



Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act

Comprehensive Four-Year Title I Plan

July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2028

North Carolina Department of Commerce
Division of Workforce Solutions
313 Chapanoke Road, Suite 120
4316 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-4316

Introduction and Instructions

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) requires each Local Area Workforce Development Board (WDB) to develop and submit, in partnership with the chief local elected official (CLEO), a comprehensive four-year plan.

The WIOA Comprehensive Four-Year Title I Plan is to provide current information and be effective July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2028 and will include required current local policies. The Local Area Plan will support the alignment strategy described in the 2024-2025 NC Unified State Plan in accordance with WIOA Section 102(b)(1)(E), and otherwise be consistent with the NC Unified State Plan. North Carolina Governor Roy Cooper's mission is to ensure North Carolinians are better educated, healthier, and have more money in their pockets so that they can live more abundant, purposeful lives. The cornerstone to achieving this goal is to help people get good-paying jobs to support themselves and their families. Through NC Job Ready, Governor Cooper's workforce development initiative, North Carolina is working to build a stronger and better workforce. NC Job Ready is built on three core principles: education and skills attainment are the foundation to a strong and resilient workforce; an employer-led workforce development system is key to the growth of a highly skilled and job ready workforce; and local innovation is critical to a dynamic and effective workforce system. In addition, Local Area WDBs shall comply with WIOA Section 108 in the preparation and submission of the plan.

The NCWorks Commission developed the strategic vision and mission for North Carolina's Workforce System based on Governor Cooper's NC Job Ready Initiative. This vision is to build a job-ready workforce to strengthen North Carolina companies, attract new businesses, and ensure our state can adapt to a changing economy. The mission of the state's workforce development system is to ensure North Carolina has an innovative, relevant, effective, and efficient workforce development system that develops adaptable, work-ready, skilled talent to meet the current and future needs of workers and businesses to achieve and sustain economic prosperity, and to ensure North Carolinians are ready for the jobs of today and tomorrow by increasing access to education and skills training, fostering employer leadership to prepare workers, and supporting and scaling local innovation.

Plans are reviewed by the Division of Workforce Solutions and NCWorks Commission staff. Upon completion of Plan reviews and the resolution of any concerns, as applicable, fully compliant Plans will be given Final Approval. Approval letters are distributed through Workforce Information System Enterprise (WISE). Local WDBs must have a compliant workforce board in place to receive Final Plan Approval and distribution of formula WIOA program year funding. [WIOA Section 108(e)]

Federal and State Requirements for Local Administration of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act

Local Area WDBs should reference the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Public Law 113-128, enacted July 22, 2014. Additional information is available at the U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration website: <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta>.

North Carolina policy information is available at: <https://www.commerce.nc.gov/jobs-training/workforce-professionals-tools-resources/workforce-policies>. Local Area WDBs should reference the North Carolina WIOA Unified State Plan to be posted March 2024.

Local Area Plan Submission and Due Date

The Local Area Plan must be submitted through Workforce Information System Enterprise (WISE), the Division's web-based financial system.

**The Program Year 2024 - 2028 Plan is Due:
May 1, 2024**

Each attachment must be clearly labeled in either Word or PDF format. Forms requiring original signatures may use DocuSign® (or similar) and may be uploaded in WISE.

If original signatures are obtained, forms may be mailed (and must be uploaded in WISE) to the Local Area WDB's assigned Planner at:

Division of Workforce Solutions
313 Chapanoke Road, Suite 120
4316 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-4316

I. Local Area Workforce Development Board (WDB) Overview

The Local Area WDB Overview provides important contact information that is used throughout the Division of Workforce Solutions (DWS). It is important that this section remain current during the Program Year. Updates should be submitted to the Local Area WDB's assigned DWS Planner when changes occur.

In the first section and anywhere else in the Local Area Plan, please include the appropriate salutation along with Titles such as Dr., The Honorable, Chairperson, and Judge.

1. Provide the **Local Area WDB's** official (legal) name as it appears on the local Consortium Agreement established to administer the WIOA or, if not a Consortium, in the formal request for Local Area designation.

Rivers East Workforce Investment Consortium

- If the Local Area is a Consortium, attach a copy of the current Consortium Agreement.
 - Name document: Local Area WDB Name Consortium Agreement.
- If the Local Area is not a Consortium, attach a copy of the formal request for Local Area designation.
 - Name document: Local Area WDB Name Local Area designation letter.
- If the Local Area WDB officially changed its name, please attach a copy of the Status of Incorporation, attorney's letter, or other document.

2. List the counties served by the Local Area WDB.

Beaufort, Bertie, Hertford, Martin, Pitt

3. Provide the name, title, organization name, address, phone number, and email address of the **Local Area WDB Director**.

Name: Jennie Bowen	Title & Salutation: Workforce Development Director
Organization Name: Mid-East Commission	Address: 1502 N Market Street, Washington, NC 27889
Phone Number: 252.974.1815	Email Address: jbowen@mideastcom.org

4. Provide the name, elected title, local government affiliation, address, phone number, and email address of the **Chief Local Elected Official (CLEO)**.

Name: Frankie Waters	Elected Title & Salutation: Chairman
Government Affiliation: c/o Beaufort County Commissioners	Address: 121 W 3rd Street, Washington, NC 27889
Phone Number: 252.946.0079	Email Address: brian.alligood@beaufortcountync.gov

5. Provide the name, title, business name, address, phone number, and email address of the **individual authorized to receive official mail for the Chief Local Elected Official (CLEO)**, if different than question 4.

Name: Brian Alligood	Title & Salutation: County Manager
Business Name: Beaufort County Government	Address: 121 W 3rd Street, Washington, NC 27889
Phone Number: 252.946.0079	Email Address: brian.alligood@beaufortcountync.gov

6. Provide the name, address, phone number and email address of the **Administrative/Fiscal Agent responsible for disbursing Local Area WIOA grant funds**. This is the entity responsible for the disbursement of grant funds. [WIOA Sections 107(d)(12)(B)(i)(III) and 108(b)(15)].

Name: N Bryant Buck	Title & Salutation: Executive Director
Organization Name: Mid-East Commission	Address: 1502 N Market Street, Washington, NC 27889
Phone Number: 252.946.8043	Email Address: bbuck@mideastcom.org

7. Provide the name, title, organization name, address, phone number and email address of the **Administrative/Fiscal Agent's signatory official**.

Name: N Bryant Buck	Title & Salutation: Executive Director
Organization Name: Mid-East Commission	Address: 1502 N Market Street, Washington, NC 27889
Phone Number: 252.946.8043	Email Address: bbuck@mideastcom.org

8. Attach a copy of the **Administrative Entity/Fiscal Agent's organizational chart** with an 'effective as of date'.

- Name document: *Administrative Entity Name Organizational Chart*.

9. Provide the **Administrative Entity’s Unique Entity Identifier (UEI)** number and assurance that the ‘System for Award Management’ (SAM) status is current. Administrative Entities must register at least annually on the SAM website <https://sam.gov/content/home> to receive Federal funding [required by Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) Section 4.11 and Section 52.204-7].

DUNS Number: 173851528
 UEI Number: FE1SNK136NL4
 Assurances are given that the SAM status is current and up to date

10. Provide the name of the **Local Area WDB’s Equal Opportunity Officer** who shall be responsible for assuring that discrimination does not occur in its programs or projects. (CPS 10-2021, Change 1)

The Compliance Manager serves as the region’s EO Officer. Currently, that person is Kimberly Laws.

- Composition of the Local Area WDBs shall comply with WIOA Section 107. Local Area WDB Membership Requirements have been provided as a reference at [Appendix D](#).

11. Provide each **Local Area WDB members’** name, business title, business name and address, phone number and email address on the provided form. The first block is reserved to identify the Local Area WDB chairperson (*form provided*). Indicate all required representation and indicate if vacant. [WIOA Section 107(b)(2)].

