

Region VII Workforce Development Board Strategic Plan

July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2028

Eastern Panhandle Counties of

**Berkeley* Grant* Hampshire* Hardy* Jefferson
* Mineral* Morgan* Pendleton**

**Region VII Workforce Development Board
151 Robert C. Byrd Industrial Park Road, Suite 2
Moorefield, WV 26836
Phone: (304) 530-5258
Fax: (304) 530-5107
Web-site: www.wvregion7workforce.org**

**Honorable Stephen Catlett
Chief Local Elected Official**

**Ms. Layne Diehl
Chairperson**

**Dr. Thomas J. Van Meter
Executive Director**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	5
Process for Plan Submittal	5
Key Dates	6
Organizational Structure	6
Strategic Planning	10
Alignment of the Local Workforce Development System	26
American Job Center Delivery System	33
Title I - Adult, Youth, and Dislocated Worker Functions	45
Wagner Peyser Functions	56
Title II - Adult Education and Family Literacy Functions	58
Vocational Rehabilitation Functions	63
Jobs for Veterans State Grant Functions	66
Fiscal, Performance, and Other Functions	68
Regional Analysis	90
Regional Sector Strategies	91
Regional Service Strategies	92
Coordination with Regional Economic Development Organizations	93
Coordination of Transportation and/or Other Support Services	94
Regional Cost Arrangements	94
Regional Performance Negotiation	94
Signature Page	95

ATTACHMENTS:

- A. Local Elected Officials Agreement and Memorandum of Understanding between Local Elected Officials and the Region VII Workforce Development Board
- B. Region VII Workforce Development Board Bylaws
- C. Contract for Fiscal/Administrative Services between Eastern Panhandle Instructional Cooperative, Inc. and the Region VII Workforce Development Board
- D.** Meeting Schedules
- E. Region VII Organizational Chart
- F. Region VII WDB Procurement Policy
- G. Region VII WDB Priority of Service Policy
- H. Region VII WDB Incumbent Worker Training Policy
- I. Region VII WDB Supportive Service Policy
- J. Region VII WDB Low Income for Eligibility Policy
- K. Region VII WDB WIOA Youth Additional Assistance Policy
- L. Region VII WDB Individual Training Account (ITA) Policy
- M. Region VII WDB Monitoring Policy
- N. Region VII WDB Grievance Policy and Procedures
- O. EO Discrimination Complaint Policy and Procedures
- P. Region VII WDB On-the-Job Training (OJT) Policy
- Q. Region VII WDB Youth Services Policy
- R.** Region VII WDB Transitional Jobs Policy
- S. Region VII Workforce Development Board Manual
- T. WorkForce West Virginia One-Stop Career Center Business Plans and Partner Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs)
- U. Memorandum of Understanding between the Region VII Workforce Development Board and the One-Stop Management Consortia

- V. EPIC's Policy 8100, 8200, and Region VII WDB specific financial policies
- W. Conflict of Interest Statement
- X. West Virginia Occupational Projections Statewide 2016-2026
- Y. Region VII Demand Occupation Listing 2016-2026
- Z. West Virginia Demand Occupation Listing 2016-2026
- AA. West Virginia Occupational Projections Workforce Development Area 7 2016-2026
- BB.** Cost Allocation Plan
- CC. Board Certification
- DD.** Region VII Training Provider Memorandums of Understanding
- EE. Region VII Workforce Development Board and Local Elected Officials Roster
- FF. Interagency Collaborative Team Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)
- GG. Public Comments
- HH. Procurement and Selection of Request-for-Proposals Policy
- II. Federal Funding Disclosure
- JJ.** Contract for One-Stop Operator Services between Thomas P. Miller and Associates, LLC. and the Region VII Workforce Development Board
- KK. Additional Regional Policies, Contracts, & Forms - www.wvregion7workforce.org
- LL. Infrastructure Agreement

INTRODUCTION

These guidelines direct the local plan submitted by your area under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. WIOA requires each local workforce development board (LWDB or local board) to develop and submit, in partnership with the local chief elected official, a comprehensive four-year plan to the state. The WIOA four-year plan will be effective July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2028. The law emphasizes the importance of collaboration and transparency in the development and submission of the plan. Affected entities and the public must have an opportunity to provide input in the development of the plan. The local board must make the plan available through electronic means and in open meetings in order to ensure transparency to the public.

The LWDBs must provide leadership in assembling their plan. LWDBs also should seek broad stakeholder involvement in the development of their local plan. Local elected officials, local workforce development board members, core program partners and mandatory one-stop partners must be an integral part of the planning process. WIOA encourages an enhanced, integrated system by including new core programs in its planning and performance requirements. Each plan will address how the LWDB will coordinate service delivery with the new core programs of Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS), Department of Health and Human Resources (DHHR), and Adult Education (AE).

Each LWDB's plan should be based on the current and projected needs of the workforce development system, placing an increased emphasis on coordination and collaboration at all levels to ensure a seamless system for job seekers, including those with disabilities, and employers. The plan must include an identification of the education and skill needs of the workforce and employment needs of the local area and include an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of services to address these identified needs. The assessment must include the best available information or evidence of effectiveness and performance information for specific service models as well as a plan to improve the effectiveness of such programs by adopting proven or promising practices as a part of the local vision. The LWDB should provide a complete view of the system-wide needs of the local workforce development area.

The plan must address how the LWDB will foster strategic alignment, improve service integration and ensure that the workforce system is industry-relevant; responding to the economic needs of the local workforce development area and matching employers with skilled workers. The local plan must lead to greater efficiencies by reducing duplication and maximizing financial and human resources. These plan guidelines require LWDBs to address current and future strategies and efficiencies to address the continuous improvement of West Virginia's workforce system and its focus on customer service excellence. This plan should align with the business- and market-driven principles of the Workforce West Virginia network.

PROCESS FOR PLAN SUBMITTAL

Prior to submission of its Local Plan, the Local Board pursuant to Section 108 of WIOA must:

1. Make available copies of a proposed Local Plan to the public through electronic and other means for a period that is no more than 30 days;

2. Allow members of the public (specifically representatives of business, labor organizations, and education) to submit comments on the proposed Local Plan by the end of the no more than 30-day comment period; and
3. Include with the Local Plan any comments that represent disagreement with the Local Plan.
4. All plans must include a Table of Contents and follow the guidance outline.

When submitting the Local Plan, please submit plans electronically in both Word (.doc) and Adobe (.pdf) format to wioa@wv.gov. The submission should include the name, title, email address, mailing address, and phone number of the person who needs to contact if there are questions regarding the plan. The Local Plan must be accompanied by the LWDB Chair and CLEO(s) Formal Approval Letter.

KEY DATES

March 28, 2024.....Executive Director's Meeting
 May 3, 2024..... Plans due to Workforce West Virginia for review
 May 24, 2024..... Plans returned to locals for possible changes/additions
 June 14, 2024.....Plans due to WorkForce West Virginia for final approval
 June 30, 2024..... Local Plans approved

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

(1) Chief Local Elected Official

A. Identify the chief local elected official by name, title, mailing address, phone number and email address.

Berkeley County Commissioner
 Stephen Catlett — ChiefLEO
 400 W. Stephen Street
 Martinsburg, WV 25401
 304-264-1923
scatlett@berkeley.gov

B. If the local area includes more than one unit of general local government in accordance with WIOA sec. 107(c)(1)(B), attach the agreement that has been executed to define how the parties will carry out the roles and responsibilities of the chief local elected official.

The Local Elected Officials Agreement between the Region VII Workforce Development Board and the nine county commissioners/councilmen/mayor(s) that comprise Region VII is

Attachment A.

- C. Attach a copy of the agreement executed between the local elected official(s) and the Local Workforce Development Board.**

Please see **Attachment A.**

- D. Describe the by-laws established by the Chief LEO to address the criteria contained in §679.310(g) of the proposed WIOA regulations:**

- i. The nomination process used by the Chief LEO to elect the local board chair and members;**

Article II, Section 2 of the Region VII Workforce Development Board (WDB) By-laws outlines the minimum WIOA requirements for a board member. The Region VII Workforce Development Board By-laws stipulate under Article II, Section 3, the process and responsibility of each Local Elected Official to nominate eligible Board members. Article II, Sections 4, 5, and 6 outlines selection of Board Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, and Treasurer.

- ii. The term limitations and how the term appointments will be staggered to ensure only a portion of membership expire in a given year;**

The Region VII WDB By-Laws Article II, Section 3 stipulates Board membership will be held in staggered terms in accordance with WIOA requirements (**Attachment B**). The Region VII WDB was established in 2001 and at the initial process of implementing the organization, the terms were staggered. As the organization has been in existence for over 25 years, the terms have remained staggered due to normal resignations and expirations or terms. The terms of the members are monitored by the Executive Director to ensure vacancies are addressed.

- iii. The process to notify the Chief LEO of a board member vacancy to ensure a prompt nominee;**

The Chief LEO is immediately notified by the Executive Director of any and all board member vacancies resulting from resignation. In accordance with Region VII WDB By-laws, the LEO Board is responsible for nomination and ratification of all new members. As such, all WDB member dismissals due to lack of attendance/participation/or other remain the responsibility of the Chief LEO and LEO Board.

- iv. The proxy and alternative designee process that will be used when a board member is unable to attend a meeting and assigns a designee as per the requirements at §679.110(d)(4) of the WIOA regulations;**

Article III, Section 9 of the Region VII WDB By-laws states each member of the WDB shall be entitled to one vote, and any act of a majority of the members present and voting at a WDB meeting shall constitute the act of the Board of Directors. Use of the proxy will not be permitted, with the exception of the following: certain members of the Board serve as ex officio members have the right to name a designee to represent them on the Board (pursuant to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014), and any designee so named will have voting privileges

equal to those that would have been enjoyed by the ex officio Board member designating replacement.

v. The use of technology, such as phone and web-based meetings, that will be used to promote board member participation;

Teleconferencing and webinars are allowable and are used for WDB meetings under Article III, Section 8. Meetings of the Board are announced electronically and all Board materials are posted to the Region VII WDB's website. In addition, a legal ad is placed in local newspapers to direct the public to the website and to notify the public of the date and time of the meeting.

vi. The process to ensure board members actively participate in convening the workforce development system's stakeholders, brokering relationships with a diverse range of employers, and leveraging support for workforce development activities; and,

Region VII WDB members are actively involved in brokering relations and support for workforce development activities in the region. The Chair, Ms. Layne Diehl, is an active community member who sits on a variety of advisory councils, other Boards, and promotes Region VII WDB and its services via these activities. The Region VII WDB By-laws stipulate attendance and members can be removed for unexcused absences from the meetings.

vii. Any other conditions governing appointments or membership on the local board.

As previously stated, the Executive Director of the Region VII WDB will notify the Chief LEO and LEO Board of any and all vacancies. Through the process outlined in the Region VII WDB by-laws, the Chief LEO and LEO Board will nominate and appoint all board membership. Any removal or dismissal of WDB members must occur via action of the Region VII LEO Board. Please see **Attachment B**.

E. Provide a description of how the CLEO was involved in the development, review and approval of the plan.

On March 28, 2024, the Local Elected Officials and their staff were notified of the plan process and were provided with Local Plan Guidelines. A *rough draft* of the plan will be posted to Region VII's website on May 6, 2024 and a notice will be sent to interested parties, partners, LEOs and Board members for review and input. The plan will be located at each One-Stop Career Center, and the Region VII WDB website. On May 3, 2024, plans are due to Workforce West Virginia for review. On May 24, 2024, plans will be returned to locals for possible changes/additions. On June 14, 2024, plans are due to Workforce West Virginia for final approval. By June 30, 2024, plans are to be approved.

(2) Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB)

A. Identify the chairperson of the Local Workforce Development Board by name, title, mailing address, phone number and email address. Identify the business that the chair represents.

Ms. Layne Diehl, Chair

142 North Queen Street
Martinsburg, WV 25401
304-268-8832
layne@diehl1law.net

B. Provide a description of how the LWDB was involved in the development, review, and approval of the plan.

Region VII WDB staff requests all interested LEO and Board members review the current Local Plan and provide any comments/feedback. The Local Plan update process is on-going until the Local Plan is sent out for public comment on May 6, 2024. The Region VII WDB LEOs and Board members will be notified on May 6th of the rough draft plan posting to our website. On May 3, 2024, plans are due to WorkForce West Virginia for review. On May 24, 2024, plans will be returned to locals for possible changes/additions. On June 14, 2024, plans are due to WorkForce West Virginia for final approval. By June 30, 2024, plans are to be approved.

(3) Local Grant Sub recipient (local fiscal agent or administrative entity)

A. Identify the entity selected to receive and disburse grant funds (local fiscal agent) if other than the chief elected official. WIOA section 107(d)(12)(B)(i)(iii); 20 CFR 679.420

Please see **Attachment C**, Contract between Eastern Panhandle Instructional Cooperative, Inc. and the Region VII Workforce Development Board. Region VII WDB is designated by the Governor of West Virginia. The administrative and fiscal entity for Region VII WDB is bid through a competitive procurement process in accordance state and local policy. Currently, the LEO Board and WDB have selected Eastern Panhandle Instructional Cooperative, Inc. (EPIC) as the administrative and fiscal entity for the Region VII Workforce Development Board.

B. Identify the entity selected to staff the LWDB (commonly referred to as the administrative entity) and assist it in carrying out its responsibilities as a board organized under WIOA. (May be the same as the fiscal agent). 20 CFR 679.430

Please see **Attachment C**, Contract between Eastern Panhandle Instructional Cooperative, Inc. (EPIC) and the Region VII Workforce Development Board.

C. If a single entity has been 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 or training services, attach the agreement that describes how the

entity will carry out its multiple responsibilities including how it will develop appropriate firewalls to guard against any conflict of interest.

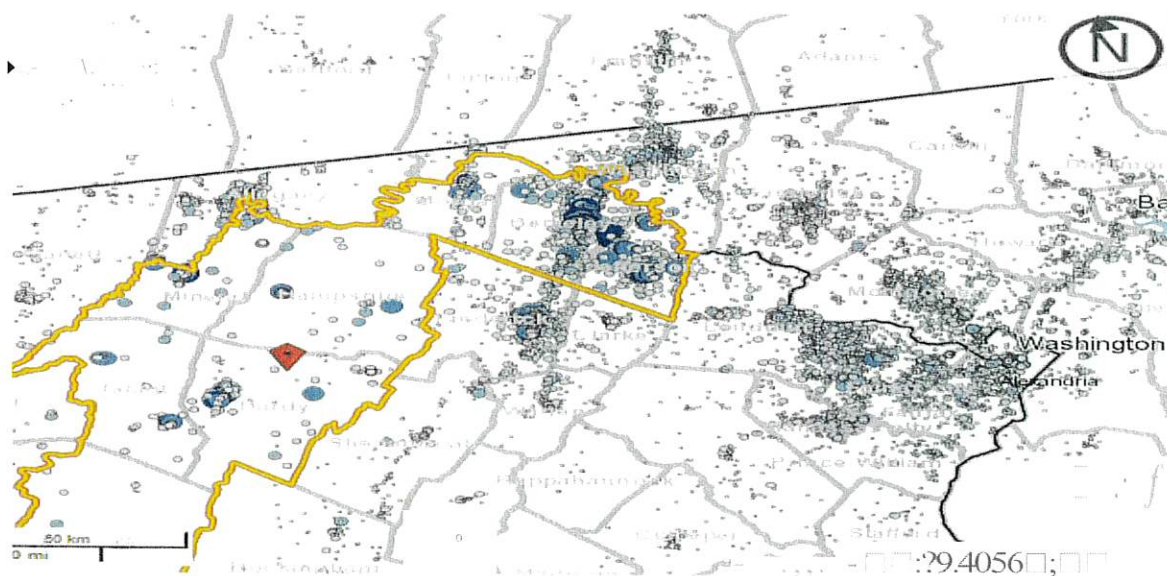
The Eastern Panhandle Instructional Cooperative, Inc. (EPIC) operates as the fiscal agent and administrative entity for the LWDB as approved in the contract between the Region VII WDB and EPIC, and has been designated to do so since July 2024. EPIC is required to submit its annual budget to the LEO Board as well as its fiscal audit as performed by an independent accounting firm. All monitoring reports are available upon request. The Region VII WDB's by-laws (**Attachment B**) stipulate prohibitions of contracting with LWDB members in accordance with State policy. All financial statements are reviewed by the Executive Committee and full Board of Directors and are available upon request to the public.

LOCAL PLAN REQUIREMENTS

Section 1: Strategic Planning

- A. An analysis of the regional economic conditions including existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations; and the employment needs of businesses in those industry sectors and occupations. The analysis should identify local priority industries based on employer (and WIOA partner) input.**

Before examining the industries within the Region VII counties, it is important to note that the region is a large exporter of workers to neighboring counties and states. The West Virginia University Economic Profile indicated that 45 percent of all workers in the region commute outside their home county for work. 20% of the region's workers have work locations that are more than 50 miles from their homes (this includes both in-region and out-region commuting).



Workers commute outside the region for a wide variety of jobs, and concentrations of industry type between people who both live and work within the region and those who live in the region but work elsewhere are generally very similar. Jobs in construction, professional, scientific and technical services industries are slightly more concentrated in workers who leave the region. Jobs in "bedroom community" industries such as education, health care, social assistance, hospitality, manufacturing and food services are slightly more concentrated in workers who remain in the region.

In terms of jobs within Region VII only, 24% of all jobs were in the government sector. This includes federal, state and local government. Nearly 14% of all jobs are in education and health services, such as local K-12 schools, state colleges/universities, hospitals, urgent care center, etc. Other large industries include trade, transportation and utilities accounting for 19% of total employment in the region. In the Eastern Panhandle counties (Berkeley, Jefferson, and Morgan), manufacturing only accounts for 7% of total employment; however, in the Potomac Highlands counties (Grant, Hampshire, Hardy, Mineral, and Pendleton), manufacturing accounts for 22% of total employment.

Health Care Services (NAICS 621-623) is an important industry across the entire region, with 9% of all jobs. Counties with particularly high percentages of employment in health care include Morgan (13%), Hampshire (12%), and Pendleton and Berkeley (both 10%). This industry will only become more important in years to come, as employment is projected to grow by 22% through 2025, with over 8,800 jobs total. Health care occupations are both significant sources of employment in the region, and projected to grow, with 5 of the 11 largest growing occupations being health care related, such as registered nurses, nursing aides, and home health care aides.

According to the WVU Economic Profile of the Potomac Highlands, nearly 40% of jobs in Hardy County are in manufacturing, including 1,800 jobs in food manufacturing. This accounts for nearly 94% of all food manufacturing jobs in Region VII. Food manufacturing dominates Hardy County, where 28% of all jobs are in that industry, and it has a location quotient of 28.5, meaning that employment in food manufacturing is 28.5 times more concentrated within Hardy County than in the nation as a whole. The vast majority of this employment is with a single employer, Pilgrim's Pride. Food manufacturing employment is projected to decline slightly through 2025.

Wood Products cluster (consisting of NAICS 113 - logging & forestry, NAICS 321 - wood product manufacturing and NAICS 337 - furniture manufacturing) has been a historically important cluster in the region, particularly in the Potomac Highlands region, with a location quotient of 8.6. However, while employment is relatively more concentrated here than in the nation, Wood Products jobs have been significantly impacted by the closure of Verso in Mineral County. The closure in 2019 left nearly 700 people without jobs and the ripple effect to ancillary jobs such as loggers and foresters is still being assessed. Additionally, over the last decade, there have been sharp declines, particularly in Grant county, where wood products manufacturing employment has declined by nearly 50%, and in Hardy County, where furniture

manufacturing has declined by more than 50%. Further steep declines are projected for these two counties, fueling an over projected decline of 25% for the cluster in the region through the 2020s.

Elsewhere in the region, mining is important. In Grant County, 8% of all employment is in Mining (NAICS 212) or Support Activities for Mining (NAICS 213), with a 7% decline projected through the 2020s. Key industries in Pendleton County include animal production and truck transportation, both with 5% of all jobs in the industry.

The Data Processing, Hosting and Related Services industry (NAICS 518) has a location quotient (LQ) of 3.6 for the region, but this is driven by just two counties, with Berkeley having a LQ of 3.5 and Mineral having an LQ of 17.8 thanks to an IBM data processing facility. However, recent talks of data centers mark this industry as a potential growing and emerging industry within the region.

Another industry with a high regional location quotient is Accommodations (NAICS 721), at 3.3. This industry is particularly strong in Jefferson County, with a location quotient of 12.0, but it is important in other counties in the region as well, with links to the general tourism industry.

As identified herein, Region VII is made up of two distinct areas, one being industry heavy and skirting the Washington DC Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) while the five western counties of the region consist of mainly wood, agriculture and agriculture food processing (i.e. poultry farming and processing). However, both areas have potential growth in other business or industry segments, such as information technology. These options are being pursued by economic developers throughout the region.

Healthcare. Healthcare is expected to grow in the state. Of the top twenty-seven occupations projected to grow in the state of West Virginia, nine of these are in the healthcare industry. Of the top seventeen occupations projected to grow in Region VII, ten of these are in the healthcare industry. Region VII continues to explore training opportunities for healthcare professionals. Working closely with training providers and healthcare employers allows Region VII to identify potential areas of need within this employment sector.

Tourism. Many areas of the region are known for their beauty, serenity, sporting abundance, hospitality, history, and simply their ability to draw visitors from all over the east coast of the United States. The region has four distinct seasons, with noticeable climate distinctions within the region. For instance, in the Allegheny Mountains, you may find several inches of snow and blustery weather and only twelve miles away in the flatlands of the Potomac Highlands you will have no snowfall and temperatures ranging from 5 degrees to 15 degrees warmer. In a day's time, one can enjoy trout fishing in the morning and skiing in the afternoon and evening. This is but a sample of the abundance of year round activities that can greatly enhance the region's tourism market, if properly marketed. There are numerous bed and breakfast "homes" throughout the

region. More hotels and motels are being built in anticipation of the expansion of the West Virginia Corridor H Interstate System, which will connect the western part of the region with Interstate 81 in Virginia. Along this new corridor, distribution is expected to grow like that of the industry along the I-81 and I-68 corridor near Martinsburg, WV. Building of the Corridor has already prompted communities to start planning and building Industrial Parks to accommodate businesses willing to move into the western counties of the region, as well as along the approximate 100 miles of new interstate highway.

Impact of Plant Closures. The region has been highly impacted by plant closures and downsizing over the past fifteen years. Among these are American Woodmark, Rayloc in Hancock, Maryland, and Verso in Mineral County. Most recently, in March 2024, Alleghany Wood Products announced they would be closing their doors after doing over fifty years of business in West Virginia. The closure affected 163 individuals locally and over 850 throughout the state of West Virginia. Several other layoffs have occurred in the region that impacted 30 workers or less. Many of the workers in the region leave their respective counties and state to find self-sustaining employment in neighboring states. Local economic developers, community and technical schools, chambers of commerce, and the WDB, to name a few, are all working together to attract new industry to the region and retain its current skilled workforce. Berkeley County was able to claim an enormous success in their continued efforts to attract jobs to the region. Macy's Department Stores built a vast 30+ acre warehouse and distribution center in Berkeley County. Proctor and Gamble invested approximately \$500 million dollars in construction and site development of a 460-acre campus. The Proctor and Gamble plant opened in the fall of 2017 and became fully operational in late 2020 with employment of over 1,400 full-time workers. Macy's and Proctor and Gamble account for nearly 3000 jobs in Berkeley County. This has given much needed relief and hope to people facing long-term unemployment and very few job opportunities just a few short years ago. The jobs created by the opening of the Macy's distribution center was a welcome sign that true economic growth and recovery were taking shape in our region. The opening of the Proctor and Gamble plant reinforces the sentiment that true economic recovery is taking place and quite possibly giving our region the opportunity to bounce back even stronger during a post-recession era. Additionally, the Clorox Company opened a cat litter manufacturing plant in Berkeley County in 2022. The investment brought \$192 million in economic development to the region and created approximately 100 full-time jobs. Announced in July of 2026, European defense technology company Helsing is coming to Berkeley County, West Virginia, bringing a major advanced manufacturing and artificial intelligence facility to the region. Helsing is investing an initial \$50 million to establish its first U.S. advanced manufacturing operation in a Martinsburg facility. The facility will create at least 60 high-skilled, full-time jobs. These are high-paying roles, averaging approximately \$125,000 per year. The operation will manufacture the company's HX-2 artificial intelligence-enabled strike drone, with plans to produce 2,000 drones per month initially. The state is partnering with Blue Ridge Community and Technical College and [West Virginia Advance](#) to develop specialized training programs tailored to Helsing's advanced manufacturing needs.

