance the provision of services to individuals with disabilities and to other individuals, such as cross-training staff, technical assistance, use and sharing of information, cooperative efforts with employers and other efforts of cooperation, collaboration and coordination. **This item was "I" in 2022-24 Mod with note "See Attachment "A"**

K. A description of the process used by the LWDB to obtain input and comment by representatives of business and labor organizations for the development of the plan. The LWDB must make information about the plan available to the public on a regular basis through electronic means and open meetings. **This was Attachment "J" in the Mod.**

L. Planning Region Agreements between the participating LWDBs of the planning region and agreements between the planning region and regional partners to include cooperative service agreements, memoranda of understanding, regional policies, etc.

PLAN APPROVAL

FloridaCommerce will review each local and regional plan for the requirements outlined in these guidelines using a plan review checklist that aligns with requirements outlined in these guidelines. If there are questions or concerns, FloridaCommerce will notify the contact(s) included in the plan.

FloridaCommerce will recommend complete and fully compliant local and regional plans to the state board for approval.

Where deficiencies exist or clarity is required, FloridaCommerce will notify the LWDB in writing that:

- There are deficiencies in workforce investment activities that have been identified through audits, and the local area has not made acceptable progress in implementing plans to address the deficiencies;
- The plan does not comply with applicable provisions of WIOA and the WIOA regulations, including the required consultations and public comment provisions, and the nondiscrimination requirements of 20 CFR Part 38; or
- The plan does not align with the state's WIOA combined plan, strategies and operations approved by the state board, core and combined state plan partners- including alignment of specific programs, additional goals described in Section II of the state's WIOA combined plan, state strategic and administrative policies, and negotiated performance indicators that support the state plan and workforce investment system in accordance with WIOA section 102(b)(1)(E), 20 CFR 676.105, and [Chapter 445.003, F.S.](#)

The plan, including plan modifications, will be considered to be approved upon written notice by FloridaCommerce advising of state board approval or at the end of the 90-day period beginning the day FloridaCommerce receives the plan, or plan modification, unless, in accordance with 20 CFR 679.570, any deficiencies referenced above are identified by FloridaCommerce in writing and remain unresolved.

Any questions regarding the submission, review and/or approval of plans should be submitted to FloridaCommerce at: WIOA-LocalPlans@commerce.fl.gov.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The local plan must describe the organizational structure and delivery systems in place in the local area, including:

(1) Chief Local Elected Official(s)

- (a) Identify and list the chief local elected official(s) by name, title, mailing address, phone number and email address.

Name/Title: Scott Monlyn, Chair
Company: Calhoun County Board of County Commissioners
Mailing Address: BOCC, County Commissioner District 4,
Blountstown Florida 32424

Phone: (850) 643-8274
Email: smonlyn@calhouncountyfl.gov

- (b) Describe how the chief local elected official(s) was involved in the development, review and approval of the local plan.

The Chipola Regional Workforce Development Consortium consists of one member, either the Chair or their designee, of each of the five county commissions in the LWDA. The group elected one member to serve as Chair of the Consortium and Chief Elected Official for the purposes of the Consortium who signs all vital documents. The staff members meet with the Consortium on an as-needed or as-requested basis to obtain their input on issues and to keep the group updated on changes taking place within the organization and to maintain the group as a vital partner in the planning and development of the plan or plan modifications. The LWDB's Executive Director met with members of the Consortium to discuss the plan modification and obtain input from them. The Consortium Chair signed the plan prior to submission to CareerSource Florida.

- (c) If the chief local elected official is a consortium, identify the members of the consortium and which member(s) has authority to sign on behalf of the consortium.

As stated above the Consortium consists of one member, either the Chair or their designee, of each of the five county commissions in the LWDA. The group elected one member to serve as Chair of the Consortium and Chief Elected Official for the purposes of the Consortium who has full authority of the Consortium to enter all agreements and sign all vital documents. The CLEO elected by the Consortium, Scott Monlyn, is listed above in the appropriate section.

(2) Local Workforce Development Board –

- (a) Identify the chairperson of the LWDB by name, title, term of appointment, mailing address, phone number and email address. Identify the business entity and industry the chairperson represents.

Name: Donnie Read
Title: Liberty Wilderness Crossroads Camp Inc
Term of Appointment: 7/1/2023 – 6/30/2026
Mailing Address: 11939 NW State Road 20, Bristol, FL 32321
Phone Number: 850.379.8344
Email Address: dread@twinoaksfl.org

- (b) If applicable, identify the vice-chairperson of the LWDB by name, title, term of appointment mailing address, phone number and email address. Identify the business or organization the vice-chairperson represents.

Name: Tracy Andrews
Title: Florida Power and Light, External Affairs Manager
Term of Appointment: 7/1/2018 – 6/30/2027

Mailing Address: 1195 Jackson Avenue, Chipley, FL 32428
Phone Number: 850.415.4211
Email Address: tracy.andrews@nexteraenergy.com

- (c) LWDB member roster which includes name, title, term of appointment mailing address, phone number and email address. Identify the business that the board member represents.
- (d) Describe how the LWDB members, including those described in Public Law 113-128 § 107(b)(2), were involved in the development, review, and approval of the local plan.

The members of the Board of Directors are well-informed on the programs and are directly involved in policy making for all programs. Meetings were held with management staff, career center staff, and the Board to discuss the issues. Members were provided with a link to the plan for final review and comment before submission to CareerSource Florida. The workforce services draft plan was reviewed, discussed and approved at the September 12, 2024, meeting of the LWDB, with the Board Chair signing the plan prior to submission to CareerSource Florida.

- (e) Describe how the LWDB convened or obtained input from local workforce development system stakeholders including LWDB committee members, combined state plan partners, education, industry and representatives of disability populations and those with barriers to employment to assist in the development of the local plan.

Meetings were held with other workforce partners including the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Early Learning Coalition, and the school systems within the LWDA. A particular focus was placed on meetings of career and technical education staff within the region.

Meetings were set up with the LWDB's staff, Board of Directors, and the Chipola Regional Workforce Development Board Consortium, all of which are made of various representatives of business, labor and other partner organizations throughout the five-county area.

In addition, discussions were held with Opportunity Florida, the regional economic development organization covering all counties served by the LWDB. Opportunity Florida is directly tasked with improving the local environment for business development and expansion and as such, is a key partner in any planning effort concerning the needs of private employers in the five counties served.

(3) Local Grant Subrecipient (local fiscal agent or administrative entity)

- (a) Provide the name of the entity selected to receive and disburse grant funds (local fiscal agent) if other than the chief local elected official. WIOA § 107(d)(12)(B)(1)(iii); 20 CFR 679.420 and 20 CFR 560(6)(14)

The Chipola Regional Workforce Development Board, Inc., dba CareerSource Chipola is the administrative entity/grant recipient for the LWDB.

- (b) Provide the name of the entity selected to staff the LWDB (commonly referred to as the administrative entity) and assist the LWDB in carrying out its responsibilities as a board organized under WIOA (20 CFR 679.430).

The Chipola Regional Workforce Development Board, Inc., dba CareerSource Chipola is the administrative entity/grant recipient.

(4) One-Stop Operator and One-Stop Career Centers

- (a) Provide the name of the entity or entities selected through a competitive process to serve as the one-stop operator. Include the effective in place between the LWDB and the one-stop operator. (20 CFR 678.605)

Linda Sumblin, Workforce Consultant, serves as LWDB's One-Stop Operator. The current agreement in place is effective July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025.

- (b) Describe the steps taken to ensure a competitive process for selection of the one-stop operator(s) (WIOA §121(d)(2)(A) and 20 CFR 678.605).

The LWDB advertised and released a Request for Proposal for a One-Stop Operator on January 29, 2021. The notice was publicly advertised through the major newspapers in the area, as well as posted on the Board's website. The solicitation was also forwarded to fifteen (15) entities on the approved Vendor List and the organizations were given until March 3, 2021, to respond to the proposal. Advertisements were made well in advance of the proposal due date to give potential bidders sufficient time to submit their bids. The RFP clearly described the services being procured and did not contain features that would restrict competition.

- (c) If the LWDB serves as the one-stop operator, provide the last date the CareerSource Florida Board of Directors granted approval to the LWDB to serve in this capacity and provide the approved duration. ([Administrative Policy 093 – One-Stop Operator Procurement](#)).

N/A.

- (d) Describe the roles and responsibilities the LWDB has identified and assigned to the one-stop operator. (20 CFR 678.620)

The One-Stop Operator, in a satisfactory and proper manner as determined by the LWDB, shall carry out all activities as agreed upon in the performance-based Contract for Services. The One-Stop Operator is responsible for working with the LWDB to ensure coordination of services across program lines and with other organizations as required by the Act.

It is the responsibility of the One-Stop Operator to provide quarterly reports showing the effectiveness of delivering services across programs and other WIOA-required organizations. In addition, the One-Stop Operator presented the LWDB with a draft of established practices that encourage the One-Stop partners to provide services to individuals with barriers to employment, including individuals with disabilities, who may require longer-term services, such as intensive employment training and

education services. Evaluation methods, necessary actions, and any recommendations or suggestions for improvement are included in the reports. The One-Stop Operator quarterly reports are included in the Board meetings as an agenda item and presented to the full Board of Directors for review.

- (e) Provide the location (address) and type of each access point, indicating whether it is a comprehensive center⁴, affiliate site or specialized center, as described in [Administrative Policy 093 – One-Stop Delivery System and One-Stop Career Center Certification Requirements](#).

Marianna Center - 4636 Hwy-90 E Suite E Marianna, FL 32446 – Comprehensive
Blountstown Center - 17336 Main St N Blountstown, FL 32424 – Specialized
Chipley Center - 757 Hoyt Street Room 108, Chipley FL 32428 - Specialized

- (f) Identify the days and times when each access point is open to customers. Comprehensive career centers must be open to the public for walk-in service a minimum of eight hours per day during regular business days, Monday through Friday. ([Administrative Policy 093 – One-Stop Delivery System and One-Stop Career Center Certification Requirements](#))

Marianna Career Center: Monday-Friday 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM
Blountstown Career Center: Monday-Friday 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM
Chipley Career Center: Monday-Friday 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM

The hours are posted at the entrance to each career center in the LWDA. Extended hours are available based on location and customer need. Additionally, extended hours are available through electronic means allowing customers to access many of the services regardless of time of day.

- (g) For each access point, identify how the local area provides customers with access to each required (and any approved optional) one-stop career center partners' programs, services and activities (physical co-location, electronic methods, and/or referrals). ([Administrative Policy 093 – One-Stop Delivery System and One-Stop Career Center Certification Requirements](#))

The comprehensive center, the largest in the region, is in Marianna and primarily serves residents of Jackson County; the first satellite center is in Chipley and primarily serves residents of Holmes and Washington Counties; and the second satellite center is in Blountstown and serves the residents of Calhoun and Liberty Counties. The Chipley and Blountstown career centers have electronic linkages and provide veterans, employment, and other on-site services. The Blountstown Career Center has an established veteran staff member presence on Wednesdays through Fridays.

To the extent possible, each career center is centrally located to population centers, governmental buildings, and shopping centers making them convenient locations for most customers. Customers may choose any of the three centers for services to access core and intensive services as specified in the regulations. Centers are connected by a wide area network that spans the three career centers providing e-mail, internet access, state mainframe access, case management, data sharing, and print sharing.

Improvements to the local IT system allow Success Coaches and other staff members to interact with clients both visually and verbally through remote access. This lessens expenses associated with travel by staff members, but more importantly will give customers, especially those with limited funds, a less expensive way to interact with staff members while still maintaining a high level of personal connection.

- (h) Provide the required attestation that at least one comprehensive one-stop center in the local area meets the certification requirements contained therein. ([Administrative Policy 093 – One-Stop Delivery System and One-Stop Career Center Certification Requirements](#)).

The Marianna Career Center is a comprehensive American Job Center that meets the following requirements of CareerSource Florida’s Policy No. 93, Issued February 2, 2017, and revised December 15, 2021, on One-Stop Career Center Certification Requirements.

- 1) The Marianna career center has at least one Title I staff person physically present,
 - 2) Provides the career services described in 20 CFR 678.430,
 - 3) Provides access to training services described in 20 CFR 680.200, including serving as the point of access to training services for participants in accordance with WIOA sec. 134(c)(3)(G),
 - 4) Provides access to the employment and training activities carried out under WIOA sec. 134(d),
 - 5) Provides access to programs and activities carried out by one-stop partners listed in 20 CFR 678.400 through 678.410.
 - 6) Provides access to workforce and labor market information, as described in Section 15(a) of the Wagner-Peyser Act. (7)
 - 7) Provides access to programs, services, and activities during regular business days (Monday through Friday) as further prescribed in Section IV.D.1. Availability and Hours of Operation of this policy.
 - 8) Provides physical and programmatic access to individuals with disabilities and limited English proficiency
- (i) Describe any additional criteria (or higher levels of service coordination than required in [Administrative Policy 093 – One-Stop Delivery System and One-Stop Career Center Certification Requirements](#)) relating to service coordination achieved by the one-stop delivery system, to respond to education/training needs, labor market, economic, and demographic conditions and trends in the local area (WIOA §121(g)(3)).

The LWDB’s comprehensive center provides higher levels of service coordination than required by incorporating the characteristics of a High Quality One-Stop Center listed in CSC Policy 093 and TEGL No. 04-15. These include the following.

- **Excellent Customer Service to Job Seekers, Workers, and Businesses**
 - A welcoming environment to all customer groups including job seekers, businesses, and others, either in person or by telephone or email, and
 - The presence of One-Stop center staff sensitive to the unique needs of individuals with disabilities and prepared to provide necessary accommodations,
 - Developing, offering, and delivering quality business services,
 - Improving the skills of job seeker and worker customers by offering

- access to education and training.
- Creating opportunities for individuals at all skill levels of experience
- Providing career services that motivate, support, and empower customers including individuals with disabilities, to make informed decisions based on local and regional economic demand and effectively attain their personal employment and education goals.
- Valuing skill development by assessing and improving each individual's basic, occupational, and employability skills.
- **Innovative and Effective Service Design**
 - Integrated and expert intake process with frontline staff who can assist customers and make appropriate referrals to partner programs.
 - Practices that actively engage industry sectors and use economic and labor market information, sector strategies, career pathways, Registered Apprenticeships, and competency models to help drive skill-based initiatives.
 - The balance of traditional labor exchange services with strategic talent development within a regional economy.
 - Ensures meaningful access to all customers.
 - Includes both virtual and center-based service delivery for job seekers, workers, and employers.
 - Incorporates innovative and evidence-based delivery models that improve the integration of education and training, create career pathways that lead to industry recognized credentials, encourage work-based learning, and use state-of-the-art technology to accelerate learning, promote college, and career success.
- **Integrated Management Systems and High-Quality Staffing**
 - Reflects the establishment of robust partnerships among partners.
 - Organized and integrated services by function, i.e., Business Services Team.
 - Operational policies reflect an integrated system of performance, communication, case management, and uses technology to achieve integration and expanded service offerings.
 - Common performance indicators are used to ensure that federal investments in employment and training programs are evidence-based, labor market driven, and accountable to participants and taxpayers.
 - Center staff members are trained in an ongoing learning process with the knowledge, skills, and motivation to provide superior service to job seekers, including those with disabilities, and businesses in an integrated, regionally focused framework of service delivery.
 - Center staff members include highly trained career counselors, skilled in advising job seekers of their options, knowledgeable about local labor market dynamics, aware of available services inside and outside the career centers, and skilled in developing customers' skills for employment success.

The LWDB adheres to requirements developed as part of the certification process. In addition, the members of the Board of Directors view each meeting as an opportunity to improve services, respond to changes in the local labor market, local economy, or demographic conditions. As such, the LWDB is constantly seeking ways to improve services to individuals and business customers.

(5) Provider of Workforce Services

- (a) Provide the name of the entity or entities selected to provide workforce services (except training services) within the local one-stop delivery system. ([Administrative Policy 083-Direct Provider of Workforce Services](#))

The LWDB is the only direct provider of services in the workforce development area.

- (b) Provide the effective date and end date that workforce services will be provided, as defined in the current executed agreement between the LWDB and the provider of workforce services.

N/A.

- (c) Identify and describe which career services are provided by the selected one-stop operator, if any.

The One Stop Operator, Linda Sumblin, does not provide career services but works to ensure the LWDB is coordinating services across programs and with other organizations, as required by the Act.

- (d) Identify and describe which career services are provided by the designated provider of workforce services (except training services).

The LWDB is the sole operator of the three career centers. The staff members manage and provide a complete array of services to job seekers and employers including a single point of entry, unassisted core services, assisted core services, intensive services, and referrals to training providers. Staff members possess the expertise to design, administer, and deliver all workforce development activities. The staff members have demonstrated the ability to adapt and conform to changes in policy, practices, and priorities to meet local community and customer-based needs.

- (e) If the LWDB serves as the provider of workforce services (except training services), provide the last date the CareerSource Florida Board of Directors granted approval to the LWDB to serve in this capacity and the approved duration.

The most recent date the CareerSource Florida Board of Directors granted approval to the LWDB to serve as Direct Provider of Workforce Services on June 18, 2024. The three-year authorization for the LWDB began July 1, 2024 and ends June 30, 2027.

(6) Youth Service Provider

- (a) Provide the name of the entity or entities selected to provide youth workforce investment activities (youth program services) and, if the entity was competitively procured, the term through which the entity is contracted to provide these services ([Administrative Policy 120 Youth Service Provider Selection](#)).

The LWDB is the direct provider of all local workforce services, including youth workforce activities.

- (b) Provide the effective date and end date that youth services will be provided, as defined in the current executed agreement between the LWDB and the provider of youth services.

N/A

- (c) Describe the steps taken to ensure a competitive process for the selection of the youth service provider(s) in the local area, if the LWDB does not provide these services.

N/A

- (d) Describe the roles and responsibilities the LWDB has identified and assigned to the youth service provider.

N/A

- (e) Describe any additional criteria⁵ the LWDB has established to ensure providers are best positioned to deliver required youth program elements resulting in strong outcomes for youth participants are used, if applicable.

N/A

- (f) Identify and describe the youth program element(s) provided by each provider.

The LWDB ensures the 14 elements are made available to eligible youth as part of a menu of services based on the objective assessment and Individual Service Strategy (ISS). Based on the need for a skilled labor force with adequate credentials, the following activities are provided for the LWDB's youth:

1. Tutoring, study skills training, instruction and dropout prevention strategies that lead to completion of a high school diploma includes services such as providing academic support, helping a youth identify areas of academic concern, assisting with overcoming learning obstacles, or providing tools and resources to develop learning strategies. Dropout prevention strategies intended to lead to a high school diploma include activities that keep a young person in-school and engaged in a formal learning and/or training setting.

2. Alternative secondary school services assist youth who have struggled in traditional secondary education. Dropout recovery services are those that assist youth who have dropped out of school. Both types of services help youth to re-engage in education that leads to the completion of a recognized high school equivalent. Examples of activities under this program element include:

- Basic education skills training
- Individualized academic instruction
- English as a Second Language training
- Credit recovery
- Counseling and educational plan development

3. **Paid and unpaid work experience** is a planned, structured learning experience that takes place in a workplace and provides youth with opportunities for career exploration and skill development. A work experience activity may take place in the private for-profit sector, the non-profit sector, or the public sector. Work experience for you: summer employment and other employment opportunities available throughout the school year, pre-apprenticeship programs, internships and job shadowing, and on-the-job training. The region has had difficulty meeting the required expenditure rates for youth work experience. The work experience program has been revamped and revitalized and recently completed a successful summer program. Steps have been taken to provide more year-round work experience opportunities that will allow the organization to meet the required expenditure percentages.
4. **Occupation skills training** is an organized program of study that provides specific vocational skills that lead to proficiency in performing actual tasks and technical functions required by certain occupational fields at entry, intermediate, or advanced levels. Occupational skills training:
- Is outcome-oriented and focused on an occupational goal specified in the individual service strategy for the youth;
 - Is of sufficient duration to impart the skills needed to meet the occupational goal; and
 - Leads to the attainment of a recognized postsecondary credential
5. **Education offered concurrently with workforce preparation** and training for a specific occupation element reflects an integrated education and training model and describes how workforce preparation activities, basic academic skills, and hands-on occupational skills training are to be taught within the same time frame and connected to training in a specific occupation, occupational cluster, or career pathway. This element is also referred to as Integrated Education or Contextualized Instruction.
6. **Leadership development opportunities** encourage responsibility, confidence, employability, self-determination, and other positive social behaviors. Leadership development includes:
- Exposure to postsecondary education possibilities
 - Community and service-learning projects
 - Peer-centered activities, including peer mentoring and tutoring
 - Organizational and teamwork training, including team leadership training
 - Training in decision-making, including determining priorities and problem solving
 - Citizenship training, including life skills training such as parenting and work behavior training
 - Civic engagement activities which promote the quality of life in a community
 - Other leadership activities that place youth in a leadership role, such as serving on youth leadership committees
7. **Supportive services** enable an individual to participate in WIOA activities. These services enable an individual to participate in WIOA activities (such as, but not limited to, assistance with transportation, childcare, housing, health care, educational testing, and work-related tools).
8. **Adult mentoring** is a formal relationship between a youth participant and an adult mentor that includes structured activities where the mentor offers guidance, support, and

encouragement to develop the competence and character of the mentee.

9. **Follow-up services** are critical services provided following a youth's exit from the program. The goal of follow-up services is to help ensure that youth are successful in employment and/or postsecondary education and training. Follow-up services may include regular contact with a youth participant's employer, including assistance in addressing work-related problems that arise.

10. **Comprehensive guidance and counseling** provide individualized counseling to participants. This program element also includes substance and alcohol abuse counseling, mental health counseling, and referral to partner programs.

11. **Financial literacy education** provides youth with the knowledge and skills that they need to achieve long-term financial stability. Financial literacy education encompasses information and activities on a range of topics, such as creating budgets; setting up checking and saving accounts; managing spending, credit, and debt; understanding credit reports and credit scores; and protecting against identity theft.

12. **Entrepreneurial skills training** provides the basics of starting and operating a small business. This training helps youth develop the skills associated with entrepreneurship, such as the ability to take initiative, creatively seek out and identify business opportunities, develop budgets, and forecast resource needs, understand various options for acquiring capital and the trade-offs associated with each option, and communicate effectively and market oneself and one's ideas. Examples of approaches to teaching youth entrepreneurial skills include:

- Entrepreneurship education introducing to the values and basics of starting and running a business, such as developing a business plan and simulations of business start-up and operation
- Enterprise development which provides supports and services that incubate and help youth develop their own businesses, such as helping youth access small loans or grants and providing more individualized attention to the development of viable business ideas
- Experiential programs that provide the youth with experience in the day-to-day operation of a business

13. **Services that provide labor market and employment information** about in-demand industry sectors or occupations available in the local area and includes career awareness, career counseling, and career exploration services. Labor market information also identifies employment opportunities, and provides knowledge of job market expectations, including education and skill requirements and potential earnings. Numerous tools and applications are available that are user-friendly and can be used to provide labor market and career information to youth. These tools can be used to help youth make appropriate decisions about education and careers.