- Name document: Local Area WDB Name Board List.
- If a Local Area WDB list is not in compliance, please provide the current list and state the expected date that a compliant list will be provided (detailing vacant positions). Do not change required category names except to clarify those representing multiple categories. When determining the total number of members, representatives serving in more than one category must be counted and listed only once on the form. Identify any names representing a dual category with an asterisk (*).

Notes:

- *Please complete the entire form. Check the block on the last page of the form certifying compliance with required WIOA Local Area WDB business nomination process.*
 - *Representatives with expired terms will not be included in the counted list of Board members. Board member terms must stated in a month/date/year format.*
 - *Plans that do not have a compliant workforce Board will not receive Final Approval. Formula funds will not be awarded until the Local Area WDB has a compliant workforce Board. Exceptions are allowed only when realignment is occurring in the upcoming program year.*
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12. Briefly describe how the Local Area WDB works with local elected officials to ensure viable local business representatives are appointed to the Local Area WDB in compliance with WIOA Section 107.

The Board Director notifies the County Manager, who serves as the Consortium appointee, when a vacancy exists. In addition, the county clerk and local economic developer are notified to assist with finding a qualified, interested applicant. Once identified, the candidate goes through the county application, vetting and appointment process as set by the commissioners for all appointments to board/committees on behalf of the county.

The Chief Local Elected Official must establish by-laws consistent with applicable local procedures, state, and federal laws to include WIOA Final Rules and Regulations 679.310(g). The Local Area WDB shall submit by-laws that clearly demonstrate all WIOA and North Carolina required elements described in [Appendix A](#). Additional by-laws guidance/template and electronic meeting formats have been provided in [Appendix B](#) and [Appendix C](#).

13. Attach the Local Area WDB By-Laws including date adopted/amended. By-Laws must include the required elements found in [Appendix A](#).

- Name document: Local Area WDB Name By-Laws.

14. To demonstrate that the attached Local Area WDB By-Laws comply, complete By-Laws Required Elements – Crosswalk chart (form provided).

Sunshine Provision – The Local Area WDB shall make available to the public, on a regular basis through electronic means and open meetings, information regarding the activities of the Local Area WDB, including information regarding the Local Area Plan prior to submission of the Local Area Plan, and regarding membership, the designation and certification of one-stop operators, and the award of grants or contracts to eligible providers of youth workforce investment activities, and on request, minutes of formal meetings of the Local Area WDB. [WIOA Section 107(e)]

15. Describe how the Local Area WDB will make copies of the proposed Local Area Plan available to the public. If stating the Local Area Plan will be on the Local Area WDB website, provide link, as well as individual’s contact information for distribution of Plan. [WIOA Section 108(d) and 108(b)(20)]

Rivers East will make copies of the proposed Local Plan available to the public for review and for comment beginning May 9, 2024 for a period of 30 days, ending June 10, 2024. A link to the proposed Local Plan will

be placed on the Rivers East WDB website (www.riverseastwdb.org) and the Mid-East Commission website (www.mideastcom.org) . The plan will also be submitted electronically to all Consortium members and each WDB member. Interested citizens are encouraged to review the plan and submit comments to Jennie Bowen, jbowen@mideastcom.org At the close of the public comment period, a list of all comments will be compiled and submitted to the Division Planner.

Public Comment – The Local Area WDB shall make copies of the proposed Local Area Plan available to the public through electronic and other means, such as public hearings and local news media; allow for public comment not later than the end of the 30-day period beginning on the date the proposed Local Area Plan is made available; and, include with submission of the Local Area Plan any comments that represent disagreement with the Local Area Plan. [WIOA Section 108(d) and 108(b)(20)]

16. Attach a copy of the Local Area WDB’s organizational chart with an ‘effective as of date.’ Include position titles, names, and contact information.

- Name document: *Local Area WDB Name Organizational Chart.*

17. Complete the following chart for the PY2024 Local Area WDB’s planned meeting schedule to include, date, time, location, and virtual link (if applicable). (Expand form as needed)

Date	Time	Location (include address, room # and virtual link)
September 11, 2024	3:00pm	Hybrid- Zoom and in person at Martin Community College, 1161 Kehukee Park Rd, Williamston, NC- Bldg 1 Room 14
November 13, 2024	3:00pm	Hybrid- Zoom and in person at Martin Community College, 1161 Kehukee Park Rd, Williamston, NC- Bldg 1 Room 14
January 8, 2025	3:00pm	Hybrid- Zoom and in person at Martin Community College, 1161 Kehukee Park Rd, Williamston, NC- Bldg 1 Room 14
March 12, 2025	3:00pm	Hybrid- Zoom and in person at Martin Community College, 1161 Kehukee

		Park Rd, Williamston, NC- Bldg 1 Room 14
May14, 2025	3:00pm	Hybrid- Zoom and in person at Martin Community College, 1161 Kehuke Park Rd, Williamston, NC- Bldg 1 Room 14

Note: All Local Area WDB meetings shall be held in accessible facilities. All materials and discussions should be available in an accessible format upon request as indicated under North Carolina specific requirements detailed in [Appendix A](#).

The Comprehensive Four-Year Plan is developed in partnership with the chief local elected official and approved by the Local Area WDB. This approval should be reflected in the Local Area WDB meeting minutes as an Action item.

18. Provide the Month and Date of the Local Area WDB meeting that the Comprehensive Four-Year Plan was approved. Attach a copy of the Local Area WDB minutes that reflect this action item.

- Name document: *Local Area WDB Name Plan Approval Minutes.*

19. Attach a copy of the signed ‘Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, and other Responsibility Matters – Primary Covered Transactions’ Form (*form provided*). [Required by the Regulations implementing Executive Order 12549, Debarment and Suspension, 2 CFR 180, participants’ responsibilities.]

- Name document: *Local Area WDB Name Certification Form.*

Document must have the original signature or DocuSign® (or similar) of the Administrative Entity signatory official. If using original signatures, mail the signed Certification form to the assigned DWS Planner at:

N.C. Division of Workforce Solutions
 313 Chapanoke Road, Suite 120
 4316 Mail Service Center
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20. Submit the original Local Area WDB and Chief Local Elected Official (CLEO) Signatory Page (*form provided*), bearing the original signatures of the CLEO(s) and the Local Area WDB Chairperson, and attach a copy of the signed document if not using DocuSign® (or similar).

- Name document: *Local Area WDB Name Signatory Page*.

If using original signatures, mail the Signatory Page to the assigned DWS Planner at:

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II. Local Area WDB Strategic Planning

*The Local Area WDB is required to keep the Local Area Plan up to date and adaptable as events and funding changes occur, which may require local area responses. Local Area Plans will require an annual modification. North Carolina has implemented integrated services delivery with an enhanced emphasis on regional planning and services. This approach is consistent with federal, state, and regional initiatives and opportunities. North Carolina's workforce development system includes businesses, organizations, agencies, employed and unemployed persons, training and educational institutions, adults, and youth. To enhance services to all constituents, aligning workforce development planning and services with regional labor markets is both effective and productive. North Carolina Governor Roy Cooper's NC Job Ready Initiative is built on three core principles: **skills and education attainment** are the foundation to a strong and resilient workforce; an **employer-led** workforce development system is key to the growth of a highly skilled and job ready workforce; and **local innovation** is critical to a dynamic and effective workforce system.*

At the local level, the Local Area WDBs are creatively working to address the new challenges of job growth and expansions. Employers in Local Area WDB areas continue to have a shortage of lower-wage, entry-level and middle-skilled level workers. As a Local Area WDB and workforce system, Local Area WDBs are leveraging resources and engaging in new partnerships that include the business community, economic developers, chambers of commerce, NCWorks Career Centers, community colleges, public schools, and community partners. Working together, Local Area WDBs are paving the way for an even stronger economy through sector partnerships and career pathways initiatives.