Areas of Potential Growth. In the past fifteen years, hundreds of windmills have been erected in the Potomac Highlands. Several hundred more are projected in the near future. Due to the increasing demand for electricity in the Metropolitan D.C. and Northern Virginia Area the electric production from the windmills will continue to be a growth area for Region VII. Windmills bring two distinct job clusters with them. Construction workers of all types are needed for installation and maintenance workers are needed to maintain their operation. Other "green jobs" such as weatherization, are projected to be growth industries in both the national and regional market places.

A. An analysis of the knowledge and skills needed to meet the employment needs of the businesses in the Local Area, including employment needs in in-demand

industry sectors and occupations.

The knowledge and skills needed to meet the needs of this region's in-demand sector occupations and target industries include strong soft skills, including: team skills, service and social skills, interpersonal communicative skills, critical thinking/problem solving and flexibility as well as the pertinent post-secondary and technical skills required for emerging and demand occupations, i.e. CDL, Health Services, IT related certifications, and Advanced Manufacturing certifications.

This plan will ensure that WIOA programs are compliant with federal regulations through our One-Stop centers so that program services are coordinated, and when appropriate, integrated to make accessible a menu of customizable services available to clients on the basis of client needs.

B. An analysis of the workforce in the Local Area, including current labor force employment (and unemployment) data, and information on labor market trends, and the educational and skill levels of the workforce in the Local Area, including individuals with barriers to employment.

The Region VII Workforce Development Board includes the counties of Berkeley, Grant, Hampshire, Hardy, Jefferson, Mineral, Morgan, and Pendleton with a population of 282,296 and a total labor force of 136,100 as of January 2024. (<http://lmi.workforcewv.org/table2.html>).

The Region VII WDB unemployment rate ranges from a low of 3.3% in Pendleton and Jefferson counties to a high of 4.3% in Mineral county as of July 2026. In reviewing the most recent census in our eight county area, 86.8% have attained a high school diploma for individuals 25 years and older.

Barriers to Employment

In 2023, the unemployment rate for those with disabilities in the United States was 7.2%, according to <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/disabl.nr0.htm>. In 2023, 1,819 individuals with disabilities were served in the region. In additions to WIOA services, Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) include: evaluation and diagnostic services, vocational counseling and guidance, training services, rehabilitation technology services, physical and mental therapeutic services, specialized services, placement services, support services, and post-employment services.

The Region VII WDB is involved in a regional effort to address those with barriers to employment due to poverty.

Median Household Income by County according to WVU's Bureau of Business and Economic Research's 2020 West Virginia County Data Profiles

(<http://business.wvu.edu/centers/bureau-of-business-and-economic-research/wv-county-profiles>)

Berkeley: \$62,515.00

Grant: \$42,216.00

Hampshire: \$47,857.00

Hardy: \$47,438.00

Jefferson: \$80,430.00

Mineral: \$49,936.00
Morgan: \$51,745.00
Pendleton: \$42,312.00

Median Household Income State of West Virginia: \$48,850.00.

The mean household income for the Eastern Panhandle (Berkeley, Jefferson, and Morgan counties) is \$80,270.00. The mean household income for the Potomac Highlands (Grant, Hampshire, Hardy, Mineral, and Pendleton counties) is \$61,067.00.

Residents with a bachelor's degree or higher - Working Age (25-64)

Region: 17.5%
State: 21.1%
U.S.: 37.9%

C. An analysis of the workforce development activities (including education and training) in the Local Area, including an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of such services, and the capacity to provide such services, to address the identified education and skill needs of the workforce and the employment needs of employers in the Local Area.

The Region VII WDB maintains relationships with regional economic development and business organizations. These relationships, coupled with our partnerships with public and private training providers allows us to facilitate the region's best training opportunities to meet the needs of the workforce. The Region VII WDB continues to be an engaged participant in our local and regional economic development agency's boards and committees, and often educational providers are included in these efforts.

Our largest strength regarding education and training are our region's training providers and education partners working hard to become involved with business leaders and understand their workforce development and training needs. The simulated workplaces have been developed in the secondary schools are aligned closely with employer needs, economic development initiatives and include business advisory councils. They remain flexible to industry needs and strive to find the best possible training solutions at the pace of business. In addition, our educational partners which include Blue Ridge Community and Technical College, Eastern West Virginia Community and Technical College, James Rumsey Technical Institute, and Mineral County Technical Center as well as private-for-profit training providers have excellent training programs that are aligned with our demand occupations and industry sectors. The public and private training providers work well with the Region VII WDB and are open to suggestions for training improvements based upon local employer input and need.

One of the weaknesses we see is the lack of registered apprenticeship programs and internships and cohort programs; however, Blue Ridge CTC and Eastern WV CTC are diligently exploring all possibilities and are moving toward implementing these programs.

- A. A description of the Local Board's strategic vision and goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce (including youth and individuals with barriers to employment) including goals relating to the performance accountability measures based on primary indicators of performance described in Section 116(b)(2)(A) of WIOA in order to support Local Area economic growth and economic self-sufficiency.**

The Region VII WDB's strategic vision is that our region is recognized for its economic growth, driven by flourishing businesses and a skilled workforce.

Our primary goal is to help businesses succeed by linking them to the workforce resources they need; and to help prepare job seekers by providing them with the skills needed for employment. To accomplish these goals, the Region VII WDB will:

- B. Create and sustain strategic partnerships dedicated to community prosperity through education, training, and developing a climate for growing business and job creation.
- C. Provide exceptional service to each customer every day.
- D. Connect citizens to employment opportunities.

It is important these goals also remain tied to the primary indicators of performance under WIOA in order to support economic growth and worker self-sufficiency.

Through the implementation of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), West Virginia will have a business-led, market-responsive, results-oriented and integrated workforce development system. The enhanced system will foster customer service excellence, seek continuous improvement and demonstrate value by enhancing employment opportunities for all individuals, including those with disabilities. This focused and deliberate collaboration among education, workforce and economic development networks will maximize the competitiveness of West Virginia's businesses and the productivity of West Virginia's workforce, thus increasing economic prosperity.

The Region VII WDB will fully support and provide services to customers in Region VII in alignment with the state vision for the workforce development system. That vision recognizes the vital importance of West Virginia's employers having a well-trained workforce-ready labor force, while additionally providing more individuals with the opportunity to be productive members of that labor force. This vision will be accomplished through the implementation of strategies and services by the Region VII WDB which mirrors the state level strategies and goals. The following goals will be supported by the Region VII WDB:

Goal #1: West Virginia will expand and implement high-quality work-based learning opportunities for youth and adult learners.

The Region VII Workforce Development Board remains committed to implementing and maintaining high-quality work-based learning opportunities for youth and adult learners through WIOA services. In Region VII, the strategies for implementation include: on-the-job training, transitional jobs, paid work experiences (youth), and apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship

trainings.

Goal #2: West Virginia will increase referrals and integrations services to improve access to supportive services customized for individuals needing education and employment.

The Region VII Workforce Development Board designed, developed, and implemented a regional electronic referral system in October 2020. Our referral system known as J.A.C.K. (Jobs, Action, Community, Knowledge), links over one hundred state, regional, local, and community agencies and services. The online system is designed to link the customer with the agency providing the service of need. On the backend, the agency is also notified of a customer inquiry. The state launched the No Wrong Door system for referrals in 2023. Currently, our regional system has been modified to include a link to the No Wrong Door site. We believe that a comprehensive state and regional electronic referral system vastly improves access to services for individuals needing education and employment throughout Region VII. During PY25 J.A.C.K. was accessed by over 10,000 users in Region 7.

Goal# 3: West Virginia will implement comprehensive sector strategy approaches to reduce skills mismatches and enhance faster labor market attachment while informing education and training priorities.

It is imperative the workforce development system provide education and training for skills that lead to quality employment in high-demand jobs or entry-level occupations that lead to high demand jobs. Career pathways must be diverse with multiple entry and exit points allowing individuals of varying abilities, including low-skilled adults and youth with multiple barriers to employment, especially those with disabilities, to have realistic access to career pathways. The region will support career pathways that help adults and youth enter the labor force and/or advance among multiple occupations, advance within an occupation, or move to a new occupation with similar skills to a previous occupation.

In Region VII, quarterly sector strategy meetings are held at one of the region's comprehensive One-Stop Career Centers. During these meetings, we highlight an in-demand career sector such as; healthcare, construction trades, advanced manufacturing, IT/cybersecurity, etc. During these meetings, industry experts as well as board and one-stop staff assess current regional needs and analyze the latest available labor market information. Many of our training providers also attend these meetings. Together, we collaborate and strategize how we can effectively address skills gaps and workforce and industry needs within the region.

Goal# 4: West Virginia will implement the Blue-Ribbon Franchise Model of workforce service delivery to increase the efficiency of service delivery and effectiveness in serving businesses, workers, and job seekers.

In order for WIOA to be successful the workforce development system must be a seamless, comprehensive, and accessible system. Partners in the workforce development system will work together in order to maximize benefits to our customers and improve West Virginia's labor force participation rate. Region VII works consistently to connect customers to services needed to re-enter the workforce. We remain committed to educating ourselves and our partner agencies about the wide-array of services and strategies available to our mutual customers.

Goal #5: Meet or exceed the performance accountability measures as negotiated by the state with the DOL.

Striving to meet the performance accountability measures will help the WDB to focus on the issues determined to be of significance by the DOL, which in turn will aid in improving the economic well-being of the region.

E. Taking into account analyses described in subparagraphs (A) through (D), a strategy to work with the entities that carry out the core programs to align resources available to the Local Area, to achieve the strategic vision and goals described in subparagraph (E).

Goal #1: West Virginia will expand and implement high-quality work-based learning opportunities for youth and adult learners.

The Region VII Workforce Development Board remains committed to implementing and maintaining high-quality work-based learning opportunities for youth and adult learners through WIOA services. In Region VII, the strategies for implementation include: on-the-job training, transitional jobs, paid work experiences (youth), and apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship trainings.

Strategy 1.1: Staffing - commitment to the task.

- The Region VII Workforce Development Board employs a Business Analyst. The Business Analyst is tasked with visiting local business and industry, determining need, and offering WIOA business services.
- The Region VII Workforce Development Board is consistently employing youth through paid work experience, with a focus on summer youth employment. In addition, pre-apprenticeship programs, career exploration, and career interest inventories are staples of the Region VII WDB Youth Program.

Strategy 1.2: Implementing work-based learning

- Region VII has effectively implemented 52 On-the-Job training contracts with employers over the last two years.
 - Region VII has effectively placed 36 Adult customers in transitional jobs over the last two years.
 - Region VII has effectively placed 30 Youth customers in paid work experiences over the last two years.
 - Region VII sponsored a pre-apprenticeship program for 10 youth during the summer of 2024.
-

Strategy 1.3: Communicate and recruit within all partners of the workforce development system

- The One-Stop Career Center has quarterly management consortium meetings. The team consists of all the required partner agencies in the region.
- Workforce development news and notices are maintained and updated frequently on the Region VII WDB website: <http://wvregion7workforce.org>.
- The Region VII WDB holds quarterly Board meetings.
- The Region VII WDB participates in quarterly business services team (BST) and implementation team meetings as well as training provider meetings.
- Region VII uses our regional electronic referral system to network with over ninety partner agencies and community based organizations participating in the system.

Goal #2: West Virginia will increase referrals and integrations services to improve access to supportive services customized for individuals needing education and employment.

The Region VII Workforce Development Board designed, developed, and implemented a regional electronic system in October 2020. Our referral system known as J.A.C.K. (Jobs, Action, Community, Knowledge), links nearly one hundred state, regional, local, and community agencies and services. The online system is designed to link the customer with the agency providing the service of need. On the backend, the agency is also notified of a customer inquiry. The state launched the No Wrong Door system for referrals in 2023. Currently, our regional system has been modified to include a link to the No Wrong Door site. We believe that a comprehensive state and regional electronic referral system vastly improves access to supportive services for individuals needing education and employment throughout Region VII.

Strategy 2.1: Electronic referrals - regional and state cooperation

- The J.A.C.K. system links over one hundred state, regional, local, and community agencies and services through a network of kiosks, QR codes, and online availability. The online system is designed to link the customer with the agency providing the service of need. On the backend, the agency is also notified of a customer inquiry.
- The J.A.C.K. system has been updated in 2024 to include access to the state's No Wrong Door referral system. This allows customers access to services beyond the borders of Region VII to find the information needed from neighboring agencies and community based organizations.

Strategy 2.2: Communication-knowing your program and knowing your partners.

- The One-Stop Career Center has quarterly management consortium meetings. The team consists of all the required partner agencies in the region.
- Workforce development news and notices are maintained and updated frequently on the Region VII website: <http://wvregion7workforce.org>.

- Region VII holds quarterly sector strategy meetings.
- Region VII holds quarterly case management trainings.
- Region VII holds quarterly board meetings.
- Region VII holds quarterly business services team (BST).

Strategy 2.3: Additional outreach

- Region VII sponsors and participates in a series of in-person regular job fairs, career fairs, resources fairs, and county-level roundtable discussions.
- Region VII promotes the states regular occurrence of online job fairs.
- Region VII mails a listing of WIOA services and offerings to all UI claimants in the region on a monthly basis.
- Region VII works with adult education and local school systems to provide information on WIOA services.

Goal# 3: West Virginia will implement comprehensive sector strategy approaches to reduce skills mismatches and enhance faster labor market attachment while informing education and training priorities.

The Region VII Workforce Development Board will implement the following framework to develop sector strategies:

1. Key Capabilities and Self-assessment - The four primary features of an employer-driven workforce development approach include: (1) Targeting an industry (2) Partnering to execute the strategies (3) Assess the needs to identify specific challenges (4) Design and execute customized employer-driven solutions. Self-assessment examines the following areas: (1) Data informed decision making (2) Industry engagement (3) Sector-based service delivery (4) Sustainability and continuous improvement (5) Organizational capacity and alignment.
2. Assessing Partner Involvement - Ask the question "Who are the individual and organization involved in working with industry in some way?" Examples would be: (1) Workforce boards (2) Secondary education (3) Post-secondary education (4) Business associations (5) Non-profits that serve the industry in some way.
3. Community Asset Mapping- Community assess map provides you with: (1) Knowledge of community-based partners and resources within an industry sector (2) Information about employment needs and employment barriers (3) The strengths and opportunities for developing a sector strategy.
4. Labor Market Information - Analyzing labor market information to determine current status, need, trends, and future strategies. Examples of questions to ask when analyzing labor market information: (1) What are the three primary industries with sustainable jobs that show the most growth in Region VII? (2) What industries is economic development working on for future growth opportunities? (3) How do projections for needed talent compare to the real-time data per employers within the region? (4) What is the supply {education} and demand {employers} of the current talent pipeline and how do we balance the scale?

In Region VII, quarterly sector strategy meetings are held at one of the region's comprehensive ~~One Stop Career Centers. During these meetings, we highlight an in demand career sector such~~
 Region VII Workforce Development Board

as; healthcare, construction trades, advanced manufacturing, IT/cybersecurity, etc. During these meetings, industry experts as well as board and one-stop staff assess current regional needs and analyze the latest available labor market information. Many of our training providers also attend these meetings. Together, we collaborate and strategize how we can effectively address skills gaps and workforce and industry needs within the region.

Strategy 3.1: Assess needs of individuals seeking employment and/or training

- The WIOA rules explain that the Individual Employment Plan (IEP) is an individualized career service, jointly developed by the participant and career coach. The IEP includes an ongoing strategy to identify employment goals, achievement objectives, and an appropriate combination of services for the participant to obtain these goals and objectives. IEPs are one of the most effective tools used to serve individuals with barriers to employment. The IEP becomes the nexus that coordinates the various service strategies, including training, individuals may need to overcome barriers to employment.

The IEP is the basis for the overall case management strategy. The career coach will utilize the IEP to update strategies and activities as they occur, and to document referral and contact information for services obtained from partner organizations. When reviewing the IEP, career coaches will document a participant's progress, activities completed, benchmarks reached, and any other accomplishments.

Additionally, the IEP should be:

- Developed in partnership with the participant;
- Used as a tool that can and will change over time, as necessary, to meet the needs of the individual;
- Used as a roadmap to achieve measurable and attainable short-term and long-term goals; and
- Designed to reflect the individual's interests and incorporate career planning.

The provision of services should be a result of, and consistent with, the customer's assessment and IEP. Having a well-developed IEP and related documentation is required and is a fundamental part of case management. Once an IEP is developed and approved, it should be used in the on-going process of monitoring and re-evaluating the participant's progress toward educational and occupational goals.

The IEP should be a "living document" and reviewed and updated as life changes occur, including the participant's interests and ambitions. As strategies are updated and services and activities from partner organizations are completed, goals are met and benchmarks are reached.

Strategy 3.2: Use the Employment First framework to ensure competitive, integrated employment as the priority option for individuals with significant disabilities

- WIOA funding enables the delivery of a comprehensive array of services that prepare individuals with disabilities for post-secondary educational and employment opportunities, attainment of educational and/or skills training credentials, and

obtainment of employment with career opportunities. This is accomplished by assessing the participant's skills, interests, needs and personal goals; creating customized service plans in collaboration with the participant; and expanding the participant's connection to and understanding of the local economy, educational opportunities, and available community services.

Strategy 3.3: Provide access to training programs that meet the needs of individuals

- The Region VII WDB works with employer partnerships, community and technical colleges, secondary and post-secondary schools to establish credentials that demonstrate job readiness, employability skills, and measurable skill gains. These achievements will be closely aligned to career pathways for individuals with barriers to employment, especially those with disabilities. The Region VII WDB is committed to serving previously under-served or neglected populations, such as immigrants and minorities.
- It is imperative the workforce development system provide education and training for skills leading to quality employment in high-demand jobs or entry-level occupations leading to high demand jobs. Career pathways must be diverse with multiple entry and exit points allowing individuals of varying abilities, including low-skilled adults and youth with multiple barriers to employment, especially those with disabilities, to have realistic access to pathways. The Region VII WDB will support career pathways which help adults and youth enter the labor force. The Region VII WDB will advocate for career pathways allowing for advancement among multiple occupations, advancement within an occupation or move to a new occupation with similar skills from an outdated occupation.

Strategy 3.4: Adhere to WIOA career pathways development

- The Region VII WDB adopts the WIOA Section 3(7) definition of career pathways.
- The Region VII WDB supports the West Virginia Adult Education, Career and Technical Education, and the Community and Technical College System of West Virginia in developing strategies to integrate career pathways meeting the requirement of WIOA.
- Region VII WDB makes available individualized career pathways when an individual demonstrates a need for a career pathway in order to obtain or retain employment, or to obtain a self-sufficient income.

Strategy 3.5: Enhance current career pathways system.

- The Region VII WDB will leverage the existing career pathways system to promote a comprehensive career pathway system that combines education, training, counseling, and support services from the core partner agencies.
- The Region VII WDB will ensure that career pathways are aligned to occupations that are high-demand and are likely to pay family-sustaining wages in our region.
- The Region VII WDB will also support placement of individuals with barriers to employment, especially those with disabilities, into quality entry-level jobs that provide the work experience and non-technical skills necessary to lead to employment in high-demand jobs.
- The Region VII WDB will continue to link On-the-Job Training (OJT) to career pathways.

- Individualized career services must be made available if determined to be appropriate in order for an individual to obtain or retain employment. These services include:
 - Comprehensive and specialized assessments of the skill levels and service needs of adults and dislocated workers, which may include:
 - Diagnostic testing and use of other assessment tools, and
 - In-depth interviewing and evaluation to identify employment barriers and appropriate employment goals
 - Development of an Individual Employment Plan (IEP) to identify the employment goals, appropriate achievement objectives, and appropriate combination of services for the participant to achieve the employment goals, including a list of, and information about, the eligible training providers
 - Group counseling
 - Individual counseling
 - Career planning
 - Short-term prevocational services, including development of learning skills, communication skills, interviewing skills, punctuality, personal maintenance skills, and professional conduct services to prepare individuals for unsubsidized employment or training
 - Internships and paid or unpaid work experiences that are linked to careers; internships and work experiences may be arranged within the private for-profit sector, the non-profit sector, or the public sector
 - Workforce preparation activities, including programs or services designed to help an individual acquire a combination of basic academic skills, critical thinking skills, digital literacy skills, and self-management skills, including competencies in utilizing resources, using information, working with others, understanding systems, and obtaining skills necessary for successful transition into and completion of post-secondary education, or training, or employment
 - Financial literacy services, including services which
 - Support the ability of participants to create budgets, initiate checking and savings accounts at banks, and make informed financial decisions
 - Support participants in learning, credit, debt, including student loans, consumer credit, credit cards, and teach participants about the significance of credit reports and credit scores, what their rights are regarding their credit and financial information, how to determine the accuracy of a credit report and how to correct inaccuracies, and how to improve or maintain good credit
 - Support a participant's ability to understand, evaluate, and compare financial products, services, and opportunities to make informed financial decisions
 - Educate participants about identity theft, ways to protect themselves from identity theft, and how to resolve cases of identity theft, and in other ways understand their rights and protections related to personal identity and financial data
 - Support activities that address the particular financial literacy needs of non-English speakers, including providing the support through the

development and distribution of multilingual financial literacy and education materials

- o Provide financial education that is age appropriate, timely, and provides opportunities to put lessons into practice, such as by access to safe and affordable financial products that enable money management and savings, and

Strategy 3.6: Educate individuals (job seekers and employers) to encourage career pathways in training and employment environments

- The Region VII WDB will promote and support the creation of pre-apprenticeship and Registered Apprenticeship programs as part of relevant career pathway models.
- The Region VII WDB will help in the establishment of statewide and regional lists of industry-recognized credentials with a focus on identifying credentials along established career pathways.
- The Region VII WDB will enhance career guidance to individuals with barriers, especially those with disabilities, to employment and education and into programs and services that will provide them with an effective pathway to their career goals.
- The Region VII WDB will add information to its web-site regarding career pathways.

Strategy 3.7: Analyzing the data and assessing the need.

- Industry-led sector strategy quarterly meetings. In-demand career sectors facilitate a discussion of current trends, demands, and workforce needs. Region VII board staff, one-stop staff, partner agencies, and training providers discuss these real-time issues and determine a local and regionalized plan based off the latest data.
- Board staff conducts weekly staff meetings where regional industry needs and the latest labor market information and trends are discussed and analyzed.

Goal# 4: West Virginia will implement the Blue-Ribbon Franchise Model of workforce service delivery to increase the efficiency of service delivery and effectiveness in serving businesses, workers, and job seekers.