14. **Postsecondary preparation and transition activities** help youth prepare for and transition to postsecondary education and training. These services include helping youth explore postsecondary education options, including technical training schools, community colleges, 4-year colleges and universities, and Registered Apprenticeship programs. Examples of other postsecondary preparation and transition activities include:

- Assisting youth to prepare for SAT/ACT testing

- Assisting with college admission applications
- Searching and applying for scholarships and grants
- Filling out the proper Financial Aid applications and adhering to changing guidelines
- Connecting youth to postsecondary education programs

(7) Career Center Staff

- (a)** List the position title and number of positions that are considered as local county or municipality employees.

No LWDB employees are considered as local county or municipality employees.

ANALYSIS OF NEED AND AVAILABLE RESOURCES

The local plan must describe strategic planning elements, including:

- (1)** A regional analysis of:

- (a)** Economic conditions including existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations (20 CFR 679.560(a)(1)(i)); and

The devastation of Category Five Hurricane Michael continues to have a significant impact on the counties served by CareerSource Chipola. The area is beginning to see construction of workforce housing in small, but significant numbers. This shift is placing a strain on areas of the labor force that were already understaffed.

The LWDB continues to see the following sectors as emerging or in demand:

- **Construction**
- **Health Care and Assistance**
- **Manufacturing**
- **Transportation and Warehousing**
- **Public Administration**

Data from FloridaCommerce indicates the fastest growing occupations in the LWDA are in areas related to retail trade, professional and technical services, health care and trade contractors. The destruction from Hurricane Michael caused significant local pressure to increase workers available in the construction industry to aid in the recovery efforts. The high number of governmental employers as a percentage of the overall employment numbers impacts the need for public administration. Manufacturing as well as Transportation and Warehousing are both targets of the local and regional economic development organizations which continue to put significant resources toward efforts to grow those industries.

For the purposes of plan development, the local area relied heavily upon work untaken for the creation of the regional plan.

- (b)** The employment needs of employers in existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors

and occupations⁵ (20 CFR 679.560(a)(1)(ii)).

The LWDB's five rural counties continue to face significant barriers that impact existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations in much the same way. A barrier facing all industries in the LWDA is the increased age of the population and the decline in the number of existing workers. The 2020 census reported the five counties represented by the LWDB lost both population and housing units. The losses are counter to the majority of the state during the same time period.

The region is still struggling to recover from the impact of Hurricane Michael. Both events have had a significant impact on the regional economy. We are still working to determine the shifts caused by these events. Due to the rural nature of the entire region served by the LWDA there is not always data available with enough detail necessary to provide the type of detailed analysis you will find for a more urbanized area. It is also necessary to note that none of the counties served by the LWDA are included in a Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). This is an indication that none of the counties in the LWDA have a significant economic tie to a major economic center.

Previously the LWDA has worked with other organizations to develop local data to be used in planning or determining program direction. A previous study was conducted by Vision First Advisors to examine all regional rural counties and determine the status in terms of economic health. This study was completed in conjunction with Opportunity Florida, a regional rural economic development organization.

The study showed the region was in economic decline and that efforts must be made to increase employment in manufacturing, logistics, value-added employers, and health care. The study called upon the region to continue close connections between workforce, education, the private sector, and economic development organizations.

Information from FloridaCommerce shows thirty-nine occupations are projected to add 20 or more jobs from 2023 through 2031. This is an increase over the nine occupations previously projected by FloridaCommerce to add 20 or more jobs from 2021 through 2029.

An examination of FloridaCommerce research of the occupations gaining the newest jobs the majority are "Stockers and Order Fillers." "Retail Salespersons" are projected to grow the second highest number of jobs.

Seasoned staff with both the regional workforce board and the regional economic development organization have indicated they have reason to believe the projections are less accurate than normal due to the impacts of Hurricane Michael and COVID-19. Hurricane Michael devastated the region in October 2018 and reconstruction and recovery continues following storms and tornadoes in the area in 2024. As an example, the impacts on housing from Hurricane Michael, changes in work and home relationships caused by COVID-19 and the explosive growth along the gulf coast of Florida are putting pressure on the housing market that is yet to be fully understood. One company has over 10,000 housing units planned for the coastal area south of the five-county region we serve. The growth in both population and housing costs along the coast is already having the effect of forcing certain sectors of the labor force to move further inland and into our region.

In addition to the demand for building trades, the LWDB has experienced some growth in manufacturing and continues to work with local education providers to increase training opportunities available for the manufacturing sector. The LWDB also experienced an increased interest in the logistics and distribution employment sector. The LWDB realizes these fields are extremely dependent upon individuals with the capability of driving vehicles requiring a commercial driver's license that sometimes, includes special endorsements in areas such as the transportation of hazardous materials.

The LWDB used data from the supply/demand website provided by FloridaCommerce to study the needs in growth sectors as well as overall labor needs. In addition, the LWDB met directly with employers and local training providers to identify gap between available labor and industry needs with an emphasis on working together to fill the identified gaps. The LWDB also examined data supplied by Jobs EQ, Opportunity Florida and Florida's Great Northwest, and continues to use EconoVue to help guide Rapid Response activities.

The LWDB worked with local employers to identify training needed to help the existing workforce adjust to changes in technology or standards.

The LWDB utilizes information from the FloridaCommerce, Bureau of Labor Market Statistics (LMS) to help understand changes projected.

The work in the LWDB with both the training and business communities aligns with those occupations having the highest projected demand.

THE LWDB also used work undertaken in the development of the regional plan to determine future direction.

- (2) An analysis of the knowledge and skills, including credentials and licenses, needed to meet the employment needs of the employers in the local area, including employment needs in in-demand industry sectors and occupations (WIOA § 108(b)(1)(B) and 20 CFR 679.560(a)(2)).**

Multiple meetings with manufacturers, local and multi-county economic development organizations in the LWDB indicated a strong need for individuals with skills that can best be described as those needed by millwrights. Training in areas such as welding, pneumatics, low voltage systems, programmable logic controls, gearing, hydraulics, and other mechanic skills are in demand by manufacturers.

In addition, the LWDB considers the needs of contiguous areas. A major ship manufacturer in Panama City was awarded a contract to produce cutters for the Coast Guard. This contract, in addition to their normal shipbuilding operations, required a significant number of workers with skills also relatable to those needed for millwrights. This serves to support the decision by the LWDB to target manufacturing.

Since the LWDB is a small workforce area, it has the advantage of getting to know employers on a one-on-one basis. Instead of formal surveys or statistical reports, the LWDB generally makes direct contact with employers to determine skill needs. The LWDB understands the significant need for correctional officers in the area and the training that must be completed to perform successfully on the job. The LWDB also

understands the struggle with fulfilling the needs of the employer in the occupation. Local logistics employers also have an increased need for individuals who can operate equipment, such as forklifts, that now have high-tech additions, such as computers that automatically scan and record loads and direct delivery to specified locations.

In the healthcare arena, the LWDB maintains direct contact with local hospitals, rehabilitation facilities, assisted living facilities and other medical institutions. The facilities indicated a need for trained healthcare professionals; however, in addition to traditional healthcare training, employers noted a greater need for training related to recordkeeping so medical facilities can comply with state and federal regulations, as well as maximize reimbursements for transactions at the facility.

As a result of Hurricane Michael and the COVID-19 pandemic, the LWDB noted a significant change in the existing workforce and this change has continued. The LWDB continues to work with local partners in efforts to determine how the impact of the disasters are truly affecting the LWDB. It is still too early to determine the full impact; however, through direct contact with local employers, the LWDB is aware the changes are having a considerable impact on employers, as well as employment opportunities.

Another change expected to continue in growth is the demand for the building trades. The LWDB experienced significant losses in available housing due to the destruction of Hurricane Michael. The LWDB continues to watch this sector of the economy, but current indications show a constant demand in building trades skills such as carpenters, electricians, masonry, concrete workers, and plumbers.

- (3) An analysis of the workforce in the regional area, including current labor force employment and unemployment data, information on labor market trends, the educational and skill levels of the workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment and current skill gaps (WIOA § 108(b)(1)(C) and 20 CFR 679.560(a)(3)).

The LWDB faced many challenges since the recession of 2008. During the recession, the LWDB lost a significant amount of the labor force and employment. The LWDB trailed behind the majority of the state during the recovery period, and in fact, only experienced consecutive months of growth, in both the labor force and employment, when Hurricane Michael, designated as a Category 5, roared through the center of the LWDB.

For the first time since the recession, prior to Hurricane Michael, the five counties served experienced consecutive months in both growth of the labor force and employment. As a state, Florida recovered years prior.

The LWDB's labor force and employment numbers appeared to be recovering when the Covid-19 pandemic struck the five rural counties. Regional leaders in both education and workforce are examining the long-term impact on employers, employment, and needed training. Both disasters, Hurricane Michael and COVID-19, continue to have significant impacts on the regional labor market. Those impacts range from a decrease in available workforce housing to an increase in individuals willing to utilize social services, such as food assistance.

The contrast between the tremendous economic boom experienced by Florida and the economic hits taken by the five counties served by the LWDB are evident in employment statistics comparing changes shown below. We compared numbers from July 2018 to July 2024 to give us a comparison of prior to Hurricane Micheal and post Hurricane Micheal. The table below uses the annual average data for Local Area Unemployment Statistics as documented by the Florida FloridaCommerce.

Comparing 2018 to 2024		
	Region	State
Labor Force	Increase by 3.3%	Increase by 8.7%
Employment	Increase by 3.6%	Increase by 9.1%

The chart above clearly indicates the significant difference between the growth experienced by Florida as a whole and the five rural counties served by the LWDB. While Florida experienced a significant increase in the labor force, the five counties served by the LWDB experienced only a slight increase. This is further supported by information from the 2020 census showing the five counties combined lost both population and available housing. The loss in available housing continues to have a negative impact on the ability of the LWDB to attract and retain labor.

The area faces significant challenges regarding the workforce and the ability of both employers and workers to find opportunities that meet the need of both sides of the employment equation. The rural nature of our LWDB and the lack of public transportation increase employment barriers in our area versus those in more urban areas.

The workers in the LWDB, without sufficient personal transportation, have few options and find themselves limited to employment within a short commuting and/or walking distance. The other option is to gain employment in the same area as friends and neighbors so they can ride together.

Education level information from the FloridaCommerce Bureau of Workforce Statistics and Economic Research indicates 48.3 percent of the labor force in the LWDB has an education level of high school diploma or below, while 17.3 percent of the labor force has a bachelor’s degree or above. This represents a decrease since the last plan revision in the percentage of individuals with a high school diploma or less and a slight increase in the percentage of individuals with a bachelor’s degree or above.

The area works with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation for referrals, as appropriate. Again, the limited employment options in conjunction with limited transportation options tend to compound the impact on individuals with other barriers to employment.

The challenges faced by the LWDB are significant; however, through partnerships, the area continues to work hard to address them.

- (4) An analysis of the workforce development activities, including education and training, in the local area. This analysis must include the strengths and weaknesses of workforce

development activities and the capacity to provide workforce development activities to address the education and skill needs of the workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment, and the employment needs of employers (WIOA § 108(b)(1)(D) and (20 CFR 679.560(a)(4)).

The LWDB currently operates three (3) career centers with one considered a comprehensive center and two listed as satellite centers. The largest career center, the comprehensive center, is in Marianna, and primarily serves residents of Jackson County; the first satellite career center is in Chipley and primarily serves residents of Holmes and Washington Counties; and the second satellite career center is in Blountstown and serves the residents of Calhoun and Liberty Counties.

To the extent possible, each of the career centers are centrally located to populated areas, governmental buildings and shopping centers making them convenient locations for most customers. Centers are connected by a wide area network that spans all centers providing e-mail, internet access, state systems access, case management, and data/print sharing. The LWDB's move to a Citrix-based computer system allows staff better access to necessary work tools regardless of physical location. This certainly proved to be beneficial during the initial phases of the pandemic.

The ATLAS electronic records system provides access to case records and customer activity information via the internet. The electronic system allows staff members at any location to engage customers and provide services. Both virtual and center-based service delivery for job seekers, workers, and employers support the talent needs of the regional economy. The ATLAS system proved to be a valuable asset during the Employ Florida system Cyberattack in late June 2022, in which the system was offline for fifteen days. Because of the LWDB's decision to house the electronic case records in ATLAS and not in Employ Florida, success coaches, support staff, and members of management were able to access case records. If the LWDB had not opted to maintain a separate electronic records management system, this would not have been the case. With the LWDB having access to the electronic records management system, and local documentation of policy and procedures, the LWDB was able to continue active case management and enrollment of individuals. The LWDB also has historical staff knowledge of operations prior to management information systems which allowed for continued manual operations.

Customers may choose any of the three career centers to access Wagner-Peyser, WIOA (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) services as specified in WIOA regulations, TANF, SNAP, Veterans, and Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessments (RESEA). The Early Learning Coalition is in the same complex as the Marianna career center, providing subsidized childcare and daycare facilities training and certification. The Senior Community Service Employed Program (SCSEP) is co-located in the Marianna career center, providing employment opportunities for older individuals. The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation is electronically linked to the centers and a referral system is in place to ensure customers receive vocational rehabilitation assessments and services. Chemical Addiction and Recovery Effort (CARE) is available for referrals for drug screenings, testing, and rehabilitation. The LWDB has strong partnerships with both local public education institutions, Chipola College and Florida Panhandle Technical College, as well as the Adult Education centers located in each county. WIOA staff members have offices and provide services on the campuses of Chipola College and the Chipley career center, which is located on the campus of Florida Panhandle Technical

College (FPTC).

The LWDB increased contact and the ability to work with training facilities located outside the five-county service delivery area; however, the recent change to require a ten percent hold back on the final payment to the training providers for Individual Training Account (ITA) expenditures is expected to significantly reduce training opportunities for those most in need.

Another weakness is lack of training capacity in the LWDB for key industry sectors. As an example, the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration's Entry-Level Driver Training regulations went into effect on February 7, 2022. This requirement established new minimum training requirements for commercial driver's license holders. As a result, all training institutions within a reasonable commuting distance were backed up and had an overflow of individuals needing the certification. The changes in extensive training requirements for a key local training provider resulted in a decrease in the overall number of classes offered annually. The provider in closest proximity to the LWDB has maintained a waiting list since the change was made. This means someone qualified today who wants commercial vehicle driver training may be forced to wait for an lengthy period of time to start training or be forced to travel a significant distance to another facility. The distance requires additional travel and housing costs and may well exceed the available LWDB training limit resulting in the individual paying out-of-pocket.

Hurricane Michael forced major changes in the work of non-profits and faith-based organizations previously involved in employment or education related support. These impacts continue to be felt by the LWDB. The LWDB is represented across multiple long-term recovery organizations coordinating recovery efforts directed towards individuals with unmet needs. In some cases, the need includes additional training to increase employment prospects or wage levels to help provide financial resources an individual or family needs for recovery.

The dual impact of Hurricane Michael followed by the COVID-19 pandemic dealt tremendous blows to the LWDB's economy. The LWDB suffered a loss of both population and available housing during the period of time covered by the last census.

The LWDB desperately needs to reverse these declines that are negatively impacting both employers and training providers.

Opportunities are available for individuals at all skill levels and levels of experience, including those with disabilities, through labor market, job-driving information, customer choice related to education and training, careers, and service delivery options and both skill-development and job placement services. Education and training services include occupational skills training, paid and unpaid work experience, on-the- job training, and employed worker programs.

One of the LWDB's strengths is the center's local presence, linkages to numerous resources in the rural community, and a level of local knowledge that is possible due to the close relationships between the LWDB and local partners with shared experiences. Quality customer service most often means personal service. Meeting face-to-face interaction with the Department of Children and Families (DCF) is often needed but rarely available for Welfare Transition (WT) and Supplemental Nutrition and Assistance

Program (SNAP) customers. Reemployment Assistance (RA) customers often need computer assistance or have questions concerning their benefit claims and are unable to reach the FloridaCommerce Reemployment Assistance office due to waiting times on the phone line. Job seekers frequently request assistance, especially if he/she is new to the electronic process, to seek reemployment assistance benefits. Based on the need, the LWDB provides one-on-one pre-employment workshops and employability skills training to help job seekers at varying skill levels.

Strong partnerships with training providers are a result of the LWDB's historical emphasis on providing opportunities to customers for in-demand and high-wage training in the local area. Educational providers (Chipola College and Florida Panhandle Technical College) expanded existing programs and created new programs in collaboration with the local Board and economic development associations. School districts coordinate career academies and adult education programs with the Board to ensure access to career paths and future employment. The LWDB utilizes CareerSource Florida and FloridaCommerce staff and information resources in joint meetings with training providers to acquire the most current information concerning labor projections, associated training, and grant information. Training providers are cognizant of industry needs and LWDB members and management staff serve on business advisory boards to ensure training meets the current and future needs of business. Likewise, education providers participate in LWDB meetings, serve on committees, and support workforce events.

One of the weaknesses in the rural area is the lack of large industries paying higher wages. Many businesses have less than five employees and are family-owned and operated. The lack of large businesses results in the lack of opportunities, such as apprenticeships and large numbers of on-the-job (OJT) contracts. The LWDB strives to improve these areas by diligently working with economic development partners.

While the size of the employer base generally is a weakness for the area, it is also a strength in that the LWDB can have a much closer relationship with employers than is found in a more urban area. Relationships can be built over longer periods due to the lack of turnover in management in a significant portion of our employer base.

LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD STRATEGIC VISION AND GOALS

Local plans describe how LWDBs implement strategies that help Floridians secure good jobs, while providing employers with the skilled workers needed to compete in the global economy. Local strategies must prioritize employment, emphasize education and training, and ensure

LWDBs are responsive to Florida employers' demand for qualified workforce talent.

- (1) Describe the LWDB's strategic vision to support regional economic growth and economic self-sufficiency. This must include goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce (including youth and individuals with barriers to employment), and goals relating to the performance accountability measures based on primary indicators of performance described in WIOA § 116(b)(2)(A) and (20 CFR 679.560(a)(5)).

The primary goal of the LWDB is to connect job seekers and employers in a manner

that allows both to improve their current economic status while improving their long-term economic position. This is accomplished by working with local and regional economic development partners as well as education partners.

In addition to the goals stated below, it is important to note the rural nature of the LWDB and the declining labor force, along with the steady decline in the number of employed individuals, led the Board of Directors and staff to become more involved in efforts to stem the current tide of job loss and decreased employment in the LWDA.

The LWDB's goals are simply stated but are solidly aligned with the WIOA Common Measures. These performance goals include:

1. Percentage of participants in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit
2. Percentage of participants in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit
3. Median earnings of participants during the second quarter after exit
4. Percentage of participants who obtain a postsecondary credential or secondary school diploma within one year after exit
5. Achievement of measurable skill gains toward credential or employment
6. Effectiveness in serving employers.

Preparing an educated and skilled workforce is at the heart of the area's economic development activities. Driven by business and targeted industry sectors, the LWDB seeks to provide career pathways, skills upgrades, and secondary/post-secondary credentials. The aggressive outreach to secure local employment opportunities through economic development organizations is highly valued by LWDB members. Strategies to address the needs of employers and job seekers are promoted through training, work experience, on-the-job training, employed worker programs, business development, and employer human resource assistance. Local strategies address the core measures in the service delivery of Wagner Peyser, WIOA, Welfare Transition, SNAP, and Rapid Response programs. Partnerships and special grants with training institutions enable the LWDB to provide cost-effective solutions that produce results to enhance regional performance.

The LWDB's strategic goals are:

- Align workforce processes to support WIOA implementation by creating strong partnerships with businesses and education to continue to provide and enhance quality services for outreach, hiring, training, retraining, and retention of workers.
 - Enhance the regional score card to include the core performance measures and include management tools so that individual programmatic staff performance can be evaluated.
- (2) Taking into account the analyses described in (1) through (4) in **Section B. Analysis of Need and Available Resources** above, describe the local area's strategy to work with entities that carry out the core programs and combined state plan partner programs to align resources available to the local area, to achieve the strategic vision and goals described in number (1) above (20 CFR 679.560(a)(6)).

The LWDB works with core program entities to align resources to achieve local outcomes by:

- Engagement with community partners through Board memberships including the Early Learning Coalition, Opportunity Florida, Florida's Great Northwest, Transportation Disadvantaged Coordinating Boards, Chipola College and Florida Panhandle Technical College Advisory Boards, Juvenile Justice Advisory Councils, Chambers of Commerce, School Boards, and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation;
- Leveraging funds (without duplication) for supportive services to support mutual WIOA, Welfare Transition, and SNAP program customers;
- Execution of Memorandums of Understandings with core program entities and community partners to enhance the provision of employer and job seeker services and address/utilize sharing of information;
- Streamlining referral processes to Adult Education, General Equivalency Diploma (GED) Prep programs, vocational education, vocational rehabilitation, and business partners; and
- Cross-training career center staff so all staff have a basic understanding of Wagner Peyser, WIOA, Welfare Transition, and SNAP programs and can provide appropriate referrals to the programs.

(3) Describe the LWDB's strategies to work with core and combined partners to contribute to the following statewide goals:

(a) Increase local labor force participation.

The labor force counts the number of residents, ages 16 and over, who are either currently working or actively seeking and available to work, while employment counts only the number of those who are currently working. The labor force participation rate measures the number of people in the labor force as a percentage of all individuals potentially available for work and the LWDB faces numerous challenges to increase this percentage.

Challenges include the loss of population, the provision of available housing, sufficient personal transportation, education/skill levels, and employment opportunities that meet the needs of both employers and workers.

The LWDB strategies to increase labor force participation include:

- Attracting and retaining available housing by working with economic development entities and counties to expand and attract new housing developments. Also, entities applying for grants to build affordable housing has been successful with new housing opening later in 2024 or early 2025. These efforts include infrastructure grants that lay the foundation for new or future expansion of homes.
- Working with job seekers to discover appropriate employment opportunities within short commuting and/or walking distance from their residence. The other option is to gain employment in the same area as friends and neighbors so they can ride together.

- **Upskilling and providing training opportunities that are beyond a high school diploma will lead to self-sufficient employment. These include career & technical education as well as college degree programs.**

The challenges faced by the LWDB are significant; however, through partnerships, the area continues to work hard to address them.