1. Provide a description of the Local Area WDB's strategic vision and goals for preparing an in-demand industry-driven, educated, and skilled workforce, including youth and individuals with barriers to employment. Include goals relating to the performance accountability measures based on primary indicators of performance and how it aligns with regional economic growth, industry sectors, and economic self-sufficiency. [WIOA Section 108(b)(1)(E)]

The Rivers East Workforce Development Board strategic vision for preparing an educated and skilled workforce:

- Focus our resources and training on providers that deliver high-quality employer-focused and job seeker programs.
- Continue and expand our networking with Community Colleges to identify "gaps" in program offerings as identified through labor market research and dialogue with business.
- Continue our close working relationship with the Customized Industry Training and Apprenticeship programs.
- Continue and expand our assessment instruments in the NCWorks Centers to help identify the barriers to employment and provide comprehensive individualized plans to produce the best skilled workers for referral to businesses.

- Continue our emphasis on short-term training and work-based learning in the region.
- Expand our sector work to identify emerging sectors and to begin offering skills training to meet the projected needs.
- Continue our Career Pathways work (Northeast NC Career Pathways) to engage businesses, K-12, Community Colleges, Economic Developers, Chambers of Commerce, STEM, and the Universities to develop our workforce from school to life-long learning.
- Continue our close working relationship with local, regional, and state economic developers and work to improve and increase collaboration among other WIOA providers in the region through communication, joint projects, innovation, and opportunities to braid funding.

The benefit of having such an established framework is that it can be implemented to prepare an educated and skilled workforce at any level.

Performance Goals under WIOA for the Rivers East Local Area have been established at the local area and contractor level. In addition, performance measures are set for each of our NCWorks Career Centers which includes both job seeker and employer services measures.

The Program Specialist generates reports for the WIOA enrolled participants receiving training services monthly. These reports are reviewed monthly and corrective action performed as needed. All participants that have completed goals/obtained employment or are not actively receiving services are required to be submitted for exit. Employment and wages are reviewed. After the operator records exit information into NCWorks, the SuperUser reviews the data to ensure it is recorded correctly. The NCWorks reports and FutureWorks data are reviewed monthly and/or quarterly for current program year performance and performance year performance. Programs are monitored to ensure all services provided are properly recorded.

2. Provide a description of how the Local Area WDB, working with the entities carrying out core programs, will expand access to employment, training, education and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals with barriers to employment. Include how the Local Area WDB will facilitate the development of career pathways and co-enrollment, as appropriate, in core programs, 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. Include how these strategies will be a result of regional economic and employer-driven priorities. [WIOA Section 108(b)(3)]

The Rivers East WDB, WIOA Service Providers, and NCWorks staff network and partner with K -12 educational systems, community colleges, community-based organizations, business groups, economic developers and others to stay abreast of services available in the region. This includes sharing of information and referrals with partner agencies to and from the NCWorks Career Centers and among other WIOA funded programs and providers

Through dialogue with business, economic developers, community colleges, and labor market information research, “Occupations in Demand” are identified for training to meet the needs of our workforce. Individual Training Accounts for long term and short-term training leading to industry recognized credentials, along with

work-based learning tools such as work experience, on-the-job training and apprenticeship, are utilized to assist adults, dislocated workers, and youth in need of additional skill acquisition. The Board approves training that will result in a post-secondary credential or industry recognized credentials that are portable and stackable. Supportive services are utilized to assist with barriers such as childcare and transportation, in addition to career counseling.

The Board and our NCWorks Career Centers work closely with each of the four community colleges in the region to provide career and training services in a variety of degree, diploma and certificate programs. The NCWorks Career Centers have a presence on each community college campus, from being housed on campus to visiting at least weekly. In addition, East Carolina University and Chowan University are four-year institutions located in our region that also offer skills training. Additional universities provide virtual learning opportunities as well.

Strong relationships exist between all of these agencies as supports to our regional career pathways model, developed and maintained locally over the past twelve years covering the 20 counties of Northeast NC. Four Certified Pathways have been built to support our most in demand occupations, Healthcare, Advanced Manufacturing, Business Support Services (including IT & Logistics) and Agriscience & Biotechnology. This included partners such as K-12, community college, university, economic development, community based organizations, non-profits and local employers. These pathways were not only built from this partnership, but are reviewed and updated every 18-24 months to stay relevant in the constantly changing economy in the Northeast through input from all of the partners, most importantly our local employers. You can find more information on our Career Pathways at <https://nencpathways.org/>.

It is our intent to use the career pathways work as a basis to launch sector partnerships. The Board Director and Career Pathways Facilitator are both graduates of the US Chamber Foundation's Talent Pipeline Management (TPM) Academy program. We plan to use a combination of the TPM and Sector Strategies frameworks to build employer led partnerships to address the current and future talent needs of our local economy.

3. Considering the analyses described in the Regional Strategic Planning Section III, describe strategies to work with the entities that carry out the core programs that align resources available to the Local Area to achieve the strategic vision and goals. [WIOA Section 108(b)(1)(F)]

Rivers East WDB works closely with our neighboring boards, including Turning Point, Northeastern and Eastern Carolina. Multiple strategies are at play to work with the entities that carry out the core programs and align resources available to achieve the strategic vision and goals. The board invests in training for staff at all levels to ensure they deliver high-quality employer focused and job seeker service. Often, core program partners are also invited to attend these trainings. Working closely with our partners in our monthly and/or quarterly partner meetings, we have expanded our network and focus on identifying gaps in services in our communities. These gaps are often filled with partnering agencies including community-based organization and faith-based organizations who are local to that area. As part of our continuing Career Pathways work through our Workforce Connector, we are moving our focus to better engage businesses, while continuing to engage key partners such as K-12, Community Colleges, Economic Developers, Chambers of Commerce, and

the Universities to ensure career ladders are updated and clear to help lead our current and future workforce to self-sufficient employment. In addition, we are strengthening our partnership with ApprenticeshipNC, The benefit of having such an established framework and established relationships with multiple partners and programs, as well as neighboring boards, is that it can be implemented to prepare an educated and skilled workforce for our current and future businesses.

4. Provide a description of strategies concerning maximizing coordination of services provided under the Wagner-Peyser Act and services provided in the Local Area through the NCWorks Career Center system. Include how this coordination of services improves service delivery and avoids duplication of services. [WIOA Section 108(b)(12)]

Rivers East NCWorks Career Centers operate using the Integrated Service Delivery model. This strategy ensures all customers receive an orientation to the Center, are registered in Wagner-Peyser and are provided basic career services during their visit. Basic career services could include things like job search, resume or interview assistance as well as others identified during the initial assessment. Any barriers noted are addressed or referrals are made to partnering agencies who may specialize in that area. These services can be provided by any staff member in the center. For those wishing to pursue classroom or work based learning opportunities, staff provide more individualized services to evaluate the candidate for potential program eligibility to receive training assistance. This is coordinated among all Center staff. If the individual is eligible and is enrolled, other tools may be used to assess and identify needs. The solution often lies with coordination of services with other agencies to avoid duplications of services. Where permissible by information release forms, staff across all programs and agencies share information as it relates to services being provided to a specific customer to maximize resources and ensure customers receive all the need services to achieve success.

5. Describe how the Local Area WDB implements **each** of the following initiatives: incumbent worker training programs, on-the-job training programs, customized training programs, industry and sector strategies, career pathways initiatives, layoff aversion, utilization of effective business intermediaries, and other employer services and strategies, designed to meet the needs of employers in the corresponding region in support of the regional strategy to meet the needs of businesses. [WIOA Section 108 (b)(4)(B)]

Incumbent Worker Training Programs: Rivers East WDB has an approved incumbent worker policy to offer this training service to local businesses. The board sets aside funding each PY to make these services available. This has expanded with the availability of ARPA funds for Small Businesses.

On-the-Job Training Programs: Rivers East WDB has an approved OJT policy and requires all contractors to set aside funds for OJT in their budgets.

Customized Training Programs: Rivers East WDB has not sponsored any Customized Training programs using formula funds, however, we work with our local colleges to provide support and services as needed for their projects.