In order for WIOA to be successful the workforce development system must be a seamless, comprehensive, and accessible system. Partners in the workforce development system will work together in order to maximize benefits to our customers and improve West Virginia's labor force participation rate. Region VII works consistently to connect customers to services needed to re-enter the workforce. We remain committed to educating ourselves and our partner agencies about the wide-array of services and strategies available to our mutual customers.

Strategy 4.1: Core Partners will collaborate to align program initiatives and processes.

- Coordinate and develop memorandums of understanding with all partners. These will be developed with a clear purpose of cooperation and service to all customers of the workforce system (individuals and employers).
- Share goals at the local level.

- Promote program integration in order to overcome silos and achieve unified goals.
- Conduct quarterly management consortium meetings with the core partners.

Strategy 4.2: Ensure cross-training of all workforce development system partners.

- Develop team-based case management for the customers at our one-stops. Training for one-stop partners and new tools will be needed to ensure consistency across West Virginia.
- A high priority will be placed on staff training in serving individuals with barriers to employment, especially those with disabilities.
- Technical training will be provided on the data-sharing IT system to all effected staff at the regional level.
- Develop a comprehensive Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) as a resource guide for all One-Stop staff.
- Conduct weekly staff meetings that include the One-Stop Director where cross training and other staff needs are continuously discussed.

Strategy 4.3: Communicate with all partners within the workforce development system.

- Region VII has quarterly management consortium meetings. The team consists of all the required partner agencies in the region.
- Workforce development news and notices are maintained and updated frequently on the Region VII website: <http://wvregion7workforce.org>.
- Region VII holds quarterly board meetings.
- Region VII participates in quarterly business services team (BST) meetings.

Strategy 4.4: Maintain integrated state management information system utilized by core partners.

- Region VII continues to input all WIOA-related data into the MACC system.
- Region VII continues to contribute financially when applicable to the operation and maintenance of the MACC system.

Goal #5: Meet or exceed the performance accountability measures as negotiated by the state with the DOL.

Striving to meet the performance accountability measures will help the WDB to focus on the issues determined to be of significance by the DOL, which in turn will aid in improving the economic well-being of the region.

Strategy 5.1: Monitor performance on a regional level.

- The Region VII WDB will monitor performance monthly to ensure performance measures are being met or exceeded.
- WIOA Career Coaches and Youth Case Managers will follow-up monthly to ensure that clients are still in training or are employed.

Section 2: Alignment of the Local Workforce Development System

- A. A description of the workforce development system in the Local Area that identifies the programs that are included in that system and how the Local Board will work with the entities carrying out workforce development programs identified in the State Plan. The description should also include how the Local Board and the programs identified plan to align and integrate to provide services to customers. The description should also include programs of study authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.);**

The Region VII WDB serves Berkeley, Grant, Hampshire, Hardy, Jefferson, Mineral, Morgan, and Pendleton counties. James Rumsey Technical Institute and Mineral County Technical Center offer Carl Perkins services and technical educational services. The WDB works very closely with those educational entities, and they provide the WDB with their annual Carl Perkins plan for our review and comment. These educational entities provide GED prep courses as well as GED testing at their institutions.

WIOA authorizes the One-Stop Career Center (also known as American Job Center) service delivery system and six core programs. The core programs physically housed within the Region VII One-Stop Career Centers are:

- WIOA Title I (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth formula programs) administered by Department of Labor (DOL)
- Adult Education and Literacy Act programs administered by the Department of Education (DoED)
- Wagner-Peyser Act employment services administered by DOL
- Rehabilitation Act Title I programs administered by DoED

In addition to the core programs, for individuals with multiple needs to access the services, the following partner programs are required to provide access through the One-Stops. The following partner programs have a physical presence within the One-Stop Career Centers: Adult Education and Literacy, SNAP E&T programs, Small Business Development Centers (SBDC), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), and the National Farmworker Jobs Programs. The following partners' programs are accessible through the One-Stop Career Centers through electronic portals: Career and Technical education (Perkins), Community Services Block Grant, Indian and Native American Programs, Job Corps, HUD Employment and Training Programs, Local Veterans' Employment Representatives and Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program, Senior Community Service Employment Program, Trade Adjustment Assistance Programs, Unemployment Compensation Programs, and YouthBuild. TANF is now a required partner.

- B. A description of how the local board, working with entities identified in A, will expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals with barriers to employment, including how the Local Board will facilitate the development of career pathways**

and co-enrollment, as appropriate, and improve access to activities leading to a recognized postsecondary credential (including a credential that is an industry-recognized certificate or certification, portable, and stackable);

The Region VII WDB has an extensive outreach network in place to create community awareness regarding available employment and training services and all employment events. The One-Stop Career Centers provide access to individuals with barriers to employment and provide specialized services to meet the needs of customers with barriers. Services such as WIOA, TANF, and SNAP are available at the One-Stop Career Centers. Disabled Veteran Opportunity Program (DVOP) Specialists provide intensive case management, and employment and training services to Veteran's with significant barriers. The One-Stop Career Centers have WIOA Career Coaches to assist customers with disabilities in navigating services and provide referrals to appropriate community agencies/services. After initial contact, One-Stop staff will send appropriate referrals to partner agencies such as DHHR, DRS, and Adult Education. All staff is crossed trained regarding programs and services to allow for seamless service delivery and co-enrollment when appropriate. The One-Stop Career Centers have Business Analysts whose primary function is to develop and coordinate On-The-Job Training contracts. While the primary function of the Business Analyst is to work with employers, they also work hand-in-hand with One-Stop staff to fill job openings and when necessary host job fair or other hiring events.

Career Pathways:

Sector strategy partnerships have been developed with key stakeholders including but not limited to education and industry. Career pathways align and integrate education (including AE and ESL), job training, counseling and support services to create accelerated pathways to postsecondary education credentials and employment in in-demand occupations.

Career pathways involve a range of stakeholders. In addition to state and local workforce boards and agencies, potential partners should include education and training providers, community colleges, community-based organizations, support service providers, and employers. Examples of cross-program collaboration with key workforce development stakeholders developing career pathways in Region VII include:

- Strategies - Region VII WDB conduct Sector Partnership Strategy Meetings with key stakeholders including but not limited to industry and workforce development partners. These meetings help assess the needs of industry and align educational programs and offerings.
- Roles and Responsibilities - Training and education providers can design curriculum based on industry demands. The Region VII WDB facilitates meetings and disseminates labor market information to support career pathway efforts. Region VII WDB serves as a primary link between education and business. Other key stakeholders provide useful input

based on regional infrastructure and technology needs.

- One of the key strategies the Region VII WDB has been able to effectively implement through Sector Partnership meetings is the capability of portable and stackable industry-recognized certifications. I.e., in partnership with Blue Ridge Community and Technical College their Advanced Manufacturing A.A.S. program has been divided into multiple, 6-week cohorts with open entry points and certifications at the end of each 6-weeks. This is an example of allowing clients the opportunity to easily access and obtain the skills required by industry. The stackable components allow the individual to ultimately obtain a 2-year Associate's Degree. However, the certifications earned at the end of 6-weeks cohorts allow for immediate employment opportunities. Similar programmatic designs are currently in development with Eastern West Virginia Community and Technical College.
- The State has identified four growing industry sectors in the state; advanced manufacturing, healthcare, information technology, and energy. The Region VII WDB is financially committed to supporting all training endeavors that lead to industry recognized credentials in occupations identified as "in-demand" by the U.S. Department of Labor. The Region VII WDB is able to provide up to \$6,000.00 in tuition assistance and an additional \$5,000.00 in supportive services for WIOA-eligible individuals.
- The success of these programs will be measured by myriad of data points collected from the key stakeholders. Data used will include but not be limited to MACC, labor market information, EDA reports, economic impact studies, WIOA performance metrics, et.al.

C. A description of the steps taken by the Local Board to engage entities identified in A in the formulation of its Local Plan.

The formulation of the Local Plan begins with One-Stop Management Consortia. The Management Consortia meet quarterly at the One-Stop Career Centers. The management consortium is comprised of mandated partners and key stakeholders within the One-Stop delivery system. Through these meetings, and other One-Stop committee meetings such as the Implementation Team and Business Services Team, partners are given an effective platform to help shape service delivery strategies, identify customer needs, and ultimately shape policy. The Region VII WDB also hosts training provider meetings. These meetings are strategy sessions between education providers and the WDB on how we can effectively collaborate and implement strategic workforce development efforts in our region. Utilizing the collective knowledge of our One-Stop partners and training providers enables the Region VII Workforce Development Board with the knowledge to create an effective and meaningful plan for delivery of services throughout our region. In addition to the aforementioned meetings, individual board members were asked to give input and feedback in regard to the local plan. Region VII Workforce Development Board membership is business-driven (51% business) and includes multiple partner agencies including all core partners prescribed under WIOA.

D. A description of the strategies and services that will be used in the Local Area -

- **To facilitate engagement of businesses, including small businesses and businesses in in-demand industry sectors and occupations, in workforce development programs**
- **To support a local workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses in the Local Area**
- **To better coordinate workforce development programs and economic development**
- **To strengthen linkages between the American Job Center delivery system and Unemployment Insurance Programs.**

The Region VII One-Stop Career Centers have an active Business Services Team made up of key One-Stop staff, community college representatives, and other representatives from the local area that serve business needs.

In order to facilitate engagement of local employers in in-demand industry sectors, the One-Stop Career Centers Business Services Team actively participate, and will continue to participate, in area business advisory councils and boards that bring together business and educational leaders in-demand occupational and industry sectors. While this is a fluid list, current in-demand occupations receiving the most attention from our Business Service Team members include:

Construction Trades
Culinary/Hospitality
Energy
Healthcare
Information Technology
Advanced Manufacturing
Transportation and Logistics

Through these councils and advisory boards, workforce development and educational leaders communicate directly with area business leaders regarding the in-demand human resource needs, training needs, and skill-sets that are currently being sought after by area businesses.

In addition, Region VII Business Services Team members frequently and actively partner with Chambers of Commerce/Economic Development entities throughout the Local Workforce Development Area.

Region VII business service representatives provide extensive outreach to employers in the local area. This is accomplished through employer visits, community presentations, and hosting of and participation in job fairs, community fairs, and recruiting events. Employer information is also disseminated through communication outlets such as press releases, the company's website and social media outlets.

The Region VII Business Services Team operates within the One-Stop Career Centers and is integrated with the WIOA program, TANF/SNAP, and Wagner-Peyser/Re-employment programs. All job orders, job fairs, and recruiting events are accessible to and communicated to

all One-Stop staff and Business Service Team members.

To strengthen linkages between the American Job Center delivery system and Unemployment Insurance Programs, the local One-Stop center operates under the direction of a Management Consortium. The Management Consortium is comprised of several One-Stop partners including local Unemployment Insurance Office Managers. The Management Consortium meets quarterly and addresses day-to-day One-Stop operations including: customer flow, customer recruitment, service delivery, budget operations, etc. As members of the Management Consortium, the Unemployment Insurance programs are able to provide regular direct input to the operation of the local One-Stop center.

In addition to the Management Consortium, the local electronic referral system is able to identify individual customers in need of Job Service or Unemployment Insurance services. These referrals are collected via email by the One-Stop Director and delivered to the appropriate local office. The Region VII Workforce Development Board remains committed to strengthening and fostering productive partnership with local Unemployment Insurance and Job Service programs in order to provide the best possible rapid around services to our mutual customers.

E. A description regarding the implementation of apprenticeship, incumbent worker training programs, on-the-job training programs, customized training programs, industry and sector strategies, integrated education and training, career pathways initiatives, utilization of effective business intermediaries, and other business services and strategies, designed to meet the needs of businesses in support of the strategy described in Section 1.

Region VII currently works with local registered apprenticeship programs within our eight-county area. Also, IBM in Mineral County has a nationally recognized registered apprenticeship program. Ironworkers Local 568 located in Cumberland, Maryland is also a registered apprenticeship that serves our region.

In addition, the Region VII WDB and other key stakeholders work with Mr. Michael Ferrari, U.S. DOL/OA 115-15 Aiken Center, Martinsburg, WV 25402, Phone: (304) 260-9137, Email: ferrari.michael@dol.gov.

The Region VII WDB does use On-the-Job-Training (OJT) and customized training for local employers and/or businesses locating or expanding into our area. Incumbent Worker training is offered to assist in skill upgrading of current employees as part of layoff-aversion strategies. As previously mentioned, our Business Services Team(s) work closely with our economic development partners; industry clusters; advisory councils; and educational partners to understand trends and workforce needs. Services are recorded in the Mid-Atlantic Career Consortium (MACC). The Executive Director of the Region VII WDB is involved with advisory councils and the school districts regarding secondary career academies and how they translate into postsecondary degrees and/or certifications leading to career pathways.

F. A description of how the Local Board will coordinate workforce activities carried

out in the Local Area with economic development activities carried out in the Local Area in which the Local Area (or planning region) is located, and promote entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services.

The Small Business Development Centers (SBDC) is an active partner with the One-Stop Career Centers in Region VII. One-Stop Career Centers facilitate SBDC with appropriate referrals and for our mutual customers to receive direct and immediate benefit in regards to business plans, taxes, and incorporation and other issues important to the development of a business. Microenterprise and entrepreneurial training takes place through regular workshops as well as individual meetings and appointments facilitated by SBDC staff. We will continue to support entrepreneurial development efforts throughout the region including the development and expansion of related training in support of entrepreneurial development.

G. A description of how the Local Board will leverage and coordinate supportive services in the delivery of workforce development activities carried out in the Local Area. Specifically, the Local Plan should address how the Local Board will work with Local Management Boards and other providers to deliver supportive services to jobseekers.

The Region VII WDB established within policy authorization of Supportive Service payments to WIOA eligible participants to offset the costs of attending training. Supportive Service payments are one of the direct tools Workforce Development Areas can use to remove barriers from individuals in need of re-employment or re-training. The Region VII WDB is committed to alleviating the barriers job-seekers face during their efforts to find re-employment. Often these barriers are the customers' lack of financial resources. In such instances, Supportive Service payments are able to assist the job-seeker with the ability to have transportation, clothes, tools, and other items related to looking for or accepting employment.

Referrals for Supportive Service payments are initiated by One-Stop Career Center staff. Priority is given to individuals not receiving unemployment; however, receiving unemployment does not necessarily preclude a customer from Supportive Service payments. Issuance of a Supportive Service is identified and documented as part of the Region VII WDB's case management process as well as documented electronically within the MACC.

Ultimately, the appropriate regional WDB staff must approve Supportive Service payment requests. In addition, every effort is made by regional staff to not duplicate services when records indicate a customer is co-enrolled in another partner program. For instance, the Region VII WDB would not provide Supportive Services for transportation during a job search if a WIOA customer was co-enrolled in the SNAP E&T program and receiving transportation assistance from DHHR.

H. A description of how the Local Board intends to provide a greater business voice in the delivery of workforce development activities carried out in the Local Area. The description should include how the Local Board will engage businesses on decisions regarding the type and content of training activities.

The Region VII WDB believes the voice of business and industry must be heard if we are to effectively train and adequately prepare our regional workforce for careers in our Local Area. This has been accomplished through joint partnerships of the local Community & Technical Colleges in Region VII. Blue Ridge CTC & Eastern WV CTC are active partners in Sector Strategy meetings held quarterly. These meetings have provided a framework for key industry, economic development, chamber of commerce, and other key community leaders to come together and organize workforce and economic development efforts. Business stakeholders are given a platform to express their training and workforce issues while the CTCs are able to address the existing areas of need while proposing solutions to close the identified skills gaps. Effective partnerships and collaboration empower our Sector Strategy efforts and successfully provide business a "voice" within our Local Area. Also, the Region VII Workforce Development Board is business driven with over 51% of the board comprised of business membership.

I. A description of how the Local Board will promote and cultivate industry-led partnerships in the delivery of workforce training opportunities.

The Region VII Business Services Team and One-Stop Management Consortium Team have strong industry partnerships within the local area. Representatives actively participate and will continue to participate in numerous advisory councils and boards that represent occupational and industry sectors in the region. Established industry partnerships exist in: construction trades, culinary/hospitality, energy, healthcare, information technology, advanced manufacturing, and transportation and logistics. Representatives actively participate on these councils and boards and will strive to develop relevant memberships that increase effectiveness and guidance to the Local Workforce Development Board. Region VII also actively partners with the area's chambers of commerce and economic development entities to develop and enhance industry partnerships. Finally, Region VII partners with business to offer industry specific hiring events such as job and resource fairs.

J. A description of the role (if any) of local faith or community-based organizations in the local workforce development system.

Active faith-based partnerships have been somewhat limited in Region VII. However, there are instances when a client has exhausted all other available partner resources and various faith-based groups in the region have provided emergency-type assistance. Examples of these faith-based groups would be Catholic Charities, Jefferson County Ministerial Association, as well as numerous individual churches within the Local Area. Community-based organizations such as Telamon and Eastern WV Community Action Agency provide a myriad of client services, including but not limited to supportive services and emergency needs-based assistance. Other community groups provide food pantries and coat closets to residents in need throughout the local

area. It is worth noting that faith-based groups often work hand-in-hand with the community organizations to provide the aforementioned services.

Section 3: American Job Center Delivery System

- A. List the American Job Centers in your Local Area, including address and phone numbers. Indicate the One-Stop Operator for each site and whether it is a comprehensive or satellite center.**

The regional One-Stop system consists of two comprehensive centers. The Martinsburg One-Stop Career Center is located in Martinsburg, West Virginia at 202 Viking Way, Martinsburg, West Virginia 25401 and the phone number is (304) 264-6133. The South Branch One-Stop Career Center is located in Moorefield, West Virginia at 151 Robert C. Byrd Industrial Park Road, Suite 2, Moorefield, West Virginia 26836, and the phone number is (304) 530-3917. Both centers are open Monday- Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Thomas P. Miller & Associates, Inc. is the One-Stop Operator at this time. However, the One-Stop Career Centers have a Management Consortium which meets quarterly to discuss key issues and resolve joint issues common to the One-Stop System stakeholders. Under WIOA, the One-Stop Operator will be competitively procured as required by the Act.

- B. Customer Flow System – Describe the customer flow process used in the Local Area. This description should include eligibility assessment, individualized training plans and case management.**

Eligibility Assessment:

Eligibility for services related to local determinations about the individual's need for and ability to benefit from services. A WIOA participant is an individual determined to be eligible to participate and who receives one or more WIOA-funded services in a Region VII One-Stop Career Center.

The WIOA registration must reflect information the date the form is completed online (MACC). The signature and date of the intake worker on the registration form means the intake worker has reviewed the registration information, a determination of eligibility has been made and indicated the individual is eligible or ineligible.

The WIOA gives the state the authority to establish policies and procedures relating to verifying WIOA eligibility, such policies and procedures must be consistent with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, as well as all other applicable federal regulations and statutes. The Region VII WDB must establish policies and procedures to verify and document

participant eligibility for WIOA programs.

The Region VII WDB procedure for verifying and documenting eligibility shall identify acceptable eligibility documentation. All documentation must be retained in the participant's file. See **Attachment S**, Region VII Workforce Development Board standard Operating Procedures, Chapter 2, page 1.

IEP Development and Case Management Processes:

The WIOA rules explain that the IEP is an individualized career service, jointly developed by the participant and career coach. The IEP includes an ongoing strategy to identify employment goals, achievement objectives, and an appropriate combination of services for the participant to obtain these goals and objectives. IEPs are one of the most effective ways to serve individuals with barriers to employment, and to coordinate the various services, including training services, they may need to overcome these barriers.

The IEP is the basis for the overall case management strategy. The career coach utilized the IEP to update strategies and activities as they occur, and to document referral and contact information for services obtained from partner organizations. When reviewing the IEP, career coaches document a participant's progress, activities completed, benchmarks reached, and any other accomplishments.

Additionally, the IEP will be:

- Developed in partnership with the participant;
- Used as a tool that can and will change over time, as necessary, to meet the needs of the individual;
- Used as a roadmap to achieve measurable and attainable short-term and long-term goals; and
- Designed to reflect the individual's interests and incorporate career planning.

The provision of services will be a result of, and consistent with, the customer's assessment and IEP. Having a well-developed IEP and related documentation is required and is a fundamental part of case management. Once an IEP is developed and approved, it will be used in the on-going process of monitoring and re-evaluating the participant's progress toward educational and occupational goals. The IEP will be a "living document" and reviewed and updated as life changes occur, including the participant's interests and ambitions, as strategies are updated, as services are obtained from partner organizations, as activities are completed, and as goals are met and benchmarks are reached. The participant must receive a copy of the plan signed and dated by both the participant and career coach. When the plan is significantly modified, such as the addition or modification of information that may be used as data validation source documentation, a new copy will be signed and dated by both parties and provided to the participant.

MACC Case Notes: Case notes refer to electronic statements by the career coach that identify, at a minimum, the following:

- A participant's status for a specific data element;
- The date on which the information was obtained; and
- The career coach who obtained the information.

The content of case notes will include information that accurately describes the services provided and the individual's experiences. Case notes will tell a story of the participant's journey through programs into self-sufficiency. They will document progress, identify barriers, describe the interaction between the participant and the career coach, provide a description of the assistance the career coach has provided, and show how barriers were overcome.

The Region VII WDB has developed a case note guidance/standard operating procedure, which ensures case noting are consistent and complete for participants in all programs. See **Attachment S**, Region VII Workforce Development Standard Operating Procedures, Chapter 2, pages 40-41. For additional information regarding Region VII Workforce Development Board customer flow, please refer to **Attachment S** for greater detail.

The activities and services of the Workforce West Virginia system are streamlined to provide immediate access to a wide variety of both job seeker and employer services. This streamlined approach provides responsive customer service whether it is one-on-one customer support at a Workforce West Virginia Career Center, one-on-one interaction with a WIOA partner, services at an Affiliate Site or access point, or by field visitation by a Workforce West Virginia staff member. Upon entry into the Workforce West Virginia Career Center, customers are informed of all service options available and are encouraged to utilize those services most appropriate to meet their needs. Although initial utilization of these resources encourages self-assessment and independent use of resources, the Workforce West Virginia Career Center recognizes that some customers may require more assistance in order to become and remain gainfully employed. As a result, Resource Room staff and the One-Stop staff with diversified backgrounds from the various partners are available to work with customers as part of Career Services in order to achieve a positive self-sustaining employment outcome. This can include enhanced career counseling, referral to other programs, referral to support services, and intensified employability skills training (i.e., AE, SPOKES, etc.) in addition to the options listed above.

Training Services available through the Workforce West Virginia delivery system encompass a wide array of services offered by partnering with public and community training agencies. Adult training is provided to assist customers in improving basic skills, employability skills and job skills. Basic skill instruction is provided in labs within the Workforce West Virginia Career Centers and includes literacy instruction, basic skill remediation and test preparation. English proficiency instruction is available in adult education centers throughout the region. Employability skill training is provided for all adults and dislocated workers who lack work history and is available to others who desire this instruction. Partner programs such as Adult Education (AE) and Strategic Planning in

Occupation Knowledge for Employment and Success (SPOKES) are provided through the Region VII Workforce West Virginia Career Centers. ADA compliant computers are located at the One-Stops for handicapped job seekers.

Other programs for customers that are provided by partner agencies include Veteran Employment Programs, the Migrant and Seasonal Farm Worker Program, Job Corps, Older Worker Programs, Rehabilitation Programs, Community Action Programs, and Youth Programs. Another service available for adults and dislocated workers is Rapid Response, which provides services to displaced homemakers and dislocated workers.