- (b) Ensure local jobseekers and employees aged 25-70 have a credential of value. The 2024-2028 WIOA Combined Plan states that core and combined partners have collaborated and agreed to focus on ensuring that 60% of Floridians aged 25-70 will have a credential of value by 2030.**

The LWDB will continue to work with partners to provide opportunities to attain credentials of value by:

- **Streamlining access to high-quality workforce services through career centers and remote connections,**
- **Working collaboratively with core and combined partners to expand employment opportunities to meet employer demand while identifying and addressing barriers for populations aged 25-70,**
- **Reducing duplication of services and maximizing efficient use of human and financial through aligning and expanding partnerships that leverage and braid funding and coordinate programming to improve credential outcomes,**
- **Focusing on community collaboration between workforce, education, industry, and other partners to break down community silos and maximize the effectiveness of workforce development efforts that benefit all partners and job seekers, and**
- **Providing case management that is focused on outcomes, while addressing barriers with appropriate and available supports to sustain training through credential attainment.**

- (c) Median wages greater to or equal to 75% of the median hourly wage in Florida. The LWDB will continue to work with local and regional economic development organizations to bring in industries with higher-paying wages. The counties served by the LWDB are all rural inland counties without direct access to saltwater coastal resources. The counties have also been heavily based upon agriculture and timber industries that tend to have lower wages.**

- (d) Increase the second quarter after exit employment rate by 10% for each of the following populations:**
- Individuals 55 years and older**
 - Youth**
 - Individuals receiving SNAP and TANF benefits**
 - Individuals without a high school diploma or speakers of other languages**

- e. Individuals with disabilities

Working with core and combined partners, the LWDB will assist individuals from the populations listed above to earn credentials with career ladders that support a self-sufficient wage that increase over time and experience. The strategies for attaining credentials listed above in (b) are suitable and utilized for all populations.

In-depth case management is key to supporting these groups and will be conducted through personal and remote contacts as well as referrals and collaborations with partners. Case management follow-up for 12 months after initial employment with employed workers will ensure continued employment, encourage additional credentials or assist with applying for higher paying job opportunities.

- (e) Increase the total newly registered apprentices annually.

The strategies for increasing the number of apprentices include utilizing Apprentice Florida leads, continuing to promote RAPs, collaborating with CareerSource Florida and the Apprenticeship Training Representative, ensuring that Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAPs) are included on the LWDB Eligible Training Provider List, supporting RAPs with available WIOA funding and other supports for eligible apprentices, keeping the RAP local operating procedures current, and training LWDB staffs of the local RAP policy, promotions, and recruitment efforts.

The LWDB works with core programs and combined partnerships to help achieve this outcome through:

- **Engagement with community partners through Board memberships including the Early Learning Coalition, Opportunity Florida, Florida’s Great Northwest, Transportation Disadvantaged Coordinating Boards, Chipola College and Florida Panhandle Technical College Advisory Boards, Juvenile Justice Advisory Councils, Chambers of Commerce, School Boards, and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation;**
- **Leveraging funds (without duplication) for supportive services to support mutual WIOA, Welfare Transition, and SNAP program customers;**
- **Execution of Memorandums of Understandings with core program entities and community partners to enhance the provision of employer and job seeker services and address/utilize sharing of information;**
- **Streamlining referral processes to Adult Education, General Equivalency Diploma (GED) Prep programs, vocational education, vocational rehabilitation, and business partners; and**
- **Cross-training career center staff so all staff have a basic understanding of Wagner Peyser, WIOA, Welfare Transition, and SNAP programs and can provide appropriate referrals to the programs**

- (f) Increase registered apprenticeship programs.

The LWDB strategies to work with core and combined partners include:

- **Convening and/or participating in sector strategies to support the development/expansion of industry-based apprenticeship opportunities.**
- **Developing and executing an outreach plan to educate employers, jobseekers, and other stakeholders in the community about the merits of RAPs.**
- **Supporting regional Apprenticeship Accelerator events organized by the Florida Department of Education (FLDOE) and ensuring core and combined partners are encouraged to attend.**
- **Working with employers or potential sponsors to begin building the standards of apprenticeship in preparation for referral to the FLDOE Apprenticeship Training Representative (ATR)**
- **Collaborating with and assisting ATRs, existing apprenticeship sponsors, employers, related training instruction providers, LWDB staff, and all other core and combined partners to develop strategies designed to make the entire RAP process seamless and easier for employers, sponsors, education providers, and apprentices.**
- **Compiling an inventory of local, regional, and statewide RAPs and pre-Raps using State and Federal RAP data, including programs and employers that are actively seeking new apprentices.**
- **Bringing together LWDB and career center staff in a coordinated effort to connect individual job seekers to apprenticeship opportunities and support employers engaged in RAPs, including, through the use of WIOA funding for Customized Training, Incumbent Worker Training, On-the-job Training, Occupational Skills Training, and Supportive Services.**
- **Developing capacity-building activities at the local level.**
- **Serving as a liaison between state partners and the local board to keep local core and combined partners staff apprised of RAP activities and initiatives across the state.**

(g) Increase registered pre-apprenticeship programs.

The LWDB will promote and support the development of registered pre-apprenticeship programs. School districts and Career & Technical Education programs will be targeted to promote and develop pre-apprenticeships. Jackson County School District is currently working with the LWDB and seeking to develop pre-apprenticeships in the building trades. Linking the pre-apprenticeship programs to registered building trades programs is on-going with the goal of registering at least one pre-apprenticeship program to be during the 2024-2025 school year.

(h) Increase percentage of 12th grade secondary career and technical education enrollment.

The LWDB works closely with five school districts, the Florida Panhandle Technical College and Chipola College's CTE programs. LWDB youth staff members promote CTE enrollment by conducting ongoing presentations in the districts. These interactive

presentations allow students to utilize Virtual Reality technology and experience CTE occupations. This initiative began in PY 2023-2024 and CareerSource Chipola expects the percentage of 12th grade CTE enrollment to increase as we track the growth.

- (i) Build talent pipeline for targeted new and emerging industries of focus by assisting individuals to earn credentials that directly support the sector.

LWDB strategies include the following:

- **Maintaining strong community and business linkages to ensure the ability to develop work-based learning opportunities and meet the skill and training needs,**
- **Leveraging strategic partnerships to cultivate local, regional and state capacity-building that increases economic opportunity,**
- **Emphasizing data-driven decisions and providing performance to the LWDB Directors for accountability and performance achievement,**
- **Integrating service delivery and case management, and**
- **Providing a participant self-service portal and strengthening access to workforce education and training for all individuals including those with disabilities, and**
- **Ensuring that employers are engaged with local educational institutions that feed the industry pipeline.**

DESCRIPTION OF STRATEGIES AND PROGRAM SERVICES

The local plan must address how the LWDB coordinates service delivery with core programs of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, the Division of Blind Services and the Division of Career and Adult Education, as well as core and combined state plan partners (described in Introduction Section C, above) including, but not limited to TANF, SNAP Employment and Training (E&T), JVSG, SCSEP, CSBG programs authorized under the state’s unemployment insurance laws (referred to as Reemployment Assistance in Florida), programs authorized under section 212 of the Second Chance Act of 2007, and Housing and Urban Development, where available.

(1) Workforce Development System Description: Describe the local workforce development system, including:

- (a)** All the programs included in the system; and

Workforce programs operated by the LWDB include Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA), Wagner-Peyser, Welfare Transition, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Trade Assistance Act (TAA), and the Jobs for Veterans State Grant program. Other partners co-located include Opportunity Florida and Senior Community Service Employment Service. Partners electronically linked include the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR), Early Learning Coalition of Northwest Florida, Department of Children and Families, Tobacco Free Florida, Chipola College and Florida Panhandle Technical College.

- (b)** How the LWDB supports the strategy identified in the state plan under 20 CFR 676.105 and [Chapter 445.003, F.S.](#)

The LWDB supports the implementation of the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) through the following required following six elements:

- a) **Streamlining services.** —Florida’s employment and training programs must be coordinated and consolidated at locally managed one-stop delivery system centers.
 - b) **Empowering individuals.** —Eligible participants will make informed decisions, choosing the qualified training program that best meets their needs.
 - c) **Universal access.** —Through a one-stop delivery system, every Floridian will have access to employment services.
 - d) **Increased accountability.** —The state, localities, and training providers will be held accountable for their performance.
 - e) **Local board and private sector leadership.** —Local workforce development boards will focus on strategic planning, policy development, and oversight of the local system, choosing local managers to direct the operational details of their one-stop delivery system centers.
 - f) **Local flexibility and integration.** —Localities will have exceptional flexibility to build on existing reforms. Unified planning will free local groups from conflicting micromanagement, while waivers and WorkFlex will allow local innovations.
- (c) How the LWDB works with entities carrying out core and combined programs and other workforce development programs, including programs of study authorized under [The Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act \(Perkins V\)](#) (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.) to support service alignment (WIOA § 108(b)(2) and 20 CFR 679.560(b)(1)).

The LWDB coordinates workforce activities with providers of education and training, adult education and literacy activities, career and technical education and vocational rehabilitation by providing opportunities and approving processes for integration of services. Collaborative meetings with partners, board members and management staff helped the LWDB develop career pathways with streamlined access to employment and training. The Board’s Programs Committee reviews and makes recommendations to the full Board for approval of eligible training providers, local in-demand training programs, financial decisions for training, allowable training services and types and amounts of supportive services.

Chipola College and Florida Panhandle Technical College are strong supporters and contributors of workforce programs. The Chipley career center is co-located on the Florida Panhandle Technical College campus, and staff work closely with the college to promote success by developing closer working relationships with instructors allowing progress to be consistently followed. In addition, student issues or barriers are easily addressed and resolved onsite. The LWDB also coordinates with The Center for Career and Alumni Development on the campus of Chipola College during registration to recruit individuals interested in occupational skills training and/or seeking employment.

The LWDB historically emphasized and directed resources to provide opportunities for individuals in the community to gain credentials, acquire workforce skills, obtain, and retain employment that leads to economic self-sufficiency. WIOA supports the alignment of these partner services and local cross-referrals are in place. Th WIOA state partnerships will strengthen local processes and alignment even more.

(2) Adult and Dislocated Worker Employment and Training Activities:

- (a) Provide a description and assessment of the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the local area (WIOA §108(b)(7) and 20 CFR 679.560(6)).

The LWDB utilizes the required types of career services: basic career services, individualized career services, and follow-up services. These services can be provided in any order; there is no sequence requirement for the services. Career services provide local areas and service providers with flexibility to target services to the needs of the customer. Participants in the LWDB service area receive career and training services based on assessed needs, as appropriate.

The LWDB training activities include:

- Comprehensive and specialized assessments of skill levels and service needs, interviewing and evaluation to identify barriers, and appropriate employment goals;
- Development of an individual employment plan/Individual Service Strategy (ISS) to achieve employment goals by identifying appropriate objectives and appropriate services and information about eligible training providers and career pathways;
- Individual career and on-going counseling/case management provided prior to enrollment and all through the training experience by a WIOA Success Coach (case manager);
- Employability, employment preparation and job retention workshops to prepare and retain individuals in unsubsidized employment include Interviewing Techniques, Microsoft PowerPoint, Learn to Type, Creating an Effective Resume, Using Employ Florida, What Employers are Looking For, Using Local Labor Market Information, Using Social Media in Your Job Search, Mock Interviewing and Effective Networking Skills.
- Paid and unpaid work experience that are linked to careers;
- Occupational skills training, including training for nontraditional employment;
- On-the-job training;
- A specialized focus on Customized Training for skills upgrading and retraining;
- Adult education and literacy activities;
- Supportive services that are necessary to enable an eligible participant to participate in WIOA activities when the participant is unable to obtain supportive services through other programs providing such service. Supports may include transportation, tuition, books and training supplies, employment uniforms and tools required but not purchased by the employer; and
- Follow-up Services for participants who are placed in unsubsidized employment, for up to 12 months after the first day of employment. All youth

program participants receive follow-up services for up to 12 months. The exception to the completion of follow-up services is if the individual indicates he/she does not want to the services and at that point, staff are required to document the information in the Employ Florida system.

- (b) Provide a description of local policies and procedures for individualized career and training services in the Adult program to give priority to veterans, recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who have basic skills deficient. 20 CFR 679.560(b)(21)

An on-going assessment of adult and dislocated worker employment and training programs are conducted by means of local monitoring and training vendor/provider outcome evaluations. Local performance accountability measures determine the value and contribution of each vendor/provider towards the specific measures including placement, credential, wages, and retention.

Additional training programs are evaluated through the FloridaCommerce Eligible Training Provider Policy approval process. Participant and staff surveys/comments provide valuable input concerning gaps in the provision of training services and resolution is readily implemented. Examples include issues with vendors of uniforms/supplies or requests for additional required materials to ensure participant success.

Priority of service in employment and training to veterans and certain veteran spouses over non-veterans is used for receipt of employment, training, and placement services in job training programs, if the veteran meets the program's eligibility requirements. All veterans are identified through Basic Career services and those veterans with significant barriers to employment (SBE) are referred to the appropriate Jobs for Veterans Grant (JVSG) staff member. The order of priority is: Special Disabled Veterans, Disabled Veterans, Other Eligible Veterans, Certain Spouses, and Other Eligible Persons.

Since funds are limited, priority is given in the LWDB area first to low-income individuals as stipulated in the Act or recipients of public assistance. This does not prohibit an individual from being financially assisted by WIOA if he/she is not low income, but all applicants previously determined eligible must be given priority service and enrollment.

When serving participants through the *Adult Program*, the priority of service applies to the provision of training services due to the low cost of providing basic career and individualized career services. The individuals must meet all applicable guidelines including economic (individualized career services) to be eligible for the services.

Dislocated workers (including displaced homemakers) as defined by the Act are eligible for training and not subject to the priority of service requirement. Training services may be made available to employed or unemployed adults and dislocated workers, who meet eligibility requirements for intensive services, received intensive services and unable to obtain or retain employment through such services.

Priority is given to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient. Priority is processed on a *daily basis* with WIOA staff utilizing a regional decision tool to document the provision of priority service. The decision tool is housed electronically in the LWDB SharePoint and accessible to all staff.

Priority of service begins when the individual registers for services at the point of entry, either electronic or in-person. Point of entry includes physical locations, such as the career centers, Employ Florida (EF) web site, career/job fairs and mass recruitments. Strategies to provide training services to the targeted population include assessments, career counseling, assignment of an individual success coach, case management, pre-employment services, coordination with the training institution and authorizations for supportive services.

(3) Training Services: Describe how training services outlined in WIOA section 134 are provided, including:

- (a)** A description of the process and criteria for issuing ITAs, including a description of any ITA limitations established by the LWDB and a description of any exceptions to the use of ITAs.

ITAs are utilized for workforce funded occupational skills training activities. The total value of provided funds of an ITA will not be greater than the cost of the required tuition, books, and supplies at the selected training institution. After appropriate assessment of a customer's interests, grade level completion, aptitude, and support service needs, a WIOA Success Coach will determine the customer's ability to successfully complete the selected training program. After confirming the customer's enrollment/acceptance in the training program, an ITA will be completed by the Success Coach for the period being enrolled (semester, quarter, or open entry). The value will not be greater than the tuition for the courses to be taken that semester/term, the required books (used if available), and required supplies as stipulated by the training institution. Required tools, uniforms, safety equipment, etc. should be included under supplies. The costs of paper and pencils shall not be covered unless it is a general requirement for all students.

The LWDB's Board approved a policy to allow WIOA participants to receive Supportive Services in an amount not to exceed \$2,000 per program year and for a limited time not to exceed two years. The LWDB requires the use of other funding sources first, when available. If the participant is eligible to receive Pell grant funding, that resource is used to help with the cost of tuition, etc. The LWDB does not have adequate funds to pay for childcare and other high-cost support services.

The training provider must be included on the LWDB's approved Eligible Training Provider List and the program of study must be listed on the Regional Targeted Occupations List and/or be an approved local in-demand occupation approved by the Board. The Statewide Targeted Occupation List (TOL) for occupations may also be utilized when suitable for participants. Suitability is based on the ability to find work in the local area or in an area of relocation. The LWDB's Executive

Director must approve, in writing, requests and exceptions.

An ITA can be issued for a training program not to exceed two (2) years. Note: the LWDB does not authorize payment from workforce funds for pre-requisites or developmental classes that must be taken for some programs, i.e., nursing. An ITA is valid up to the last day a student may begin classes at the training institution.

The LWDB provides a budget for each Success Coach to track the overall allowable amount to be used for training and training-related expenses. It is the duty of each Success Coach to track the budget in an ongoing manner and adjust. As needed, Success Coaches may submit a request for additional training funds and if funds are available, an increase will be granted.

Participants may select training programs offered by approved providers who are contiguous to the LWDB (both in and out of state).

- (b) If contracts for training services are used, how the use of such contracts are coordinated with the use of ITAs.

The LWDB will award training funds through ITAs with limited exceptions enforced through Requests for Proposals (RFPs) and contractual agreements with provider (when not providing direct services.) The exceptions include:

- When the services provided are for on-the-job training (OJT), customized training, incumbent worker training or transitional jobs
- When the LWDB determines an insufficient number of eligible providers in the local to accomplish the purpose
- When the LWDB determines there is a training program of demonstrated effectiveness in the area operated by a community-based organization or other private organization serving individuals with barriers to employment, displaced homemakers, low-income individuals, individuals with disabilities, older individuals, i.e., those aged 55 or over; ex-offenders; homeless individuals, youth who are in or have aged out of the foster care system), individuals who are English language learners, individuals who have low levels of literacy, and individuals facing substantial cultural barriers, eligible migrant and seasonal farmworkers, individuals within two years of exhausting lifetime eligibility under Temporary Aid for Needy Families (TANF), single-parents (including single pregnant women), long-term unemployed individuals, other groups determined by the Governor to have barriers to employment.

- (c) How the LWDB will ensure informed customer choice in the selection of training programs regardless of how the training services are to be provided (WIOA §108(b)(19) and 20 CFR 679.560(18)).

The WIOA success coaches and resource room staff are instructed not to advocate for any training provider or program. Staff members are allowed to advise the customer during the development of a workable training and employment plan to ensure an adequate support system is available and that successful

completion is obtainable. The LWDB success coaches ensure each customer is aware of the full array of training services available under the WIOA.

The customer has total choice of the training program he/she wishes to pursue if the training occupation is listed on the LWDB's demand occupation list and available through an approved training provider. Customers interested in pursuing training services are encouraged to review the tools to explore and research the training programs listed prior to selecting a training program in a demand occupation. Training provider websites and training program specifics are made available to assist customers in the process. Participants may select training programs offered by approved providers who are contiguous to the LWDB (both in and out of state) and that will align with the participant's budget.

- (d) How the LWDB ensures training provided is linked to in-demand industry sectors or occupations in the local area, or in another area to which a participant is willing to relocate (WIOA §134(c)(3)(G)(iii)). Include strategic or other policies that align training initiatives and Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) to sector strategies and demand occupations (WIOA §134(d)(1)(A)(ix)(II)(aa)).

For ITAs, the LWDB focuses on demand occupations listed on the statewide, regional or local occupations lists. For PY 2024-2025, the Board of Directors shifted more of the focus to Customized Training to provide assistance to employers and to help workers receive upskilling and increased wages. The local training institutions received grants over the past year that cover the cost of tuition, books, etc. The students may access those grants which do not have the same federal/state strings attached as WIOA funds.

The LWDB's policy for approving training programs established a methodology for review of programs eligible for WIOA funding. The policy was designed to be rigorous while allowing the LWDB Board of Directors the ability to have direct input to add additional programs based upon local need not evident due to data lag.

Effective July 1, 2024, FloridaCommerce manages the Eligible Training Provider List with the LWDB to certify the programs for use by the participants. To receive WIOA funds, Florida training providers must submit data to Florida Education & Training Placement Information (FETPIP). Failure to submit data to FETPIP is grounds for immediate removal of any program not reported. A training provider that has all training programs removed shall no longer be considered an approved training provider and must complete a full training provider application to be recertified as a training provider.

Training Providers shall be evaluated and once approved, all training programs shall be subject to the same criteria regardless of training provider. Training providers must comply with CareerSource Florida's Administrative WIOA Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) Policy and with the ETP process implemented by FloridaCommerce.

Basis For Evaluation

The State Targeted Occupation List (TOL) can be used as the beginning point for determining which programs should be reviewed for inclusion on the WIOA

training list based on demand. The LWDB retains the ability to certify programs for local use based on a proven need indicated by the employers.

FloridaCommerce evaluates programs using FETPIP for public training providers in the five counties served by the LWDB, then contiguous counties served by LWDB 2, LWDB 4, and LWDB 5. In addition, all other training providers approved or seeking approval from the LWDB will have their training programs evaluated using FETPIP data. States contiguous to the LWDB with approved programs may also be utilized. The contiguous states have rigorous processes for the eligibility process and have information available to the public for training program outcomes.

Evaluations shall be made using the percentage of employed completers, percentage of completers in full-time employment, percentage of completers' continuing education, percentage of completers employed in training related field and continuing education, average yearly income compared to Lower Living Standard Income Level (LLSIL). Evaluations are made of individual training providers by training program as well as training programs regardless of training provider.

After evaluation using FETPIP data, any program currently sponsored by the LWDB designated for removal will be reviewed using the previous two years of WIOA exit data for the program. The second test will test two-year exit data using data for training completion, employment in the field of training, and wage rate. Training programs failing to meet the second test will no longer be funded by WIOA.

Programs offered by a training provider for at least one year must meet the FETPIP criteria to be funded by the WIOA program. New programs will be evaluated by staff for inclusion and a recommendation will be made to the LWDB's Programs Committee. Programs rejected must wait at least six months for another review. Approved programs shall be forwarded to the full Board for approval. Programs approved by the Programs Committee but rejected by the full Board must wait at least three months for another review.

Evaluation of new programs shall be based upon the following criteria:

- Inclusion on the TOL or a proven local need.
- Estimated wage at employment.
- Certification available for those completing training.
- Significant investment in the training program by the institution indicates a commitment to the program including, but not limited to, purchase or use of industry standard equipment, certified instructor(s), and outcomes tied to industry standards.
- If the program is in an area previously disallowed for WIOA funding by the LWDB, the program shall also be required to show significant differences between the planned program and existing programs no longer eligible for WIOA enrollment.

Programs subject to removal may request continuation and will be evaluated based upon new program criteria.

Required Standards

Programs are reviewed by training provider and the following standards must be met:

Existing Programs FETPIP Review

Programs must meet at least one of the following:

1. At least 80% completers and 70% of LLSIL
2. At least 70% completers and 80% of LLSIL
3. Be above state average on at least three of the following six measures and at least 90% of LLSIL
 - a. % Of Employed Completers
 - b. % Of Completers in Full-Time Employment
 - c. % Of Completers Continuing Education
 - d. % Of Completers Employed and Continuing Education
 - e. % Of Completers Employed in Training Related Field or Continuing Education
 - f. Average Yearly Earnings
4. At least 60% completers and 100% of LLSIL

WIOA Two Year Exit Review

Programs scheduled for removal will be evaluated against the previous two years of WIOA exit information. Programs with WIOA exits in the previous two years shall not be removed if they meet the following criteria:

- At least 90% of those exiting have completed training.
- At least 90% of those completing training are employed in the first quarter after exit.
- The average yearly earnings are at least 100% of LLSIL.