Industry and Sector Strategies: Rivers East WDB has two US Chamber Foundation Talent Pipeline Management (TPM) Academy trained staff and is interested in using this tool, along with sector strategy tools, to offer this in our region as a next phase of our pathways work. As a recipient of the Sector Partnership Planning grant, this work has begun to move our career pathways and “Made In” initiatives to the next level.

Career Pathways Initiatives: Rivers East WDB continues to hold a personal services contract position for the Career Pathways Facilitator for the Northeast, in partnership with our neighboring boards of Northeastern and Turning Point. Our facilitator maintains pathways, schedules meetings and events, and promotes pathways to partner agencies through workshops and conferences. This position is also working on using the connections made through pathways to move into a sector partnership model to reconnect with local businesses.

Layoff Aversion: Rivers East WDB has worked with DWS to provide this service when needed.

Utilization of Effective Business Intermediaries: Rivers East WDB has partnered with DWS staff in the past to provide this service when needed.

Other Employer Services and Strategies: Rivers East WDB will close out the Golden Leaf Grant in October which has been focused on promoting advanced manufacturing in the region. This project was spearheaded by our local and regional economic developers, who serve as the steering committee. In addition, the board received the ARPA Work Based Learning Grants and plans to expand our work with small businesses over the next 2 years.

6. Provide a description of how the Local Area WDB coordinates workforce investment activities – including strategies enhancing services, promoting participation in training programs, and avoiding duplication of services – is carried out in the Local Area with the provision of Adult Education and Literacy activities. [WIOA Section 108(b)(13)]

The Rivers East Workforce Development Director convenes a meeting of the Adult Education Directors from the Community Colleges and Literacy Volunteers each year to increase collaboration. Additionally, the Youth Program Specialist meets with the Title II directors throughout the year to further promote continuity, collaboration, innovation, and co-enrollment. The discussion focuses on best practice sharing including local career pathways, enhancing career exploration, hands-on training & post-secondary transition instruction along with High school Equivalency preparation that are necessary to skill up the existing workforce, and improve and increase services provided by referral or on-site at the NCWorks Career Centers.

This relationship serves as a foundation for referrals to and from the colleges and NCWorks Career Centers for services, and co-enrollment of those enrolled in AEFLA activities in NCWorks for workforce preparation, job search assistance and/or Title I services, specifically for those age 16-24 in the NEXTGEN/Youth programs. In addition, AEFLA staff have a vested interest in our Career Pathways/NCWorks Career Pathways Partnership. This allows the same pathways strategies to be used in this non-traditional setting to allow those HSE or ESL students to explore the same career paths as they would in a traditional high school

setting using the same tools and technology.

The Board works with all partners to coordinate and not duplicate services. Where permissible by information release forms, staff across all programs and agencies share information as it relates to services being provided to a specific customer to maximize resources and ensure customers receive all the need services to achieve success.

7. Describe the Local Area's workforce development system. Identify the following: the programs that are included in the system, how the Workforce Development Board will work with the entities administering core programs and other workforce development programs to support alignment and provision of services, and the programs of study authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.). [WIOA Section 108(b)(2)]

The Rives East region is home to 4 community colleges- Beaufort County Community College serving Beaufort County, Roanoke-Chowan Community College serving Hertford County, Martin Community College serving Bertie and Martin Counties, and Pitt Community College serving Pitt County. Each community college administers the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006. A close relationship is maintained with each of the colleges, and our NCWorks Career Centers are co-located on 3 of the college campuses - Martin Community College's main campus and Bertie campus, as well as Roanoke-Chowan Community College. They play a direct role in training the current and future workforce of our new and existing businesses, through their wide variety of degrees, diplomas and certificates, as well as their Customized Training. Strong relationships also exist with the Career and Technical Education (CTE) system in our region. This is, in part, a result of our NENC Career Pathways work. Both of these partners have been instrumental in the development and promotion of our "Made In" campaigns focused on advanced manufacturing careers and the four cohorts of Rivers East Academy, all funded by Golden Leaf Foundation.

8. Provide a description of (a) cooperative agreements, as defined in WIOA Section 107(d)(11), between the Local Area WDB and other local entities described in Section 101(a)(11)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 721(a)(11)(B)) with respect to efforts that will enhance the provision of service 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 to include cooperation, collaboration, and coordination. [WIOA Section 108(b)(14)]

Vocational Rehabilitation/ Employment and Independence for people with Disabilities (EIPD) is a partner in our state and regional MOU to provide services in our NCWorks Career Centers; and is an active partner in our NCWorks Centers in the region. VR staff attends center staff meetings, where training takes place on the use of NCWorks online, updates on hiring opportunities are shared and general discussion of coordination efforts are covered. VR Business Services staff actively promote the programs and services of the Center along with specific VR services when visiting employers or other community partners. Through our VR partnership, a manager serves on our board and is an active member on our Inclusion Committee. In addition, we have a representative from the Assistive Technology Center on the Inclusion Committee.

In addition, to make our NCWorks Career Centers more physically and programmatically accessible, assistive technology has been placed in each Career Center in the region. This includes a variety of equipment as recommended by VR's Assistive Technology Center specialist.

9. Provide a brief description of the actions the Local Area WDB will take toward becoming or remaining a high-performing Local Area WDB, consistent with the factors developed by the NCWorks Commission. [WIOA Section 108(b)(18)]

The Rivers East Workforce Development Board established a Strategic Vision for 2020, updated it in 2022 and are currently updating again for 2024. This Vision serves as local implementation of the goals set forth by the NCWorks Commission's Strategic Plan and Governor's Job Ready Plan.

Like the NCWorks Commission, we want to ensure that we have an innovative, relevant, effective and efficient workforce system that develops adaptable, work-ready, skilled talent to meet the current and future needs of workers and businesses to achieve and sustain economic prosperity and ensure our citizens are ready for the jobs of today and tomorrow by increasing access to education and skills training, fostering leadership to prepare workers and supporting innovation. The Rivers East WDB looks to provide regional leadership, guidance and support to meet the changing needs of our communities through strategic innovation and collaboration.

Through career exploration, assessment and planning, the WDB supports individuals from choosing their career path to attaining their credentials. Through data management, participants are tracked from start to finish in pursuit of their educational goal and supported even after employment is gained. By evaluating the training providers, the board ensures the training is relevant to the local labor market and is identified as a high growth sector to ensure participants are being prepared to succeed in the local, state and global economy.

We have close ties with our local county and city officials as a department of Mid-East Commission, the regional council of government. We have forms, policies and procedures in place to support existing programs and expedite the start-up of new programs and provide guidance and technical assistance during operations.

Through monthly staff training and email communication, staff are kept up to date on performance goals, service delivery methods, policy, technology and best practices. In addition, staff participate quarterly in DEI training both online and through group discussion with local facilitators.

The Rivers East WDB continues to lead or partner in innovative projects such as Made In, Rivers East Academy, Our State, Our Work/Carolina Across 100 through RiversEast Youth Alliance and are always pursuing new opportunities. We also continue to innovate using technology such as Text Software and Virtual Reality to improve service delivery to job seekers and employers alike.

10. Discuss the increase and expansion of service delivery and awareness efforts to reengage individuals with barriers to include dislocated workers, opportunity youth/high school dropouts, women, people of color in hard-to-reach communities, individuals with disabilities, and justice involved individuals to help reconnect the disconnected workforce. More importantly, clarify how success is measured.

The WDB's Inclusion committee has evaluated regional demographics and identified customer groups to be targeted for PY23 through increased outreach and community events. We have a multi-pronged approach in place to address the barriers:

As part of our Center Reorganization plan launched May 2022, Centers in four of our five counties are open two days per week and staff are providing virtual services other days. We are also providing services in our local communities on a consistent basis at locations such as libraries and community centers. By being present in the local community, we hope to reach those who are currently disconnected in hard-to-reach communities who have barriers such as lack of internet access and/or transportation to engage with staff face-to-face in an easier to access location. This includes dislocated workers, disconnected youth, high school dropouts, women, people of color, and individuals with disabilities.