C. Describe how the Local Board will ensure meaningful access to all customers.

The service delivery system in Region VII will be an evolving system, one that continues to improve on the quality of service, service accessibility, and remain adaptable in meeting the needs of area employers and job seekers. The system's primary focus is to provide a framework in which the workforce of West Virginia can advance skills needed for the 21st century. The delivery system will be dependent on web-based portals that allow immediate transfer and processing of information between rural access points such as the Workforce West Virginia Career Center partners and other state and federal agencies. In keeping with the One-Stop delivery philosophy, the Board faces many challenges to provide services throughout the region, to enable universal access by all employers and job seekers. Currently, the WDB has chartered the Workforce West Virginia Career Center located in Moorefield, WV and the Career Center located in Martinsburg, WV. Additionally, the region's electronic referral system J.A.C.K. is utilized to help customers find the services they need from the correct partner agency. If a customer is needing assistance from outside the region, the state's No Wrong Door system has been integrated into the J.A.C.K. system to help these customers.

The aforementioned comprehensive One-Stop Career Centers in Region VII will be physically and programmatically accessible to all customers, including individuals with disabilities and those individuals with limited English proficiency. In so doing, the One-Stop Career Centers use principles of universal design and human-centered design such as flexibility in space usage. The One-Stop Career Centers will use pictorial, written, verbal, and tactile modes to present information for customers with disabilities or limited English proficiency. The One-Stop Career Centers will also provide clear lines of sight to information for seated or standing users, necessary accommodations, and **adequate** space for the use of assistive devices or personal assistants.

D. A description on the process the Local Board intends to provide for the solicitation and selection of a One-Stop Operator as identified in Section 107 of WIOA.

The selection of a One-Stop Operator will be conducted in accordance with federal, state, and local procurement policies and regulations. See **Attachment F** for Region VII WDB Procurement Policy. The Region VII WDB has adopted a Procurement and Selection of Request-for-Proposals Policy, see **Attachment HH**. The Region VII policy is in accordance with Workforce West Virginia Policy 04-17.

E. A description of how the Local Board will ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers of services through the system and ensure that such providers meet the employment needs of local businesses, and workers and jobseekers

To ensure continuous improvement, Region VII WDB staff monitors local training providers twice a year to assure file maintenance and integrity. This process allows WDB staff to provide technical assistance and guidance to these institutions. Region VII WDB believes this is a critical component in fostering partnerships and assisting our regional training providers in their mission to better serve WIOA clients. Also, each One-Stop Career Center facilitates quarterly Sector Strategy and Business Services/Implementation Team meetings. The purpose of these meetings is to discuss upcoming courses at each institution as well as the needs of local businesses in the area. These meetings are critical in the continuous improvement efforts of key One-Stop system stakeholders. Collectively, these meetings and monitoring sessions provide the necessary tools to facilitate effective partnerships and streamline referral process and client services.

F. A description of how the Local Board will facilitate access to services provided through the American Job Center delivery system, including in remote areas, through the use of technology and through other means.

Throughout the eight counties of the region, the Board will continue to develop access points with WIOA partners. These access points will have computers linked to the Workforce West Virginia delivery system and required One-Stop partners for job seekers and employers to access services. The Board plans to have multiple sites with computers in each county, allowing maximum accessibility. Job seekers will have at their disposal extensive listings of jobs available locally, across the region, state and nation. Employers will have access to an extensive database of available workers, online labor market information and the ability to post job listings on the network. Computers will be available during normal business hours and in some cases, dependent on the hosting location, on a 24-hour basis. Computers will have access to the Internet and be linked to the regional and state job information system. Computers can be accessed during regular business hours, Monday through Friday, at our partner agencies (DHHR, DRS, etc.), libraries, and local One-Stop Career Centers. If a client needs further assistance, they can call the WDB office at (304) 530-5258.

G. A description of how entities within the American Job Center delivery system, including American Job Center operators and the American Job Center partners, will comply with Section 188 of WIOA, if applicable, and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities, including providing staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities.

Business representatives, community leaders, county government officials as well as secondary and post-secondary schools have attended community roundtable meetings. Together, they work to identify and support the initiatives necessary to combat the identifiable problems associated with high poverty areas. Educational partners include Blue Ridge CTC and Eastern WV CTC as well as secondary school representatives and other post-secondary school representatives in the Local Area. The Region VII WDB will also maintain a Business Analyst. In addition, the Region VII WDB continues to serve customers who are low-skilled, low-wage, disconnected, disadvantaged and at-risk, with multiple employment challenges, many of whom have undisclosed or unknown disabilities. Finally, the Region VII WDB ensures access for all individuals with disabilities to the full range of services available to all customers and those individuals with disabilities and barriers to employment are provided services that lead to competitive, integrated employment.

H. An acknowledgement that the Local Board understands that, while Section 188 of WIOA ensure equal opportunity for individuals with disabilities, sub-recipients may also be subject to the requirements of:

- **Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, which prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities by recipients of Federal financial assistance.**
- **Title I of the ADA, which prohibits discrimination in employment based on disability.**
- **Title II of the ADA, which prohibits State and Local governments from discriminating on the basis of disability.**
- **Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act.**
- **West Virginia Anti-Discrimination laws.**

The Region VII Workforce Development Board and our sub-recipients will adhere to the above mentioned federal regulations and their requirements. Sub-recipient contracts outline the aforementioned requirements. Sub-recipient monitoring will be used to reinforce Section 188 of WIOA as well as all applicable requirement therein.

I. A description of the roles and resource contributions of the American Job Center partners.

The Region VII WDB provides a number of employment, job training, and career assistance programs for individuals who live within the eight county area of Region VII and are out of work or who have suffered job loss for a variety of reasons.

WIOA Youth: Eastern Panhandle Instructional Cooperative is the provider of Youth Services in the region, and they provide education and employment services for youth 16-24 years of age.

WIOA Adult Program: This program serves individuals 18 years old or older who meet family income guidelines and are eligible to work in the United States. WIOA Adult enrollees can receive assistance with: career planning, job search, job training (including ITA funding), follow-up, and related services.

WIOA Dislocated Worker Program: This program offers services to help individuals who have lost a job through no fault of their own and need help returning to work find suitable employment. Services provided may include career planning and counseling, job search assistance, vocational assessments, and funding for counselor-approved training.

Workforce West Virginia Job Service/Unemployment: This is a program through which several of Workforce West Virginia's key services to job seekers and certain workforce-development services

to businesses are delivered. Workforce West Virginia service include but are not limited to:

- Unemployment Insurance
- Job Service and Placement
- Migrant Seasonal Farmworker Services
- Job Orders
- Job Search
- Resume Building
- Career Guidance and Counseling

Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS): This program specializes in working with individuals with disabilities that create barriers for employment, post-secondary training, independent living and community integration. DRS provides pre-employment transition services, vocational assessments, job tryouts, community-based evaluations, job search assistance, job coaching, case management, tuition assistance and supportive services. Staff from DRS is available as needed, to consult with partners who happen to be working with individuals with disabilities.

Department of Health and Human Resources (DHHR): The West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources (DHHR) is comprised of five bureaus: Bureau for Behavioral Health and Health Facilities; Bureau for Child Support Enforcement; Bureau for Children and Families; Bureau for Medical Services; and Bureau for Public Health. DHHR has a statewide presence and employs nearly 6,000 individuals.

Senior Community Service Employment Program: This program helps workers who are 55 or older to build the experience and confidence they need to find permanent employment.

Partners contribute to the infrastructure of the One-Stop Career Center system and co-enroll clients with other one-stop partners to avoid duplication and ensure wrap-around services are provided. See **Attachment LL**, the One-Stop Infrastructure Agreement.

J. A description of how the Local Board will use Individualized Training Accounts based on high-demand, difficult to fill positions identified within local priority industries identified in Section 1 (A).

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) provides for the Individual Training Account (ITA) to be used on behalf of WIOA participants to finance training services. Upon exhausting all other student financial aid sources the ITA shall be one of the primary methods used by the WDB to train WIOA eligible participants. Customers will be

required to apply for Federal Pell Grants and the portion of the Pell Grant attributable to tuition and other training costs must be applied to the tuition cost before WIOA funds are applied. WIOA funds may be used to fund an ITA while Pell eligibility is being processed. However, when Pell funds are provided, the portion of Pell attributable to tuition must be repaid to the WDB. The portion of a Pell Grant that is attributable to "education related" expenses is not required to be applied to tuition or reimbursed to the Board. In cases where an individual has a choice between a Pell eligible training provider and a service provider that has not applied or received Pell eligibility, the customer must choose the Pell eligible provider, if performance data are comparable and the Pell-eligible service provider training costs are comparable. The selection of a training provider will be in a manner that maximizes informed consumer choice. However, consumer choice must be in a demand or growth occupation within the Region VII labor market. Applicable portions of the ITA will be completed by the Workforce West Virginia Career Center Case Manager and the Training Provider, and then forwarded to the WDB for approval. The ITA can only be utilized at training or educational facilities approved by both the local WDB and Workforce West Virginia. A listing of approved training providers can be reviewed on the state website at <https://public.workforcewv.org/JobSeeker/TrainingCourseSearch.asp>. The listing should provide information on school location; program offerings and class dates; school point of contact; program cost; program certification or degree; school completion rates; wage at placement; and rate of retention in unsubsidized employment. The availability of the above information will assist the individual in choosing a quality-training program.

ITA Eligibility. The process for determining individual ITA eligibility includes:

- individual has received Career Services without obtaining employment (career services received must be documented on the Individual Employment Plan (IEP) and in MACC). Before moving to either a training program or employment, the individual must demonstrate he or she has the necessary basic education or work skills necessary to proceed to training or employment.
- individual chooses a training program or educational program from a demand occupation which is offered by a Region VII certified Training Provider;
- individual has demonstrated through evaluation, assessment, and case management the abilities, aptitudes, and/or skills to successfully complete the training;
- the training occupation has the potential to provide the customer a self-sufficient income;
- individual is accepted by the training provider; and
- the WDB approves the ITA.

Individual Training Account (ITA) Limitations

1. Training costs shall not exceed \$6,000 for a twelve (12) month period and are limited to that twelve (12) month period, to include tuition, fees, books, supplies, tools and other direct training related expenses, unless by approval of the Executive Director. No payments will be made for training costs incurred prior to the time the Individual Training Account is approved. The training provider and/or participant shall provide proof, in writing, of tuition coverage or income to support training programs that cost in excess of the approved WIOA amount.
2. Participants may transfer from a training institution of higher education to another Board approved training institution as long as the receiving institution provides credit for all successfully completed training.
3. Transfers will not be approved for participants attending providers of training from other than Board approved institutions.
4. Funds shall not be approved for home study courses or sectarian activities. However, courses of study whose main course work is conducted on-site with minimal home study or video teaching can be approved.
5. Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act funding shall not be provided for individuals changing programs unless approved by the WDB.
6. Prior to approval by the WDB, a new ITA will be completed by WIOA Career Coaches and the Training Provider and submitted to the WDB. The new ITA must be approved by the WDB prior to any program change.
7. Costs for any repeated course(s), lost books, etc. will not be paid by WIOA funding unless prior approval is granted through a waiver by the Region VII WDB Executive Director.
8. The participant will be required to apply for student financial aid, to include a Pell Grant, if attending a training provider that participates in the Federal Financial Aid Program. A copy of the award or denial letter must accompany the ITA.
9. The individual must be making satisfactory progress in the program. Satisfactory progress is defined as 2.0 grade point average (GPA) for each term and the cumulative GPA must also be 2.0 or greater. The Board will recognize higher progress standards when required by a school for satisfactory completion of a program. Satisfactory progress, in the case of schools utilizing a pass/fail grading system, will be defined as the progress level the school has established as the benchmark the individual must meet or obtain to be declared "skill efficient" in the school's program of study.
10. The student must agree to attend classes no less than 12 credit hours/semester hours or 25 classroom hours per week or be enrolled as full-time equivalent student in a West Virginia State

Board of Education approved program, or be enrolled in a program approved by an accrediting agency recognized by the West Virginia State Board of Education. Instances where school scheduling will not allow the student to carry the required credit hours/semester hours may be waived and will be handled on a case-by-case basis by the WDB. Summer school students must be enrolled no less than the credit hours/semester hours equivalent to 6-credit hours/semester hours or 37.5 classroom hours per week.

ITA Payment.

If a participant drops out of the training program between disbursement periods, the balance due will be prorated, and a refund issued to the WDB.

The length of training shall be based on the time needed to learn adequately the occupational skills. Depending on the type of training, it could be as long as twelve (12) months or as short as a few weeks.

ITA Disclaimer. Failure to abide by the ITA policy relieves the Local Workforce Development Board of any obligation to pay for any training cost incurred. The individual may be responsible for payment to the Board of training expenses incurred by the Board in the event the individual does not abide by the ITA policy. Each ITA recipient will have this acknowledged in a signed Memorandum of Understanding.

K. A description of how the Local Board will provide priority of services that conforms with the State Plan. This should include a description of additional local requirements or discretionary priorities including data to support the need and how the local requirement and/or priority will be documented and implemented for the Adult program.

WorkForce West Virginia has issued a Priority of Services Policy for Adult Title I Funding 2-16, which determines priority for providing WIOA Career and Training services. A priority of service will be utilized in Region VII that will fund all WIOA eligible veteran and felons needs and provide adult funding to recipients of public assistance and / or low-income individuals. Region VII Workforce Development Board remains committed to a seamless delivery of services to all WIOA eligible customers. The Board will continually review our own policies to conform and comply with State policies implemented to deliver seamless integration of WIOA services. The Region VII WDB believes this will be an on-going effort of the Local Board, One-Stop Delivery System, applicable local partners, and appropriate mandated State partners. See **Attachment G** for the Region VII WDB Priority of Service Policy.

Priority for individualized career services and training services funded with Title I Adult funds must

be given to recipients of public assistance and other low-income individuals who are basic skills deficient. States and local areas must establish criteria by which the one-stop operator will apply the priority under WIOA section 134(c)(3)(E).

Veterans, under WIOA section 3(63)(A) and 38 U.S.C. 101 receive priority of service in all Department of Labor funded training programs under 38 U.S.C. 4215 and described in 20 CFR 1010. A veteran must still meet each program's eligibility criteria to receive services under the respective employment and training program. For income-based eligibility determinations, amounts paid while on active duty or paid by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) for vocation rehabilitation, disability payments, or related VA-funded programs are not to be considered income in accordance with 38 U.S.C. 4213 and 20 CFR 683.230.

L. A description of how the Local Board will utilize funding to create incumbent worker training opportunities.

Incumbent worker training (IWT) is defined as training designed to keep businesses and workers competitive by keeping workers employed, thus averting layoffs. IWT may be used to upgrade workers' skills for the purpose of layoff aversion. The purpose of this program is to assist businesses who have the need to train and retrain existing members of their workforce in order to remain competitive in the local, regional, and global economy. IWT is "employer driven" and responds to changes in market conditions as well as the introduction of new technology in the workplace. Our policy identifies the need for our Business Services Team to work jointly in effort to identify employers in need of IWT. See **Attachment H** for the Region VII WDB WIOA Incumbent Worker Training Policy.

M. A description of how the Local Board will train and equip staff to provide excellent, WIOA-compliant customer service.

The Region VII WDB will continue to use established professional development activities in order to meet goals, develop staff skills, and ensure a competent WIOA case management staff. In addition, we will enhance training curricula that incorporates policies, processes, and input from Wagner Peyser, UI, and /or core partner agency staff. The Region VII WDB will continue to train employees on the pertinent skills needed in the American Job Center through seminars, conferences, and other professional development opportunities. Examples of such professional development programs include but are not limited to: Workforce GPS, NAJA, NAWB, NAWOP, and other various state and local trainings. The WDB also provides a case management manual to all new staff to use as a reference and further enhance their professional skill-set.

Section 4: Title I - Adult, Youth, and Dislocated Worker Functions

A. A description and assessment of the type and availability of adult and dislocated workers employment and training activities in the Local Area.

All Adult and Dislocated Workers can be provided WIOA Career and Training Services through the comprehensive Workforce West Virginia Career Centers located in Martinsburg and Moorefield. Career Services can be obtained at any Workforce West Virginia Career Center, or by use of the Internet. Training Services may be provided to WIOA eligible job seekers that do not have skills necessary to secure immediate employment and will be coordinated by a Workforce West Virginia Career Center WIOA Career Coach. Customers will be assessed by the TABE prior to beginning training. Training Services will be constantly monitored by the WDB to ensure both quality and success by the approved provider. The Region VII WDB reserves the right to remove a Training Provider or a Training Providers program from our approved regional list if there is a problem related to performance or quality.

Services will be provided to current workers, emerging workers, incumbent workers or dislocated workers, the disabled, veterans, low-income, including former and/or older workers re-entering the workforce. Eligibility for services will be in accordance with the WDB Priority of Service Policy and the WDB's Self-Sufficiency Income Level Policy.

B. A description of how the Local Board will coordinate workforce development activities carried out in the Local Area with statewide rapid response activities, as described in Section 134 (a)(2)(A).

Workforce West Virginia, by publication, of Policy Guidance Letters No. 02-03, 03-03, 24-03, and Informational Notice dated October 4, 2006, has established procedures for the operation of Rapid Response activities throughout the state. These policies establish Workforce West Virginia as the lead state agency. Although Workforce West Virginia is the lead, their goal is to operate the Rapid Response program as a collaborative effort between the State and the local WDB. Thus, a Rapid Response Team including the state and local representatives will be used in all Rapid Response situations. The team will consist of:

- Representative from Workforce West Virginia
- Representative from the local WDB
- The appropriate local One-Stop Director or Business Service Team representative
- The appropriate local Unemployment Insurance representative

- The appropriate local Resource Center Peer Advocate
- The appropriate Wagner-Peyser staff
- The appropriate WV Development Office Existing Industry Representative
- The State Trade Adjustment Assistance Act Unit
- Local Economic Development personnel
- Local Community and Technical College personnel

The process flow for combined state and local Rapid Response activities will be conducted as follows:

- Initial contact from the employer, either direct or indirect contact, to either Workforce West Virginia or the local WDB (first party notified will immediately notify the other party).
- State and local representatives discuss coordination of services for the employer and employees.
- Establish state roles and local roles, to include roles of neighboring WDBs and WDBs located in adjoining states (who will be the lead agency).
- Contact employer for additional information regarding the layoff, plant closure, etc.
- Determine if plant closing, layoff, or downsizing is due to international competition.
- Set up initial meeting date with the employer and union (if applicable).
- Develop appropriate materials and presentation on programs and services.
- Contact the Rapid Response Team members and brief them on upcoming events with employer and employees.
- Rapid Response Team meets with company officials and union officials (if applicable).
- Prepare and distribute initial employee meeting agenda to include discussion about the employee survey.
- Identify employee's skills, wages and needs.
- Present services offered at the local Workforce West Virginia Career Center (One-Stops)

- Determine the need for an Adjustment Committee (does the company and union want an Adjustment Committee?).
- Conduct Adjustment Committee training.
- Conduct meeting(s) with employees to inform them about available services.
 - ✓ One-Stop partner services.
 - ✓ Market community programs.
 - ✓ Conduct employee needs survey.
 - ✓ Identify Unemployment Insurance requirements.
 - ✓ Inform about job search methods.
 - ✓ Inform about training opportunities.
 - ✓ Identify services that maximize reemployment opportunities.
- Analyze other needed services through surveys and distribute results.
- Assist employees find jobs.
- Provide WIOA Career and Training Services.
- Provide WIOA Case Management Services.
- Provide WIOA Supportive Service needs.
- Assist individual obtain unsubsidized self-sustaining employment.
- Provide follow-up activities.

Funding of local Rapid Response activities will come from local Dislocated Worker funds. Once local Dislocated Worker funds are depleted the WDB may request additional Dislocated Worker funds from Workforce West Virginia.

C. A description and assessment the type and availability of youth workforce development activities in the Local Area, including activities for youth who are individuals with disabilities, which description and assessment shall include an identification of successful models of such youth workforce investment activities.

Description and assessments of the type and availability including activities for disabled and non-disabled are administered prior to enrollment and annually to measure progress. The Region VII WDB services out-of-school youth between ages 16-24 and in-school youth between the ages of 14-21.

Activities and services provided are as follows:

- Career training - classroom with instruction, attainment of education credentials.
- Employment training - work experiences, on-the-job training, occupational skills training, and job search.

In addition, the fourteen WIOA Youth Program elements are incorporated as services in program design and provided (when applicable) to youth program participants. These elements include:

- Tutoring, study skills training
- Alternative secondary school services, or dropout recovery services
- Paid and Unpaid work experience
- Occupational skill training
- Education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training
- Leadership development opportunities
- Supportive Services
- Adult Mentoring
- Follow-up services
- Comprehensive guidance and counseling
- Financial Literacy
- Entrepreneurial skills training
- Services that provide labor market and employment information
- Activities that help youth prepare for and transition to post-secondary education and training

In addition to aforementioned WIOA required youth elements, the Region VII Workforce Development Board remains committed to providing programs to our youth that meet local and regional demand. One such program has been our summer work crews that have operated since 2020. These are small work crews that deployed to different local businesses over a six-week period. Engaged youth are able to experience a multitude of work site demands and expectations while performing various tasks in a group setting. The basics of "work" are imparted to the youth through direct experience, such as, reporting to work on time, meeting employer expectations, communicating with co-workers, and earning a paycheck. The work groups are unique in the aspects of the Region VII WDB Youth Program provides the supervision and transportation for the participating youth. This alleviates transportation barriers on the youth side and supervision limitations on the employer side. In the summer of 2024, the Region VII WDB Youth Program will provide a six-week pre-apprenticeship program. In conjunction with our partner at the South Branch Career and Technical Center, WIOA Youth will engage in a six-week pre-apprenticeship model that encompasses hands-on-training within a classroom-style learning environment. Youth will primarily focus on various skilled-trades careers, such as HVAC, welding, masonry, carpentry, and industrial maintenance. Other entry level medical careers such as CNA, medical assistant, phlebotomy, etc., will also be explored. The program will utilize work-based training modules and virtual reality training provided by the South Branch Career and Technical Center and the Region VII WIOA Youth Program.

D. A description of how the Local Board will coordinate education and workforce development activities carried out in the Local Area with relevant secondary and post-secondary education programs and activities to coordinate strategies, enhance services, and avoid duplication of services.

The Region VII WDB works closely with local community and technical colleges as well as other private institutions to provide training opportunities to meet the demands of employers in the region. There are quarterly training provider meetings at both One-Stop Career Centers in the region to discuss curriculum. Our focus is on programs and certificates identified as in-demand by industry. Our quarterly Implementation Team meetings keep One-Stop partners abreast of all activities in the local area as well as identify areas of need. Sector-Strategy meetings held in conjunction with our CTC partners create an additional platform to not only address areas of need, but prevent duplication of services. In addition to regular WDB meetings, staff also attends various regional partner meetings. Meetings with agencies within the region are used to address areas of need, concern, further strengthen existing partnerships while also preventing duplication of services. At a front-line level, it is not uncommon for One-Stop staff to contact local partners in regards to a "shared" customer in efforts to provide wrap-around services, while eliminating the possibility of duplicating said services. The Region VII WDB is fortunate to have local partners committed to the development of the regional workforce and economy.

E. A description of how the Local Board will coordinate workforce development activities carried out under this title in the Local Area with the provision of transportation, including public transportation, and other appropriate supportive services in the Local Area.