A program without WIOA exits in the previous two years shall be removed without further review.

Application Of Standards Review For Existing Programs

Standards shall be applied using two approaches. The first approach shall be to review each program by training provider. Training provider programs that meet the standards shall be eligible for continued enrollment without further review. Training provider programs that fail to meet the standard according to two years of FETPIP data shall no longer be eligible to have new individuals funded in that particular program at the institution without approval of the LWDB Board of Directors. The programs must be certified by the LWDB.

Training programs shall be grouped by training providers offering the training program and will be reviewed. If training providers for any training program fail to meet the required standards, the training program shall be deemed to have failed the standards. If training providers for any training program fail to meet the required standards for two consecutive years, the training shall no longer be eligible for new enrollment using WIOA funds.

New training providers must seek approval from FloridaCommerce for addition to the Eligible Training Provider List. The LWDB requires the training provider to

complete a Training Vendor Application for local use as well as a Statement of Work form for each program.

Existing training providers seeking approval of a training program offered for at least one year must document the program meets the required FETPIP standards.

Review Of Training Programs Not Included On A FETPIP Report

Training programs eligible for WIOA funding due to inclusion on the TOL, not included in the FETPIP system, shall be evaluated based upon the previous two years of WIOA exiters. Programs without FETPIP reporting and WIOA exiters shall not be eligible for WIOA funding and shall not become eligible unless a training provider completes an LWDB Training Provider Application for the program in question. Based on local access to contiguous states for training since the LWDB boards Alabama and Georgia, those training providers can be utilized based on customer choice. The contiguous state's ETPL is used to document inclusion. Information is gathered based on accreditation and the same data is captured as is collected for Florida providers.

It shall be the responsibility of the training provider to submit the application for approval; however, if data indicates the need for a program offered at a currently approved training provider, Board staff may seek approval by providing the same information required in the Training Provider Application to the LWDB's Programs Committee to approve or deny the request. Approval of the request shall be forwarded to the Board of Directors for consideration.

Automatic Removal Of Training Programs And Appeals Process

Removal of training programs from the LWDB WIOA Approved Training list shall be automatic upon determination the program no longer meets the necessary requirements per this policy. Removal shall occur in two steps. Once a determination has been made that a program no longer meets the requirements as established in this policy, no further enrollments in the program shall be allowed until the decision to remove has been reported to the LWDB's Programs Committee at a committee meeting. Training Providers wishing to appeal the decision to remove shall have twenty days from the date of the report to the committee to request an appeal and are required to provide a written appeal to the LWDB within thirty days of the report to the committee.

The appeal shall, at a minimum, include information indicating why the information used to make the decision was incorrect or shall provide sufficient information to allow the committee to determine significant changes have been made to the program causing the program to experience significant outcome improvements. The committee shall consider the information provided by the Training Provider and staff for the appeal. The committee shall deny or approve the appeal. If an appeal is denied, the Training Provider can request consideration by the full Board providing such an appeal is made in writing within five working days of the decision to deny by the LWDB's Programs Committee. If a further appeal is made, information provided to the committee shall be provided to the full Board of Directors. A decision of the Board is not subject to appeal.

If the committee approves the appeal, enrollments shall be open for the Training Program immediately. The program would still be subject to removal after the next program review if existing standards are not met. If an appeal is not made by the required deadline, or if the appeal is denied, a Training Program shall cease to be eligible for WIOA funding. Training Programs deemed no longer eligible for funding may either reapply one year after the decision or may be reinstated automatically if the program meets the required standards in the future.

New Training Program Application

Existing training providers seeking to add a new program must request the addition of the new program by letter or email combined with a completed Program Description Statement of Work form to the LWDB's Program & Center Director, who will then forward the request to the LWDB Executive Director. Upon receipt of the request, the LWDB Program & Center Director and the Executive Director shall conduct a review of the requested program and prepare a report for the LWDB's Programs Committee that, at a minimum, examines the following items:

- Inclusion on the TOL or proven local need
- Estimated wage at employment.
- Certification available to those completing training
- Has the Training Provider made a significant investment in the training program indicating a commitment to the program including, but not limited to, purchase or use of industry standard equipment, certified instructor(s), and outcomes tied to industry standards
- If the program is in an area that is scheduled to be deleted from the approved list within one year or was disallowed for WIOA funding by the LWDB within the previous two years, the program shall also be required to show significant differences between the planned program and existing, or previously existing, programs no longer eligible for WIOA enrollment
- A staff recommendation for approval or denial of the request.

Additional information may be provided within the report if it is determined such information is necessary for the LWDB's Programs Committee or the full Board to make an informed decision.

A report including staff recommendation for denial must be provided to the institution no later than two weeks prior to the scheduled LWDB's Programs Committee meeting. The institution shall be allowed to submit a written response if the written response is received no later than three workdays prior to the committee meeting.

New Training Providers seeking a training program to be approved that has been in existence for at least one year, must complete a full Training Provider application and shall be evaluated using the information contained in the application.

Training Providers denied approval based upon information about the Training Provider and not the provider's training program may appeal the decision. An appeal must be made in writing within twenty days of the decision by the

committee.

The Training Program shall be evaluated using the same six criteria listed in this New Training Program Application section. For a new Training Program from a New Training Provider to be approved, both the institution and the program must be approved.

Training providers shall be evaluated without requirement of a previous relationship with the LWDB and once approved, all training programs shall be subject to the same criteria regardless of training provider. New training programs approved by this method shall automatically be eligible for funding for two years. After two years, the program shall be subject to review under the same guidelines as other programs.

Removal Of Training Provider And Appeals

Training providers that do not provide information to FETPIP shall be removed and this action is not eligible for appeal. Training providers with all programs deemed no longer eligible for funding may not appeal to remain as an approved training provider as they have no programs eligible for training. The LWDB will coordinate with FloridaCommerce on these types of actions.

- (e) How the LWDB incorporates/includes work-based training activities in the local area's service delivery model.

As outlined in CareerSource Florida (CSF) Policy Number 100, the LWDB incorporates work-based training as an effective service strategy to assist job seekers in entering and advancing along a career pathway and to allow local employers to train employees while they continue to be productive members in the workforce. Work-based training includes on-the-job training, customized training, incumbent worker training, registered apprenticeships, pre-apprenticeships, transitional jobs, work experience, and internships.

The Business Services Team (including JVSG staff) and WIOA Success Coaches engage employers and present opportunities to implement sector strategies and industry partnerships through employer-driven work-based training. The advantages to the employer include cost savings in training while providing a training customized for the business and promoting employee retention. Employers are approved eligible for the work-based training activity in accordance with the

LWDB's Policy and Local Operating Procedure. With the exception of incumbent worker training, individuals must be determined eligible for the WIOA Adult of Dislocated Worker programs to participate. For Customized Training, the income is reviewed and must be \$30 or under per hour and a letter from the employer is required indicating the need of the training to retain/maintain the individual and for the company to remain competitive. For Customized Training, the LWDB requires an increase in wages and skills.

Success Coaches may provide career counseling to adults and dislocated workers who have barriers to employment and are chronically unemployed or have an inconsistent

work history. These individuals along with individuals who are long-term unemployed, ex-offenders, and current or former recipients of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) or Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) recipients. are the focus for work-based training activities. When the participants are appropriately engaged in a planned and limited time work experience, the participants develop employability skills, acquire job-specific knowledge, and gain work experience in an area that helps prepare the individuals for self-sufficient employment.

When work-based training is selected for a participant, the Success Coach develops an Individual Employment Plan (IEP) including:

- (1) A determination that a work-based learning activity is appropriate to meet the participant's needs.
- (2) The specific work-based learning most appropriate for the participant based on an assessment of the participant's needs, skill set, and other characteristics necessary to determine the best activity for the participant.
- (3) The specific short and long-term goals for the work-based learning activity, by identifying the purpose of the activity and outcomes expected.
- (4) The employer with whom the activity will be done and other information relevant to the work-based learning activities.
- (5) Other services/activities necessary to support the work-based learning activity.

The LWDB Local Operating Procedure for Work-based Training outlines Worksite Agreements and Contracts. Worksite agreements are developed for work-based learning activities that do not involve an exchange of consideration or a disbursement of funds to or on behalf of an employer. A contract with an employer is developed for work-based learning activities that involve an exchange of consideration or a disbursement of funds to or on behalf of an employer.

LWDB Agreements and Contracts include:

- (1) A clear statement of purpose
- (2) A job description
- (3) A training outline
- (4) Requirements of the worksite employer, participant and WIOA service provider or staffing agency
- (5) Contact information for the supervisor
- (6) The worksite address
- (7) Record-keeping, attendance, and payroll information
- (8) The duration of the activity
- (9) Signature and dates of all parties to the contract/worksite agreement
- (10) A process to monitor the participant's worksite activities and ensure adherence to the records retention requirements, as applicable
- (11) Required tools, equipment, or uniforms, if applicable
- (12) Health and safety standards established under federal and state law otherwise applicable to working conditions of employees shall be equally applicable to working conditions of participants engaged in work-based training activities, and
- (13) Signatures of both the worksite employer and staffing agency, when relevant.

All required assurances are included in the LWDB's contracts. In addition, the LWDB ensures compliance that:

- Contracts for customized training and IWT include additional requirements outlined

- in CSF Policy Number 100,
- Specific OJT requirements listed in CSF Policy Number 009,
- Supportive Services requirements prescribed in CSF Policy Number 109, and
- WIOA requirements and restrictions.

Local employers are currently benefiting from the LWDB's contracts and worksite agreements for On-The-Job Training and Work Experience. Recruitment for Pre-Apprenticeship and Apprenticeship continues to be a challenge for local employers. These work-based trainings; however, are included and encouraged in the presentations to local industry and business.

- (4) **Youth Workforce Investment Activities:** Provide a description and assessment of the type and availability of youth workforce investment activities (services) in the local area, including activities for youth who are individuals with disabilities. The description and assessment must:

The LWDB's goal is to prepare youth and young adults ages 16-24 for successful careers through continued education and work-based learning in targeted industries. WIOA is designed to serve eligible youth through high-intensity case management support to help achieve educational goals through career guidance and exploration, year-round work experience, skills training in demand occupations, and to provide support services to help ensure success and positive outcomes.

Based on WIOA's focus to increase the number of out-of-school youth enrollments, increase expenditures for work-based learning and development of career pathways, the LWDB worked diligently to serve out-of-school youth with significant resources placed on outreach and recruitment. The LWDB met with school districts, educators, faith-based, and non-profit organizations to attempt to increase services to out-of-school youth. These efforts resulted in less enrollments than desired by the Board of Directors, which required the LWDB to do an in-depth analysis of the efforts. The Board of Directors determined more focus needed to be placed on in-school youth while not denying services to out-of-school youth qualified for services. CareerSource Florida issued a waiver to help the LWDBs serve more youth.

The LWDB has a working relationship with the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) to ensure juvenile offenders, under the supervision of DJJ, have information about and access to services provided by the workforce system. One of the latest partnerships established is with the local Guardian Ad Litem Program. Through this partnership, youth have an added layer of support to help enforce connections to educational and employment opportunities.

The LWDB's Board of Directors includes a representative from the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation since the entity works directly with youth and adults who have different abilities.

The LWDB worked with the Jackson County Board of County Commissioners on the implementation of curriculum for the Next Step at Endeavor project. The Next Step program targets individuals with Autism aging out of the education system. The program is designed to give the individual skills needed for employment as well as life skills required to live self-sufficiently. The LWDB continues to explore opportunities to work with the Next Step program to connect those in training with

employers.

- (a) Identify successful models of such youth workforce investment activities (WIOA §108(b)(9) and 20 CFR 679.560(b)(8)).

The LWDB continues to use the National Council on Youth, Education and Families to gather information about how to Learn and Network; Stimulate and Support; Assist and Promote; and Elevate Voices and Strategies. The Institute for Youth, Education, and Families (YEF Institute) is the go-to place for leaders seeking to improve outcomes for children and families. With expertise in early childhood success, education and expanded learning, promoting a culture of health, youth and young adult connections, and economic opportunity and financial empowerment, the YEF Institute reaches areas of all sizes and brings together local leaders to develop strategies via technical assistance projects, peer learning networks, leadership academies, and Mayors' Institutes.

The YEF Institute at the National League of Cities has transformed how leaders envision their roles in improving outcomes for all children, youth, and families in their communities. For residents to thrive, we need empowered local leaders who place the well-being of children, youth, and their families at the center focus of governance. The continued amplification of not only the voices of elected officials but also those youth leaders ensures that children and families are centered in the work.

A skilled and educated workforce is increasingly vital to a community's economic vitality. Even if officials do not play a direct role in governing their school systems, there are numerous ways in which they can exercise leadership to support public schools, expand alternatives for students who struggle in traditional educational settings, and increase postsecondary success.

- (b) Include the local area's design framework for the local youth program and how the 14 program elements required in 20 CFR 681.460 are made available within that framework (WIOA § 129(c)(1)).

WIOA Section 129(c)(2) requires 14 program elements. To support the attainment of a GED, entry into postsecondary education, and career readiness for participants, the youth programs shall provide these 14 elements or referrals. The LWDB ensures that these 14 activities are available for eligible youth as part of a menu of services based on their objective assessment and Individual Service Strategy (ISS). The services are delivered in the career centers with internal partners and electronic links to external partners.

- (c) Describe the LWDB's policy regarding how the local area will determine when an individual meets the definition of basic skills deficient contained in [Administrative Policy 095 – WIOA Youth Program Eligibility](#).

The LWDB uses testing scores/reports utilized by local training providers to measure basic skills, skills gains, and placement in education. Local education

partners and training providers primarily use the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment Systems (CASAS) and the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE). Both tools are recognized by the National Reporting System (NRS). CASAS assessments meet the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Common Measures requirements and correlate with the definitions used in the NRS. The test score results correspond to the Adult Basic Education (ABE), Adult Secondary Education (ASE), and English Language Learners (ELL) Educational Functioning Levels. Since training providers typically requires their own testing; therefore, the LWDB adopted this methodology to avoid the customer/participant the hassle of completing basic skills assessments multiple times when the LWDB's scores will not be utilized.

The LWDB defines a Basic Skills Deficient youth as a youth who has English reading, writing, or computing skills at or below 8th grade level on a generally accepted standardized test (CASAS/TABE) or is unable to compute or solve problems, or read, write, or speak English, at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individual's family, or in society.

- (d) Define the term “a youth who is unable to compute or solve problems, or read, write, or speak English at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individual's family, or in society” and describe how the LWDB defines whether a youth is unable to demonstrate these skills sufficiently to function on the job, in their family, or in society and what assessment instruments are used to make this determination (20 CFR 681.290).

WIOA eligible youth are provided an academic and skills assessment during the eligibility and career counseling process. The academic assessment determines if the youth is Basic Skills Deficient (below 9.0 grade level). The local LWDB defines a youth who meets the Basic Skills Deficient criteria as a youth unable to compute or solve problems, or read, write, or speak English at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individual's family, or in society.

- (e) Define the term “requires additional assistance to complete an educational program or to obtain or retain employment” and describe the circumstance(s) or other criteria the LWDB will use to qualify a youth under this eligibility barrier (20 CFR 681.300).

The LWDB defines “requires additional assistance...” (but the definition is not limited to) as a youth who:

- Requires additional assistance to complete an educational program (in need of a GED; has dropped of a post-secondary educational program during the past 12 months; or has a diploma but requires additional education in order to obtain or retain employment);
- Requires additional assistance to secure and hold employment (a youth who has not held a full-time job for more than three consecutive months; or has a poor work history, to include no work history; or has been fired from a job in the last 6 calendar months; or lacks work readiness skills necessary to obtain and/or retain employment);
- Is Basic Skills Deficient defined by the LWDB as a youth who has English reading, writing, or computing skills at or below 8th grade level on a generally accepted standardized test (TABE) or is unable to compute or solve problems, or read, write, or speak English, at a level necessary to

- function on the job, in the individual's family, or in society;
- Resides in a county where the resident live birth rate for mothers ages 15 through 19 years of age is above the state average according to the Florida Bureau of Vital Statistics;
- At risk of court involvement;
- Incarcerated parent(s);
- Is gang involved/affiliated/affected;
- Experiences personal/family substance abuse;
- Has a substance abuse problem and is/has been actively participating in treatment;
- Is an emancipated minor;
- Is a victim of domestic violence or sexual/child abuse;
- Has been alienated due to sexual preference;
- Is a member of a migrant family;
- Is lacking significant work maturity and/or work history (less than six months of work experience within the last year)

For each item outlined above as “requires additional assistance...” staff must make diligent efforts to secure documentation to support the identified barrier.

The LWDB applies the criterion "requiring support services or participation preemployment activities to enable them to complete their education and/or successfully enter employment" when:

- The school counselor/official provides written documentation that the youth has specific barrier(s) or needs that create a higher risk of dropping out of high school prior to graduation, or
- The Success Coach determines through assessment that the youth has little or no work experience or a poor work history and needs employability/soft skills that may include resume writing, interviewing skills, assisted job search, etc. to obtain employment.

(5) Self-Sufficiency Definition: Under WIOA § 134(c)(3)(A) training services may be made available to employed and unemployed adults and dislocated workers who need training services to obtain or retain employment leading to economic self-sufficiency or wages comparable to or higher than wages from previous employment. Describe the definition of “self-sufficiency” used by your local area for:

(a) Adults (distinguish if there are different definitions for unemployed individuals or employed workers); and

The LWDB’s local self-sufficiency wage for WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and TANF funds is defined as being at or above 200% of the Lower Living Standard Income Level (LLSIL) based on family size.

For employed workers, the wage rate is measured as employees earning less than \$30 per hour to support their family as a basis for upskill training to gain increased earnings.

(b) Dislocated Workers (WIOA § 134(c)(3)(A)(xii)).

The LWDB's local self-sufficiency wage for WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and TANF funds is defined as being at or above 200% of the LLSIL based on family size.

(c) If self-sufficiency is defined differently for other programs or populations served in the local area, describe the definition of "self-sufficiency" used for those programs as well. NOTE: If the local area utilizes a self-sufficiency definition that exceeds 250% of the Lower Living Standard Income Level (LLSIL) or LLSIL wage rate, the description must include the rationale/methodology used by the local area to determine the local area's self-sufficiency standard.

The LWDB's local self-sufficiency wage for WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and TANF funds is defined as being at or above 200% of the LLSIL based on family size.

(6) **Supportive Services and Needs-Related Payments:** Describe the types of supportive services offered in the local area to include any applicable limits and levels. The supportive services offered by the LWDB in the local area must align with the supportive services outlined in [CareerSource Florida Administrative Policy 109 – Supportive Services and](#)

Supportive services are provided to eligible WIOA participants to enable participation in training. Support services includes fuel cards, uniforms, books, and uniforms/tools necessary for employment. Success coaches work closely with training providers to combine resources so the participant is provided a complete package of assistance to allow him/her to concentrate on studies and not on meeting financial hardships.

The LWDB five-county area does not have public transportation services. Transportation expenses are provided through fuel cards and the amount is based on days in attendance and mileage ranges approved by the Board. The participants are informed the fuel cards are intended to help offset a portion of the cost of transportation and are to be used for their intended purpose.

Participants dually enrolled in workforce programs benefit by having services coordinated between programs but only receive non-duplicated services. While WIOA does not provide childcare, the service may be provided through the Welfare Transition program based on eligibility. Some in-demand pathway programs are not included on the WIOA ITA list but may be funded through Welfare Transition. Special grants also provide support that are not included in WIOA services. Local program procedures clearly outline the supportive services and amounts allowable in each workforce program.

The Supportive Services Program Year (July 1 – June 30) amount is \$2,000 per program year and Success Coaches have an option to transfer up to \$1,000 per calendar year to the Individual Training Account. The LWDB's Executive Director has the authority to approve up to an additional \$1,000 over the yearly ITA amount spent for a student with reasonable cause.

The Transportation Assistance Guidelines for the standard dollar amount are:

Travel up to 150 miles per month	Value \$ 25
Travel up to 300 miles per month	Value \$ 50
Travel up to 450 miles per month	Value \$ 75
Travel up to 600 miles per month	Value \$100
Travel up to 750 miles per month	Value \$125
Travel more than 750 miles per month	Value \$150

- (7) **Individuals with Disabilities:** Describe service strategies the LWDB has in place or will develop that will improve meeting the needs of customers with disabilities as well as other population groups protected under Section 188 of WIOA and 29 CFR Part 38.

The LWDB coordinates service delivery and resources with core programs and partners to provide services to individuals with disabilities and other populations protected under the Act. Streamlined customer access is available for all populations with specialized services for disabled individuals. Success coaches continually assess barriers and authorize necessary services to facilitate full participation in the program as well as transitional activities.

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation is electronically linked to the centers and a referral system is in place to ensure customers receive vocational rehabilitation assessments and services. The LWDB Board includes representation from the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and Jackson County Association for Retarded Citizens (JCARC).

In addition to website services, computers, fax machines, copy machines, and phones, additional programs and services are available. These include the Welfare Transition, SNAP, referrals to Ticket to Work providers, Jobs for Veterans State Grant program, ADA compliant computers, Interpretive system for the hearing impaired, JAWS screen reader for the blind, ZoomText for the vision impaired, JoneR Translator for language translation, sign language communication assistance, and center staff providing one-on-one assistance as needed.

Participants are notified of the Grievance Process at multiple points in the LWDB career centers to include universal services, as well as program specific services. The Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) tag line is included on outreach and recruitment materials as well as advertisements for staff vacancies.

- (8) **Linkage with Unemployment Insurance (referred to as Reemployment Assistance in Florida) programs:** Describe strategies and services used in the local area to strengthen linkages between the one-stop delivery system and the Reemployment Assistance program (WIOA § 134(c) and 20 CFR 679.560(b)(3)(iv)).

The Wagner-Peyser Unemployment Insurance (UI) program is a mandatory partner under WIOA and is a vital program within the workforce system. The employment of individuals is the key performance goal of each core partner and the LWDB works diligently to strengthen partner linkages.

Wagner-Peyser, the State's labor exchange program, connects individuals seeking

employment with employers seeking workers. The LWDB administers a labor exchange program that provides services to assist job seekers to find employment; assist employers in filling jobs and facilitates the match between job seekers and employers. Wagner-Peyser participates in a system for clearing labor between the States, including the use of standardized classification systems issued by the Secretary of Labor under Section 15 of the Wagner-Peyser Act; and the system meets the work test requirement of the State Reemployment Assistance system.

The LWDB ensures self-services are available to all job seekers and employer customers. Services may be accessed from computer workstations at the career centers or personal desktop computers via the internet. In addition to accessing information electronically, customers may choose to receive printed materials available at all career centers. Career services such as WIOA intensive services and training/retraining through the ITAs are offered to eligible individuals unable to secure employment through core services.