Rivers East WDB participated in Carolina Across 100, Our State Our Work, Opportunity Youth program to help better connect with disconnected youth in the region. Our first Career Summit was held in April, with future events being planned now by the diverse regional advisory team.

The WDB has invested in multiple forms of assistive technology to ensure our Centers were more accessible for those with disabilities.

Success will be measured through demographics comparison by the Inclusion Committee, who will track demographic data of our communities versus the demographics of those we serve through NCWorks to ensure a balance and equal representation of all groups being served.

11. Provide a description of how the Workforce Development Board coordinates workforce investment activities carried out in the Local Area with:
- a. statewide rapid response activities as described in WIOA Section 134(a)(2)(A).
 - b. specifically describe the coordination and delivery of services to businesses to include systems that are used to determine economic trends and partners within your Early Warning Network to help identify those businesses that are expanding and/or struggling. [WIOA Section 108(b)(8)]

Rapid Response activities are coordinated by the WDB Director. All Rapid Response and early warning efforts are completed in partnership with the state and local partners such as local, regional and state level economic development, local elected officials, county managers, community colleges, , DES, Vocational Rehabilitation- Employment and Independence for people with Disabilities (EIPD) - Employment and Independence for people with Disabilities (EIPD) , our NCWorks Career Centers, and other partners identified as needed.

We utilize a labor market analysis tool, Lightcast, (which we share with our Pitt County Economic Development team) to analyze a wide range of data that addresses industry growth outlooks, as well as businesses that may be in need of assistance for layoff aversions. Data is also obtained locally from our partners like EDPNC, NCSU IES and our regional and local partners in addition to the information obtained from the DWS Rapid Response staff to identify businesses that may be struggling.

Through strong local connections to these partners and our local businesses, we ensure services are provided to local businesses during times of expansion or reductions utilizing a local team all working to assist the company with their needs.

12. Provide an overview of how the region partners with NC Community Colleges, UNC institutions, and independent colleges in the local areas to prepare workers to succeed by using skills and education attainment with a focus on diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility.

The Board and our NCWorks Career Centers work closely with each of the four community colleges in the region to provide career and training services in a variety of degree, diploma and certificate programs. Three of our five Centers in the region are co-located on local Community College campuses. For the other two counties, staff are present on the Community College campus at least weekly. Our staff provide career services to all interested students and offer training services to eligible students.

In addition, East Carolina University and Chowan University are four-year institutions located in our region that also offer skills training. Additional universities provide virtual learning opportunities as well.

The WDB has a standing Inclusion Committee which focuses on equity and inclusion. This committee analyzes demographic data to ensure the Board, and in turn its NCWorks Centers, are serving its proportionate share of the population by demographic. The committee includes members from Vocational Rehabilitation-

Employment and Independence for people with Disabilities (EIPD), Division of Services for the Blind and AMEXCAN.

13. Based on the history of economic development projects in the Local Area, how many projects does the Local Area WDB expect to engage in during the upcoming program year? Please indicate the type of services the Local Area WDB expects to provide.

We are aware of two large projects, one announced and one not yet announced, coming to the region. Both will require ramp up time, and the date for hiring a workforce is pending. Our economic development partners have communicated with us their intent to bring us to the table when the company is ready to begin the hiring process. In addition, we have knowledge of several projects where our local economic developers have submitted information for consideration of location in our region.

14. Provide a description of how the WDB is employing sector strategies by creating industry-led sector partnerships to facilitate engagement of employers and better coordinate workforce development services, training, and economic development activities. Include a brief example(s) of existing industry sector initiatives / partnerships or describe the strategy to implement them for evidence-based in-demand industry sectors for the region [WIOA Section 106 (c)(1)(C), Section 107 (d)(4)(D)]

We are currently working under the Sector Partnership Planning Grant to build a sector partnership. It is our intent to use the career pathways network built and maintained for 12 years and our recent “Made In” campaign as a basis to launch sector partnerships.

In our region, the best current example is Tradesformers, active in Pitt County as a local employer led collaborative including apprenticeship for the skilled trades. We are working with them now to potentially crosswalk the ARPA Work Based Learning Grant funds with apprenticeship, work experience, on-the-job training, and incumbent worker training opportunities.

The Board Director and Career Pathways Facilitator are both graduates of the US Chamber Foundation’s Talent Pipeline Management (TPM) Academy program. We plan to use a combination of the TPM and Sector Strategies frameworks to build additional employer led partnerships to address the current and future talent needs of our local economy.

15. Identify the Career Pathways developed by the Local Area. Complete the chart below.

Pathway Name	Partner WDBs	Year the pathway was developed	Number of trainees (to date) who have utilized the pathway
Health Sciences	Rivers East WDB Northeastern WDB Turning Point WDB	Planning (October 2013); Approved (February 2016); Check-in (April 2017), Reviewed	485

		(January 2019); Reviewed (February 2021); 4 Local Implementations	
Business Support Services	Rivers East WDB Northeastern WDB Turning Point WDB	Planning (July 2017); Approved (August 2018); Reviewed (April 2019); Reviewed (February 2021); 2 Local Implementations	446
Advanced Manufacturing	Rivers East WDB Northeastern WDB Turning Point WDB	Planning (September 2015); Approved (November 2016); Checkin (February 2018); Reviewed (March 2019); Reviewed (February 2021); 4 Local Implementations	185
Agriscience/Biotechnology	Rivers East WDB Northeastern WDB Turning Point WDB	Planning (May 2014); Reviewed (January 2016); 117 Commission Policy Statement CPS: 01-2024 Attachment 1 Page 22 of 112 Reviewed (November 2017); Endorsed May (2020); Reviewed (February 2021)	117

16. In addition to facilitating the development of career pathways, also describe the review process for in-demand career pathways to determine if new pathways are needed, or if current pathways should be updated or removed based on the needs of the industry.

- a. Include plans for new career pathways.
- b. Explain how career pathways in the local area are in alignment with other partners/stakeholders' (Department of Public Instruction (DPI), community colleges, myFutureNC, universities, etc.) existing pathways or if they are duplicates.
- c. Describe the strategy to avoid duplication efforts.
- d. Describe the strategy to promote pathways and recruit participants.

- a. There are currently no plans for new pathway development as we continue to focus on those we have already created.
- b. All of our pathways have been created through our NENC Career Pathways Partnership which includes 22 Local Education Agencies (LEA's), 4 charter schools, 1 regional high school, 9 community colleges, 10 NCWorks Career Centers, 4 universities, and a variety of local employers and economic development agencies
- c. We avoid duplication of efforts by developing our pathways through the NENC Career Pathways Partnership as described above.
- d. Pathways are promoted through efforts of all partners in the NENC Career Pathways Partnership. The partnership maintains regularly scheduled quarterly meetings. We ensure that our career advisors in our NCWorks Career Centers are familiar with these pathways and have resource materials to promote them to career center customers.

17. Provide a description of the Local Area WDB's capacity to provide workforce investment activities to address (a) education attainment and skill needs of high-demand fields (b) strategies for awareness and cultivation efforts to increase access to education and postsecondary credentials and certificates, availability of learn-and-earn opportunities (internships, apprenticeships, summer employment) and (c) supportive services for hard-to-reach communities. (d) Explain strategies that include NextGen, NCCareers.org and any awareness models for success. (e) Explain strategies to align work across the North Carolina Community College System (NCCCS) and (DPI) to increase youth apprenticeships or assist businesses in hiring youth apprentices.

a. For close to 12 years now, Rivers East WDB has been a leading partner in the NENC Career Pathways Partnership. Through this partnership, we have developed four certified pathways – Health Science, Advanced Manufacturing, Agri-Science/Biotechnology, and Business Support services. The purpose of this partnership is to develop a talent pipeline for employers in these high-demand fields by helping our youth and adult job seekers earn industry recognized credentials and participating in relevant work-based learning opportunities.

b. Rivers East WDB engages in numerous strategies for awareness and cultivation efforts to increase access to education and postsecondary credentials and certificates, and the availability of learn and earn opportunities. One way in which this is done it through our NENC Career Pathways Partnerships. This partnership promotes awareness of career pathways, credentials available at little to no cost and workbased learning opportunities.
 Also, through our Golden Leaf Foundation Grant, we have focused on the pathway to Advanced Manufacturing careers with exposure for parents, students and teachers on local good paying jobs. The Made In project highlights the pathway from K12 to Community College and/or University to the manufacturers in the region (including company names).

c. Rivers East WDB serves a diverse region. The top two barriers are access to transportation and broadband internet. We have worked to maintain a physical presence in each of our counties and offer services via text and phone. We use community partners to assist with outreach including those located in the harder to serve areas. With connections to the faith-based and community-based organizations already serving those areas, we have seen an increase in customers reaching out for a variety of services.