The Region VII WDB acknowledges that a lack of transportation continues to be a barrier to employment within our local area. While public transit exists, it is not readily available to all of our customers. Reliable public transit in our population centers exists and in many instances provides bus routes to the major area employers as well as our comprehensive One-Stop Centers. However, due to much of the region being of a rural nature, public transit from home-to-work is not always possible, nor financially feasible. In effort to fill this area of need, the Region VII WDB has developed a Supportive Service Policy. The policy allows for WIOA customers to log time/attendance sheets and be reimbursed at a flat rate per day for the costs of travel, child care, and other related costs to training and searching for work. Please see **Attachment I** which is the Region VII WDB's Supportive Services Policy.

F. A description of how the Local Board will utilize Local Adult Funding based on adult priority groups as specified in the State Plan.

The Region VII WDB budget is reviewed and approved by both the Local Board and the Local Elected Officials Board at their respective annual meetings. Any revisions that take place throughout the program year are also subject to approval by both boards. Please see Section 4 - Adult, Youth, and Dislocated Worker Functions, Question 1 and **Attachment G**, the Region VII WDB Priority of Service Policy for additional information.

G. A description of how the Local Board will utilize Local Dislocated Worker Funding.

The Region VII WDB budget is reviewed and approved by both the Local Board and the Local Elected Officials Board at their respective annual meetings. Any revisions that take place throughout the program year are also subject to approval by both boards. The State has identified four "high-growth" industry sectors in the state; advanced manufacturing, healthcare, information technology, and energy. The Region VII WDB is financially committed to supporting all training endeavors that lead to industry recognized credentials in occupations identified as "in-demand" by the U.S. Department of Labor. Please see Section 4 - Adult, Youth, and Dislocated Worker Functions, Question 1 and **Attachment G**, the Region VII WDB Priority of Service Policy for additional information.

H. A description of how the Local Board will define "self-sufficiency" for employed Adult and employed Dislocated Worker participants.

The Region VII Workforce Development Board will utilize 125% of Federal Poverty Guidelines and 70% of the Lower-Living Standard Income Level (LLSIL) when determining income based eligibility for WIOA Adult or WIOA Youth services. A low-income individual is one who qualifies under various criteria, including an individual who received income for a six-month period that does not exceed the 125% of federal poverty level guidelines. The policy covers all needs related payments, supportive service payments, stipends, training funds, or any other monies designated on behalf of eligible low-income WIOA Adult or WIOA Youth customers. The region's designations are accepted by the Department of Labor and Workforce West Virginia based consistency with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and WIOA regulations. As policy, the 125% of federal poverty guidelines will be the standard when determining WIOA Adult and WIOA Youth income eligibility in Region VII, except for families of three or more in Berkeley or Jefferson County. In this instance, the 70% of the LLSIL will be used for determining WIOA eligibility.

Please see **Attachment J**, the Region VII WDB's Low-Income Eligibility for WIOA Services Policy for additional information.

I. A description of the Local Board's definition of "unlikely to return to previous industry or occupation" when required for eligibility for Dislocated Worker services.

Unfortunately, coal mining and manufacturing are two examples of declining/changing industries in the national, regional, and local economies. In this instance, a WIOA customer who has demonstrated an active and thorough job search effort may be considered as "unlikely to return to previous industry or occupation." Case management staff will assess customer's transferrable skills to determine if re-employment opportunities may exist outside of their previous industry or occupation. If not, our One-Stop case management team may determine training for an in-demand occupation is necessary for the customer to obtain self-sufficient re-employment. The aforementioned case management process must be fully documented in the Individual Employment Plan (IEP). The Region VII WDB acknowledges that there may be other industries adversely affected by changes in technology and/or various economic conditions. For instance, in West

Virginia, the coal industry has been adversely affected by a combination of environmental and economic factors. At this point, it seems unlikely to return as a major economic contributor in the region. However, manufacturing has not ceased, but changed. As our region emerged from the Great Recession, we have found manufacturing has given way to advanced manufacturing. Traditional laborers are now required to possess certifications or at the very least the skill-sets to operate sophisticated machinery. We have also seen the consolidation of departments as well as management functions. This has led to a variety of mid-management, supervisors, and line-workers unable to find re-employment through traditional methods. When this occurs, a need for training may be identified by our case management team. In order for our WIOA customers to be competitive in the job market, our One-Stop staff will exhaust all avenues of re-employment including training for a new career.

J. A description of how the Local Board will interpret and document eligibility criteria for "requires additional assistance to complete and educational program or to secure or hold employment" as set forth in the State's Guidance and WIOA Sections 129(a)(1)(B)(iii)(VII) and (a)(1)(C)(iv)(VII).

Currently, the Region VII WDB has a Youth Who Needs Additional Assistance Policy, **Attachment K**, which defines the criteria a WIOA eligible youth in Region VII must meet in order to qualify for "additional assistance." Under the WIOA law, as defined in section 681.200 (c)(8), either the State or the local level may establish definitions and eligibility documentation requirements for the "requires additional assistance to complete an educational program, or to secure and hold employment." In cases where the State Board establishes State policy on this criterion, the State Board must include the definition in the State Plan. In cases where the State Board does not establish a policy, the Local Board must establish a policy in their local plan if using this criterion. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 provides for employment and training programs for Out-of-School Youth ages 16-24 that are not attending school and meet at least one mandated barrier to training or employment. For a youth to qualify for services using the criterion "is an individual who requires additional assistance to complete an education program, or to secure and hold employment, one of the following must be met:

- Youth in a situation of domestic violence
- Youth with a history of substance abuse
- Youth that lacks occupational goals/skills
- Youth that has a poor work/no work history
- Youth that has been actively seeking employment for at least 2 months, but remains unemployed
- Youth that is gang involved or at-risk of gang involvement
- Migrant Youth
- Youth residing in a household where at least one family member living at the same residence has received public assistance in the last six month

The Region VII WDB has an established Supportive Services Policy, **Attachment I**. The Supportive Services Policy is meant to help alleviate the incidental and miscellaneous cost associated with completing training or finding employment. First priority is given to WIOA eligible Adults and then WIOA eligible Dislocated Workers who have exhausted their UI benefits. All supportive service requests are initiated by WIOA Case Managers and are subject to approval by the One-Stop Director and ultimately the regional office. All requests and subsequent payments are sufficiently documented per our regional policy and fully comply with the State's Guidance and WIOA Sections 129(a)(1)(B)(iii)(VII) and (a)(1)(C)(iv)(VII).

K. A description of the documentation required to demonstrate a "need for training."

Before a "need for training" can be documented by WIOA staff, eligibility must first be determined and verified by our WIOA Career Coaches. Once eligibility criteria have been determined, Region VII Workforce Development Board believes in an individualized approach to case management services. Region VII WDB believes this practice best serves the intent of the Act. Perhaps this is best demonstrated through the formation of the Individual Employment Plan (IEP). The IEP serves as a roadmap for the client on their journey to re-employment and self-sufficiency. Just as each client's individual circumstances are different so is their IEP. Some clients may find through the formation of their IEP that formal training is not what they need. In many instances, identifying transferable skills and On-the-Job Training opportunities may best serve the client's needs. If our WIOA staff in conjunction with the client can demonstrate an IEP that includes training as part of their plan for re-employment and self-sufficiency, the Region VII WDB will provide the funding assistance per our regional Individual Training Account (ITA) Policy. If a WIOA eligible individual has a certification or degree in any recognized demand occupation, staff must document "why" a "need for training" exists. The "need" could be derived from various possibilities, such as: a former truck driver with a DUI, a former health care worker with a drug conviction, a former teacher with sexual offense, or any worker whose skill-sets are determined to be outdated. The latter can best be demonstrated in the field of Information Technology where the knowledge and skills obtained through degrees and certifications change quite rapidly. If no apparent hindrance applies to a WIOA eligible individual with advanced training, they must demonstrate a concerted work-search effort. If they are unable to find re-employment within six-months with their existing training/certifications/degree, the Region VII WDB would entertain training said individual for a different regionally recognized demand occupation. It is important to note that Region VII WDB understands the rapid nature in which employer demands change. Therefore, in the best interest of our clients, we maintain the flexibility to serve the training needs of our individual clients and recognize the training demands of employers can change rapidly and without notice. It is important to note the Region VII WDB and our WIOA ITA services are not a vehicle for career change merely for the sake of change, i.e. a teacher that is tired of teaching and decides to become a nurse. The Region VII Workforce Development Board is committed in their role to provide a highly

skilled and competitive workforce. Formalized training certifications and degrees are tools utilized by the Region VII WDB to accomplish this goal.

L. A description of how the Local Board will provide the fourteen required program elements for the WIOA Youth program design.

After eligibility determination by the WIOA Youth Case Manager (located at the Workforce West Virginia Career Center), the WIOA Youth Case Manager will then refer the young person to the Year-round Youth Services Provider. The Youth Services Provider (YSP) will then interview the customer to determine if he or she would benefit from the youth services offered. If the YSP feels that the services offered would benefit the young client, they will register the customer into the MACC computer system. If the services provided are not appropriate for the customer, the YSP will make referrals to other appropriate services in the community. For the Youth accepted into the program, the YSP will then conduct an objective assessment of each youth participant that meets the requirements of WIOA and includes a review of the academic and occupational skill levels, as well as the service needs of each youth;

Youth Services staff will develop service strategies for each youth participant that meets the requirements of WIOA including identifying a career goal in consideration of the participant's needs;

The Youth Case Manager will conduct a pre-test within 60 days of enrollment into the program, using a standardized testing instrument (as defined by the Department of Labor as suitable for Common Measures criteria) to identify participant math and reading levels. Basic skill instruction, if the need is identified (anything below 9th grade level), will be provided to assist the youth in increasing basic skill levels. Increased basic skill levels will be documented comparing the basic skills pre-test score with the results of the required post-test using the same standardized testing instrument used during the pre-test;

Preparation for post-secondary educational opportunities, linkage between academic and occupational learning, preparation for employment, and effective connections to intermediary organizations that include strong links to be job market employers, and regional demand occupations;

The Youth Coordinator will be responsible for arranging and/or providing service for youth based on the results of individualized objective assessments and individual service strategy. If a youth is determined to be in need of any of the fourteen (14) program elements, those elements shall be made available to the individual served. The YSP will document activities, attendance, and progress of individuals participating in each element. This information will be entered into the Mid-Atlantic Career Consortium (MACC) system by the Youth Case Managers as they occur, to be used for reporting and performance purposes. This will be reported to the appropriate WDB staff for

monitoring purposes. Case Managers will maintain a hard copy case management log on each client served, which includes linkages, referrals to other services, services provided, and plan for further activity or follow-up;

The Youth Coordinator will identify how services will be offered to youth that were provided WIOA youth services under a prior contract. All services will be recorded in the MACC system, and will be maintained on a daily basis. The Region VII WDB will continue offering WIOA services as outlined on the youth Individual Service Strategy (ISS) and provide follow-up services as required by the Act. The Youth staff will conduct face-to-face contact with all youth receiving WIOA youth services, excluding follow-up services. The Youth Case Managers will have monthly contact with all WIOA youth participants, except those youth receiving only follow-up services.

The Youth Coordinator will give enrollment priority to those WIOA participants receiving youth services under a prior WDB youth services contract. The Youth Case Managers will also provide follow-up services to those youths that have exited the WIOA youth services elements but still fall into the "follow-up" window for twelve months.

M. A description of the steps the Local Board will take to ensure at least 20% of Youth Funds are used for work-based training activities.

Youth case managers and appropriate WDB staff is committed to providing quality work-based training activities to the youth in the region. The Youth Case Managers will coordinate with the Region VII WDB Business Analyst to link youth to paid work experiences as well as job shadowing of employers in the area. After assessing the youth's career interests, the case manager will refer to them to an appropriate employer in the area. The Youth Coordinator tracks paid-work-experiences monthly to ensure 20% of the youth funds for work-based training are expensed correctly for the PY. Funds spent on work-based training activities will be tracked by the appropriate WDB fiscal staff as well.

N. A description of the Local Board's plan to service 75% or more out-of-school youth and identify specific steps that have been taken to meet this new goal.

Under WIA, Region VII Workforce Development Board had a self-imposed 70% out-of-school to 30% in-school youth provision. So, meeting the WIOA standard of serving 75% out-of-school youth only called for a minor adjustment in the recruitment and subsequent enrollment of eligible WIOA youth.

O. If the Local Area has contracted with youth service providers, provide a list and description of services.

The fourteen WIOA Youth Program elements are incorporated as services in program design and provided (when applicable) to youth program participants by the Youth Services provider. These elements include:

- Tutoring, study skills training
- Alternative secondary school services, or dropout recovery services
- Paid and Unpaid work experience
- Occupational skill training
- Education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training
- Leadership development opportunities
- Supportive Services
- Adult Mentoring
- Follow-up services
- Comprehensive guidance and counseling
- Financial Literacy
- Entrepreneurial skills training
- Services that provide labor market and employment information
- Activities that help youth prepare for and transition to post-secondary education and training

For additional information, please refer to **Attachment CC**, Contract and Memorandum of Understanding between Region VII Workforce Development Board and the Eastern Panhandle Instructional Cooperative, Inc.

P. A description of how the Local Board will provide basic and individualized career services to customers. The description should explain how individualized career services will be coordinated across programs/partners in the American Job Centers, including Vocational Rehabilitation, TANF, and Adult Education and Literacy activities. This description should specify how the Local Area will coordinate with these programs to prevent duplication and improve services to customers.

Job seekers and employers in Region VII will have unlimited access to career services. Career services can be obtained through the WorkForce West Virginia Career Centers and their partners, and access points by use of any computer with Internet access. Career services will be coordinated through the One-Stops and will involve more intensive evaluation, testing, assessment, case management services, and development of the Individual Employment Plan (IEP). Career Coaches/Case Managers will put emphasis on identifying any and all possible barriers to employment and refer the individual to agencies that can assist the individual to overcome known barriers. Career Coaches will utilize to the fullest, services of Adult Education (AE), DHHR's

SPOKES Program, Division of Rehabilitation Services, and other services that are known to enhance an individual's employability skills. In no instance, should any individual be referred to a training program or employer unless all barriers preventing success have been overcome at the Case Management level. In the event career services do not result in employment for the individual, additional assessment and case management services will be provided. At this point, the individual may be qualified for either On-The-Job Training or occupational training in a demand occupation specific to the regional labor market. Training under the ITA will be used only after customized training and/or OJT are used or determined not appropriate for the participant. On-the-Job Training will have priority over contracted occupational training. Individuals eligible for the Individual Training Account (ITA) will be provided training by a Training Provider approved by the Board and Workforce West Virginia. The Training Provider must offer training in a regional demand occupation.

Quarterly Management Consortium meetings keep One-Stop partners abreast of all activities in the local area as well as identify areas of need. Sector-Strategy meetings held in conjunction with our CTC partners create an additional platform to not only address areas of need, but prevent duplication of services. In addition to regular WDB meetings, staff also attends various regional partner meetings. Meetings with agencies within the region are used to address areas of need, concern, further strengthen existing partnerships while also preventing duplication of services. At a front-line level, it is not uncommon for One-Stop staff to contact local partners in regards to a "shared" customer in efforts to provide wrap-around services, while eliminating the possibility of duplicating said services. The Region VII WDB is fortunate to have local partners committed to the development of the regional workforce and economy.

Q. Describe the Local Board's follow-up services policy. This should include follow-up requirements, frequency of contact, and required documentation.

Section 3-9: Follow-Up, pages 37-38 of the Region VII Workforce Development Board Manual stipulates WIOA Career Coaches and Youth Case Managers are required to follow-up with WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth clients once a month via face-to-face interaction, telephone conversation, or by mail. The method of contact and description of the interaction is required to be inputted into the state database, MACC. Please see **Attachment S** which will be the Region VII Workforce Development Board Standard Operating Procedures.

Section 5: Wagner-Peyser Functions

A. A description of the plans and strategies for, and assurances concerning, maximizing coordination of services provided by the State employment service under the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 49 et seq.) and services provided in the Local Area through the

American Job Center delivery system, to improve service delivery and avoid duplication of services.

The Wagner-Peyser entity, Workforce West Virginia, has representation on our Local Board, with the Business Service Representative of the South Branch location serving as a board member. Strengthening linkages between the One-Stop delivery system and unemployment insurance Workforce West Virginia maximizes all available resources and tools to ensure that all job seekers will have full access to jobs and filing of UI claims. Wagner-Peyser staffs, along with WIOA staff, provide a variety of high quality career services in a customer-centered approach environment to include, but not limited to: job search navigation, job readiness assessment, vocational counseling, labor market information, and workforce development duties associated with the employability development of its customers. Services are delivered in one of three methods including (1) self-service, (2) facilitated self-help services, and (3) staff assisted service delivery approaches. Depending on the needs of the labor market, other services, such as job seeker assessment of skill levels, abilities, and aptitudes, career guidance, job search workshops, and referral to training may be available when deemed appropriate. Workforce West Virginia and Region VII Workforce Development Board are co-located in both the Martinsburg and South Branch One-Stop Career Centers.

To strengthen linkages between the American Job Center delivery system and Unemployment Insurance Programs, the local One-Stop center operates under the direction of a Management Consortium. The Management Consortium is comprised of several One-Stop partners including local Unemployment Insurance Office Managers. The Management Consortium meets quarterly and addresses day-to-day One-Stop operations including: customer flow, customer recruitment, service delivery, budget operations, etc. As members of the Management Consortium, the Unemployment Insurance programs are able to provide regular direct input to the operation of the local One-Stop center.

B. A description of how the Local Board will utilize Wagner-Peyser program to provide access to local workforce development services for Unemployment Insurance claimants.

At the Martinsburg One-Stop Career Center, Wagner-Peyser staff refers interested parties to weekly WIOA orientation sessions. Also, at any point, referrals can be easily made by Wagner-Peyser staff to WIOA staff based on the co-location of the respective offices. Staff from each organization routinely work together on projects such as jobs fairs, employer services, On-the-Job Training contracts, and rapid response activities. The Region VII Workforce Development Board engages partners including the local Wagner-Peyser office in quarterly cross-training segments. These quarterly trainings are led by different One-Stop or local workforce

development system partners. Wagner-Peyser staff is encouraged to participate in these trainings through the local Management Consortium. This level of joint cooperation facilitates familiarization of services and ultimately provides better customer service.

C. If applicable, a description of how the Local Board will ensure that migrant and seasonal farm workers in its Local Area will be provided employment services.

Services, activities, and programs delivered the One-Stop Career Centers will be provided in accordance with the ideas and requirements of WIOA and guidance provided by the U.S. Department of Labor. Workforce West Virginia conducts outreach to migrant and seasonal farm workers in the state. All migrant and seasonal farm workers can be referred to the local One-Stop Career Center for eligibility determination and services. The Region VII WDB will provide intensive case management to all eligible migrant and seasonal farm workers as well as place them into a wide array of jobs depending on their goals and training. The WIOA Career Coaches will provide customers with labor market information and choices related to education and training options. Also, the WDB will refer these workers to Adult Education and English as a Second Language programs based on needs.

Section 6: Title II - Adult Education and Family Literacy Functions

A. A description of how the Local Board will coordinate workforce development activities in the Local Area integrating the provision of adult education and literacy activities under Title II of WIOA, but not limited to, the implementation of the career pathways model.

Adult Education (AE) is an active partner in the local and regional workforce system. Eastern Panhandle Instruction Cooperative (EPIC) Program Director, John Holmes, is a member of the Region VII Workforce Development Board. AE co-enrolls and cross refers students to employment service programs, provides high school equivalency test prep and testing services, and provides integrated instruction for career pathway programs. AE has programming and partnerships that create multiples points of entry for students along several career pathways and is committed to working closely with the local board to embed this work further across the local area.

B. A description of how the Local Board will coordinate efforts with Title II providers to align basic skills and English language assessments. The description should include:

- An outline of the agreed upon steps that will be taken to align basic education skills and English language assessments within the local area, including, but not limited to, any Memoranda of Understanding entered into by the workforce development and adult learning partners;
- An identification of how assessment scores will be shared among WIOA Title I areas and Title II providers {Consideration must be given to the Federal Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)};
- An identification of who will conduct which of the approved assessments (including for Trade Participants) and when such assessments will be conducted, consistent with this policy.
- An outline of how the local area will coordinate testing between workforce development and adult education providers.
- An outline of how the local area will ensure that test administrators are to be trained in accordance with this policy and applicable testing guidelines as set forth by the applicable test publisher.

WIOA presents an extraordinary opportunity to improve the quality of life for individuals with low skills. Literacy and numeracy are fundamental skills necessary for workforce success, as well as for personal and social well-being. Services provided under WIOA are intended to lead to further education, training opportunities, and work, and are to be based on best practices derived from the most rigorous research available. The diversity of individuals who possess low skills requires a broad approach to skills development.

As one of six core programs under WIOA, Adult Education (AE) programs plays an integral role in the workforce development system by providing access to educational services for adult learners through the one-stop delivery system. AE seeks to increase opportunity in the educational and workforce development of adults as workers, parents, and citizens. While playing a critical role in adult attainment of a secondary school diploma, the program also aims to assist in the transition to postsecondary education and training through the use of career pathways.

The local one-stop delivery system in conjunction with local AE programs will provide the following critical services and activities to support adult learners with the goal of improving access to education and training opportunities, as well as to employment:

- Assist adults to become literate and obtain the knowledge and skills for employment and economic self-sufficiency;

- Support the educational and skill achievement of parents and family members to participate in the educational development of their children and improve economic opportunities for families;
- Assist immigrants and English learners in improving their English and math proficiency and understanding of the rights and responsibilities of citizenship; and
- Assist incarcerated individuals in strengthening their knowledge and skills to promote successful re-entry into society.

Assist adults to become literate and obtain knowledge and skills for employment and economic self-sufficiency. Workers and job seekers have access to basic skills instruction relevant to employment through the one-stop delivery system. Education is provided in the context of industry-specific needs that involve employers and is integrated with occupational skills training to achieve the best outcomes for participants. Programs use career pathways, integrated education and training, and workforce preparation activities as hallmarks of excellent work-relevant instruction.

Support the educational and skill achievement of parents and family members to participate in the educational development of their children and improve economic opportunities for families. Family literacy programs provide parents and family members with foundational skills that boost their knowledge and confidence to support the educational development of, and to become educational advocates for their children. Parents and family members are able to improve their skills to achieve readiness for postsecondary education or training, job advancement, and economic self-sufficiency. Programs are designed to make sustainable improvements in the economic prospects for a family and to better enable the family to support their children's learning needs.

Assist immigrants and English learners in improving their English and math proficiency and understanding of the rights and responsibilities of citizenship. English learners have access to services to help them achieve competence in reading, writing, speaking, and understanding English. These competencies allow them to obtain secondary school credentials and succeed in further education and training. Immigrants acquire an understanding of what it means to be a citizen and to participate in civic responsibilities. Programs are designed to provide high-quality math instruction, evidence-based English language instruction and civics education that is responsive to, and respectful of, the diversity of immigrants and English learners.

Assist incarcerated individuals in strengthening their knowledge and skills to promote

successful re-entry into society. Individuals who are incarcerated have access to educational services that prepare them for employment, economic self-sufficiency, family roles, and responsible citizenship upon their release. Incarcerated individuals can access adult education and literacy activities that support post-release transition to higher levels of education and training, as well as meaningful employment. Programs are designed to support incarcerated and formerly incarcerated individuals' access to life-expanding career pathways opportunities that include approaches such as dual enrollment, peer tutoring, and transitions to re-entry services designed to facilitate post-release success and reduce recidivism.

Adult education leaders should take immediate action to move forward in achieving this vision for excellence in service to adults who can benefit from improving their literacy and English proficiency skills.