All LWDB partners coordinate, collaborate, and integrate resources, ideas, and services to serve the customer in the most effective manner. Career center staff members are cross-trained and able to identify and refer unemployed individuals to partner programs for services and/or benefits. Dual enrollment in Wagner Peyser, RESEA, SNAP, Welfare Transition, WIOA, and Rapid Response/TAA programs is encouraged for eligible individuals and helps maximize opportunities and benefits for successful outcomes.

The LWDB developed strong linkages with Adult Education and Literacy as well as Division of Vocational Rehabilitation. Agreements with these partners promote the Wagner Peyser services available to the partners' participants. Joint employment goals provide a win-win situation for core partner programs. A cross-referral process is in place between the partners.

- (9) Highest Quality of Services to Veterans and Covered Persons:** Describe the LWDB's strategies and policies for providing veterans and covered persons with the highest quality of service at every phase of services offered. Policies must be implemented to ensure eligible veterans and covered persons are aware of their entitlement to priority of service, the full array of programs and services available to them, and applicable eligibility requirements for those programs and/or services.

The LWDB approved the following priority of service policy for WIOA individualized career and training services:

- (1) First, to veterans and eligible spouses who are also included in the groups given statutory priority for WIOA adult formula funds. This means veterans and eligible spouses who are also recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, or individuals who are basic skills deficient would receive first priority for services provided with WIOA formula funds.**
- (2) Second, to non-covered persons (that is, individuals who are not veterans or eligible spouses) who are included in the groups given priority for WIOA formula funds. (Recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, or individuals who are basic skills deficient.)**
- (3) Third, to veterans and eligible spouses who are not included in WIOA priority groups.**

(4) Lastly, to non-covered persons outside the groups given priority under WIOA.

Priority is given to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient. Priority is applied daily with WIOA staff utilizing a regional decision tool to document the provision of priority service. The

decision tool is housed electronically in the LWDB SharePoint and accessible to all staff.

Priority of service begins when the individual registers for services at the point of entry, electronic and/or in-person. Point of entry includes physical locations, such as career centers, Employ Florida (EF) web site, career/job fairs and mass recruitments. Strategies to provide training services to this targeted population include assessments, career counseling, assignment of a success coach, case management, pre-employment services, coordination with the training institution, and authorizations for supportive services.

(10) Entities Carrying Out Core Programs and Combined State Plan Partner Programs:

Describe how the LWDB works with entities carrying out core and combined state plan partner programs to:

(a) Expand access to employment, training, education and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals with barriers to employment; (20 CFR 679.560(b)(2)(i))

The LWDB has a wide network to provide eligible individuals access to employment, training, education, and supportive services. The three career centers are strategically located to provide physical access to job seekers and employers. Services are facilitated through the LWDB's website and include online workshops for job seekers and WIOA pre-application processes. Local WIOA priority services are in place to target and provide services to individuals with barriers to employment including veterans, eligible spouses, recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient. Individuals with disabilities are provided access through the LWDB's Reasonable Accommodation Policy.

The LWDB strives to be the top resource providing qualified employees to employers. This is accomplished by responsiveness, customizing services, and targeted marketing. The LWDB meets with business and industry employers to better align training with employment needs and create a pipeline of qualified candidates. The on-going needs and employment qualifications are communicated to career center staff. Strengthening efforts with business partners is promoted by an aggressive initiative to facilitate worksite training and generate a more efficient referral system. Work Experience, OJT, and referrals to Ticket-to-Work Employment Networks provide additional opportunities for disabled individuals and those with barriers to employment. The LWDB's local employers expressed a need for more focused efforts on customized training and based on the request, the Board of Directors voted to shift the focus more toward customized training to help employers maintain/retain employees and increase wages through upskilling.

The LWDB coordinates resources with core programs and other partners to provide services to individuals with disabilities and other populations protected under the Act. Streamlined customer access is available for all populations with specialized services for disabled individuals. Success coaches continually assess barriers and authorize necessary services to facilitate full participation in the program and transitional activities.

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation is electronically linked to the career centers and a referral system is in place to ensure customers receive vocational rehabilitation assessments and services. A contracted representative with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation utilizes the Marianna career center to meet and provide assessment services to disabled participants.

In addition to website services, computers, fax machines, copy machines, phones, additional services are available. These include the Welfare Transition, SNAP, referrals to Ticket-to- Work Program for SSI and SSDI recipients, Jobs for Veterans State Grant program, ADA compliant computers, Interpretive system for hearing impaired, JAWS screen reader for the blind, ZoomText for the vision impaired, JoneR Translator for language translation, sign language communication assistance, and career center staff providing one-on-one assistance as needed.

Participants are notified of the Grievance Process at multiple points in the career centers to include universal services, as well as program specific services. The EEO tag line is included in outreach and recruitment materials as well as advertisements for staff vacancies.

- (b) Facilitate the development of career pathways and co-enrollment, as appropriate, in core programs; (20 CFR 679.560(b)(2)(ii) and**

The LWDB Board approved training supporting Career Pathways as authorized under WIOA. LWDB eligible WIOA participants are funded for approved training that guide the participants through the chosen career path. For ITAS, the LWDB is focused on funding credential/certification-based programs included on the statewide, regional, or local demand list rather than narrowing to a specific sector. Short-term on-line programs are also approved to better prepare job seekers with pre-vocational and/or work skills. Assessments, individualized career plans, and supportive services to enable participation and completion of training are in place and reviewed for needed enhancements. Center staff are cross trained to refer individuals across programs to benefit the customer. Individuals who are co-enrolled with core partners are provided unduplicated supports with unsubsidized employment as a common goal among partners.

- (c) Improve access to activities leading to a recognized postsecondary credential (including a portable and stackable credential that is an industry-recognized certificate or certification) (WIOA § 108(b)(3) and 20 CFR 679.560(b)(2)(iii), to include credentials contained on Florida's Master Credentials List.**

The LWDB historically emphasizes and directs resources to provide opportunities for individuals in the community to gain credentials, acquire workforce skills,

obtain, and retain employment leading to economic self-sufficiency. WIOA supports the alignment of these partner services and local cross-referrals are already in place.

The Reimagining Education and Career Help (REACH) Act of 2021 seeks increased collaboration and cooperation among state workforce and education agencies and aims to address fundamental gaps in access to quality training. The Florida Department of Education's Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Division of Blind Services and Division of Career and Adult Education share this vision, holding all learners and populations at the center in view of outcomes that promote full participation in the workforce and higher credentialing attainment wherever possible. Greater success will be achieved when all core partners are focused on attainment of credentials of value and acquisition of postsecondary certification, industry recognized credentials and degrees. Improvement towards reaching the REACH Act vision will be achieved through local communication and electronic linkages with core partners.

(11) Employer Engagement: Describe strategies and services used in the local area to:

- (a) Facilitate engagement of employers in workforce development, including small employers and employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations; (20 CFR 679.560(b)(3(i)) and

The LWDB works with employers through various economic development contacts as well as direct outreach to employers within the LWDA. In addition, the LWDB uses mail, personal contact by phone and in-person, as well as social media for outreach and recruitment.

- (b) Support a local workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses in the local area. (20 CFR 679.560(b)(3(ii))

The LWDB's mission requires staff to meet the needs of job seekers and employers. Through constant contact with industry leaders and the involvement of private sector board members, the LWDB developed a flexible system able to continuously develop to meet the needs of employers.

- (c) Utilize community-based information related to educational programs and industry needs contained in the quarterly reports submitted to the LWDB by the local area's education and industry consortium. (CareerSource Florida Strategic Policy 2023.09.19.A.2)

The LWDB Education and Industry Consortium meets quarterly and reports to the LWDB.

The following recommendations and requests from the Industry and Education Consortium were presented to CareerSource Chipola at the May 9, 2024, board meeting.

The general recommendations from the consortium all center around the need to become more involved in helping determine the training needs of the area, helping youth and parents understand the careers in the area, and helping local industry

better expose available careers to residents of the area.

Specific recommendations are as follows:

- Do more to promote/host activities that connect industry and education partnerships.
 - Create a resource list of individuals from the private sector with skills that could be utilized in a classroom environment to further career and technical education.
 - Host joint meetings of industry and education to promote a better understanding of the needs, obstacles, and common goals.
 - Needs to go beyond the “top-level” staff.
 - Develop partnerships at the school level.
- Survey local industry on the need for short-term training and become more involved in short-term training activities.
 - Training could be by an individual employer or a group of employers
 - Training could be provided by a school (local or other).
- Lead the way in promoting parental involvement in activities that expose parents of K-12 youth to careers available locally.
- Help promote a “universal skills language” that could be used by local industry.
- Develop a complete list of all CTE programs available in the area regardless of their sponsorship by CSC.
 - Name and title of programs
 - Skills really being taught
 - Number of students in programs
 - Number of certificates awarded each year
 - Develop a way to track students leaving certificate programs to local employment

Such strategies and services may include the implementation of initiatives such as incumbent worker training programs, on-the-job training programs, customized training programs, industry and sector strategies, career pathways initiatives, [U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundations' Talent Pipeline Management](#), utilization of effective business intermediaries, and other business services and strategies designed to meet the needs of regional employers. These initiatives must support the strategies described above.

Employer engagement strategies utilized in the local area include high involvement with economic development activities affecting the community and employers. As a founding partner of Opportunity Florida, a long-standing member of Florida’s Great Northwest and a key partner of all five local economic development organizations, the LWDB is ingrained with economic development. Opportunity Florida is housed in the Marianna center complex, and the LWDB works with members of that staff daily. Additionally, the LWDB Executive Director is also the Executive Director of Opportunity Florida, providing direct insight into economic development initiatives in the five-county service delivery area.

Other services include on-the-job training programs, career pathways initiatives, effective business services staff members, and personalized communication with local

employers. Board members and employers are kept abreast of hiring events/job fairs and other business events via emails and social media postings.

Specialized hiring events/job fairs for industry and sector strategies were conducted the past year and based on the successes, the LWDB will continue this strategy.

- (12) **Enhancing Apprenticeships:** Describe how the LWDB enhances the use of registered apprenticeships to support the local economy and comply with [CareerSource Florida Strategic Policy 2019.02.13.A.1 – Registered Apprenticeship Strategic Policy](#). Describe how the LWDB and apprenticeship navigators work with industry representatives, education partners, and local businesses to develop registered apprenticeships, in collaboration with apprenticeship training representatives from the Florida Department of Education and other partners.

The LWDB understands and supports the high value that Registered Apprenticeships bring to industry, education, job seekers, and the local economy. The LWDB led by the Executive Director, Programs Director, and Apprenticeship Navigator (AN) promote convening and/or participating in sector strategies to support the development and expansion of industry-based apprenticeship opportunities. The local collaboration between workforce, business, and education to create Registered Apprenticeships provide access to in-demand jobs and career pathways that drive economic growth and sustain the future workforce.

CareerSource Florida and the Department of Education Apprenticeship Training Rep (ATR) work closely with the Apprenticeship Navigator to provide training, toolkits, guidance, technical assistance and assist with the development of new and expanded RAPs. The AN and ATR work as a team to recruit employers and assist in the registration. The AN utilizes promotional emails, telephone and in-person contacts, social media informational posts, job fairs, and Accelerator events to attract and inform local employers of the benefits of developing an apprenticeship program. The AN connects employers with existing programs and training providers. Interested employers are referred to the ATR for in-depth development of a program customized to meet their business needs. The LWDB provides RAP support with available WIOA funding and other supports for eligible apprentices.

Describe strategies and operations that promote and support statewide apprenticeship goals that include, but are not limited to:

- (a) Increasing total number of new apprentices and pre-apprentices per year

The LWDB will increase the number of new apprentices and pre-apprentices per year as local employers partner to create new RAPs, expand active RAPs, or join other statewide RAPs. The creation of a RAP in our rural area has been challenging with only one RAP developed during 2023-2024. This statewide RAP presents opportunities for additional apprentices to be enrolled.

The strategies for increasing the number of apprentices include utilizing Apprentice Florida leads, continuing to promote RAPs, collaborating with CSFL and the ATR, ensuring that RAPs are included on the LWDB Eligible Training Provider List, supporting RAPs with available WIOA funding and other supports for eligible apprentices, keeping the RAP local operating procedures current, and training

LWDB staffs of the local RAP policy, promotions, and recruitment efforts.

- (b) Increasing total number of registered apprenticeship programs and program occupations**

Registered Apprenticeship Programs and program occupations will be increased by the LWDB utilizing the following activities conducted by the Apprenticeship Navigator:

- **Convening and/or participating in sector strategies to support the development/expansion of industry-based apprenticeship opportunities.**
- **Developing and executing an outreach plan to educate employers, jobseekers, and other stakeholders in the community about the merits of RAPs.**
- **Supporting regional Apprenticeship Accelerator events organized by the Florida Department of Education (FLDOE).**
- **Working with employers or potential sponsors to begin building the standards of apprenticeship in preparation for referral to the FLDOE Apprenticeship Training Representative (ATR).**
- **Collaborating with and assisting ATRs, existing apprenticeship sponsors, employers, related training instruction providers, LWDB staff, and all other partners to develop strategies designed to make the entire RAP process seamless and easier for employers, sponsors, education providers, and apprentices.**
- **Compiling an inventory of local, regional, and statewide RAPs and pre-Raps using State and Federal RAP data, including programs and employers that are actively seeking new apprentices.**
- **Using leads generated through Apprentice Florida campaigns, retrieve apprentice leads from the CareerSource Florida brand portal to engage prospective apprentices and employers.**
- **Bringing together LWDB and career center staff in a coordinated effort to connect individual job seekers to apprenticeship opportunities and support employers engaged in RAPs, including, through the use of WIOA funding for Customized Training, Incumbent Worker Training, On-the-job Training, Occupational Skills Training, and Supportive Services.**
- **Participating in and inviting LWDB and career center staff to participate in technical assistance meetings and other training offered by Career Source Florida (CSF) and/or FloridaCommerce.**
- **Developing capacity building activities at the local level.**
- **Serving as a liaison between state partners and the local board to keep local staff apprised of RAP activities and initiatives across the state**

- (c) Increasing total number of registered pre-apprenticeship programs**

The LWDB will promote and support the development of registered pre-apprenticeship programs. In conjunction with the outreach strategies listed above in (b), school districts and Career & Technical Education programs will be targeted to promote and develop pre-apprenticeships. Jackson County School

District is currently working with the LWDB and seeking to develop pre-apprenticeships in the building trades. Linking the pre-apprenticeship programs to registered building trades programs is on-going with the goal of registering at least one pre-apprenticeship program to be during the 2024-2025 school year.

- (d) Expanding registered apprenticeships and pre-apprenticeships into healthcare, advanced manufacturing, aviation and aerospace, information technology, and other emerging industries.**

The LWDB supports the expansion of registered apprenticeships and pre-apprenticeships by attending and being involved with job fairs, partnering with economic development, employers, educational institutions and other key stakeholders. The Apprenticeship Navigator is key to the LWDB business services team and interacts with board members, economic development partners, industry associates and educational collaborators.

The LWDB region consists of five rural counties with critical need hospitals and is targeting the healthcare industry to develop apprenticeships. The Apprenticeship Accelerator held in April 2024 was attended by health sciences educators, area hospital and nursing home officials, proving a desire for moving forward with the development of healthcare apprenticeships and pre-apprenticeships. The LWDB is currently working with a PCOG intermediary to secure local funding for this effort.

- (e) Supporting apprentices with WIOA services to support the on-the-job learning, related instruction and supportive services.**

Pending available funding, the LWDB will use all allowable activities to support registered apprenticeships and pre-apprenticeships through WIOA and other relevant grant programs to ensure maximum flexibility in serving participants and supporting their placement into RAPs.

WIOA activities may include:

- Counseling and career services**
- On-the-job training (OJT)**
- Customized training**
- Incumbent worker training (IWT)**
- Occupational skills training**
- Cohort training**
- Work experience**
- Internship**
- Supportive services**

Additionally, registered apprenticeships may be supported by leveraging other available workforce opportunities, including but not limited to:

- Sector strategies**
- Financial assistance braided funding**
- Referral to community services**

- State-granted USDOL waivers
- State and federal tax credits
- Non-WIOA state and national grants

In addition, the LWDB:

- Works with other LWDBs for the purpose of supporting apprentices working for employers outside of their workforce region.
- Has not and will not develop policies that restrict the promotion of and support to RAPs, employers, and apprentices.
- Collaborates with public and private education providers responsible for delivering the technical instruction necessary for registered apprenticeships. This collaboration also extends to employers who are offering on-the-job training and mentorship, as well as the sponsors and intermediaries involved in apprenticeship programs. The goal is to foster cooperation and coordination within the workforce system, even in cases where the program sponsor, employer, and training provider are the same entity.
- Ensures compliance with federal and state regulations governing registered apprenticeships, including but not limited to WIOA, and we review and update existing local policies that may conflict with state or federal policies or with the direction provided.

DESCRIPTION OF THE LOCAL ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM

(1) General System Description: Describe the one-stop delivery system in your local area, including the roles and resource contributions of one-stop partners (WIOA §108(b)(6)).

(a) Describe how WIOA core partners and combined state plan partners contribute to the LWDB's planning and implementation efforts. If any core or required partner is not involved, explain the reason.

The LWDB one-stop delivery system includes all required WIOA core program partners (WIOA Adult, Dislocated and Youth, Wagner-Peyser, Adult Education and Literacy and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation). Partners co-located and paying a proportionate infrastructure cost include WIOA Adult/Dislocated/Youth, Wagner-Peyser, Jobs for Veterans State Grant Program, Welfare Transition (TANF), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA), Senior Community Service Employment Program, Opportunity Florida, and referrals to Ticket-to-Work Program. Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, though not co-located, utilizes office space in the Marianna center on a routine basis for contracted assessment services. The Early Learning Coalition of Northwest Florida is in the same office complex as the Marianna career center and the LWDB Board management. The on-going Adult Education and Literacy partnership increased significantly and continues to reach populations working toward obtaining his/her GED. Each partner is actively

involved in the planning and sharing of resources to enable dual enrollment to assist customers to upgrade skills and/or achieve the high school or GED credential, continue his/her education, and gain self-sufficient employment. The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation representative is an active LWDB member and meetings have been held with core partners to develop the local plan.

The LWDB operates three (3) career centers with one being a full-service, comprehensive center and the other two (2) locations classified as satellite centers. The Marianna career center is a full-service/comprehensive center which provides Wagner-Peyser, WIOA Adult, Youth, and Dislocated Worker, Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA), Jobs for Veterans State Grant services, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Welfare Transition (WT) programs.

Wagner-Peyser

All career centers provide Wagner-Peyser services and the LWDB serves as the provider for the services to include, but not limited to, intake and assessment, work registration, assistance with re-employment benefits claim filing, job information, job development, assisted job search, job listings, job referrals, job placement, follow-up on job referrals, referrals to other services, information on all programs and services, workshops, labor market information, tax credit information, federal bonding services, and employer marketing.

Basic career services are made available to all individuals seeking services through the career center system. Once staff determines individualized career services are appropriate for a career seeker to obtain or retain employment, services are made available to the career seeker at the centers.

Individuals may also receive workforce preparation skills that help the customer acquire a combination of basic, academic skills, and obtaining skills necessary for successful transition into and completion of post-secondary education, training, or employment.

Comprehensive and specialized assessments of skill levels and service needs are available to job seekers. These services may include diagnostic testing, use of other assessment tools and in-depth evaluation to identify employment barriers and appropriate employment goals.

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act/Trade Adjustment Act (TAA)

All career centers offer WIOA services including eligibility determination, case management, and funding assistance within budgetary allowances. Rapid Response/TAA services are offered primarily in the Marianna career center but based on need, can be provided at any center.

Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth Programs are composed of basic career services, individualized career services, training, and follow-up services. The services can be provided in any order and there is no requirement for the without a sequence of service. Youth services include, but are not limited to, work-readiness training, occupational/vocational training opportunities, work-based learning opportunities, incentives, support services, GED assistance,

mentoring, job placement, and post-secondary education support.

Basic Career Services

Includes eligibility determination for the WIOA programs; outreach, intake, and orientation to information and other services available through the career centers; initial assessment of skill levels, as well as aptitudes, abilities, and supportive service needs; labor exchange services, including job search and placement assistance, and, when needed by an individual, career counseling.

Individualized Career Services

If a career center staff member determines individualized career services are appropriate and needed to obtain or retain employment, the following services are made available to individuals in the career centers: Testing and other assessment tools to identify employment barriers and employment goals, referrals to partner programs for supportive services, career planning/case management, development of employment plan, information regarding the Regional Demand Occupational List and Eligible Training Provider List including training provider information and provision of labor market statistics.

Training Services

Training services are very important to the employment success of many Adult/Dislocated Workers, Youth, and TAA career seekers. As with career services, there is no sequence requirement of services and the need and suitability for training must be determined and documented.

Jobs for Veteran State Grant Veteran Program

The LWDB ensures individuals identified as veterans or eligible spouses receive veteran's priority of services at the point of entry when accessing any locations or community events. Veteran services are considered a career center responsibility and not just a task assigned to the Veterans Program staff. All career center staff are trained and tasked to identify and serve veterans, especially veterans with specific barriers to employment (SBE). Once front-line staff identify an SBE veteran, the veteran is referred to a veteran staff member to receive enhanced services, per federal program requirements. This does not mean that a LWDB staff member cannot provide the service in the absence of a JVSG staff member. The LWDB works to ensure customers receive the service that is needed.

Reemployment Assistance (RA) Benefits

Each career center resource room is equipped with computers for job seekers to use. If an individual is interested in filing a claim for RA benefits, he/she may connect to the FloridaCommerce Reemployment Assistance claims and benefits system to complete the online application and work registration process. Frontline staff are available to provide information about the programs and services available through the workforce system.

Welfare Transition (WT) Program

All career centers provide services to WT participants and appointments are scheduled to ensure that quality services can be delivered. WT offers participants a variety of career services including referrals to other workforce and partner programs and services, community service/work experience activities to teach

and/or strengthen basic job skills; tuition assistance for GED, English as a Second Language (ESOL), approved courses of study; and job searching. WT also provides support services in the form of transportation assistance and other similar types of services to customers who are suitable and qualified to participate in training programs. The LWDB is dedicated to meeting the requirements of HB1267 with the provision of intake and exit surveys and utilizing the Career Ladder Identifier and Financial Forecaster (CLIFF) tools. The career-mapping tool helps working families make decisions and customize their career journeys as they progress toward economic mobility and prosperity.

Adult Basic Education

The LWDB provides information and referrals to Jackson County Adult Education, Holmes County Adult Education, Liberty County Adult Education, and Florida Panhandle Technical College (FPTC) for Adult Basic Education services in Washington and Holmes counties. The LWDB has an established Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to define the role and resource contribution of the local partnerships.