- d. As participants in the Carolina Across 100, Opportunity Youth cohort, we learned much more about the region and how best to outreach to the target audience of the NEXTGEN program. Again, key relationships with those partners already established and serving those communities have made the biggest impact. NCCareers.org is embedded in our enrollment process for all customers and is utilized by our staff and partners when working with customers of all ages during career advising and development of their employment plans and goals.
- e. Rivers East WDB recognizes the importance of apprenticeships. Unfortunately, the past had shown minimal activity in the Northeast due to the responsiveness of the Apprenticeship Consultant and/or distance away. However, there has recently been positive progress with better coordination with the college-based apprenticeships, building of our own Career Advisor apprenticeship and a potential crosswalk of current apprenticeships to the ARPA Work Based Learning Grant. This should serve as a firm foundation to rebuild the apprenticeship program in the Northeast.

III. Regional Strategic Planning:

North Carolina is defined by an expansive geography that covers over 53,000 square miles and spans from the mountains in the west, to the piedmont region in the state's center to the coastal plain region in the east. This expansive geography contributes to the state's diverse mix of rural communities, small towns, cities, metropolitan areas, and regional economic centers, each with its own unique industrial composition. Part of North Carolina's economic development strategy includes organization of the state's 100 counties into eight multi-county regions called Prosperity Zones, which are intended to help ensure economic growth across all areas of the state, by leveraging regional economic, workforce, and educational resources. Overlaying the eight prosperity zones are North Carolina's 20 Local Area WDBs that facilitate the delivery of workforce services to the state's citizens and employers.

Local Area WDBs are to continue, or begin, formal interaction based on these regional geographies. The following regional configurations will be used for submission of this Regional Plan:

- *Western Region: Southwestern, Region C (Foothills), and Mountain Area WDBs;*
- *Northwest Region: High Country, Western Piedmont, and Region C (Foothills)WDBs; empl*
- *Piedmont Triad Region: Piedmont Triad Regional and GuilfordWorks WDBs;*
- *Southwest Region: Centralina, Charlotte Works, Region C (Foothills), and Gaston County WDBs;*
- *North Central Region: Kerr-Tar, Durham County, Turning Point, Mid-Carolina, and Capital Area WDBs;*
- *Sandhills Region: Cape Fear, Lumber River and Mid-Carolina WDBs;*
- *Northeast Region: Rivers East, Northeastern, and Turning Point WDBs; and*
- *Southeast Region: Eastern Carolina and Cape Fear WDBs.*

1. Provide an analysis of the regional economic conditions to include: a) existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations; as well as conditions that contribute to potential layoffs and closures and, b) knowledge and skills needed to meet the employment needs of employers in those industry sectors and occupations. Include sources used and business involvement in determining needs. [WIOA Section 108 (b)(1)(A)(i)(ii) and (B)].

The 20 county Northeast region has a total population of 735,098 with 323,901 individuals employed with average earnings of \$58.1 annually. Total population decreased by 29,343 over the last five years and is projected to further decrease by 31,356 over the next 5 years. This is significant for many reasons including

that a lot of funding, such as WIOA funding, is based on population. With a decreasing population, this region is likely to receive less WIOA funds. On a positive note, jobs decreased by 832 over the past five years, but are projected to grow by 8,869 over the next five years. Median earnings for the region are significantly lower than the national average, which is \$82.5K. Concerning educational attainment, 16.0% of the regions' residents possess a bachelor's degree (5.1% below the national average), and 10.9% hold an associate's degree (2.0% above the national average). Currently, the largest industries are Government, Retail Trade, Manufacturing, Health Care and Social Assistance, and Accommodation and Food Services. Industries with the highest expected growth are Manufacturing, Construction, Wholesale Trade, Retail Trade, and Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services. The most in-demand skills needed to meet the demands of employers in the Northeast region are Merchandising, Nursing, Auditing, Accounting, and Cash Register. This data was collected from Lightcast. In addition to using Lightcast, the workforce boards of the northeast are in constant communication with local employers about their needs.

Conditions that contribute to potential layoffs are subject to local, state, and national trends. As inflation and gas prices soar, so does the cost of business. If businesses are not able to produce their products or services at prices that align with what consumers are willing to pay, there will be layoffs and closures. As Government is one of the largest employers, as noted above, a lot of government services are funded through formulas that use population. With a decreasing population, this could result in less government services resulting in layoffs. Also, with a decreasing population, employers will have even more difficulties filling their open positions. If companies cannot access the workforce they need, some will relocate to areas in which they can. The Northeast Region, unlike many other regions throughout the state, is also subject to extreme weather and its impact on local economies. Hurricanes can have an extremely negative effect on the economy and result in layoffs.

2. Describe how the regional strategic vision aligns with the NCWorks Commission's 2023-2025 Strategic Plan.

There are four main goals in the NCWorks Commission Strategic plan as follows: 1. Prepare workers to exceed in the North Carolina by increasing skills and education attainment. 2. Create a workforce system responsive to the economy's needs by fostering employer leadership. 3. Promote replication of creative solutions to challenging workforce problems by supporting local innovation. 4. Promote system access, alignment, integration, and modernization.

The Northeast Region has been a leader in promoting skill and education attainment for close to 12 years now through our NENC Career Pathways Partnership. Through this partnership, four regional employer-driven career pathways have been developed (Health Sciences, Business Support Services, Advanced Manufacturing, Agri-Science/Biotechnology). Careers in these fields and the credentials/stackable credentials are promoted in the high schools, community colleges, and NCWorks Career Centers. The three Workforce Board Directors in the Northeast Region meet regularly to ensure that each local area is aware of what the others are doing and either partner in the efforts or replicate the efforts as appropriate. The Northeast is more than a team, it is a family. Employer leadership is especially important in the northeast. The above-mentioned career pathways were developed with input from local employers. Also, each local area is currently working on sector strategies – and again, we learn from each other as we do this. Lastly, to promote system alignment, the three boards in the Northeast Region, along with Eastern Carolina Workforce Development Boards, have held numerous meetings to align policies to make workforce services more consistent throughout the regions .

3. Provide an analysis of the workforce in the region, 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 region, including individuals with barriers to employment. [WIOA Section 108 (b)(1)(C)].

The 20 county Northeast region has a total population of 735,098 with 323,901 individuals employed with average earnings of \$58.1 annually. Total population decreased by 29,343 over the last five years and is projected to further decrease by 31,356 over the next 5 years. On a positive note, jobs decreased by 832 over the past five years, but are projected to grow by 8,869 over the next five years. Median earnings for the region is significantly lower than the national average, which is \$82.5K. Concerning educational attainment, 16.0% of the regions' residents possess a bachelor's degree (5.1% below the national average), and 10.9% hold an associate's degree (2.0% above the national average). In 2022, there were 13,429 graduates in the region. This pipeline shrunk by 10% over the last 5 years. The highest share of these graduates come from "Liberal Arts and Sciences/Liberal Studies" Associate's), "Business Administration and Management, General" (Bachelor's), and "Registered Nursing/Registered Nurse" (Bachelor's). Currently, the largest industries are Government, Retail Trade, Manufacturing, Health Care and Social Assistance, and Accommodation and Food Services. Industries with the highest expected growth are Manufacturing, Construction, Wholesale Trade, Retail Trade, and Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services. The most in-demand skills needed to meet the demands of employers in the Northeast region are Merchandising, Nursing, Auditing, Accounting, and Cash Register. Unemployment in the Rivers East region as of January 2024 is 4.1%, Turning Point is 5.1%, and NWDB is 4.6%. The overall Unemployment Rate for the region is 4.58%. All of these are higher than NC (3.5%) and the US (3.7%).