Realizing the vision requires acting upon the following principles:

- I. **Leaders develop a vision for how adult education aligns with core programs and one-stop partners.** The local area has established strong partnerships with core programs and other necessary community partners to successfully serve adult learners. Region VII WDB embraces partnerships of the core programs to develop a unified strategic vision and goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce through our one-stop delivery system. Adult Education, as a core program, is a key component in the implementation of the Plan, including the development of career pathways to provide access to high-demand, regionally significant employment and training services for individuals in Adult Education programs.
- II. **Move toward aligning adult education content standards with the state's K-12 standards.** Local adult education programs identify curriculum frameworks for the standards that take into account the academic requirements for non-remedial credit courses in postsecondary institutions. Adult education leaders and practitioners consider the content of occupational and industry standards that are widely used in the state and ensure that teachers are trained and supported to implement standards-based education. State-adopted academic content standards provide a focus for coherent improvement in all components affecting teaching and learning, including curriculum, instruction, professional development, program leadership, student assessment, and program monitoring and accountability.
- III. **Commit to improving teaching and learning in every local adult education program.** Support adult educators in learning and applying practices that are based on

the most rigorous or scientifically valid research available. Teacher training promotes an understanding of adults as learners and focuses on the teaching of reading, writing, mathematics, and English language acquisition to adults. The Region VII WDB coordinates efforts with Adult Education to align basic skills and English language assessments. The Local Board mandates test administrators are to be trained in accordance with local, state, and federal standards. Professional learning opportunities are available for teachers of all experience levels. Effective teachers are recognized and used to train and mentor novice instructors.

- IV. **Adult educators leverage technology to improve teaching and learning.** Many local and regional jobs require digital literacy. The Region VII WDB encourages and supports the integration of digital literacy skills into all adult education and literacy activities. Further, recognizing the work and family demands of adult learners, Region VII WDB supports Adult Education's effort to expand high-quality distance education offerings. Adult educators enrich teaching and learning in traditional classroom, distance education, and hybrid learning environments by identifying, using or adapting, and assessing with appropriate and high-quality open education resources. Professional development explicitly addresses the teaching and assessment of digital literacy skills integrated appropriately into instruction in all content domains. Region VII is committed to working with local adult education programs to ensure that local program staff can assist all learners in maximizing access to technology and the Internet.
- V. **Adult educators work to create stronger linkages with employers in partnership with other core programs.** Region VII WDB encourages and supports ongoing engagement with employers and workforce development system partners in the design, delivery, and evaluation of career pathways educational programs, integrated education and training, and workforce preparation activities that are responsive to regional and local labor market demands. Career pathways, integrated education and training, and workforce preparation activities reflect the skill needs of high-demand jobs within the local and regional economy. Employers work in partnership with other core programs and eligible providers to deliver adult education and literacy activities. Employers not only serve in advisory capacities but also provide externships (teacher learning experiences) and make commitments to hiring program graduates. Employers clearly and consistently articulate the value-added of adult education services.
- VI. **Identify models and promising practices and a process to disseminate them for wider use among local providers.** Region VII WDB supports and promotes evidence-

based instruction to assist youth and adults with low literacy skills in participating more fully in society and successfully transitioning to further education and training. Teaching and learning methods include, but are not limited to, instruction incorporating the essential components of reading instruction and instruction that addresses the needs of adult learners, including those with disabilities. The Region VII WDB in conjunction with state and federal agencies may provide technical assistance to eligible providers through development and dissemination of high-quality, evidence-based professional development, assessments, and instructional training for use in the classroom; use of technology to improve system efficiencies and performance, including advancements in digital literacy skills; and the monitoring and evaluation of programs and activities.

VII. Evaluate programs and activities to ensure continuous improvement and expand the available evidence base. States conduct ongoing evaluations of the core programs using the more rigorous analytical and statistical methods that are reasonably feasible to promote efficiency and effectiveness of the workforce development system. The results are used to achieve a high-performing system that reflects optimal outcomes for its participants. Evaluations fully engage partner programs; leverage federal, state, and local resources; and include customer feedback. Evaluations are transparent, and results are accessible to the public.

VIII. Work to increase accountability of the workforce development system. Region VII WDB will use the performance indicators established in WIOA to assess the effectiveness of our workforce system. Integrated data systems promote the availability of high-quality data on participant outcomes and support research and evaluation activities. Data about specific subpopulations of participants, such as individuals with barriers to employment, are disaggregated to determine the extent to which the workforce development system is effectively providing opportunity to vulnerable populations,

C. A description of how the Local Board will ensure that the individual appointed to represent Title II services on the Board will coordinate with all Title II Grant Administrators in the Local Area in a uniform, regular and consistent manner.

See response to Section 6, Question 1. Also, see **Attachment T**, MOU between Adult Education and the Region VII Workforce Development Board.

D. A description of how adult education services will be provided in the American Job Center system within the Local Area.

The Region VII Workforce Development Board one-stop delivery system is committed to a seamless provision of adult education services to clients in the local area. Referrals of individuals to adult education sites occur on a daily basis as does referrals from adult education sites to the One-Stop Career Centers. Also, when needed, the Region VII WDB and the comprehensive One-Stop Career Centers may provide space when the need for adult education services exceeds their current classroom setting. WIOA staff is well versed in the TABE assessment and all WIOA staff is certified to administer said assessment. The One-Stop Career Centers will accept TABE assessments from our adult education counterparts; likewise, AE may utilize TABE assessments administered by One-Stop staff. Adult education is a core partner with the Region VII WDB and our One-Stop Career Centers. Our mutual clients derive value-added services, such as, comprehensive case management, career exploration, basic literacy/numeracy skills enhancements, English as a Second Language (ESL), career pathways, On-the-Job Training, and advanced post-secondary training. In combination, these resources with the appropriate staff guidance create a roadmap to self-sufficiency and career success.

Section 7: Vocational Rehabilitation Functions

- A. A description of the cooperative agreements (as defined in section 107(d)(11) between the Local Board or other entities described in section 101(a)(1)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 721(a)(1)(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. 720 et seq.) (West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services) (other than section 112 or part C of that title (29 U.S.C. 732, 741) and subject to section 121 (f)) in accordance with section 101(a)(1) of such Act (29 U.S.C. 721(a)(1)) with respect to efforts that will enhance the provision of services to individuals with disabilities and to other individuals, such as cross training of staff, technical assistance, use and sharing of information, cooperative efforts with employers, and other efforts at cooperation, collaboration, and coordination.**

The Region VII Workforce Development Board has an active partnership with the West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services (WVDRS) in the local area, including maintaining a Memorandum of Understanding between our entities. The WVDRS mission:

Together, we enable and empower individuals with disabilities to work and to live independently by providing individualized services to consumers and employers. WVDRS provides one-on-one effective personal service to its consumers, carefully evaluating their skills and interests to enable them to achieve competitive employment in an integrated setting. To help people with disabilities achieve their employment goals, WVDRS is available to provide a variety of services to eligible consumers, such as: (1) Evaluation and Diagnostic Services; (2) Vocational Counseling and Guidance; (3) Training Services; (4) Rehabilitation Technology Services; (5) Physical and Mental Therapeutic Services; (6) Specialized Services; (7) Placement Services; (8) and Supportive Services.

Additionally, WVDRS has an in-house Employer Services Section that specializes in providing employers with disability-related information, services, and pre-screened job seekers. WVDRS' team of employment specialists provide business owners and employers with critical business options and assistance in staffing, employee retention strategies, education on disability-related issues, job accommodations, and information about financial incentives for employers who hire individuals with disabilities. WVDRS uses its employment specialists to gather information regarding employers at the local level, including information regarding job placements for individuals with disabilities and regarding current and expected employer needs. Employment specialists contact employers directly to identify current and future job openings and to identify competitive integrated employment and career exploration opportunities for WVDRS consumers. Additional information describing the "cooperative agreement" between the Region VII WDB and DRS can be found in our joint MOU, **Attachment T**. This MOU is reviewed annually and is in full compliance with WIOA Section 107(d) (11) as well as the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 721(a) (11) (B)).

B. A description of how individuals with disabilities will be served through the American Job Center system in the Local Area.

Currently, WVDRS operates in all eight counties in the Region VII local area, providing an array of services to eligible individuals.

WVDRS provides high-quality rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities to assist them in meeting their competitive integrated employment goals. Additionally, WVDRS provides pre-employment transition services (Pre-ETS) to students with disabilities, ages 14-21, both statewide and at the local level. The provision of Pre-ETS offers students with disabilities information about careers, career opportunities, education and training programs, and self-advocacy. WVDRS counselors will also refer consumers as needed for other services

provided by the Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs), Workforce WV, Adult Education, or other services providers.

The Region VII WDB has a strong commitment to providing the best possible services to job seekers and businesses alike. Additionally, each partner agency supports the development of cross-agency training for awareness regarding its programs and services within the AJC Centers. Each American Job Center is well equipped to provide a multitude of services to West Virginia job seekers, including those with disabilities.

All applicable staff at each American Job Center are expected to:

- Identify and have a clear understanding of industry skill needs
- Identify appropriate strategies for assisting employers and coordinating business service activities across one-stop center partner programs, as appropriate
- Offer access to education and training leading to industry-recognized credentials through the use of career pathways, apprenticeships, and other strategies that enable customers, including those with disabilities, to compete successfully in today's global economy
- Provide customers, including those with disabilities, as much labor market, job-driven information and choice as possible related to education and training, careers, and service delivery options
- Provide 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 educational goals
- Value skill development by assessing and improving each individual's basic, occupational, and employability skills

The WVDRS is dedicated to providing technical assistance to the American Job Centers regarding matters related to individuals with disabilities, including accessibility to facilities and information, assistive technology, rights, advocacy, and other pertinent issues. WVDRS is guided by numerous federal and state laws in reference to confidentiality. These include, but are not limited to, confidentiality provisions under the Federal Rehabilitation Act, the Federal Privacy Act, and West Virginia Code 18-10A-10. WVDRS protects the confidentiality of all consumers and will only release information if the consumer signs a release form that

identifies what is being released, to whom and the intended purpose. WVDRS also upholds the WVDRS consumer's choice whether to disclose to an employer if he/she has received services from the WVDRS.

All job-ready individuals are required to register with the Workforce West Virginia AJCs to aid in their job-seeking efforts. WVDRS employment specialists participate in Business Services teams in all the workforce regions to enhance the services to employers, eliminate duplication, and better serve the state's employers.

The WVDRS provides services through an eligibility-based program. Eligibility criteria are established by the Rehabilitation Act, as amended, and its federal regulations. To be eligible for rehabilitation services, an individual must have a physical or mental impairment which constitutes or results in a substantial impediment to employment AND the applicant must require rehabilitation services to prepare for, secure, retain, advance in, or regain employment consistent with the individual's strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, and informed choice.

If an individual applies for rehabilitation services and is found eligible, job-ready individuals may choose to apply for other workforce services after receiving intensive services from WVDRS. WVDRS will encourage consumers to access the full range of workforce services. More detailed information pertaining to delivery of services through the American Job Centers in Region VII can be found in our partner MOU with DRS, **Attachment T**.

Section 8: Jobs for Veterans State Grant Functions

A. A description of how the Local Board will provide priority of service to veterans and their eligible spouses.

The Local Board will provide Priority of service by identifying veterans and eligible spouses and/or family caregivers when they visit service delivery locations.

This includes displaying signs that clearly describe priority of services and the registration process. This information will also be conveyed when veteran and eligible spouses and/or family caregivers access services electronically or by telephone.

At the point of entry, it is not necessary nor appropriate to demand verification of a veteran's or other eligible individual's status. Instead, verification of their eligibility should be carried out through a separate process or at a more suitable time, as requiring immediate verification may cause inconvenience or discomfort. Point of entry staff need only ask "Are you a Veteran or the

spouse of a Veteran?".

If a person self identifies as a veteran or other eligible person immediate priority of service is required.

Veterans will be screened and eligible Veterans or spouses will be referred to the DVOPS via the state case management system for *MSG* services.

Point of entry staff will coordinate employer outreach development activities with related responsibilities of LVER staff.

On behalf of the eligible person the LVER will identify employers interested in hiring veterans by utilizing the HVMP database and online platforms, collaborate with military transition programs, attend veteran-focused job fairs and networking events, reach out to veteran service organizations, explore corporate veteran hiring programs, leverage professional networking platforms like LinkedIn, and seek recommendations from fellow veterans or military contacts.

Promoting job fairs for veterans and eligible persons and actively advocating and creating awareness for employment events that offer targeted opportunities and a supportive environment, ensuring priority of service and meaningful employment opportunities for those who have served or meet specific eligibility criteria.

Monitoring the priority of services will be done at the point of entry and during training or employment services.

Priority of Service will be conducted in accordance with DOL VPL 07-09. Walk in participants who are veterans are served at each One Stop location under the Region VII Priority of Service Policy, Attachment G.

**B. A description of how the Local Board will engage Local Veterans
Employment Representatives in engaging and providing services to local
businesses.**

LVERs are an integral part of the AJCs as they facilitate employment, training and placement services furnished to covered persons in the State under the applicable State employment service delivery system.

LVERs routinely keep the AJC staff apprised of labor market information, serve as capacity builders to boost the effectiveness of AJC colleagues who assist veterans, promote awareness and appreciation of the unique qualities and skills that veterans possess by explaining how

military experience and training translates into civilian competencies, and generate more business for the AJCs by educating employers and community organizations about the benefits of utilizing all of the services available.

Where applicable, LVERs will be fully integrated into the Business Service Team which affords them the opportunity to build strong relationships with employers in their local area, develop standard team business service knowledge and practices across participating partner agencies, and coordinate and link resources and information with the ultimate goal of ensuring more employers are aware of, and utilize, services and incentives.

Section 9: Fiscal, Performance, and Other Functions

A. An identification of the entity responsible for the disbursement of grant funds described in section 107(d)(12)(B)(i)(III), as determined by the chief elected official or the Governor under section 107(d)(12)(B)(i).

The Region VII Local Elected Officials and Workforce Development Board issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) for fiscal and administrative agent in January 2014, January 2017 and more recently January 2021. The Region VII Workforce Development Board and the Local Elected officials unanimously selected Eastern Panhandle Instructional Cooperative, Inc. as the WDB fiscal/administrative agent. **Attachment E** is an organizational chart for the WDB.

Attachment C is the contract between the Region VII WDB and Eastern Panhandle Instructional Cooperative, Inc.

B. A description of the financial sustainability of the American Job Center services with current funding levels, and a description of the ability to make adjustments should funding levels change.

The One-Stop Operator Contract describes the funding level of \$625,000.00 for the career centers, see **Attachment U**. If funding levels change, the One-Stop Director must submit a revised one-stop budget for review and approval by the One-Stop Management Consortium. Once approved, the budget will be reviewed by Executive Committee, the Region VII WDB, and ultimately, the Local Elected Officials of Region VII. The Region VII WDB is confident that current One-Stop Career Center services can continue to be provided for the aforementioned amount. Fortunately, the Region VII WDB has successfully obtained grant funding beyond WIOA annual allocations. The "braiding" of additional monies granted to the Region VII WDB successfully leverages additional granted resources. Also, it insulates the Region VII WDB and our One-Stop Career Centers from minor fluctuations in WIOA allocations. However, significant reductions in annual WIOA allocations would undoubtedly have an impact in our ability to continue to provide the seamless and efficient client services that we are now able to offer.

C. A description of the competitive process to be used to award the sub-grants and contracts in the Local Area for activities carried out under this title, including risk assessment of potential sub-grantees and contractors.

The Region VII Workforce Development Board has a competitive process that follows rules safeguarding fair and objective decision-making when awarding sub-grants and contracts. These rules must comply with appropriate federal, state, and local requirements. The Region VII WDB complies with 2 CFR Part 200. In January of 2017, WorkForce West Virginia adopted policy 04-17 regarding competitive bid processes. Although, the Region VII WDB has utilized the practices outlined in policy 04-17 for many years, the Board adopted its own policy based largely on the State policy 04-17. See **Attachment HH**, Procurement and Selection of Request-for-Proposals.

In summary, the process is as follows: to the extent possible, services providers for Region VII are selected through a competitive procurement process in accordance with 2 CFR Part 200. Noncompetitive sole source and emergency procurements may be authorized in accordance with 2 CFR 200. For each competitive procurement, the method used (Request for Proposals) is maintained on file. The rationale for all non-competitive procurements is documented according to applicable regulations, cost thresholds, type of service being procured and/or emergency procurement situations.

The evaluation criteria are kept on file for each procurement effort, including the individual evaluation forms completed for each proposal submitted. In addition, copies of correspondence sent to service providers in regards to the procurement are kept as documentation of the Region VII WDB's actions concerning the selection or non-selection of providers. The cost/price analysis and proposed cost of service as the basis for negotiation and final price for the proposed service of the contract price. Any miscellaneous correspondence regarding the proposed costs will be maintained in the appropriate file.

The primary consideration in the selection of service providers is the effectiveness of the agency or organization in delivering comparable or related services. This consideration is based on the following criteria: merits and quality of the technical proposal; demonstrated effectiveness and performance; ability to meet performance standards within reasonable cost parameters; and fiscal accountability and management capabilities. Contract awards are made to the most responsive respondents; those with proposals that are most advantageous to the Region VII WDB after considering price, technical factors, and other applicable criteria.

The Region VII WDB conducts a comprehensive review of all the responses to each solicitation. Responses are evaluated first to ensure all information required is complete and the responses satisfactorily address each and all requirements. Responses that are incomplete or do not satisfactorily address each and every requirement may be disqualified. The evaluation process is designed to assess the respondent's ability to meet the Region VII WDB's

requirements and to identify those respondents most likely to satisfy them.

The evaluation process is conducted in a thorough and impartial manner at a publicly noticed selection Region VII WDB Executive Committee meeting. All respondents to a particular solicitation are encouraged to attend a Bidder's Conference held before the meeting. While price is an important factor in selecting a respondent for an award, other factors in the competitive process may be considered and may take precedence over price. Those factors include, but are not limited to: quality of service offered, operating characteristics, technical innovations, administrative capability, previous experience in providing the same or similar services and the ability to achieve the deliverables as specified in the solicitation.

- D. A description of the local levels of performance negotiated with the Governor and chief elected official pursuant to section 116(c), to be used to measure the performance of the Local Area and to be used by the Local Board for measuring the performance of the local fiscal agent (where appropriate), eligible providers under subtitle B, and the American Job Center delivery system, in the Local Area.**

PY 22 - PY 23 Performance

WIOA Performance Measures	West Virginia	
	Final Negotiated Goals	
	PY26	PY27
WIOA Adults		
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	77.0%	78.0%
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	75.0%	77.0%
Median Earnings	\$ 8,200.00	\$ 8,500.00
Credential Attainment Rate	77.0%	80.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	61.0%	64.0%
WIOA Dislocated Workers		
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	81.0%	85.0%
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	84.5%	86.0%
Median Earnings	\$ 11,000.00	\$ 11,500.00
Credential Attainment Rate	84.0%	84.5%
Measurable Skill Gains	59.0%	62.0%
WIOA Youth		

Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	67.0%	69.0%
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	66.0%	70.0%
Median Earnings	\$4,800.00	\$5,000.00
Credential Attainment Rate	66.0%	69.0%
Measurable Skills Gains	55.0%	57.0%

E. A description of the actions the Local Board will take toward becoming or remaining a high-performing board. This should include a description of the process used by the Local Board to review and evaluate performance of the local American Job Center(s) and the One-Stop Operator.

The Region VII Workforce Development takes many steps to remain as a high-performing board. Region VII WDB staff reviews the annual performance report as well as quarterly MACC performance reports to locate the areas of performance that need to be improved and/or maintained to exceed the negotiated levels of performance. The Region VII WDB and our fiscal agent, EPIC are audited by an independent auditor as well as WorkForce West Virginia on an annual basis to ensure compliance with all WIOA programmatic and fiscal requirements. Region VII WDB monitors training providers, One-Stop Careers Centers, and its sub-recipient, United Way of the Eastern Panhandle, on a bi-annual basis. These reviews are to ensure all WIOA fiscal and programmatic requirements are being met. The Region VII WDB also holds various meetings such as Business Services/Implementation Team, Sector Strategy, and Training Provider meetings to discuss the needs of the various organizations and businesses in the region. Staff participates in Economic Development, SHRM, and Chamber of Commerce meetings throughout the region. Finally, the Region VII WDB holds its staff to high standard and expects staff to participate in various professional development activities. Finally, staff is given annual performance evaluations by their direct supervisors to determine areas of improvement or note areas of success. The Region VII WDB remains committed to an active process of organizational self-improvement. The items listed above are the current tools utilized to achieve a "high-performing Board."

F. A description, including a copy of, the Local Area's Individual Training Account policy. The description should include information such as selection process, dollar limits, duration, etc.

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014, Sections 122 and 134(d)(4)(g)(l) and 20 CFR 680.300-680.340 provides for the establishment of an Individual Training Account (ITA) on behalf of an eligible participant to finance approved Training services. The Act establishes the ITA as one of the primary methods for WIOA-eligible participants to access

needed training services.

The local Workforce Development Board will identify and approve regionally-eligible training providers and programs who have submitted an initial or renewal application via the Mid-Atlantic Career Consortium (MACC) computer system and been granted State approval. The Region VII WDB will distribute information concerning approved training providers and programs to the WIOA Career Coaches at both One-Stops on a quarterly basis. Eligible participants will have full access to this information and will select a training program and provider in a manner consistent with the principle of informed customer choice. The Region VII WDB has authorized a maximum of \$6,000.00 for a period of training up to twelve months in duration. Please see **Attachment L**, the Region VII Workforce Development Board Individual Training Account (ITA) Policy for additional information.

G. A description of how training services under chapter 3 of subtitle B will be provided in accordance with Section 134(c)(3)(G), including, if contracts for the training services will be used, how the use of such contracts will be coordinated with the use of individual training accounts under that chapter and how the Local Board will ensure informed customer choice in the selection of training programs regardless of how the training services are to be provided.

In accordance with WIOA Section 134(c)(3)(G), contracts for training services (such as customized training, work experience, or On-the-Job-Training programs) may be used lieu of or in conjunction with Individual Training Accounts. The client with the assistance of the WIOA Career Coach will determine the best route to self-sufficiency/re-employment and document this in the Individualized Employment Plan (IEP). WIOA customers engage in an active case management process that is customized to meet their unique needs and life situations. Documenting transferable skills and career interests are just as important as assessing basic skills or other potential barriers to employment; such as, transportation needs, child care, housing, etc. WIOA customers are provided with a litany of resources documented in the IEP that serve as their road map to success. Clients are provided with a Training Provider list which includes all approved regional demand-occupation trainings with regional providers in the local area. This list is updated several times a year, but no less than quarterly. Clients are also provided with a Training Provider Report Card. This tool allows WIOA customers to view the performance of approved training programs within our region, based on the self-reported performance metrics input into the MACC system. This allows prospective ITA clients to view critical performance information such as program completion and placement in employment. If our WIOA customer is more interested in returning to the workforce immediately an OJT program may be their best avenue to re-employment. Our WIOA Career Coaches are equipped with weekly reports indicating active regional employers engaged in an OJT contract with the Region VII WDB. On-the-Job-Training programs have been proven to have a higher rate of placement and retention than traditional ITAs. Therefore, the Region VII WDB remains committed to grow our OJT program throughout the local area. Again, in accordance with WIOA Section 134(c)(3)(G), these training services can be used separately or in conjunction as documented in the customer's IEP.

H. A description of the process used by the Local Board, consistent with subsection (d), to provide an opportunity for public comment, including comment by representatives of businesses and comment by representatives of labor organizations, and input into the development of the Local Plan, prior to submission of the plan.