Senior Employment Services

The LWDB has an established partnership with National Caucus of Black Aged, Inc. (NCBA) and a referral system is in place between the partners. CSC provides information and makes referrals to NCBA. The LWDB continues to work to establish a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to define the role and resource contribution of this local partnership.

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

The LWDB partners and provides referrals to the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) for services to those with disabilities. In turn, VR makes referrals to the LWDB. A formal Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was developed and is on file. This MOU defines the role and resource contribution of the local partnership.

- (b) Identify any optional/additional partners included in the local one-stop delivery system and how their inclusion in the local system achieves state and local strategies, operations and performance outcomes.

Non-required partners included in the local one-stop delivery system include the Jobs for Veterans State Grant Program, Welfare Transition (TANF), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA), Early Learning Coalition of NW Florida, Senior Community Service Employment Program, Opportunity Florida, Florida's Great Northwest, Chambers of Commerce, County School Boards, Tobacco Free Florida, and the Florida Panhandle Technical College. Success for many individuals served in the local area hinge on non-duplicated services provided through these agencies. Each of these non-required partners are vital to achieving system-wide goals by providing training and placement supports unique to the population they serve.

The LWDB has a Hope Florida Navigator that receives referrals from the UniteUs

platform and determines what services are needed regarding employment and training opportunities. If a service is not provided by the workforce system, a referral can be forwarded to a partner organization that can provide the service with the intent being no wrong door approach.

(2) Customer Access: Describe actions taken by the LWDB to fully implement [CareerSource Florida Strategic Policy 2021.09.15.A.1 – Availability of Services to Floridians](#) and promote maximum integration of service delivery through the one-stop delivery system for both business customers and job seekers.

(a) Describe how entities within the one-stop delivery system, including one-stop operators and one-stop partners, comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act regarding physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services, technology and materials for individuals with disabilities, including providing staff training and support for addressing needs of individuals with disabilities. Describe how the LWDB incorporates feedback received during consultations with local Independent Living Centers on compliance with Section 188 of WIOA (WIOA §108(b)(6)(C)).

The LWDB's career centers are ADA compliant providing job seekers, including individuals with barriers to employment; i.e., individuals with disabilities, with the skills and credentials necessary to secure and advance in their lives.

The LWDB promotes accessibility for job seekers and the career centers are compliant with accessibility requirements for individuals with disabilities within the centers. The LWDB has a reasonable accommodation policy to ensure all center staff understand and recognize the processes and procedures to follow when a job seeker requests or appears in need of accommodations.

The LWDB refers individuals to organizations for participation in the Ticket to Work program. A veterans staff member provides one-on-one services to disabled veterans.

Individuals with disabilities are provided universal services with basic assistive technology tools available. These include an ADA-compliant computer and the Interpretive system for the hearing impaired. Additionally, staff is knowledgeable in the use of JoneR Translator and Google Translator. A JAWS screen reader for the blind and ZoomText for the vision impaired are also available. The LWDB initiated contact with the Division of Blind Services to provide updated equipment at no cost to the LWDB.

To serve individuals with limited English-speaking proficiency, the LWDB has agreements with several of the school systems in the area as well as private individuals that make themselves available should the need arise for the services a translator. The LWDB's Resource Room personnel at each of the centers follow the information provided in a Resource Guide that includes contact information for these individuals. This population is not generally recruited but Spanish speaking parents of children enrolled in local schools may be referred through the school districts. In most cases, when adults come to the career centers and do not speak English, he/she will bring another family member who speaks fluently to help with translation needs.

Individuals who are hearing impaired can receive communication assistance through employees who are proficient in sign language. These individuals have been identified and are included in the LWDB's Resource Guide.

There are three different trainings available to staff which all center staff must complete: 1) Sexual Harassment Awareness Training, 2) Diversity Training; and 3) Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Training.

- (b) Describe how entities within the one-stop delivery system use principles of universal design in their operation.**

In addition to the LWDB's Reasonable Accommodation Policy, each career center has multiple copies of the Resource Guide for Serving Individuals with Disabilities. This guide contains guidance for staff to use when serving customers who are deaf or hard of hearing, blind or visually impaired; those that have cognitive disabilities; mobility impairments; and speech impairments. This guidance directs career center personnel on the proper etiquette to use to make the experience of the individual with specific needs as close to that of other customers to the center to avoid segregating or stigmatizing him/her. Common spaces in the career centers are designed to provide equal privacy, security, and safety for customers. Staff members are assigned to assist all customers in the resource room in each career center with computers, fax machines, copy machines, etc. to minimize accidental or unintended actions.

The LWDB and partner agencies located within the career centers adhere to the principles of universal design in the facilities, materials, service delivery and technology whenever and wherever possible and practical, including the following core principles:

- (1) Equitable Use – The design is useful for people with diverse abilities.** Career seekers are asked if he/she requires additional assistance to fully access the services and no assumptions are made about job seekers' abilities. Space is available in each career center for staff members to engage with job seekers privately, as needed.
- (2) Flexibility in Use – The design accommodates a wide range of individual preferences and abilities.** Skills testing and assessments can be completed by job seekers either online or manually. Marketing materials are provided in multiple formats.
- (3) Simple and Intuitive Use – Use of the design is easy to understand, regardless of the user's experience, knowledge, language skills or current concentration level.** Pertinent information may be made available in multiple languages. In each access location, job seekers check in on a touch screen computer using an interactive, automated process. If needed, staff members are available in the career centers to provide assistance.
- (4) Perceptible Information – The design communicates necessary information effectively to the user, regardless of ambient conditions or the user's sensory abilities.** Workshops are communicated in a variety of methods. Information is presented verbally and supported by graphic presentation. Job seekers are also given handouts with information relative to the topic.

- (5) **Tolerance for Error – The design minimizes hazards and the adverse consequences of accidental or unintended actions.** Computers are configured so that job seekers cannot inadvertently change settings. As special circumstances occur, accommodations are made for job seekers with specific needs. Staff members are assigned to the resource rooms of career centers to provide assistance as needed.
- (6) **Low Physical Effort – The design can be used efficiently and comfortably and with a minimum of fatigue.** Adjustable chairs are provided for all workstations and labs/classrooms. Printers are available to job seekers to print work-related information.
- (7) **Size and Space for Approach and Use – Appropriate size and space is provided for approach, reach, manipulation and use regardless of the user’s body size, posture, or mobility.** Meetings/workshops are held in large rooms to accommodate services, as well as wheelchairs. Classrooms/labs are arranged in a manner that allow the instructor access to all participants. Resource materials are available in places and heights that are accessible.

(c) Describe how the LWDB facilitates access to services provided through the local delivery system, including remote areas, using technology and other means (WIOA §108(b)(6)(B) and 20 CFR 560 (b)(5)(ii)).

The LWDB facilitates access to services through the website and center facilities located across the five counties and offers online workshops for job seekers. The career centers are strategically located to provide physical access to all job seekers and employers.

(3) Integration of Services: Describe how one-stop career centers implemented and transitioned to an integrated, technology-enabled intake and case management information system for programs carried out under WIOA and programs carried out by one-stop career center partners (WIOA §108(b)(21)).

The LWDB utilizes Florida’s case management systems including Employ Florida (EF), One-Stop Service Tracking (OSST), FLORIDA (DCF), and CONNECT to integrate WIOA, TANF, and Wagner-Peyser employment services. Individuals may apply for benefits, complete job searches and other work requirements, communicate with program contacts, and utilize the on-line system(s) as needed, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

The LWDB initiated use of the electronic records system (ATLAS) which is web-based and enables secure document storage and records for career center activities. Upon entering the career centers, customers log-in at a kiosk and staff members are alerted of appointment arrivals or someone needing to speak with a program contact. Customers can submit documents for specific program requirements. The system streamlined the job seeker, business and program participation process and allowed integration between partners who are co-located in any of the LWDB’s career centers. Since the system is web-based, it is used at hiring events/job fairs to capture data integrated into business services. The LWDB’s website technology allows individuals to access workforce information, E-courses, program orientations, workshops and WIOA pre-applications. ATLAS case management may be accessed from the web by success coaches. This system allowed case management to continue uninterrupted during the Hurricane Michael recovery and during the pandemic when the LWDB’s staff members, individuals, and businesses were isolated due to quarantines.

- (4) Sub-grants and Contracts:** Describe the competitive process used by the LWDB to award sub-grants and contracts in the local area for WIOA-funded activities (WIOA §108(b)(16)).

The LWDB follows the requirements as specified in the approved Procurement Policy and Procedures which meets all applicable federal or state procurement guidelines for services. Prior to issuance of a Request for Proposal (RFP), independent cost estimates are completed. The estimates are used as a guide to determine whether the overall cost is within market limits. RFP's are required to provide a clear and accurate description of services to be procured. This includes requirements that must be fulfilled and other factors used in evaluation of bids or proposals, technical requirements described in terms of functions to be performed or performance required, provide for open and fair competition, specify due dates that gives proposers sufficient time to prepare the proposals, and specifies the criteria used to determine the award. Proposals are evaluated by a review committee consisting of individuals knowledgeable in the specific program area and judged on the potential contractor's ability to perform successfully under the terms and conditions of the proposal, with additional consideration given to such matters as demonstrated ability, ability to perform, past performance and technical and financial resources. An evaluation summary is provided to the LWDB's Board of Directors for final consideration and approval.

- (5) Service Provider Continuous Improvement:** Describe how the LWDB will ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers through the system and that such providers will meet the employment needs of local employers, workers and job seekers (WIOA §108(b)(6)(A) and 20 CFR 679.560(5)(i)).

The LWDB's program management team provides oversight for workforce programs for quality and federal/state/local compliance. The team is responsible for conducting quality program reviews, providing oversight of business and employer services, assessing service delivery methods, and ensuring the local area is progressing toward positive performance outcomes.

Continuous improvement is managed through ongoing meetings, reinforcement of policies and procedures, and recommendations for improvement. The LWDB conducts periodic desk reviews for: Wagner-Peyer (WP) job seekers and job orders; Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Adult, Dislocated Workers and Youth; Supplemental Nutrition and Assistance Program (SNAP); Welfare Transition (WT), and Special Projects, as appropriate. As part of compliance, all stages of program operations are reviewed from eligibility determination to allowable financial transactions.

The LWDB continues to assess effectiveness of programs and services to ensure that the services align with labor market relevance and the local area adjusts its strategies to respond to the changing economic conditions and workforce needs in the service delivery area.

The Eligible Training Provider performance is reviewed annually by the Board/Committees to ensure training resources are utilized to increase the skills of individuals in targeted industries. The Board's Programs Committee reviews training provider completion rates, placement rates, and average wages for those who complete

programs. The LWDB will adhere to CareerSource Florida's policy to determine the eligibility of training providers consistent with the state's policy to establish a statewide list approved by the Governor. FloridaCommerce ensures that all providers are eligible to provide training services.

COORDINATION OF SERVICES

(1) Coordination of Programs/Partners: Describe how services are coordinated across programs/partners in the one-stop career centers, including Vocational Rehabilitation, TANF, SNAP E&T, and Adult Education and Literacy activities. Specify how the local area coordinates with these programs to prevent duplication of activities and improve services to customers. 20 CFR 679.560.

Individualized services are coordinated across programs and partners utilizing multiple approaches. The LWDB's management team communicates with representatives of partner programs and cooperative agreements are developed outlining conditions for coordination and responsibilities of parties. Referral processes are in place to refer individuals appropriately across programs. Shared planning and activities are ongoing as individuals mutually served are provided efficient and non-duplicated services as appropriate to their needs. Success coaches and career center staff members are cross trained to identify possible partner participation and provide referrals to partner programs.

The WT and WIOA programs are co-located in the career centers and coordination with the delivery of basic and individualized services is continuous and efficient. The individual career planning, coordination of services (including supportive services), information collection and sharing between WT, WIOA, Adult Education and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation is cost-effective, appropriately delivered, and maximizes benefits to the job seekers and the employers.

Career center programs coordinate with the Adult Education programs in each of the five counties in the LWDA. Program funds are utilized to assist with costs by dual enrollment of eligible participants. Coordination of services and supportive services are communicated between programs so non-duplication of payments and services remain in place.

To the degree possible, partners share costs, funding and grant opportunities, data and information, and training standards that promote greater communication, transparency, accountability, and coordination of services across education and workforce partners, businesses, and vendors. Increased efficiencies and accountability **achieved** under WIOA guidelines and combined planning foster strategies to avoid duplication of services and improve simplified access to quality customer services for businesses, job seekers, veterans, seniors, and individuals with SBE.

(2) Coordination with Economic Development Activities: Describe the strategies and services that are used in the local area to better coordinate workforce development programs and economic development (20 CFR 679.560(b)(3)(iii)).

Include an examination of how the LWDB will coordinate local workforce investment activities

with local economic development activities that are carried out in the local area and how the LWDB will promote entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services (WIOA §108(b)(5) and 20 CFR 679.550(b)(4)).

The LWDB is a founding member of Opportunity Florida, a ten-county rural economic development organization. The two groups developed a contractual agreement resulting in a much closer alignment and directly ties the goals of the two organizations in ways that benefit both organizations. The LWDB Executive Director is also the Executive Director of Opportunity Florida. The LWDB is the managing organization for Opportunity Florida under the guidance of Opportunity Florida's Board of Directors.

The LWDB is also a member of Florida's Great Northwest, a ten-county economic development organization. In addition, the LWDB is directly involved with the lead economic development organization in all five counties represented by the LWDB. The LWDB has been involved in every major employment announcement within the service area in the last ten years.

Both the LWDB and Opportunity Florida promote entrepreneurial and microenterprise training as part of the partnership.

- (3) Coordination with Rapid Response:** Describe how the LWDB coordinates workforce investment activities carried out in the local area with statewide rapid response and layoff aversion activities (WIOA §108(b)(8) and 20 CFR 679.560(b)(7)). The description must include how the LWDB implements the requirements [in CareerSource Florida Strategic Policy 2021.06.09.A.2. – Rapid Response and Layoff Aversion System](#) and [CareerSource Florida Administrative Policy 114 – Rapid Response Program Administration](#).

The LWDB adheres to guidance issued in the CSF Administrative Policy, Rapid Response Program Administration.

Rapid Response provides customer-focused services to both dislocated workers and employers, ensuring immediate access to services for affected workers to expedite reentry into the workforce. WIOA legislation required Rapid Response and early intervention assistance be provided to workers to avert or minimize the economic disruption of a mass job dislocation event.

The LWDB is responsible for the day-to-day coordination of Rapid Response services to the Calhoun, Holmes, Jackson, Liberty, and Washington county businesses and workers that are experiencing layoffs or closures. The LWDB designated a member of the Rapid Response team to be the coordinator and the primary point of contact. The Local Rapid Response Coordinator is responsible for:

- 1. Communicating with FloridaCommerce and the State Rapid Response Coordinator.**
- 2. Serving as lead contact for affected employers and dislocated workers.**
- 3. Leading the LWDB's Rapid Response team;**
- 4. Ensuring Rapid Response activities are reported accurately and timely in Employ Florida; and**
- 5. Implementing Layoff Aversion strategies and delegating appropriate staff members to implement these strategies.**

The LWDB designated a member of business services as the Local Rapid Response Coordinator. The LWDB's Rapid Response team is comprised of individuals that provide information, resources, and services to assist affected employers and workers. The team may include, but is not limited to:

1. Business services team member
2. TAA Coordinator
3. Department of Children and Families Case Manager
4. Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Business Outreach Specialist
5. WIOA Success Coach
6. Local Veteran Employment Representative

Note: The JVSG funding positions may participate in Rapid Response events only when it has been predetermined that the dislocated workers include veterans who may be eligible for veteran services as described in Administrative Policy 102: Veteran Initial Intake Process at Career Centers.

The classification of a Rapid Response event is without regard to industry, size of the employer, number of workers potentially affected, or the time between notification and layoff date.

There are four (4) types of Rapid Response events:

- a) Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) event: Any employer that provides written notice of a mass layoff or closure with intent to meet the federal WARN requirements;
- b) Non-WARN event: Any employer experiencing a mass layoff or closure, even if it is not subject to the federal WARN requirements;
- c) Trade Adjustment Allowance (TAA) event: Any employer for which a TAA petition has been filed with the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL); and
- d) Natural disasters: Any employer experiencing a mass layoff or closure due to natural or force majeure disasters.

Rapid Response activities assist communities experiencing employer closures, mass layoffs, disaster-related mass job dislocations, or TAA petition filings that precipitate substantial increases in the number of unemployed individuals. Rapid Response services and activities shall be provided to all employers who experience a mass layoff or closure, regardless of how the LWDB was notified, or became aware of, the event.

FloridaCommerce provides the LWDB notifications of filed TAA petitions and WARN notices via email to the LWDB's Rapid Response staff member and other designated recipients as assigned by the LWDB. The LWDB may add individuals to the Rapid Response event distribution list by submitting an email with the requested recipient's name and email to WARN@FloridaCommerce.myflorida.com.

The WARN Act of 1988 required employers, in certain circumstances, to provide advance notification of layoffs and plant closings in order to provide workers with ample time to seek other employment or retraining opportunities. Employers covered under the WARN Act submit WARN notices to the State Rapid Response Coordinator sixty (60) days in advance of plant closings and/or mass layoffs.

The LWDB assists employers meeting the criteria set forth in the WARN Act of 1988 and required in 20 CFR Part 639, with filing WARN Notices by providing the procedures and instructions available in the Employer's Guide for Advance Notice of Closings and Layoffs. WARN filing assistance must be documented in the employer's Employ Florida services plan with Employer Service Code E47 – WARN Notice Assistance.

Upon receipt of a WARN notice, FloridaCommerce shall provide notification via email to the LWDB. FloridaCommerce shall provide a copy of the WARN notice and any known separation details in a notification email to the LWDB within two (2) business days of receipt. If a WARN notice is incomplete, FloridaCommerce will provide the known details to the LWDB in the form of an advanced, partial layoff notification.

A summary of all WARN information is available from the FloridaCommerce public website at www.floridajobs.org. The State Rapid Response Program Office is responsible for updating the list and keeping it current within three (3) business days of receiving a WARN notice. The online WARN Summary Report includes:

- a) Company name and address;
- b) Total number of affected workers;
- c) The affected employer's industry;
- d) WARN notification date;
- e) Layoff dates; and
- f) A copy of the WARN notice.

Arranging on-site employer/employee visits and informational sessions

When the Rapid Response Coordinator learns of a possible circumstance such as a news article or story, a rumor, community member or from a customer, they shall move forward with verifying this information. The information on a WARN or filed Trade Act Petition is considered verification of the layoff or closure.

Once the Rapid Response event has been identified, the LWDB Rapid Response Coordinator will establish contact with the employer and act as the single point of contact for arranging and scheduling all Rapid Response activities. Upon determination of a Rapid Response event, the LWDB Rapid Response Coordinator must contact the affected employer within two (2) business days to discuss the following:

1. Rapid Response services and benefits to the employer and affected workers.
2. The employer's layoff plans and schedule.
3. The feasibility of surveying affected workers to determine appropriate Rapid Response services.
4. General information on the skills and abilities of the affected workers.
5. The spaces where employee meetings or other services may take place, including virtual accommodations and other accommodations for disabilities.
6. Describing and scheduling informational sessions and workshops for affected Workers, preferably on-site and during work hours.
7. Determining whether an outplacement firm has been hired.
8. Explore possible TAA connection to the layoff.
9. Identify if layoff aversion services are applicable for non-affected workers.
10. The spaces where employees may safely meet to receive services following a

Natural disaster (if applicable).

11. The duration of Rapid Response assistance to workers, and the ability for workers to receive services during regular work hours.

If there is a labor union involvement, a representative may be included in the on-site meeting. If a joint meeting with both employer and union representative is not possible, separate meetings may be arranged. If two meetings are held, it is necessary to ensure that the same information is provided to both parties.

Employer Needs Survey

The LWDB Rapid Response Coordinator works with the employer to survey affected workers to determine their needs and interests in preparation for the provision of Rapid Response services. The information gathered by the survey shall inform the team of what information is relevant to ensuring successful outcomes for the affected workers.

Developing rapid response visit reports

The “On Site Rapid Response Visit Report” is completed upon the initial visit with the employer.

Administering employee surveys

Employee needs assessment surveys are distributed and completed during the employee informational meeting. The survey results are given to the LWDB’s Executive Director as well as appropriate career center staff for follow-up.

Coordinating reemployment services with career centers

Early intervention reemployment services are coordinated with the career centers throughout the Rapid Response Event. Wagner–Peyser (WP) and WIOA staff are included in the employee informational meetings and present oral and written information to employees. A packet of suitable materials is distributed and explained by staff to enable the employee to make the best decision concerning job search and/or training programs. During the onsite meetings, individuals are provided information about filing for Reemployment Assistance benefits through Florida’s online link - CONNECT. Data is collected to survey workers’ interest in employment assistance including re-training. In addition, the career centers accommodate employees as needed for group sessions including testing/assessments, job applications, completing resumes, “Surviving A Layoff” workshops, and other resources. Resource rooms, computer rooms, the Community (Board) Room, as well as single offices are made available to assist as needed with the dislocation event.

The LWDB staff will ensure that the correct codes and services are entered in the Employ Florida system in a timely manner. This is minimally the E42 – Rapid Response/Dislocated Workers Assistance in the employer’s Employ Florida service plan. Employers who decline or refuse Rapid Response services must be documented by a case note in the employer’s case note tab. Supporting evidence of the employer’s refusal or declining of services must be retained for source documentation. For employer’s who are not included in the Employ Florida system, staff will ensure documentation is scanned into the ATLAS electronic records system. Instructions for all LWDB staff regarding the reporting of Employ Florida service codes and case notes are available in the Employ Florida Virtual One-Stop User Guide for Staff, section 16: Manage Employers.

Reporting the employment situation of State employees

The LWDB reports the employment situation of state government employees in the same manner as other rapid response events.

Rapid response-related performance measures and goals

The Program & Center Director and the Rapid Response staff member initiates the rapid response services within 48 hours of receiving the WARN notice and completes the Rapid Response Report within 5 days of the employer visit.

Rapid response dislocated worker unit staffing

The Program & Center Director provides support to the assigned Rapid Response staff member. Other staff members (Executive Director, Business Services, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and Wagner-Peyser (WP) staff) assist, as needed.

Public awareness.

Public awareness for dislocation services is provided through the LWDB’s career center marketing materials and activities. Information for general and special assistance available to workers and employers is disseminated throughout the LWDB on an on-going basis. Advertisements of available training programs and employment opportunities encourage job seekers to seek assistance through the system. In addition, FloridaCommerce materials are utilized as appropriate to the event.