4. Describe strategies, used to facilitate engagement of businesses and other employers, including small employers and in-demand industry sector occupations. Describe methods and services to support the workforce system in meeting employer needs. [WIOA Section 108 (b)(4)(A)(i)(ii)].

The workforce boards in the region frequently engage with businesses, including small employers and those in in-demand industries. 96.2% of the businesses in the region have 49 or fewer employees – so the majority of business engagement is with small employers.

Through our NENC Career Pathways Partnership, we identified four industry sectors to build career pathways and focus business engagement – Health Science, Advanced Manufacturing, Business Support Services, and Agri-Science/Biotechnology. We hold regional quarterly meetings focusing on one of these sectors (all four annually). This allows for frequent and intentional business engagement, as we continuously work to ensure that our pathways, and the work of our business/employer services staff align with the needs of these sectors.

In addition, the three boards have worked together to align our Incumbent Workers Grant and On-the-Job Training policies, to allow for consistency in services to businesses. In addition to these services, other services are available to help meet employer needs. This includes customized recruitment strategies based on the individual needs of the employers. Customized recruitment may or may not include pre-screening of applicants. This just depends on the needs of the employer. We realize there isn't a "one size fits all" approach to recruitment, so staff in the region work hard to understand the employers' specific needs and design a recruitment strategy based on those needs. [Click here to enter text.](#)

5. Describe strategies and services used to coordinate workforce development programs and economic development. [WIOA Section 108 (b)(4)(A)(iii)].

Many of the regional economic developers are geographically aligned to the areas these three boards cover. An example of this is the NCEast Alliance. Board Directors and Business Services staff have developed relationships with the staff of NCEast and have provided workforce availability data to this group to help them recruit new businesses. Staff are also invited to on-site discussions that NCEast may organize with a business to help provide context to the data. NCEast Alliance staff serve on both the Rivers East and Northeastern Workforce Development Board. Another example is the regional representative from EDPNC which is aligned to our region. This individual attends regional meetings and has been de-briefed on the board's role and business services. Board staff also participate in joint business meetings with EDPNC staff. The boards also have strong relationships with local economic developers and work to maintain those relationships.

6. Outline regional transportation issues related to workforce development and ways the region is/will address needs identified. Include a description *and* map of the regional commuting patterns. [WIOA Section 108(b)(11)].

Transportation is a major workforce development issue in the region. The inter-regional highway system is inadequate for many businesses that may otherwise relocate to the area. Widening, bridge replacement, ferry upgrades, and new construction are necessary to allow business to efficiently import resources and export goods. Furthermore, the current system creates long commute times, placing additional burdens on working families. On December 14, 2015, the US 17 corridor was officially designated as a future interstate with the passage of the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act) and in May of 2016, the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) approved the designation of Interstate 87 (I-87) for the corridor.

From a workforce perspective, the boards will continue to voice the concerns of transportation challenges on the workforce and for I-87 to come to fruition. Also, knowing the expense of transportation can be a barrier to individuals, preventing them from accomplishing their educational goals, the boards offer transportation as a supportive service to help ease that burden.

Regarding commuting patterns: A significant number of workers commute outside of the region. In 2023, 97,935 workers commuted out of the region, while only 64,093 workers commuted to the region. This is a net loss of 33,842 workers. Most of those who commute outside of the region commute to Virginia. In 2023 58% of those who commute out of the region, commuted to Virginia. In addition, a large number commute between counties inside and outside of the individual workforce board areas.

7. Briefly provide a description of how the Local Area WDB will coordinate education and workforce investment activities carried out in the local area with relevant secondary and postsecondary education programs and activities to coordinate strategies, enhance services, and avoid duplication of services. [WIOA Section 108(b)(10)].

Boards of the Northeast have many types of relationships with secondary education and community college and university partners. One example is the close relationship between boards and customized training departments. Business services staff aligns marketing efforts with local and regional customized training

representatives, particularly for Incumbent Worker Grants. Another example of alignment is working collaboratively with career coaches (titles differ across the region) to ensure community college staff are aware of approved trainings, eligibility for Title I participation, etc. Moreover, each board has a representative from Adult and Basic Education as a member on the board.

REWDB staff and Career Center Staff network and collaborate regularly with secondary school and community colleges to provide wrap-around services to customers. Career Advisors communicate and meet with secondary school counselors and CTE teachers to evaluate the need of eligible youths and partner to service students jointly. Our NCWorks Career Centers are co-located on the local community college campus in three of our counties to maximize the partnership and provide services to students. Likewise, the Career Center provides office space for the local community college staff in Pitt County to facilitate partnership between the two organizations and provide onsite services to Career Center customers. REWDB participates in joint meetings with secondary and community college staff to collaborate on services provided to students and roles are identified to reduce duplication of services. Career Center and REWDB staff have collaborated with the local 4-year universities as well. NextGen staff regularly visit High Schools and Title II programs on community college campuses.

Presidents of Roanoke Chowan Community College and Pitt Community College sit on the REWDB Board and an additional Title II Director from Martin Community College serves as a resource member on the NextGen Committee. Dialog between the community colleges is transparent, therefore avoiding duplication of services and ensuring that strategies are aligned. Community college alliances are evidenced through the four distinct Career Pathways developed for the NWDB region. In addition, the community colleges of the region are valued referral sources for WIOA Title I services.

8. Briefly describe how the NCWorks Career Centers serve military veterans.

Veterans and eligible spouses receive priority of service for all USDOL-Funded job training programs, which include WIOA programs. When veterans visit one of our centers, they do receive priority of services. There is a form that they must complete (Veteran Intake Form) to identify any barriers that they may have which will allow us to determine if the veteran should speak to a veteran representative or one of our career advisors at the office. If the veteran meets with a veteran representative, the veteran program can offer these individuals additional benefits. It is important that we gather as much information as possible from that individual to determine what his/her needs may be. For the person to receive these benefits they must accept being placed on a case load so the veteran representative can properly assist and assess their needs.

We have two types of veteran representatives that are housed in our center. One is a DVOP, which is the veteran representative that works with the jobs seekers to ensure that they find employment or receive services. The other is the LVER, this individual is responsible for building and engaging in relationships with our business community to ensure that we are explaining all the services that the veteran program offers and the benefits of hiring a veteran. They are also responsible for outreach in the community and working in partnership with the center business service coordinator to provide services to the business community. Recently, DWS has implemented Hybrid staff which perform the functions of both the DVOP and LVER.

9. Explain the strategic plan for how the region will respond to national emergencies or weather-related disasters to serve victims (such as lay-off aversion activities) and utilize special grants efficiently throughout the recovery period.

Through prior experience, Boards of the Northeast are prepared to respond to national emergencies including weather related disasters. In addition to utilizing previous NEG funds, the boards realize the value of providing mobile and virtual services to customers impacted by hurricanes that lack the means to travel to a center or when a region must close a center due to a hurricane's impact. For example, each board of the Northeast has used the mobile unit in the aftermath of a hurricane to provide services to customers. During this pandemic, the boards of the Northeast were quick to respond to needs by developing texting platforms, virtual career services (such as online soft skills courses), virtual job fairs and more. The tools and skills we've acquired due to the pandemic will be valuable in normal circumstances and will aid in expediting services and using outreach techniques in atypical ways.

In addition, Turning Point and Rivers East WDB's have recently utilized a NEG grant to serve the displaced workers of the QVC plant in Rocky Mount which was closed after a deadly fire.