In accordance with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Section 108(d), the Region VII Workforce Development Board shall make copies of the proposed local plan available to the public through electronic means, the Region VII WDB website:

www.wvregion7workforce.org, allow for public comment no longer than a 30 day period beginning on the date the proposed plan is made available, and include with submission of the local plan comments that represent disagreement with the plan. The Region VII WDB local plan was put out for public comment on May 6, 2024 and the comment period ended on May 24, 2024.

The local area plan was developed through a series of interactions with core partners and other relevant partner. Industry-standard data sources and practices were used to analyze the current and also projected regional characteristics and trends. The draft plan was distributed to EWVCAA's office and both comprehensive One-Stop Career Centers for review. The plan was also uploaded to the Region VII WDB's website and notification via the website was distributed to all potentially interested parties including local businesses, labor organizations, educational systems, et al.

No comments were received during the public comment period.

I. A description of how the American Job Centers are utilizing the MACC as the integrated, technology-enabled intake and case management information systems for programs carried out under WIOA and programs carried out by American Job Center partners.

Many residents lack the resources to bring the Internet into their homes and rely on the technology available through the workforce system. Computers are provided for residents at One-Stop Career Center locations to access all workforce systems as well as general Internet research. Select trainings and workshops are available online; however, the in-home Internet access in certain areas may not be sufficient to allow for acceptable access.

The Region VII Workforce Development Board will continue to utilize the Mid-Atlantic Career Consortium (MACC) statewide brand for workforce services in order to promote uniformity and increase access to services. Currently, the Region VII WDB and Workforce West Virginia, in conjunction, use the MACC as the integrated, technology-enabled database system that delivers seamless services as well as case management information.

J. A description of the Local Board's procedures for conducting oversight and

monitoring of its WIOA activities and those of its sub-grantee and contractors. The monitoring plan shall address the monitoring scope and frequency and shall include the following:

- **The roles and responsibility of staff in facilitating this procedure**
- **A requirement that all sub-grantee agreements and contracts be monitored at least annually**
- **Procedures for determining that expenditures have been made against the cost categories and within the cost limitations specified in the Act and WIOA regulations**
 - ✓ *The staff of the Region VII Workforce Development Board (WDB), as the appropriate administrative entity for the WDB and Local Elected Officials, will conduct comprehensive on-site reviews of all WIOA-funded sub-recipients no less than twice annually during each program year. Visits in local areas may include, but are not limited to, on-site reviews of training providers, comprehensive One-Stop Career Centers, and satellite centers, sub-recipients of WDB funds, and other locations or entities as deemed necessary and appropriate by the WDB. Resolution of any compliance issues shall be in accordance with the provision of the Act, its regulations, and other applicable local and state laws or regulations.*
 - ✓ *Additional reviews will be conducted by the WDB as deemed necessary and appropriate. These additional reviews may include, but are not limited to, additional comprehensive on-site reviews, special on-site reviews to address specific issues or concerns, and paperwork reviews ("desk audits") of appropriate reports, documents, or other written or recorded materials.*
 - ✓ *For purpose of conducting its comprehensive on-site reviews, the WDB will utilize the attached monitoring tools (included in **Attachment M**). The attached instruments may be modified as needed by the WDB at any time, and may be used in whole or in part for the purpose of monitoring any WDB sub-recipient (including training providers). WIOA-funded agencies are encouraged to utilize the tools contained herein to conduct self-analysis.*
- **Procedures for determining compliance with other provisions of the Act and regulations and other applicable laws and regulations, including the method of monitoring to be used for sub-grantees and contractors**
 - ✓ *The Region VII WDB administrative and fiscal agent shall be monitored annually by an independent auditor.*
 - ✓ *The Region VII WDB is monitored annually by WorkForce West Virginia.*
- **Provisions for the recording of findings made by the recipients' monitor(s), the forwarding of such findings to the sub-grantee or contractor for response**

- and the recording of all corrective actions
- **Provisions of technical assistance as necessary and appropriate**
- **Specific local policies developed by the Local Board for oversight of the American Job Center system, youth activities, and employment and training activities under Title I of WIOA**
 - ✓ *The Region VII Workforce Development Board Monitoring Policy encompasses monitoring and oversight for the American Job Center system, youth activities, and employment and training activities under Title I of WIOA.*
 - ✓ *The Region VII Workforce Development Board Monitoring Policy is established from guidance contained in WIOA Section 183. The policy requires monitoring and oversight of our own activities and those activities of our sub-recipients.*
 - ✓ *Sub-recipients include but are not limited to; Youth activities and Employment and Training activities.*

The Region VII Workforce Development Board has a comprehensive Monitoring Policy. The policy is established from guidance contained in WIOA Section 183. The Region VII WDB policy explicitly answers all of the aforementioned questions. Please see **Attachment M**, the Region VII WDB Monitoring Policy.

K. A description of the Local Board's policy and procedures regarding the handling of personally identifiable and confidential information.

Embedded within numerous Region VII WDB policies are the procedures utilized by staff to ensure the confidentiality of personally identifiable information. These steps include but are not limited to: password protected computers, each staff member has their own MACC password that is changed every thirty (30) days, files kept in locked filing cabinets in a locked room, staff is to keep personal information off of their desktops when not at their desks, only pertinent staff will have access to client's personally identifiable information and excess copies of such information are to be shredded by staff. The Region VII WDB EO Officer, Mr. Phillip Sirk, conducts periodic staff development for regional WDB as well as WIOA One-Stop Career Center staff. The Region VII Workforce Development Board remains committed to the strict adherence of all state and federal guidelines, 29 CFR 37.37, in regards to client confidentiality and the appropriate handling of their personally identifiable information.

L. A description of the Local Boards procedures for handling grievances and complaints from participants and other interested parties affected by the local American Job Center system, including partners and services providers. Provide a separate description for the:

- **Complaints alleging discrimination on the ground of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, political affiliation or belief, and for**

beneficiaries only, citizenship or participation in any WIOA Title I - financially assisted program or activity

- **Complaints and grievances not alleging illegal forms of discrimination. This includes grievances from individuals alleging labor standards violations**
- **Remedies that may be imposed for a violation of any requirement under WIOA Title I, limited to, suspension or termination of payments under the title; prohibition of placement of a participant with an employer that has violated any requirements under WIOA Title I; reinstatement of an employee, payment of lost wages and benefits, and re-establishment of other relevant terms, conditions, and privileges of employment (where applicable); and other equitable relief as appropriate.**

The above questions are answered in the attached Region VII Workforce Development Board Grievance Policy and the Equal Opportunity Discrimination Complaint Policy and Procedures. Please see **Attachments N and O**.

From the Region VII Workforce Development Grievance Policy, it reads: "This document establishes the policy of West Virginia on the development, maintenance and implementation of programmatic grievance and complaint procedures. This policy and related procedures covers complaints alleging noncriminal violations of the requirements of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) in the operation of local WIOA programs and activities, and transmits policy governing WIOA Title I related grievance and complaint procedures at the local and State level."

"Title 20 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Subpart F Section 683.600 requires that Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDB) and sub-recipients of WIOA Title I grant funds comply with the grievance and complaint provisions of the WIOA. This policy applies to programmatic grievances and complaints pursuant to WIOA Section 181(c) and does not address the procedures for processing complaints alleging discrimination under WIOA Section 188 and/or Title 29 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 37. Information and complaints involving allegations of fraud, abuse, or other criminal activity must be reported directly to U.S. Department of Labor's (DOL) Office of Inspector General."

M. A description of the Local Board's policy and procedures with regard to aid, benefits, services, training, and employment; include a statement of assurance that you will provide reasonable accommodation to qualified individuals with disabilities unless providing the accommodation would cause undue hardship.

The overall mission of the Region VII Workforce Development Board is to provide a framework in which the workforce of West Virginia can attain necessary skills required for the 21st century. This effort should serve both individual and business/industry needs within Region VII.

The primary objectives of the Region VII Workforce Development Board are to utilize a system of One-Stop Career Centers and integrate all elements of the public sector that contribute to this mission. This action will be delivered through a coordinated system of case management, management information systems, and Business Services teams. Deliverables will be directly linked to skills training in demand occupations. These actions include mentoring, work readiness, and job development/placement.

This integrated system will be developed by the public and private sector. The individual job seekers will serve as the supply side for employers. Employment opportunities are created from the current demands of business and industry. Technology and innovation will serve as the catalyst that drives employers' needs for a skilled workforce. The system will produce the demographics of skill needs, skill sets, and skills training essential to employment needs. The aforementioned information will be made available to job seekers, businesses, training providers, and partner agencies. One-Stop customers enter with a goal of procuring employment or improving their work skills. Some are in need of establishing an assessment of current capabilities as well as potential skill sets. The One-Stops will provide case managers who will, by using services available throughout the integrated system, direct appropriate individuals to demand industries and occupations. Customers will be referred to the appropriate agency or organization and will find success through credentialing followed by job placement with a self-sufficient wage and benefits.

By utilizing the most appropriate career path, time and resources will be saved for the individual job seekers and the system. Skilled workers will be supplied for emerging demand occupations in business and industry. Employers will reduce initial training costs since initial hires will reach full performance at a faster rate. Incumbent workers will also keep up with technology advances, allowing them to keep their present job or advance in the workplace, thus cutting turnover costs, and as current workers advance, more entry level positions will become available. In addition, information will be accessible to link students with internships, Earn and Learn programs, and other subsidized employment opportunities. This effort will assist in training our next generation(s).

Please see the Region VII WDB website: <http://www.wvregion7workforce.org>, our Facebook page at https://www.facebook.com/search/265515320133603/local_search?surface=tyah, and the Region VII WDB Twitter account at <https://twitter.com/RegionVIIWDB>. Details of the Region VII Workforce Development Board's strategies and policies for aid, benefits, services, training, and employment to our clients can be found in the following attachments: ITA Policy, **Attachment L**, OJT Policy, **Attachment P**, Supportive Services Policy, **Attachment I**, Transitional Jobs Policy, **Attachment R**, Youth Services Policy, **Attachment Q**, and Incumbent Worker Policy, **Attachment H**.

The Region VII Workforce Development Board is an equal opportunity program/employer. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. The Region VII WDB staff and our partners attend regular trainings on how to better serve individuals with disabilities. Several assistive devices exist within the One-Stop. The devices assist staff in meeting our customers' needs. In the event a customer discloses a disability, the seamless delivery of our services relies on assistive devices and technology, as well as competent and well-trained staff. The Region VII Workforce Development Board will provide reasonable accommodation to qualified individuals with disabilities unless providing the accommodation would cause undue hardship.

N. A description of how the Local Board will ensure compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. The description should include how the Local Board will provide reasonable accommodations regarding materials, technology, and physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities. The description should also include how the Local Board will provide staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities.

The major resources and support services for individuals with disabilities are administered through the Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS). The Region VII Workforce Development Board will coordinate services and resources with core programs and other partners to provide services to individuals with disabilities and other populations under the Act. Streamlined customer access is available for all populations with special services for disabled individuals. The Region VII WDB utilizes a Voluntary Self-Identification of Disability form for individuals to disclose a disability. A referral system is also in place to ensure customers receive rehabilitation assessments and services.

In addition to website services, computers, copy machines, and phones, there are additional services that will be handled in-house or by referral. Clients will be referred to DRS when in need of ADA compliant computers, Interpreter system for hearing impaired, and sign language communication assistance. Currently, both comprehensive One-Stop Career Centers are ADA compliant.

The Grievance Procedure is posted in both comprehensive One-Stop Career Centers in the region. The Equal Opportunity Officer will ensure that staff and partners receive ongoing professional development and are advised of changes in law and policy. The EEO tag line is included on all outreach and recruitment materials and advertisements.

O. A description of the Local Board's policy and procedures in place to ensure that communications with individuals with disabilities, including individuals with visual or hearing impairments, are as effective as communications with others.

The Region VII Workforce Development Board is committed to serving individuals with disabilities. We incorporate a variety of assistive technology and devices to ensure all clients

receive a seamless delivery of employment services. Each One-Stop is ADA compliant, as well as equipped with a computer work station that allows: physical accessibility, services for the deaf and hard of hearing, telecommunication/TTY devices, sign language interpreter services (by appointment), services for the blind and vision impaired, and enlarged print. All of the aforementioned assistive technology/devices are available upon request. In addition, the Region VII WDB prominently displays the Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD) WV Relay 7-1-1 throughout the One-Stop and on all printed materials such as brochures, flyers, business cards, etc.

Region VII WDB staff and our One-Stop partners are well-versed in serving customers with disabilities. We rely on a combination of state-led and self-led trainings. There are several websites and organizations the Region VII WDB has found helpful in maintaining staff awareness and education on serving individuals with disabilities. They include the following websites. Microsoft Accessibility Resource Centers (www.microsoft.com/enable/centers) are available in the United States. These centers provide expert consultation on assistive technology and accessibility features built into Microsoft Products. The Alliance for Technology Access (www.ataccess.org) and the Association of Assistive Technology Act Programs (www.ataporg.org/) are other U.S. networks dedicated to providing information and technology support services to people with disabilities. The Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Technology Society of North America, known as RESNA (www.resna.org), offers certification programs for assistive technology practitioners. RESNA is another source for identifying assistive technology experts who can assist organizations in North America. In addition, online training and web seminars are available for learning specific types of assistive technology products. Primary sources for online training include: Accessibility for Businesses and Organizations (www.microsoft.com/enable/business/), the Assistive Technology Industry Association (www.atia.org), and the HP Guide to Selecting Assistive Technology (www.hp.com/hpinfo/abouthp/accessibility/atproduct.html).

P. A description of the steps the Local Board will take to meet the language needs of limited English speaking individuals who seek services or information. The description should include how the Local Board proposes that information will be disseminated to Limited-English speaking individuals.

In the One-Stop Career Center locations, staff has access to automated translation websites such as Google Translate. Web-based resources are available at the reception desk at both One-Stop Career Centers to assist staff with addressing language barriers resulting from increasingly diverse populations seeking our services. Language manuals are also available to WIOA and One-Stop Career Center staff.

Q. A description of the Local Board's procurement system, including a statement of

assurance that the procedures conform to the standards in DOL regulations set forth in 2 CFR 200.

The following are the Region VII Workforce Development Board's procurement procedures:

1. The Region VII WDB shall avoid purchasing items that are not necessary or duplicative for the performance of the activities required by a federal award. (2 CFR Part 200.318(d))
2. Where appropriate, an analysis shall be made of lease and purchase alternatives to determine which would be the most economical and practical procurement for the federal government (2 CFR Part 200.318(d)). This analysis should only be made when both lease and purchase alternatives are available to the program.
3. Purchasers are encouraged to enter into state and local inter-governmental or inter-entity agreements where appropriate for procurement of use of common or shared goods and services (2 CFR Part 200.318 (e)).
4. Purchasers are encouraged to use Federal excess and surplus property in lieu of purchasing new equipment and property whenever such use is feasible and reduces project costs (2 CFR Part 200.318 (f)).
5. Documentation of the cost and price analysis associated with each procurement decision in excess of the simplified acquisition threshold (\$150,000) shall be retained in the procurement files pertaining to each federal award (2 CFR Part 200.323).
6. All pre-qualified lists of persons, firms or products which are used in acquiring goods and services must be current and include enough qualified sources to ensure maximum open and full competition (2 CFR Part 200.319 (d)).
7. The Region VII WDB will maintain records sufficient to detail the history of procurement, including: (2 CFR Part 200.318 (i))
 - a) Rationale for the method of procurement
 - b) Selection of contract type
 - c) Contractor selection or rejection
 - d) The basis for the contract price
8. The Region VII WDB shall make all procurement files available for inspection upon request by a federal awarding agency.
9. The Region VII WDB shall not utilize the cost-plus-a-percentage-of-costs method of contracting (2 CFR Part 200.323 (d)).
10. 2 CFR 200.318 states that non-federal entities will reflect applicable state laws and regulations "which.... conform to applicable federal law." All purchases must also follow West Virginia Code Section 5A-3-1 et seq., and the Code of State Rules Section 148-1-1 et. seq. The Purchasing Division Procedure Handbook can be found at: <http://www.state.wv.us/admin/purchase/Handbook/default.html>

All staff members with the authority to approve purchases will receive a copy of and be familiar with 2 CFR Part 200.400-475, Cost Principles. For additional information, see **Attachment V**, EPIC Accounting & Financial Policies 8100 and 8200, as well as Region VII WDB Financial Policies.

R. A description of any documentation to demonstrate that the acquisition, management, and disposition of property adhere to the Property Management Procedures taken from DOL regulations 2 CFR 200.

Please see page 87 of **Attachment V**, Eastern West Virginia Community Action Agency Inc. Accounting & Financial Policies and Procedures Manual for a description of the procedures for the acquisition, managements, and disposition of property.

S. A description of any policies or procedures the Local Board adopted to avoid conflicts of interest or the appearance of such conflicts in the exercise of their responsibilities, particularly those related to the awarding of contracts.

The Region VII Workforce Development Board has all board members and Local Elected Officials board members sign a Conflict of Interest Statement, see **Attachment W**. In accordance with West Virginia State Code 6B-2-5, the Region VII WDB also has a detailed Conflict of Interest Policy outlined within Region VII WDB By-laws. The policy states:

A member of the local board or committee must neither cast a vote on, nor participate in any decision-making capacity on the provision of services by such member or by an organization that such member directly represents, nor on any matter that would provide any direct benefit to such member or the immediate family of such member. Immediate family means a spouse residing in the individual's household and any dependent child or children and dependent parent or parents.

A board or committee member who participates in decisions relating to specific terms of a contract, the determination of performance standards in a contract, or the development of Request for Proposals or other processes leading to a contract, is prohibited from receiving any direct financial benefit from any resulting contract.

Any board or committee member with a potential conflict of interest must disclose that fact to the Local Workforce Development Board as soon as the potential conflict is discovered. If the potential conflict of interest is discovered during a board or committee meeting, the member must declare such potential conflict and excuse themselves from the remainder of the discussion and vote on that item. A board or committee member shall not engage in any business transaction or private for profit arrangement which accrues from that member's position on the board.

If the board believes that a conflict of interest provision has been violated, it can recommend to Workforce West Virginia and the chief elected official of the workforce area that the member who has violated a provision be removed as a member of the board.

The chief elected official can remove a member of the board for a violation of conflict of interest code with or without a recommendation from the board.

T. A description of the Local Board or fiscal agent's accounting procedures, including the procedures used in preparing reports to the State. In addition to the requirement that all financial transactions be conducted in compliance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) the fiscal management system must include the following in the accounting procedures. This description must address how the fiscal system:

- Tracks funding types, funding amounts, obligations, expenditures, and assets

- o The fiscal agent uses the WVEIS accounting system. This system allows for multiple tracking of activity. The WDB's activity is segregated by a unique fund code. Also, all grants, projects, and programs have a separate and unique code. The fiscal agent is a 501 (c) 3 and all accounting procedures are in compliance with GAAP and 2 CFR 200.
- **Permits the tracking of program income, stand-in costs, and leveraged funds**
 - o All program income, stand-in costs, and leveraged funds will be coded to the appropriate general ledger code and coded to the specific grant program that receives the benefit. See **Attachment V**, EPIC policy 8100 & 8200, as well as Region VII WDB Financial Policies.
- **Is adequate to prepare financial reports required by the State**
 - o The fiscal agent is staffed by a Certified Public Accountant (CPA) with over 25 years of experience. The fiscal agent manages multiples grants and programs for various agencies and has the accounting system in place to provide any reports needed. See **Attachment V**, EPIC Accounting & Financial Policies 8100 & 8200, as well as Region VII WDB Financial Policies. The attached is intended to provide an overview of the accounting policies and procedures for EPIC, the fiscal agent for the Region VII Workforce Development Board. EPIC is incorporated in the state of West Virginia. The agency is exempt from federal income taxes under IRC Section 501(c)(3) as a nonprofit corporation. Attachment V documents the financial operations of EPIC and Region VII WDB. Its primary purpose is to formalize accounting policies and selected procedures for all staff that have a role in accounting processes and to document internal controls. If a particular grant or award has provisions that are more restrictive than those in the EPIC Accounting & Financial Policies 8100 & 8200, the more restrictive provisions will be followed only for that grant or award. The contents of **Attachment V** were approved as official policy of the EPIC by the Board of Directors, Executive Director, and Chief Financial Officer. The Region VII WDB adheres to the accounting and financial policies and procedures of EPIC per the contract/statement of work that establishes EPIC as the fiscal agent for the Region VII WDB.

U. An identification of key staff who will be working with WIOA funds.

Dr. Thomas J. Van Meter, an Eastern Panhandle Instructional Cooperative employee, will serve as the WDB's Executive Director and report directly to the Region VII WDB. Mr. Phillip Sirk, an Eastern Panhandle Instructional Cooperative employee, will serve the Board as the Program Coordinator and EO Officer for Region VII. Ms. Willetta Miller, an Eastern Panhandle Instructional Cooperative employee, will serve the Board as the Youth Coordinator for Region VII. Eastern Panhandle Instructional Cooperative will not govern nor attempt to govern the day-to-day operations of the Region VII Workforce Development Board. Eastern Panhandle Instructional Cooperative is not a WIOA approved Training Provider. Eastern Panhandle Instructional Cooperative Administrative Assurances are applicable to any officer, employee, agent, or staff of the WDB.

V. A description of how the Local Board's (or fiscal agent's) financial system will permit tracking of funds to a level adequate to establish that funds have not been used in violation of WIOA standards or DOL regulations.

The fiscal agent, Eastern Panhandle Instructional Cooperative, Inc., relies on Workforce West Virginia for guidance on issues related to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) guidelines and Department of Labor (DOL) regulations. The Region VII Workforce Development Board has attended many WIOA education seminars as the Act has been implemented. The Region VII WDB qualifies all eligible participants to the appropriate program and notifies the fiscal agent via invoice coding the proper program to charge. The fiscal agent has all of the data segregated so the proper grant will be charged when the invoice is entered.

W. Provide a brief description of the following:

- **Fiscal reporting system** - WVEIS fund accounting system
- **Obligation control system** - WVEIS fund accounting system
- **ITA payment system** - WVEIS fund accounting system. Specifically, all Region VII WDB Training Provider MOUs contain an ITA payment methodology in Section 5, Part L of the respective Training Provider MOU. The training provider understands that WIOA funding is not an entitlement. Submit for one-half of the semester/term/payment at the beginning of the semester/term/mid-point. The training provider may bill at the end of the term. Submit for second one-half payment of semester/term at the semester/term midway point. The training provider may bill at the end of the term. Invoices must contain the following information - participant's full name, social security number, program, name, semester/term begin and end date, amount billed, and period covered. Accompanying the invoice must be a copy of the student's progress report. Region VII WDB will provide a signed copy of the participant's Release of Information form. If the participant drops out of the training program between disbursement periods, the balance will be prorated, unless the student or the school has negotiated other terms with the WDB Director in advance of separation. Programs costs charged by the training provider will be based on prices provided by the applicant in the training provider application. Any price variation from the prices that are contained in the training provider application will require written justification from the training provider. If the

training provider provides tuition or fee rates less than the application tuition to any WDB sponsored customer, the lower rate will apply. The amounts payable to the vendor as tuition and/or fees for each WDB sponsored participant enrolled by the Training Provider, as well as the specific program into which each WDB sponsored customer is to be enrolled, shall be specified on the ITA. Tuition estimates for future terms are acceptable. Training costs are approved up to a maximum of \$6,000. The WDB will not pay for any remedial or pre-requisite classes. The training providers shall submit a separate bill/invoice for each WDB participant enrolled in accordance with the payment schedule previously outlines in this procedure.