(4) Industry Partnerships: Describe how the LWDB identifies and collaborates with existing key industry partners in the local area. Describe how the LWDB coordinates and invests in partnership infrastructure where key industry partnerships are not yet developed (WIOA §108(b)(4)A)). The local area must describe how the following elements are incorporated into its local strategy and operational sector strategy policy. Describe how:

- (a) Selected industries or sectors are driven by high-quality data (cite data source used);

The LWDB uses data from the FloridaCommerce’s Bureau of Workforce Statistics and Economic Research (WSER). There are numerous resources available through WSER ranging from a Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages to Employment Projections. The LWDB’s selection process directly involves meetings with employers as well as examination of current data. Since the LWDB is a rural area without a single county located within a Metropolitan Statistical Area, much of the decision-making process is driven by information directly from local employers.

- (b) Sector strategies are founded on a shared, regional vision;

The LWDB has worked diligently toward establishing sector strategies that work for the local area and in partnership with LWDB1, 2, and 4, formed a

Regional Workforce Area in compliance with state requirements which helps increase sector opportunities.

The Northwest Florida Workforce Collective share industries from aerospace to logistics to advanced manufacturing. The Local Workforce Development Areas that comprise the Northwest Florida Workforce Collective (WIOA Regional Planning Area) include:

Region 1 – CareerSource Escarosa (Escambia and Santa Rosa Counties), Region 2 – CareerSource Okaloosa Walton (Okaloosa and Walton Counties), Region 3 – CareerSource Chipola (Washington, Holmes, Liberty, Jackson and Calhoun Counties), and Region 4 – CareerSource Gulf Coast (Bay, Gulf. And Franklin Counties).

The LWDB has a strong partnership with the regional economic development organizations, Opportunity Florida and Florida’s Great Northwest. The LWDB and these partners also work directly with county and industry organizations. Strategies utilized are not just developed within the LWDB counties directly served but are instead driven and developed by relationships with industry and economic development organizations across Northwest Florida.

The LWDB continues to work across state lines with workforce and economic development groups in the Alabama and Georgia areas due to the sharing of labor force and employers.

- (c) The local area ensures that sector strategies are directed by industry;**

The LWDB works directly with local industry leaders, as well as regional organizations, to better understand the needs of local/regional employers. The LWDB targets two sectors based upon current and emerging occupation information as well as the emphasis of our regional economic development partners.

The first sector is healthcare. The numbers of healthcare providers indicate the industry sector dominates both in current and emerging occupations in the LWDB. Industry partners in the sector continue to see growth and this is leading to an increased demand for labor.

The second sector is manufacturing, logistics and distribution. The LWDB’s regional economic development partners combined these sectors to better develop the manufacturing arena. The LWDB is losing both labor force and employed individuals and has targeted the manufacturing sector to stem this decline and improve the economic health of the area.

- (d) The local area ensures that sector strategies are aimed at strategic alignment of service delivery systems;**

Implementation of sector strategies is communicated from top management throughout the system. Information is shared with staff members about selected sectors and funds are set aside for targeting those sectors. This alignment simply becomes part of the LWDB’s DNA and as such, naturally becomes part of operations. The LWDB has targeted

specific sectors for additional recruitment and worked directly with local training providers to expand understanding of improvements that can be made to better serve the targeted sectors.

- (e) The local area transforms services delivered to job seekers/workers and employers through sector strategies; and

By working directly with training providers to help them understand employer needs in the area, the LWDB can directly impact the availability of training for targeted sectors. As the LWDB works directly with employers and individuals seeking employment, programs can be tailored and more resources placed in areas that benefit the targeted sectors.

- (f) The sector strategies are measured, improved and sustained.

Since the LWDB serves five rural counties, the measure of success comes from direct contact with industry. One advantage in being a smaller, rural based LWDB is that while the area does not have the data available in areas located in a Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), the LWDB has more direct contact with employers and industry leaders in the immediate area. The employers and industry leaders provide direct feedback on areas needing improvement as well as help the LWDB develop policy and plans to properly direct resources.

The LWDB sustains efforts in the sector strategy arena by constantly moving resources as necessary to support the effort, maintaining close contact with industry and training leaders, by finding new ways to introduce our board members to industries, and working directly with economic development organizations to better understand shifts in targets, if and when they occur.

- (5) **Coordination with Relevant Secondary and Postsecondary Education:** Describe how the LWDB coordinates relevant secondary and postsecondary education programs and activities with education and workforce investment activities (including activities related to the Credentials Review Committee, as appropriate) to coordinate strategies, enhance services, and avoid duplication of services (WIOA §108(b)(10) and 20 CFR 679.560(b)(9)).

The LWDB focuses on developing and providing customers with pathways to high wage/high occupations through secondary and post-secondary education programs. The working relationships established with eligible training providers include the alignment of programs and services to deliver training for in-demand occupations that move customers to self-sufficiency.

Strategies to coordinate and enhance training services include:

- **Programs Committee review of training services and supports to ensure quality/quantity is sufficient for the local demand with recommendations for any revisions subsequently presented to the full Board;**
- **Hiring events/career fairs targeting high school students jointly sponsored by the LWDB, training institutions, and school districts;**
- **LWDB membership on business/industry advisory councils at area training institutions;**

- **Representation from educational providers on the LWDB and Committees;**
- **Updating the Eligible Training Provider List to offer local programs related to skill gaps and industry need;**
- **Coordination between training institutions, adult education programs and career center success coaches for participant referrals and payment processes;**
- **Coordination of services and support benefits between programs, partners and community organizations to ensure non-duplication while maximizing training assistance;**
- **Periodic communication between adult education instructors and career center staff to ensure out-of-school youth are engaged; and**
- **Career center staff engage with businesses to provide employment opportunities.**

(6) Coordination of Transportation and Other Supportive Services: Describe how the LWDB coordinates WIOA Title I workforce investment activities with the provision of transportation assistance, including public transportation, and other appropriate supportive services in the local area (WIOA §108(b)(11) and 20 CFR 679.560(b)(10)).

Supportive services are provided to eligible WIOA participants to enable the individual to participate in training. Support services include transportation assistance, uniforms, books, and tools necessary for employment. Success coaches work closely with training providers to combine resources from multiple sources so the individuals are provided a complete “toolkit” to allow the individual to concentrate on their studies and not on meeting financial hardships.

The LWDB five-county area does not have access to public transportation services. Transportation expenses are provided through fuel cards, based on days in attendance and mileage.

Participants who are dually enrolled in workforce programs benefit by having services coordinated between programs but may only receive non-duplicated services. While WIOA does not provide childcare, this service may be provided through the Welfare Transition program, if qualified. Some in-demand pathway programs are not included on the WIOA ITA list but may be funded through Welfare Transition. Special grants provide support not included in WIOA services. Local program procedures outline the supportive services and amounts allowable in each workforce program.

(7) Coordination of Wagner-Peyser Services: Describe plans, assurances, and strategies for maximizing coordination, improving service delivery, and avoiding duplication of Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C 49 et seq.) services and other services provided in the local area through the one-stop delivery system (WIOA §108(b)(12) and 20 CFR 679.560(b)(11)).

All Wagner-Peyser employment services are available to customers in the three career centers. FloridaCommerce merit-based public employees are in two of the centers and provide Wagner-Peyser Act-funded labor exchange activities in accordance with United States Department of Labor (USDOL) regulations. The LWDB’s management team provides oversight of daily functions and delivery of Wagner Peyser functions and services in coordination with all other programs. Employment services are integrated in WIOA, WT, SNAP, and business services

through local procedures, daily operations, and delivery of programs.

Per FloridaCommerce, within six months of hire, all front-line staff must successfully pass the TOPYX (online) Tier I certification exam to be considered certified and proficient to assist job seekers and employers. Annual continuing education training updates are required, and training affords a means to provide cross-training opportunities. Locally, new staff members are encouraged to complete the training during the first 90 days of employment coinciding with the probationary period for the positions. The Tier II certification is encouraged and includes WIOA, Wagner-Peyser, TAA, Migrant Seasonal Farm Worker, Veteran Services, WT, and SNAP programs. In addition, management and center staff participate in on-site and web-based trainings, provided by FloridaCommerce, to keep abreast of new employment policies, service delivery and best practices.

Each LWDB career center has a Resource Room equipped with computers for customer use. Any individual interested in filing an RA benefit claim may connect to the state's online system to complete the application and subsequent work registration process. Career center staff members are available to assist customers with general computer and RA application questions. The career centers are equipped with telephones which customers may use to contact a representative for initial claims questions and assistance.

The Reemployment Assistance claimants are registered in Employ Florida (EF) when applying for benefits. Any individual who visits the career center or utilizes the LWDB's web site may receive reemployment assistance services regardless of whether the individual has filed an RA claim. The intent of the RA system is to ensure that individuals applying for benefits understand it is required to register and complete the required number of job searches per week.

EF provides a single statewide integrated system to track self-service and staff assisted employment services for workers, job seekers and businesses. In addition, the LWDB utilizes an electronic filing system (ATLAS) that, like EF, is internet-based and can be accessed from any location. ATLAS provides customers' documents (case records), visits to the centers, and activities conducted online and in the career centers. The systems are utilized by all LWDB management staff and workforce staff and promote coordination and reduce duplication of services.

- (8) Coordination of Adult Education and Literacy:** Describe how the LWDB coordinates WIOA Title I workforce investment activities with adult education and literacy activities under WIOA Title II. This description must include how the LWDB carries out the review of local applications submitted under Title II WIOA § 108(b)(10), consistent with WIOA sections 107(d)(11)(A) and (B)(i) and WIOA § 232 (20 CFR 679.560(b)(12)).

Adult Education and Literacy programs work collaboratively with Board management and success coaches to provide adult education services in each of the five counties. MOUs are executed between the LWDB and the Adult Education and Literacy programs. WIOA, Welfare Transition, SNAP, and other career center customers benefit from these partner services to obtain a secondary diploma or the GED and subsequently transition to postsecondary education and training or employment.

Local processes are in place for cross-referrals and outcomes to maximize student access and achievement. Use and sharing of information, resources, and cooperative efforts with employers increase coordinated success. Career center assessments identify individuals who are basic skills deficient; or do not meet grade levels to enter training; or do not have a high school diploma. These are significant barriers to employment and educational information is provided to the individuals. The career center staff members coordinate with partner programs and provide eligible individuals with tuition, supplies, and testing, or refer individuals to financial aid resources, as appropriate.

WIOA requires LWDBs to coordinate with eligible Adult Education and Literacy providers and review applications to determine whether they are aligned with the local plan and make recommendations to the Florida Department of Education (DOE) tasked with administering adult education alignment. The LWDB reviews the applications to provide adult education and literacy activities under WIOA for the local area and determines whether such applications are consistent with the local plan and provides recommendations to the eligible agency to promote alignment with such plan.

(9) Reduction of Welfare Dependency: Describe how the LWDB coordinates workforce investment activities to reduce welfare dependency, particularly regarding how services are delivered to TANF/Welfare Transition and SNAP E&T participants, to help individuals become self-sufficient. This description must include:

(a) How the CLIFF suite of tools is used to support the case management of participants, consistent with CareerSource Florida Strategic Policy 2023.06.07.A.5;

Local strategies for programmatic implementation and usage tracking of the CLIFF Tool Suite are reflected in the local workforce development board's operating policies and career center staff have been trained on the policy and usage of the CLIFF tool. The Resource Room is set up to allow for easy access to the CLIFF tool for customers.

A Local Operating Procedure (LOP) on the required usage of the CLIFF Tool for all Career Center staff was developed and training was conducted on the LOP.

The Florida Career Ladder Identifier and Financial Forecaster (CLIFF) Dashboard information tool is utilized by the LWDB one-stop center staff to assist Floridians in visualizing how returning to work or upskilling to a higher-paying occupation could impact their future earnings and public benefits as their household progresses along the path to self-sufficiency.

Career managers and center staff members use the tool with customers based on where they are currently along an estimated 'crisis-stability range'.

- CLIFF Snapshot is for those needing immediate assistance in stabilizing their financial situation.
- CLIFF Dashboard focuses on mitigating benefits cliffs for individuals on public assistance as they earn more money and proceed along their path to self-sufficiency.

- **CLIFF Financial Planner allows for a more detailed examination of the mechanics of a household's finances.**

The LWDB uses the CLIFF Tool Suite to:

- **Better understand specific gaps and barriers faced by each client.**
- **Identify specific wraparound support services needed and assist clients in obtaining needed services through partner referrals or leveraging existing resources at local workforce development boards.**
- **Heighten awareness among all stakeholders of information useful for shaping each partner's role in the strategic and tactical approach to a given client's situation.**
- **Prompt exploration—by both individual stakeholders and groups of partners—into opportunities to organize, sequence, and assess the overall set of activities performed by one or more partners in support of their shared customers, particularly around partner resource planning and collaborative service provision.**

- (b) Information and data on activities related to initiatives in the local area that support the self-sufficiency of public benefit recipients (i.e., Hope Florida); and**

The LWDB requires WT and SNAP customers to register in EF for job search purposes. The LWDB assigns all mandatory participants to participate in the required number of hours appropriate to the program services are received through, i.e., TANF/WT or SNAP. These activities include Job Search and Job Readiness, Community Service/Work Experience, Vocational Education and Training, Job Skills Training Directly Related to Employment, Satisfactory Attendance at a Secondary School or Course of Study Leading to a GED.

For participants interested in training services, success coaches coordinate services to determine a plethora of funding resources to allow for completion and certification in a targeted occupation leading to self-sufficient employment. In this manner, multiple funding streams may be utilized to provide funding for books, tuition, fees, and supportive services. Tracking systems are in place to ensure duplication of services does not occur.

Hope Florida – A Pathway to Promise strengthens coordination between DCF and Florida's LWDBs to better assist eligible Floridians with overcoming barriers to education, training, and employment. Under the Hope Florida – A Pathway to Promise initiative, a referral process involving regional DCF offices and LWDBs was established and specialized services and programming are made available using these funds to help Hope Florida program participants find jobs, enroll in training, and launch new career pathways that lead to self-sufficiency and, ultimately, to economic prosperity. Through the UniteUs platform, LWDBs can refer potential clients in need of immediate support to address barriers and challenges not related

to employment or training to other entities to access resources that are beyond the allowability of WIOA funding. The LWDB also has the ability to reject referrals as

well.

- (c) Strategies and services used in the local area to support co-enrollment of Welfare Transition and SNAP E&T participants into other workforce development programs. 20 CFR 675.100(h) and 20 CFR 680.620.

For the LWDB, the ultimate goal for all workforce programs, including Welfare Transition and SNAP E&T, is “employment.” Teamwork between programs allows case staffing to determine how best to serve the participant, provide funding and resources that will ensure successful completion of activities or training, and allow for self-sufficient employment. Once the participant is determined work ready, staff work to ensure that he/she has a quality resume, understands the expectations from employers, and ready to take the next step into building a career pathway.

PERFORMANCE & EFFECTIVENESS

The local workforce plan must include:

- (1) The local levels of performance negotiated with the Governor and chief local elected official(s) with WIOA § 116(c), to be used to measure the performance of the local area and to be used by the LWDB for measuring the performance of the local fiscal agent (where appropriate), eligible providers under WIOA Title I Subtitle B, and the one-stop delivery system in the local area. (WIOA §108(b)(17) and 20 CFR 679.560(16)(b)).

LWDB 03 CareerSource Chipola WIOA Performance Measures	PY2022 Negotiated Performance Levels	PY2023 Negotiated Performance Levels
Adults:		
Employed 2nd Qtr. After Exit	94.1%	94.1%
Employed 4th Qtr. After Exit	88.2%	88.2%
Median Wage 2nd Quarter After Exit	\$8,215	\$8,215
Credential Attainment Rate	86.7%	86.7%
Measurable Skill Gains	76.0%	76.0%
Dislocated Workers:		
Employed 2nd Qtr. After Exit	72.0%	72.0%
Employed 4th Qtr. After Exit	71.8%	71.8%
Median Wage 2nd Quarter After Exit	\$7,682	\$7,682
Credential Attainment Rate	75.0%	75.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	70.0%	70.0%

Youth:		
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Employed 2nd Qtr. After Exit	81.2%	81.2%
Employed 4th Qtr. After Exit	78.7%	78.7%
Median Wage 2nd Quarter After Exit	\$3,957	\$3,957
Credential Attainment Rate	68.2%	68.2%
Measurable Skill Gains	34.8%	34.8%

Wagner-Peyser:		
Employed 2nd Qtr. After Exit	67.5%	67.5%
Employed 4th Qtr. After Exit	67.5%	67.5%
Median Wage 2nd Quarter After Exit	\$4,282	\$4,282

- (2) Actions the LWDB will take toward becoming or remaining a high- performing board, consistent with the factors developed by the state board pursuant to WIOA §101(d)(6).

A high level of performance for the WIOA goals will be accomplished by local monitoring and evaluations of services/processes and training for continuous improvement. All programs are monitored internally during the year and financially, on a weekly basis. Performance reporting data retrieved from reporting systems assist management with measuring and determining staff productivity and setting individual staff performance goals. Worksite training (customized training, work experience/OJT/employed worker training) is being promoted to ramp up WIOA services to employers and job seekers. Front-line staff members are required to have skills in customer service, communication, computer use, and specific programmatic training, as well as receive the 15 hours continuing education training annually.

Staff members working in the centers are placed in teams focusing on areas of importance to performance. Each team has targeted tasks designed to improve services and outcomes within the LWDB.

- (3) How the LWDB considered feedback from one-stop career center customers when evaluating the effectiveness of its one-stop career centers.

Customer satisfaction surveys provide feedback to identify areas needing improvement. Customer comments provide valuable input concerning gaps in the provision of training services and resolution is readily implemented. The LWDB's career center system is committed to providing job seekers and employers with a complete array of labor market and work preparation services. The design and delivery of core workforce development services are universally accessible to all individuals and employer customers. The goals are to support business growth by connecting employers to a well-prepared local labor force, foster strong work preparation skills, and to empower job seekers with the information and support they need to make an informed decision leading to permanent, long-time work. These goals are supported by knowledgeable staff, in a flexible and adaptable environment with a commitment to customer-based continuous improvement. The LWDB listens to the needs of the individuals and employers and makes changes as needed.

(4) Actions the LWDB took to implement and assess the use and effectiveness of the following WIOA waiver(s) in effect for Florida, if applicable.

(a) Waiver associated with the requirement at WIOA § 129(a)(4)(A) and 20 CFR 681.410 that State and local areas expend 75 percent of local formula youth funds on out-of-school youth. The response should include programmatic outcomes including the increase of:

- a. Youth that attained a measurable skill gain;
For Program Year 2023 – Quarter 3, the performance was 61.54 (goal was 34.80).
- b. Youth that attended post-secondary education; **The LWDB had two youth participants who were exited as entered post-secondary education.**
- c. Youth that participated in occupational skills training; **The LWDB assisted 13 youth who were enrolled in occupational skills training.**
- d. ISY who participated in work experience opportunities; **The LWDB had one youth who participated in in-school youth work experience.**
- e. Youth that earned an industry-recognized credential.
For Program Year 2023 – Quarter 3, the performance was 58.62 (goal was 68.20).

(b) Waiver of 20 CFR 681.550 to allow WIOA individual training accounts (ITAs) for in-school youth (ISY). The response should include programmatic outcomes including:

- a. Improved response of the LWDB and youth providers' to the workforce needs of ISY;
The majority of youth enrolled in training are dual-enrolled and attending post-secondary education while still in high school. In this manner, there is no cost for tuition. This also ensures that youth can leave high school with a credential and enter into the workforce or continue their training post-graduation. This addresses the needs of employers who need workers.
- b. Increased number of youth that utilized an ITA to pursue an industry-recognized post-secondary credential; **The LWDB saw an increase in nine participants that pursued a post-secondary credential.**
- c. Increased access to and engagement of ISY in need of post-secondary education, training and support to succeed in the labor market; and
The LWDB launched a program in 2023-2024 where staff go into the schools in the five-county service area and provide employment information as it compares to education, employment opportunities in the local area by bringing in employers to speak to the youth, career exploration through Virtual Reality goggles, how to set achievable goals, financial literacy, labor market information, etc. This program continues to gain traction in the

local area with students and school staff.

- d. Increased number of prepared youth candidates who are ready to fill high growth industry demand in the State and local area. **The LWDB had 11 youth that completed their training in demand occupations and who were ready to fill jobs in areas of great need.**

REGIONAL PLAN REQUIREMENTS

LWDBs in an identified planning region will have to work together to formulate a regional plan as an addendum to each of their local plans. Once identified, planning regions will remain in effect if federal and state requirements for planning regions continue to be met. With each submission of the regional plan to the state, the respective LWDBs and chief local elected official(s) will certify that the requirements to be identified as a planning region continue to be met. The regional plan must include:

- (1) **Names of the LWDAs that comprise the planning area.** ([Administrative Policy 123: Regional Planning Area Identification and Requirements](#))

The Local Workforce Development Areas that comprise the Northwest Florida Workforce Collective (WIOA Regional Planning Area) include:

Region 1- CareerSource Escarosa (Escambia and Santa Rosa Counties), Region 2- CareerSource Okaloosa Walton (Okaloosa and Walton Counties), Region 3- CareerSource Chipola (Washington, Holmes, Liberty, Jackson, and Calhoun Counties), and Region 4-CareerSource Gulf Coast (Bay, Gulf, Franklin Counties).

- (2) **Description of how the planning region shares a single labor market, shares a common economic development area and possesses federal and non-federal resources, including appropriate education and training institutions, to administer activities under WIOA, subtitle B.** ([Administrative Policy 123: Regional Planning Area Identification and Requirements](#))

The area that comprises the Northwest Florida Workforce Collective (or RPA) share industries from aerospace to logistics to advanced manufacturing. The western communities have more concentrated industries in financial services, information technology, and advanced manufacturing, such as chemicals, medical technology, and turbine manufacturing. Eastern communities in the Florida Panhandle have a higher concentration in logistics, textile manufacturing, forest products manufacturing, and ship and boat building. The LWDAs that make up the twelve-county planning region share a regional economic development area supported by Florida's Great Northwest, a regional economic development organization, and work closely with county economic development organizations as well as Opportunity Florida, a multi-county an economic development organization that serves rural counties throughout Northwest Florida.

NORTHWEST FLORIDA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATIONS

- [Bay Economic Development Alliance](#)
- [Calhoun County Chamber of Commerce](#)

- [One Okaloosa EDC](#)
- [Franklin County](#)
- [FloridaWest](#) (Escambia County)
- [Gulf County Economic Development Coalition](#)
- [Holmes County Development Commission](#)
- [Jackson County Economic Development Committee](#)
- [Liberty County Chamber of Commerce](#)
- [Opportunity Florida](#)
- [Santa Rosa Economic Development Office](#)
- [Walton County EDA](#)
- [Washington County EDC](#)

The Northwest Florida Workforce Collective is home to multiple training providers in Pensacola, Okaloosa, Walton, Marianna, Chipley, and in Panama City that are accessible to customers seeking training opportunities that share a blend of resources to provide for training (grants, scholarships, PELL, WIOA, etc.) The Collective is made up of local workforce development boards, each of which possess federal and non-federal resources and works closely with a number of education and training institutions which provide training for WIOA sponsored participants.

NFWC Training Providers

Escarosa	Applied Technology Academy
Escarosa	Applied Technology Academy
Escarosa	CDL of AL
Escarosa	Coastal Alabama Community College
Escarosa	Fortis Institute
Escarosa	George Stone Technical College
Escarosa	Locklin Technical College
Escarosa	New Horizons Computer Learning Center
Escarosa	Nursing Bridges Institute
Escarosa	Pensacola State College
Escarosa	Reid State Technical College
Escarosa	Security Services Training Institute
Escarosa	Sky Warrior
Escarosa	Truck Driver Institute
Escarosa	University of West Florida
Okaloosa Walton	Applied Technology Academy
Okaloosa Walton	Embry Riddle Aeronautical University

Okaloosa Walton	Emerald Coast Technical College
Okaloosa Walton	Fortis Institute
Okaloosa Walton	Fleet Force Truck Dr. School at N/W Florida State College
Okaloosa Walton	New Horizons of Orlando
Okaloosa Walton	Northwest Florida State College
Okaloosa Walton	Okaloosa Technical College
Okaloosa Walton	LT3 Academy
Okaloosa Walton	Truck Driver Institute (TDI)
Okaloosa Walton	University of West Florida
Chipola	Chipola College
Chipola	Fleet Force
Chipola	Florida Panhandle Technical College
Chipola	Gulf Coast State College
Chipola	Lively Technical Center
Chipola	Wallace College
Gulf Coast	Gulf Coast State College
Gulf Coast	Tom P. Haney Technical College
Gulf Coast	Florida Panhandle Technical College
Gulf Coast	Tallahassee Community College
Gulf Coast	SkillStorm
Gulf Coast	FleetForce Truck Dr. @NW FI State College

(3) Analysis of regional and local population centers, commuting patterns, industrial composition, location quotients, labor force conditions, and geographic boundaries. ([Administrative Policy 123: Regional Planning Area Identification and Requirements](#))

Data was compiled and analyzed by Ernst and Youth and provided to early implementer regional planning areas. Please see this information in the Addendum Attachment A-1 of the Ernst and Young Data Book for the Northwest Florida Workforce Collective Regional Planning Area.

(4) Description of the established regional service strategies using cooperative service delivery agreements that include but are not limited to:

(a) Consistent eligibility standards and enrollment processes.

While our eligibility standards vary at this time, the variances are allowed by WIOA law and are determined by each LWDB based on factors such as funding, the local economy and employment data; ultimately it is the goal of the NFWC to adopt the same eligibility standards as possible whenever feasible. Our enrollment processes currently are aligned and follow the same flow. It is important to note that our processes are driven by a goal to assist as many

individuals with WIOA and other workforce services as funding will allow (in terms of training programs) and as possible. Please see attachment A-2 for customer flow/enrollment.

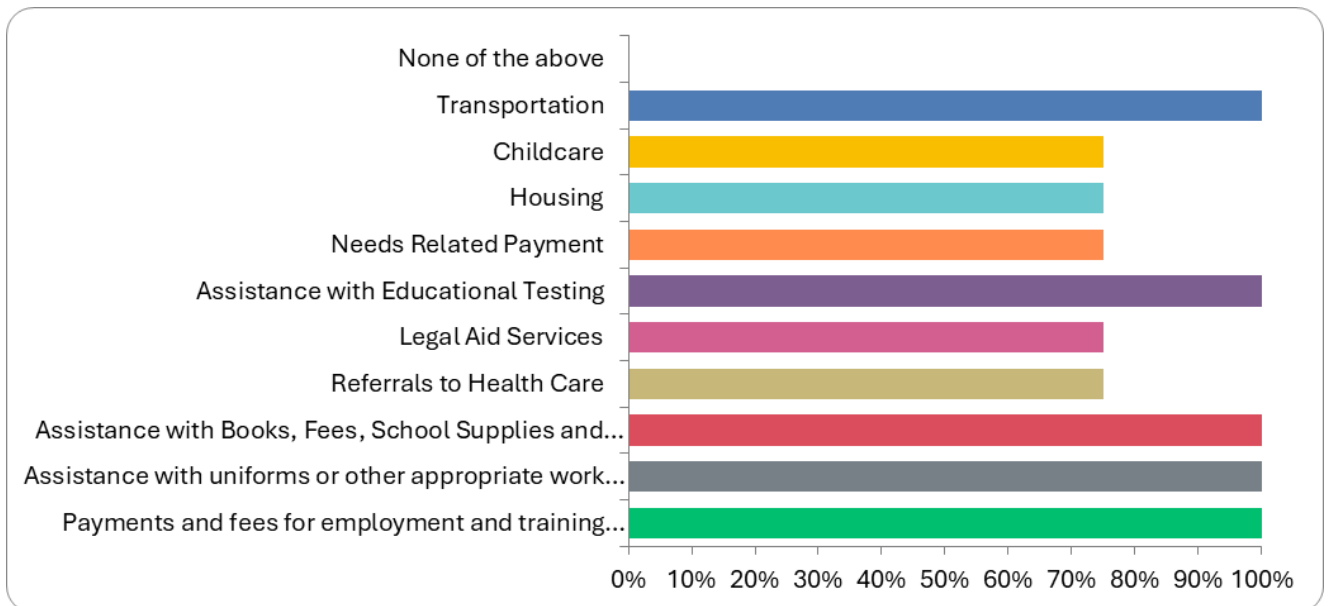
(b) Common training and coordination of supportive service offerings, as appropriate.

The NFWC utilizes common training providers and supports the use of training providers across the regional planning area when appropriate (outside of local workforce board boundaries). NFWC boards utilize the ETPL applications of each board for local approval to the ETPL. In terms of supportive Services, we have inventoried the following supportive services by LWDB as a starting point to align these services more closely. Our next step is to establish consistency wherever possible. Additionally, the NFWC has already begun sharing staff training throughout the RPA. Developing training, providing training, developing policies and procedural instructions are all time consuming and staff heavy. We plan to coordinate as much of this work as possible for efficient use of our limited staffs' time. We believe that RPA-wide training will promote more sharing of best practices and provide not only better trained staff, but also better customer outcomes.

All four regions offer the following supportive services: transportation; assistance with educational testing; Payments and fees for employment and training-related applications, tests, and certifications; Assistance with uniforms or other appropriate work

attire and work-related tools, and payments and fees for employment and training related application, tests, and certifications.

Three of the four regions also offer the following supportive services: Childcare, Housing assistance, Needs Related Payments, Legal Aid Services, and Referrals to Healthcare. Please note that CareerSource Chipola doesn't offer these supportive services.



As a newly formed RPA, we are working to more closely align our supportive services offerings, by information sharing regarding the utilization of common community resources such as United Way partner agencies, churches, homeless organizations, shelters, substance disorder rehabilitation facilities, transportation disadvantaged agencies, and other partners. In the rural counties of our RPA, supportive services and the availability of services through other partners. The availability of both transportation and childcare is challenging across the entire RPA, more so in workforce regions 2-4.

(c) Common technology tools and sharing of data within tools outside of Employ Florida.

Across the planning area, LWDBs use a variety of data tools and technology platforms to support both staff and customers. As an RPA we have completed an inventory of the current technology tools/platforms that each LWDB utilizes in order to prioritize programs where consolidating to one contract as an RPA might have value. We are also aware that the state is working toward this effort and last December passed the Statewide Standardization of Tools and Services policy. The NFWC will continue to review subscriptions and vendor contracts to look for efficiencies, while CareerSource Florida also analyzes this information to do the same on a statewide level. Data sharing is already common in our RPA, as we share reporting formats, performance data and tools where possible.

Technology and Service Platforms by LWDB:

	CareerSource Escarosa	CareerSource Okaloosa Walton	CareerSource Chipola	CareerSource Gulf Coast
Document Storage	EF, OneDrive, SharePoint	Atlas	Atlas	EF, One Drive, Sharepoint
Forms	Microsoft Forms, Formstack, NITRO Sign	Atlas, Right Signature	Docu-sign Atlas Adobe	Adobe Professional
LMI	EF, Plans for Lightcast	Jobs EQ via Opportunity Florida and EF	Jobs EQ via Opportunity Florida and EF	FloridaJobs.org, Opportunity Florida, FGNW
Accounting	MIP	MIP and Gazelle for client services	MIP	MIP
Marketing	Constant Contact, Canva free version	Canva, Constant Contact and free Social Media platforms	Canva	Canva, Survey Monkey, Mail Chimp, Adobe Creative Suite
IT Software	Trend Micro Antivirus	Microsoft 365, Adobe, and Barracuda	Citrix, Office 365, Barracuda, CarbonBlack (protection, KnowBe4, Docusi	MS Office 365, Deep Freeze, Barracuda Firewall, Absolute Resiliency, Symantec Antivirus, Freshdesk

Programmatic Tools	Work Number, Salesforce	Pathful Explorer, Traitify, Fast Forward, IBM Talent Management System, Skills First Optimal Resume, Career Edge(Youth), Virtual Job Shadowing	Employ Florida, OSST, FL COMM tools Aspiring Minds	Acuity Scheduling, IXL Learning, Talevation, Udemy, WorkNumber, Pathful Explorer, Zoom, Indeed Resume Subscription, Unite Us
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(5) Description of sector strategies for existing and emerging in-demand sectors or occupations. (20 CFR 679.560(a)(1)(ii))

a) Convening/support of convening of regional employers, foundations, institutions and other stakeholders to create or maintains sector partnerships

- The NFWC will support Florida’s Great Northwest’ strategic initiative Northwest Florida FORWARD 2.0 which will include business and industry, education, economic development and chamber organizations, infrastructure officials and government and elected officials. These regional stakeholders will come together to:
- Revisit the strategies and tactics from FORWARD 1.0 in 2017; create a new, clear plan for a path to greater success for each of the five areas of focus
- Complete a SWOT for the region’s current economic landscape using similar regional and local (including similar MSA sizes and rural counties) comparisons to conduct a gap analysis and to identify opportunities for increased competitiveness
- Conduct a SWOT based on a review of relevant cluster initiatives already in progress locally and at the state level and an understanding of state, national, and global trends
- Gather new data related to Northwest Florida’s target industry sectors and identify gaps in areas such as talent, site size/acreage, building square footage needs, logistics, etc. needed in those sectors
- FGNW will serve in the role as regional convener for the plan, not full implementor
- Assist in a workshop to pull regional players together in the five focus areas to gain buy-in and chart path forward/

b) Identify/describe the established and active sector partnerships in the planning region.

Current sector partnerships are not well defined but operate informally with support from local and regional economic development and chamber organizations.

Connections made between like industries have been, in large part, made by local and Regional economic development organizations or education-related advisory Councils. There have been past attempts to build industry sector partnerships and Apprenticeships around apprenticeship/training programs within each LWDA, but Those have not been sustainable. It is anticipated that the Florida Forward 2.0 will Help revive and create stronger industry sector partnerships.

(6) Description of the collection and analysis of regional labor market data (in conjunction with the state).

Labor market and industry data were compiled and provided by Ernst and Young as well as Florida's Great Northwest. The NFWC is comprised of three Core-Based Metro statistical areas which are Panama City, Pensacola-Ferry Pass-Brent, Crestview-Fort Walton Beach-Destin across a twelve- county geography. The RPA boasts a labor force of approximately 530,000 individuals, with an average unemployment rate of 3.5 percent (June 2024 LAUS data). Commuting patterns indicate a fluid workforce which commutes between the twelve counties of the RPA and beyond. Targeted Sector industries that LWDA 1 and 2 share are engineering, information technology and logistics. LWDA 1 has more financial services than LWDA 2, which is predominantly due to the Navy Federal's operations campus in Pensacola. Secondly, LWDAs 3 and 4 have more ship and boat building than LWDA 2 from manufacturers such as Eastern Shipbuilding, in Panama City, and Xtreme Boats, in Bonifay.

Florida targeted sectors shared by LWDAs 2 and 4 are logistics, ship and boat manufacturing and professional services. The Florida target sector industries that LWDAs 2 and 3 share are scientific research, professional services, financial services, and logistics. Region 3's target industry sector industries have more manufacturing and logistics, while LWDA 4 has more professional services and chemical manufacturing. For example, LWDA 1 has more metropolitan stational areas that have a higher concentration of corporate headquarters, such as LandrumHR and AppRiver, than traditional rural communities.

- (7) Description of the planning region's coordination of administrative cost arrangements, including the pooling of funds for administrative costs, as appropriate.

Currently, the four LWDB's do not coordinate or pool administrative resources. In the past, there have been shared positions within the RPA, but through attrition those arrangements were not sustainable. While cost pooling is not currently being coordinated, it is something that regional partners are interested in for efficiency-where possible in the future. There is still much to work out for these situations to come to fruition, including indirect cost rates and how those factor into operations and combined grant submission efforts and even for "group" procurement of needed services/goods. The NFWC believes that coordinating administrative cost arrangements is important for the future of the RPA and continues to work toward this goal

- (8) Description of the planning region's coordination of transportation and other supportive services, as appropriate.

All LWDAs in the RPA provide financially for transportation as a supportive service if there is no other agency that can assist, although public transportation options are extremely limited within the RPA area. There are no common transportation vendors throughout the RPA, and all LWDAs in the RPA provide gas cards, reimburse for mileage or by public transportation passes in order to ensure that customers have a way to get to critical workforce related appointments, training, or their work-based training site. Some regions have also invested in electric scooters or bicycles as a source of transportation for customers.

(a) What regional organizations currently provide or could provide supportive services?

The only RPA wide transportation service is the transportation disadvantaged program.

(b) What policies and procedures will be established to promote coordination of supportive services delivery?

The NFWC has already begun to compare and inventory policies and procedures in order to coordinate a variety of functions including the provision of supportive services. Our goal is to offer the same types of services that are procedurally aligned, funds permitting. Our supportive service policies are already very similar and staff are working to align them even further.

(9) Description of the planning region's coordination of services with regional economic development services and providers.

All the counties within the Northwest Florida Workforce Collective are also represented by the regional economic development organization Florida's Great Northwest (FGNW). In addition, all four local areas within the NFWC are members of FGNW. One representative from LWDBs also serves as a member of the FGNW executive committee per the organization's by-laws.

Eight of the twelve counties represented in the NFWC are part of Florida's first Governor designated Rural Area of Opportunity. These eight counties are also represented by the rural development organization Opportunity Florida. Three of the four local areas are members of Opportunity Florida and participate in the organization. Opportunity Florida and FGWN work together, and share resources, leads, and strategic initiatives.

Both FGNW and Opportunity Florida have public and private membership and welcome active participation from the local boards. The NFWC and the two economic development organizations have strong connections. The Executive Director for FGNW is housed in the same office space as CareerSource Gulf Coast. CareerSource Chipola serves as the management staff for Opportunity Florida.

(10) Description of the planning region's establishment of an agreement concerning how the planning region will collectively negotiate and reach agreement with FloridaCommerce on local levels of performance for, and report on, the performance accountability measures described in WIOA Sec. 116(c) for local areas or the planning region.

The four local areas within the NFWC all have an extensive history of positive performance. Upon release of the Statistical Adjustment by FloridaCommerce, each of the local areas have agreed to have selected management-level staff work together to evaluate regional performance levels and develop a counter-proposal, if deemed necessary, to performance levels proposed by FloridaCommerce. Any proposal from the Consortium will take into consideration changes in both local and regional economies that may impact future performance.

(11) Description of the planning region's strategy to prepare an educated and skilled workforce (including youth and individuals with barriers to employment) to meet the needs of the employers.

The Northwest Florida Workforce Collective (NFWC) will employ an objective and coherent strategy to prepare an educated and skilled workforce to meet the needs of

employers located in its planning regions. Please see data Attachment _ that will continue to inform the work of the NFWC about preparing an educated and skilled workforce.

NFWC recognizes that the major need of regional businesses is to more readily find available qualified, educated and skilled individuals who are equipped with the worker readiness skills necessary to meet their business needs. NFWC with the help of the partner Florida's Great Northwest (FGNW) is adopting eight guideposts to support the goal of a vibrant talent pipeline that includes all types of workers.

Education, nor any other single organization can address the talent pipeline as a single entity. On the contrary, to move the needle in a positive direction to solving the education and skills gaps concerns, NFWC considers in its strategy some of the peripheral elements that may negatively impact a jobseeker, worker, and a youth or young adults' ability to attain the education or training they need. When planning for education or training to fill workforce vacancies, NFWC will include the guideposts as a reference when making decisions on the allocation of limited resources.

Peripheral elements considered in the guideposts include transportation, housing, childcare, etc. These elements can directly impact an individual's ability to attain their education or training goal and must be considered. Job seekers continue to be challenged by a lack of affordable housing, transportation, and childcare. Despite notable improvements over time, access to affordable and responsive transportation remains an obstacle for many who are transitioning into or reentering the workforce. NFWC will continue to advocate for and expand its partnership with applicable local community entities to move forward with solutions to these barriers to employment. The development of the guideposts takes all of these issues into consideration as part of developing and sustaining a talent pipeline.

GUIDEPOST 1

[Early Work Experience: Early exposure to the world of work through summer and year-round employment, internships, and service opportunities is a key predictor of consistent employment in adulthood.](#) *Programs that provide these opportunities can help prepare youth and young adults for the workforce. Benefits include long lasting career benefits, development of soft skills, exploration of career interests, improved financial literacy, and personal growth. The importance of an early work experience in shaping a youth's career trajectory and personal development should not be discounted.*

GUIDEPOST 2

[Education and Training: Access to educational and career pathways and jobs that allow youth and young adults to earn an income while they learn and build careers is crucial.](#) Education and training are essential tools for closing occupational gaps. They *provide individuals with the skills and knowledge necessary to succeed* in their roles, foster loyalty and retention, and contribute to economic growth and equality.

GUIDEPOST 3

[Address Systemic Barriers: It's important to address systemic barriers that hinder an individual's employment, such as lack of access to transportation, affordable childcare and gender inequality. Advocating for policies to providing support for job seekers/workers entering non-traditional occupations via training can be beneficial.](#) Addressing systemic barriers is crucial for creating a stronger talent pipeline and involves a multi-faceted approach that includes policy changes, data-

driven decision-making, and targeted support for marginalized groups.

GUIDEPOST 4

[Support for Disconnected Youth: Disconnection from school and work increases after high school. Therefore, targeted support for disconnected youth, including those not in school and without a post-secondary degree, can help improve their job prospects.](#) These initiatives are designed to help disconnected youth overcome barriers and acquire the skills necessary to secure and maintain employment, thereby positively contributing to the labor market.

GUIDEPOST 5

Local Labor Market Trends: Understanding local labor market trends in the RPA is key. For instance, working closely with economic development partners to recognize emerging and growing industry sectors and the work based, on the job, and training-based opportunities is key to providing awareness of these growing industries across the RPA.

GUIDEPOST 6

Workforce Development:

Workforce development is a key component of any successful strategy. Workforce development programs increase job satisfaction, operational efficiency, and innovative thinking. These programs also reduce turnover rates, improve productivity, and proactively solve problems as they arise. Workforce, education and economic development partners should help industry understand these types of programs and the results they yield. These programs may include job development or understanding accommodations for those with differing abilities.

GUIDEPOST 7

[Collaboration with Local Employers: Collaborating with local employers to develop a business-focused talent pipeline is critical in order to ensure that the needs of business are understood.](#) *Aligning education and training programs according to employer needs is key to ensuring that education/training completers emerge ready to work.*

GUIDEPOST 8

Support Services: Support services play a crucial role in workforce development providing comprehensive support services, such as career counseling, job placement assistance, transportation, and post-placement support, can help youth, young adults, disabled and other job seekers overcome barriers to employment and succeed in the workforce. Support services in the workforce can lead to a more productive, diverse, and stable workforce, benefiting both the employees and the organization.

(12) Description of the local strategies, policies and improvements to enhance consistency and coordination within the planning region and help streamline experiences for job seekers, workers and businesses, allowing a more agile workforce system to better adapt to changing marketplace and consumer expectations.

Borrowing on the strength of each LWDB, management can share strategies, policies and improvements needed to enhance the service delivery and help streamline experiences for both job seekers and businesses. A lead from the front approach will better prepare and support staff in the efforts to react positively to marketplace changes and consumers' expectations of our system.

(13) Description of the steps that will be taken to support the state's efforts to align and integrate education, workforce and economic development, including:

- (a) Fostering the improvement and expansion of employer-driven regional sector partnerships to increase the focus on critical in-demand occupations in key sectors that are the engine of economic growth for the state and its planning region.

LWDAs are uniquely positioned to support and implement targeted industry sectors with our partners in education and economic development. The NFWC has a vast array of state, regional and local partners to assist the RPA in determining which sectors are the most viable and to review and provide input into sector-based initiatives, and the best mix of services including recruitment, hiring, training, work-based training and the use of registered apprenticeships. Our partners in regional and local economic development programs also provide opportunities to work with prospective employers who are seeking to locate in the region as well as existing employers who may be expanding or struggling.

- (b) Expanding career pathway opportunities through more accelerated and work-based training and aligning and integrate programs of study leading to industry-recognized credentials and improved employment and earnings.

The deep and long-serving connections between the local area members of the Northwest Florida Workforce Collective (the Collective) and two regional private sector-driven economic development organizations combined with strong local ties to private sector employers place the NFWC in an excellent position to forecast employer needs well into the future. Appropriate management-level staff will share efforts within the NFWC and then share lessons learned with their local staff and board of directors.

When appropriate, representatives from members of the NFWC will work together in seeking funding to expand opportunities for work-based training aligned with industry needs. A key focus of regional training initiatives will be to develop opportunities providing those trained with industry-recognized credentials that provide the individual with additional employment options with their current employer, or within targeted industry sectors.

- (c) Expanding career services and opportunities for populations facing multiple barriers to educational attainment and economic advancement.

The NFWC member regions have a long-standing history of serving populations facing multiple barriers to both educational attainment and economic advancement. Geographically, the NFWC is made up of roughly two thirds of RPA consisting of rural communities. There are limited services and many extraordinary barriers to employment; the two largest barriers being transportation and childcare. Furthermore, rural communities have fewer service agencies overall. Often LWDBs are the one stop shop for all services with the exception of the health department. Our offices are located in the majority of the counties we serve, and if not with a full- time office hours with staff that are on site at least one or two days per week. Our locations are often located in the heart of or near underserved communities and we partner with the few local organizations which can support those in need in order to help them become job or training ready. In our larger metro areas, we have comprehensive centers and staff equipped to assist those with an interest in training on site at the training location, at our office and/or

virtually. As a RPA our Chief Operating Officers are meeting to review and share best practices on many workforce topics such as this one. While we believe we have fully expanded services and opportunities to populations with multiple barriers, we will continue to explore better ways to serve our most vulnerable populations.