Once an invoice is received, it is first reviewed by the Program Coordinator. It is then sent to the Region VII WDB Executive Director for a final approval. If everything is in order, the invoice is sent to our fiscal agent (EPIC) for payment.

- **Chart of account system** - WVEIS fund accounting system. Specifically, the charts of account is the framework for the general ledger system and the basis for the accounting system. The chart of accounts consists of account titles and account numbers assigned to the titles. General ledger accounts are used to accumulate transactions and the impact of these transactions on each asset, liability, net asset, revenue, expense, and gain and loss account. The chart of accounts is comprised of six types of accounts: 1. Assets. 2. Liabilities. 3. Net Assets. 4. Revenues. 5. Expenses. 6. Gain and Losses. In addition to a general ledger code, there are the following: program code - 2 digits, project code - 4 digits, and grant code- 3 digits. All employees involved with account coding or budgetary responsibilities will be issued a current chart of accounts, or the section of the chart of accounts applicable to their program. As the chart of accounts is revised, an updated copy of the chart of accounts shall be promptly distributed to these individuals. The Chief Financial Officer monitors and controls the chart of accounts, including all account maintenance, such as additions and deletions. Any additions or deletions of accounts must be approved by the Chief Executive Officer, who ensures that the chart of accounts is consistent with the organizational structure and meets the needs of each division and department.
- **Accounts payable system** - The following are general policies for accounts payable:
 - o Assets or expenses and the related liability are recorded by an individual who is not responsible for ordering and receiving.
 - o The amounts recorded are based on the contractor invoice for the related goods or services.
 - o The contractor invoice should be supported by an approved purchase order where required by organization policy and should be reviewed and approved by a Program Manager prior to being processed for payment.
 - o Invoices and related general ledger account distribution codes are reviewed prior to posting to the subsidiary system.

The primary objective for accounts payable and cash disbursements is to ensure that:

- o Disbursements are properly authorized.

- o Invoices are processed in a timely manner.
- o Contractor credit terms and operating cash are managed for maximum benefits.

All valid accounts payable transactions, properly supported with the required documentation, shall be recorded as accounts payable in a timely manner. Accounts payable are processed on an as needed basis. Information is entered into the system from approved invoices with appropriate documentation attached. Only original invoices will be processed for payment unless duplicated copies have been verified as unpaid by researching the contractor records. Invoices received via email will be printed, and forwarded to the appropriate program manager or director for approval. Any additional copies of the emailed invoice will be deleted. Finally, no payments will be made from contractor statements.

- **Staff payroll system** - WVEIS fund accounting system. See **Attachment V**, Eastern Panhandle Instructional Cooperative, Inc. Accounting & Financial Policies 8100 & 8200, as well as Region VII WDB Financial Policies for information on the Region VII Workforce Development Board's staff payroll system.
- **Participant payroll system** - WVEIS fund accounting system. Time sheets are submitted to the appropriate Region VII WDB staff for approval. The time sheet is then sent to the Region VII WDB Executive Director for a final approval. If everything is in order, the time sheet is sent to our fiscal agent (EPIC) for payment. In the case of a youth time sheet, it is approved by the Youth Coordinator then sent to the Executive Director before submission to the fiscal agent (EPIC) for processing.
- **Participant stipend payment system** - WVEIS fund accounting system. Stipends are submitted to the appropriate Region VII WDB staff for approval. The stipend is then sent to the Region VII WDB Executive Director for a final approval. If everything is in order, the stipend is sent to our fiscal agent (EPIC) for payment. In the case of a youth stipend, it is approved by the Youth Coordinator then sent to the Executive Director for submission to the fiscal agent (EPIC) for processing.

X. A description of the Local Board's (or fiscal agent's) cash management system, providing assurance that no excess cash will be kept on hand, and that procedures are in place to monitor cash.

All grants are on a reimbursement basis. Funds are not requested from Workforce West Virginia until the expenditure has been incurred thus no excess cash will be kept on hand.

Y. A description of the Local Board's cost allocation procedures including:

- **Identification of different cost pools**
- **Procedures for distribution of staff costs between cost categories (Administrative**

cost, program cost, and indirect cost)

- **Procedures used for distribution of funds from each cost pool**
- **Description of funds included in each cost pool**
- **Description of cost allocation plans for American Job Centers.**

2 CFR 200 "Uniform Grant Guidance" establishes the principles for determining costs of grants, contracts, and other agreements with the Federal Government. Region VII Workforce Development Board's Cost Allocation Plan is based on the Direct Allocation method described in 2 CFR 200. The Direct Allocation Method treats all costs as direct costs except general administration and general expenses.

Region VII WDB is currently operating under a fiscal management agreement with Eastern Panhandle Instructional Cooperative, Inc. In that agreement Region VII WDB's payroll and accounts payable are included in EPIC's accounting system under separate fund, program, project, and grant codes to allow for proper segregation of expenses.

American Job Centers are currently operating under a One-Stop Operator contract with Thomas P. Miller and Associates, LLC (TPMA). In that agreement the American Job Center's payroll and accounts payable are included in TPMA's accounting system under separate fund, program, project, and grant codes to allow for proper segregation of expenses.

General and Administrative costs will be segregated in a category as WDB Admin. This admin will be allocated to the grants based on direct labor hours. Region VII WDB occasionally receives grant monies that have no admin included in them. These grants are normally agreements with Workforce WV and some other entity to expand the workforce readiness opportunities for clients. In these case WDB admin will not include labor hours from these grants and agreements.

Direct Costs are those that can be identified specifically with a particular final cost objective.

Shared costs are those that have been incurred for common or joint objectives and cannot be readily identified with a particular final cost objective.

Only costs that are allowable, in accordance with the cost principles, will be allocated to benefiting programs by Region VII Workforce Development Board.

Purpose/General Statements

The purpose of this cost allocation plan is to summarize, in writing, the methods and procedures that this organization will use to allocate costs to various programs, grants, contracts, and agreements. The Agency will be hereafter referred to as Region VII WDB. 2 CFR 200 "Uniform Grant Guidance" establishes the principles for determining costs of grants, contracts, and other agreements with the Federal Government. Region VII WDB's Cost Allocation Plan is based on the Direct Allocation method described in 2 CFR 200. The Direct Allocation Method treats all costs as direct costs except general administration and general expenses.

Direct Costs are those that can be identified specifically with a particular final cost objective. Shared costs are those that have been incurred for common or joint objectives and cannot be readily identified with a particular final cost objective.

Only costs that are allowable, in accordance with the cost principles, will be allocated to benefitting programs by Region VII WDB. Region VII WDB and the Martinsburg and South Branch One Stop Career Centers are predominantly funded by WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth grants.

When funding outside the WIOA funding stream becomes available this cost allocation plan will be applicable.

General Approach

Region VII Workforce Development Board

The general approach of Region VII WDB in allocating costs to particular grants and contracts is as follows:

1. All allowable direct costs are charged directly to programs, grants, activity, etc.
2. Allowable direct costs that can be identified to more than one program, are prorated individually as direct costs using a base most appropriate to the particular cost being prorated.
 - a. For example, supplies for a resume writing class when the number of Adult and Dislocated Worker participants is known.
3. All other allowable shared costs (costs that benefit all programs and cannot be identified to a specific program) will be allocated to programs, grants, etc. based upon participant numbers as of the last day of the previous calendar quarter.

Administrative Costs

Administrative costs are defined by 20 CFR 683.215-attached

All administrative costs will be allocated to programs, grants, etc. based upon participant numbers as of the last day of the previous calendar quarter.

Martinsburg and South Branch One Stop Career Center

The general approach of the Martinsburg and South Branch One Stop Career Center is as follows:

1. Due to the nature of the One Stop Career Center model as specified by the WIOA legislation all customers at least have an intake interview to determine eligibility.
2. The Martinsburg and South Branch One Stop Career Centers will only serve participants eligible for WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker funds.

3. Since it is unknown which (if any) program a customer may be eligible, all One Stop Costs are pooled and allocated based on participant numbers of the WIOA programs from previous quarter.
4. The participant numbers for the allocation will be the number of participants enrolled in the Adult and Dislocated Worker programs for the previous calendar quarter as of the last day of the quarter. This number will be provided to the Fiscal Agent by Region VII WDB staff.
5. All One Stop Career Center costs will be accumulated in a cost pool as incurred during the month and allocated according the number of participants from the previous quarter.
6. In the event there are Youth expenses incurred by the One Stop Career Center, those costs will be directly charged to the Youth Grant.

Allocation of Costs

The following information summarizes the procedures that will be used by Region VII WDB and the

Martinsburg and South Branch One Stop Career Centers beginning September 1, 2022.

1) Compensation for Personal Services - Documented with timesheets showing time distribution for all employees and allocated based on time spent on each program or grant. Salaries and wages

are charged directly to the program for which work has been done. Costs that benefit more than one program will be allocated to those programs based on the ratio of each program's participants to the total number of participants as of the last day of the previous quarter.

- i) Fringe benefits (FICA, SUTA, Disability Insurance, Health Insurance, Workers Compensation, and Retirement) are allocated in the same manner as salaries and wages.
- ii) Annual Leave, holiday, and Sick Leave are all allocated in the same manner as salaries and wages.

2) Travel Costs - Allocated based on purpose of travel. All travel costs (local and out of town) are charged directly to the program for which the travel was incurred. Travel costs that benefit more than one program will be allocated to those programs based on the ratio of each program's participants to the total number of participants as of the last day of the previous calendar quarter.

3) Professional Services Costs (such as consultants, accounting and auditing services)- Allocated to the program benefiting from the service. All professional service costs are charged to directly to the program for which the service was incurred. Costs that benefit more than one program will be allocated to those programs based on the ratio of each program's participants to the total number of participants as of the last day of the previous calendar quarter.

4) Office Expense and Supplies (including office supplies and postage) - Allocated based on usage. Expenses used for a specific program will be charged directly to that program. Postage

expenses are charged directly to programs to the extent possible. Costs that benefit more than one

program will be allocated to those programs based on the ratio of each program's participants to the total number of participants as of the last day of the previous calendar quarter.

5) Equipment - Region VII WDB depreciates equipment when the initial acquisition cost exceeds

\$5,000. Items below \$5,000 are reflected in the supplies category and expensed in the current year. Equipment purchases are made in accordance with Eastern Action's (Region VII WDB's Fiscal Agent) procurement procedures. Depreciation costs are all charged to the appropriate program.

6) Printing (including supplies, maintenance and repair) - Expenses are charged directly to programs

that benefit from the service. Expenses that benefit more than one program are allocated based on the ratio of the labor hours to total labor hours. Costs that benefit more than one program will be allocated to those programs based on the ratio of each program's participants to the total number of participants as of the last day of the previous calendar quarter.

7) Insurance- Property and Casualty Insurance is provided as part of TPMA policy. Costs will be allocated to programs based on the ratio of each program's participants to the total number of participants as of the last day of the previous calendar quarter.

8) Auto Insurance - Auto insurance costs will be collected in a cost pool and allocated to those programs based on the ratio of each program's participants to the total number of participants as of the last day of the previous calendar quarter.

9) Telephone/Communications -Telephone and Internet costs will be expensed directly to a program, if possible. Other telephone, internet or communications expenses that benefit more than one program will be allocated to those programs based on the ratio of each program's participants to the total number of participants as of the last day of the previous calendar quarter.

10) Facilities costs for locations that house a single program are charged directly to the program, grant or agreement for the activity being carried on at that location. Any shared Facilities costs for the Region VII WDB and Martinsburg and South Branch One Stop Career Center will be separated based on the ratio of square footage facility cost to the total facility costs. Facility Costs include rent, utilities, trash removal, janitorial etc. Facility Costs will be allocated to those programs based on the ratio of each program's participants to the total number of participants as of the last day of the previous calendar quarter.

11) Training/Conferences/Seminars - Allocated to the program benefiting from the training, conference or seminars. Costs that benefit more than one program will be allocated to those programs based on the ratio of each program's participants to the total number of participants as of the last day of the previous calendar quarter.

12) Other Costs (including dues, licenses, fees, etc.) - Costs that benefit a specific program are directly expensed. Other joint costs that benefit more than one program will be allocated to those programs based on the ratio of each program's participants to the total number of participants as of the last day of the previous calendar quarter.

13) Unallowable Costs - Costs that are unallowable in accordance with OMB Circular A-

122, including alcoholic beverages, bad debts, advertising (other than help wanted ads), contributions, entertainment, fines and penalties will not be charged to a federal award. Lobbying and fundraising costs are unallowable.

Z. A description of the Local Board's (or fiscal agent's) procedure for collecting debts involving WIOA funds.

Financial records kept by Eastern Panhandle Instructional Cooperative, Inc. on behalf of the Region VII Workforce Development Board are kept on an accrual basis. EPIC utilizes the WVEIS accounting system.

ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE MANAGEMENT

Monitoring and Reconciliations

On a monthly basis, the Accounting Department will reconcile a detailed accounts receivable report (showing aged, outstanding invoices by customer) to the general ledger. The Chief Financial Officer will review the reconciliation and ensure that all differences are immediately investigated and resolved.

Credits and Other Adjustments to Account Receivable

From time to time, credits against accounts receivable from transactions other than payments and bad debts will occur. Examples of other credits include returned products and adjustments for billing errors. An employee who is independent of the cash receipts function will process credits and adjustments to Account Receivable, and all credits shall be authorized by the Chief Financial Officer.

Accounts Receivable Write-Off Authorization Procedures

All available means of collecting accounts receivable will be exhausted before write-off procedures are initiated. Write-offs are initiated by the department associated with the amount to be written off, in conjunction with the Accounting Department. If an account receivable is deemed uncollectible, the following approvals are required before the write-off is processed:

Amount

Less than
\$1,500
\$1,500 or more

Authorized in writing

by Chief Financial
Officer Executive
Director

Once a write-off has been processed, appropriate individuals in the originating department will be advised to ensure that further credit is not granted and the master list of bad accounts is updated. Customers listed as poor credit risks will be extended future credit only if the back debt is paid and the customer is no longer deemed a collection problem.

If write-off procedures have been initiated, the following account treatment applies:

1. Current year invoices that are written off will either be charged against an appropriate revenue or revenue adjustment account, or against the original account credited.
2. Invoices written off that are dated prior to the current year will be written off against net assets.

In addition, the Region VII Workforce Development Board and the fiscal/administrative agent, EPIC, would exercise all legal measures to collect any debt. However, the chance of incurring a debt is extremely rare since vendors are only paid after a service has been rendered.

REGIONAL PLAN GUIDANCE

Section 1: Regional Analysis

A. Existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations, and their employment needs.

A review of **Attachment X**, West Virginia's Occupational Projections: 2022-2032 lists the following as the top ten "growth fields" based on the number of annual openings:

• Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers	3,984 3,758
• Cashiers	3,700
• Retail Salesperson	2,806
• Office Clerks, General	2,545
• Personal Care Aides	2,347
• Waiters and Waitresses	1,696
• Laborers and Freight, Stock, Material Movers	1,672
• Customer Service Representatives	1,486
• Registered Nurses	1,350
• Janitors and Cleaners	

Also, please see **Attachment Y**, the Region VII Workforce Development Board's In-Demand Occupation List.

B. Demographic characteristics of the current workforce, including the educational and literacy levels, with emphasis on youth, adults in transition, and individuals with disabilities. Describe how the local area's demographics are changing and the planning implications for the anticipated workforce of the future.

Please see the response to Section 1, Question 3. The Region VII local area is also recognized by the Governor as a local region, as referenced to in the Act in Chapter 2 - Local Provisions Section 106(a)(2)(A).

C. Knowledge and skills needed to meet the employment needs of the employers in the region, including employment needs in in-demand industry sectors and occupations.

Please see the response to Section 1, Question 2. The Region VII local area is also recognized by the Governor as a local region, as referred to in the Act in Chapter 2 - Local Provisions Section 106(a)(2)(A).

D. Analysis of the workforce in the region, including current labor force employment/unemployment data, labor market trends, and the educational and skills levels of the workforce in the region, including individuals with barriers to employment.

Please see the response to Section 1, Question 3. The Region VII local area is also recognized by the Governor as a local region, as referred to in the Act in Chapter 2 - Local Provisions Section 106(a)(2)(A).

E. Analysis of the workforce development activities (including education and training) in the region, including an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of such services, and the capacity to provide such services, to address the identified education and skill needs of the workforce and the employment needs of employers in the region.

Please see the response to Section 1, Question 4. The Region VII local area is also recognized by the Governor as a local region, as referred to in the Act in Chapter 2 - Local Provisions Section 106(a)(2)(A).

Section 2: Regional Sector Strategies

A. Identify which in-demand industry sector(s) or occupation(s) the Local Boards in the region is/are serving and why.

The Region VII Workforce Development Board identifies the following industry sectors and related occupation as critical areas of need for the on-going development and strengthening of the local area and regional economy: Advanced Manufacturing, Energy, Healthcare, and Information Technology. The aforementioned industry sectors are not only growing in the local area and region but also state-wide. WorkForce West Virginia, the West Virginia Community and Technical College System, and the local Workforce Development Boards continue to work together in order to identify employer needs as well as skills gaps in the workforce. An analysis of labor market information in conjunction with effective sector strategy partnerships, gives WIOA stakeholders the ability to develop career pathways through higher education, on-the-job training, or apprenticeships. The chosen training avenue is driven by the employer. The Region VII WDB remains committed to meeting the needs of a growing and changing regional economy through workforce development and education.

B. Describe the current status of regional collaboration in support of the sector/occupation, and identify anticipated next steps and timelines for at least the first two years of plan implementation.

Through our Sector Strategy Partnership (SSP) meetings, the Region VII WDB has successfully identified a need to restructure advanced manufacturing training in the region. Blue Ridge Community and Technical College has an Industrial Maintenance and Mechatronics A.A.S. program. These programs are designed to be two-years in length and successful completers earn an Associate's Degree. Recent SSP meetings have resulted in an open-ended career pathway to these degrees. Blue Ridge CTC has developed a three-part series for each degree that allows and individual opportunities for three separate entry points. Completion of each section results in a stand-alone industry recognized credential and certification, such as, Water Treatment Purification, OSHA 30, Programmable Logic, Forklift Certification, etc. The flexibility of the career pathways mentioned above allow participants to obtain the skills employers need. It also enables students to set short-term and intermediate goals via certifications, and ultimately leading to skills upgrades and in many cases a two-year degree.

Section 3: Regional Service Strategies

A. Identify and describe which populations and/or service strategies and/or services

will be developed on a regional basis.

All Adult and Dislocated Workers will be provided WIOA Career and Training Services through the comprehensive Workforce West Virginia Career Centers located in Martinsburg and Moorefield. Career Services may be obtained at any Workforce West Virginia Career Center, or by use of the Internet. Training Services may be provided to WIOA eligible job seekers that do not have skills necessary to secure immediate employment and will be coordinated by a Workforce West Virginia Career Center WIOA Career Coach. Training Services will be constantly monitored by the WDB to ensure both quality and success by the approved provider. The Region VII WDB reserves the right to remove a Training Provider or a Training Providers program from our approved regional list if there is a problem related to performance or quality.

Services will be provided to current workers, emerging workers, incumbent workers or dislocated workers, the disabled, veterans, low-income, including offenders and/or older workers re-entering the workforce. Eligibility for services will be in accordance with the WDB Priority of Service Policy and the WDB's Self-Sufficiency Income Level Policy.

Description and assessments of the type and availability including activities for disabled and non-disabled are administered prior to enrollment and annually to measure progress. The Region VII WDB services out-of-school youth between ages 16-24 and existing in-school youth.

Activities and services provided are as follows:

- Career training - classroom with instruction, attainment of education credentials.
- Employment training - work experiences, on-the-job training, occupational skills training, and job search.

In addition, the fourteen WIOA Youth Program elements are incorporated as services in program design and provided (when applicable) to youth program participants. These elements include:

- Tutoring, study skills training
- Alternative secondary school services, or dropout recovery services
- Paid and Unpaid work experience
- Occupational skill training
- Education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training
- Leadership development opportunities
- Supportive Services
- Adult Mentoring

- Follow-up services
- Comprehensive guidance and counseling
- Financial Literacy
- Entrepreneurial skills training
- Services that provide labor market and employment information
- Activities that help youth prepare for and transition to post-secondary education and training

Section 4: Coordination with Regional Economic Development Organizations

A. Identify regional economic development services and providers in the region and describe how the Local Board(s) will coordinate services with these services and providers.

The Small Business Development Center (SBDC) is co-located at the comprehensive One-Stop Career Center location in Martinsburg. This allows the Region VII One-Stop Career Center to provide SBDC with appropriate referrals and for our mutual customers to receive direct and immediate benefit in regards to business plans, taxes, and incorporation and other issues important to the development of a business. Microenterprise and entrepreneurial training takes place through regular workshops as well as individual meetings and appointments facilitated by SBDC staff. We will continue to support entrepreneurial development efforts throughout the region including the development and expansion of related training in support of entrepreneurial development. The Region VII WDB coordinates regional economic development with our local Economic Development Administration (EDA) partners. Our EDA partners attend our Sector Strategy Partnership meetings. Also, the Region VII WDB has one county EDA Executive Director that serve on our board. The Regional Manager for the WVDO actively participates in many of our Sector Strategy Partnership meetings. Effective planning and coordination with SBDC, EDA, and WVDO allows the Region VII WDB to serve employers in a comprehensive and responsive way.

Section 5: Coordination of Transportation and/or Other Support Services

A. Describe whether transportation or other support services need to be coordinated across the region based on the regional analysis, and if so which services and how.

The Region VII WDB acknowledges that a lack of transportation continues to be a barrier to employment within our local area and region. While public transit exists, it is not readily available to all of our customers. Reliable public transit in our population centers exists and in many instances provides bus routes to the major employers as well as our comprehensive One-Stop Centers. However, due to much of the region being of a rural nature, public transit from home-to-work is not always possible, nor financially feasible. In effort to fill this area of need, the Region VII WDB has developed a Supportive Service Policy. The policy allows for WIOA customers to log time/attendance sheets and be reimbursed at a flat rate per day for the costs of

travel, child care, and other related costs to training and searching for work.

Please **Attachment I** which is the Region VII WDB's Supportive Services Policy.

Section 6: Regional Cost Arrangements, As Appropriate

- A. Describe cost arrangements in the region for costs associated with items 1 through 5 above, which may include the pooling of administrative costs.**

There are currently no plans in place for coordination of administrative costs or for pooling of funds for administrative costs. Regional Partners will be exploring ways to effectively and efficiently coordinate cost.

Section 7: Regional Performance Negotiation

- A. Single area regions may describe the process used to negotiate performance.**
Describe how a region consisting of multiple workforce areas will collaboratively negotiate and reach agreement with the Governor on local levels of performance and report on performance accountability measures.

This is not applicable to Region VII since our local area is our region.

**Statement of Approval
Local Workforce Development Plan**

The signatures below certify that the attached Local Workforce Development Plan (including Administrative Assurances) have been reviewed and approved by the Chief Local Elected Official and the Workforce Development Board.

Local Workforce Area: Region VII

Board Contact Person: Dr. Thomas J. Van Meter, Executive Director

Phone Number: 304-530-5258

Fiscal Agent: Eastern Panhandle Instructional Cooperative, Inc.

Phone Number: 304-267-3595

Chief Local Elected Official

Stephen Catlett - Chief Local Elected
Official

Workforce Development Board Chair

Layne Diehl - Workforce Development Board



Signature

7/15/2026

Date



Signature

7/16/2026

Date