IV. NCWorks Commission

The NCWorks Commission recommends policies and strategies which value diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility while enabling the state's workforce to compete in the current and future global economy. The commission leads, builds partnerships, forms alliances, and is accountable for strengthening North Carolina's innovative, inclusive, relevant, effective, and efficient workforce development system.

The Commission is designated as the state's WDB under the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. Led by a private sector chair, the 37-member Commission includes representatives from the business community, heads of state workforce agencies, educators, and community leaders. All members are appointed by the Governor.

Mission of the NCWorks Commission: To ensure North Carolina has an innovative, relevant, effective, and efficient workforce development system that develops adaptable, work-ready, skilled talent to meet the current and future needs of workers and businesses to achieve and sustain economic prosperity; and to ensure North Carolinians are ready for the jobs of today and tomorrow by increasing access to education and skills training, fostering employer leadership to prepare workers, and supporting and scaling local innovation.

After extensive stakeholder work and programmatic reviews, the following systemwide goals and objectives were created for the workforce development system:

- *Prepare workers to succeed in the North Carolina economy by increasing skills and education attainment.*
- *Create a workforce system that is responsive to the needs of the economy by fostering employer leadership.*
- *Promote replication of creative solutions to challenging workforce problems by supporting local innovation.*

- *Promote system access, alignment, integration, and modernization.*

1. Briefly describe how the Local Area WDB engages with local employers and informs them of the wide array of business services offered. Include how the Local Area WDB (a) ensures collaboration with other employer-facing workforce program representatives, such as (b) Vocational Rehabilitation- Employment and Independence for people with Disabilities (EIPD) - Employment and Independence for people with Disabilities (EIPD) , (c) Agriculture Services, (d) Foreign Labor, (e) Re-Entry, and (f) Veterans Services, through processes and procedures for information sharing and efficient employer customer service delivery.

The local Workforce Development Board uses various methods to outreach to employers about available business services. These may include social media, printed materials, promotional calls or visits, presentations at civic organizations, Chamber newsletters, community events, and introductions through partner agencies. Employer services are also provided at the Center level, and include collaboration with partner programs, both internal and external. Last year our Pitt County collaborative team hosted an Employer Engagement Event with guest speakers from all workforce programs and highlighted the many incentives to work with the local Board and its NCWorks Center and partners. With the overwhelming response received from the event, plans are to make this an annual event.

2. Please provide a brief overview of the business services team within the local area. Please identify the individual staff roles the Local Area WDB utilizes to conduct business services (that is Business Services Representative (Local Area WDB staff), contractor staff, Business Engagement Coordinator, NCWorks Career Center Manager, DWS staff, Disabled Veterans Outreach Program, identify who makes regional and local employer referrals to Agricultural Services and/or Foreign Labor staff, etc.).

Rivers East WDB has one assigned Business Services Specialist on staff utilizing the ARPA Work Based Learning grant funds received. The One Stop Operator also works to support the NCWorks Center staff with local business needs (including Work Based Learning, Incumbent Worker Training and collaborative planning). The Director handles all requests for labor market information from economic developers and other interested parties. Center leadership works day-to-day to share information with staff located within their Centers representing the other programs.

3. Briefly describe how the Local Area WDB plans to increase NCWorks brand awareness at the local level (consult NCWorks Commission 2023-2025 Strategic Plan).

Rivers East maintains a strong social media presence, having accounts on Facebook, X, LinkedIn, and Instagram. Information is also posted on the Board's website and shared on various social media posts. The WDB forwards Press Releases to the local news outlets requesting the information to be shared. In addition, Local Area staff, including Center staff, participate and present at various partner agencies and Chamber events, including attending local festivals, serving on advisory boards, and helping to plan outreach and employment events. The WDB developed and provides cohesive professional printed outreach materials by all staff and distributed throughout the communities for universal brand recognition. All flyers, printed materials and social media include the NCWorks logo.

Communities across North Carolina are developing strong local models of workforce development. North Carolina should build on those successes and replicate them in more places to continue building and expanding innovative solutions.

4. Describe how the Local Area WDB and the partners identify, address, and provide new and innovative solutions to support the job growth and business expansions of the local workforce system while including Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility.

Rivers East Workforce Development staff coordinates employer outreach through a network of agency partners. The information is shared between the local K-12 Education System, Community College System, local, state and regional Economic Developers, NCWorks Career Center Managers, and the Workforce Development Board, which are all vital points of contact for employers to share needs associated with engaging talent for new and existing employment opportunities. The coordination of services is dependent upon which partner agency is notified of an employer need, and which partner is needed to help the employer satisfy the need. Once the point of contact is made other agency partners are engaged to deliver the needed services to help employers bring economic prosperity to the region. Extensive collaboration between economic development and workforce development is ongoing and aligns with the local area strategic plan to develop Business Advisory Councils in each county. Recent requirements issued by the Board of Education have mandated that each K-12 Career and Technical Education Director have an advisory board to include local area agencies and business leaders. This mandate has allowed for the proliferation of Business Advisory Councils throughout the east. Currently there are multiple advisory councils in the Rivers East Workforce Development Board local area. By utilizing a diverse network and tools, diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility are properly addressed.

The U.S. Departments of Commerce and Labor have jointly identified Recruitment and Hiring; Benefits; Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility; Empowerment and Representation; Job Security and Working Conditions; Organizational Culture; Pay; and Skills and Career Advancement as the eight key principles of a good job. Refer to Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 07-22 for details.

5. Describe the Local Area WDB's strategy for:
- a. incorporating job quality principles into ongoing workforce development activities, to assist with identifying and creating long-term partnerships with employers offering good jobs;
 - b. creating strategic, flexible career pathways to good jobs that respond to local labor market needs.

Rivers East and our NCWorks Career Center management team work collaboratively with our partners and economic developers to create relationships with the employers in the region. Through service on strategic teams aimed to address skills and interest gaps, local employer needs are at the forefront of discussion. We have built excellent relationships with the top employers in the region by hosting hiring events, involving them in career pathways initiatives, and taking new approaches to addressing their current and future workforce needs. In a few counties, this includes diving deep and working within a collaborative team to build plans for the current and 3–5-year anticipated needs. Special projects like that currently funded by Golden Leaf Foundation have strengthened relationships with

local advanced manufacturing companies by involving them in Rivers East Academy teacher externships, highlighting their company and positions on printed materials, video tours of their plant, and social media. In addition, the teachers and employers have partnered to build lesson plans and potential projects to take back to the classroom. Those efforts, along with the employability skills being integrated through Skills USA partnership will connect to all communities across the region. Plans are in place to seek additional fund sources to continue this work and extend the teacher externship opportunity on a smaller scale to Title II/adult literacy teachers from at least one community college. This opportunity will serve as a model to expand to the other three community colleges' adult literacy programs. .

Our Career Pathways Facilitator is also working hand in hand with the new EDA BBB Grant and NCA&T on Clean Energy initiatives recently funded and how that impacts our region and future workforce.

6. Describe how the Local Area WDB ensures that individuals from underserved and underrepresented communities have equitable access to the services of the workforce system and the jobs created in the economic growth spurred by federal investments.

Rivers East WDB serves a truly diverse region. We strive to ensure that all our counties receive equitable service, paying special attention to the smallest and most underserved areas. We have Center locations in every county, providing services in person at minimum 1-2 days a week, in addition to providing services by text and phone every weekday. Each county has assigned Career Advisors providing employment and training services. This allows residents access to resources close to home for those who do not have reliable transportation. We work to serve the economically disadvantaged individuals, as they often have less resources and are more likely to have additional barriers to employment, which requires additional assistance. By maintaining physical locations in each county and partnering with community and faith-based organizations in their communities, better access to services is maintained for those who are underserved and underrepresented. .

7. Describe how the Local Area WDB is engaged in work-based learning projects with local employers.

Rivers East Workforce Development Board works through the NCWorks Career Centers and service providers to coordinate work-based learning with local area employers. These efforts are ongoing throughout the region and continue to be a supply source to employers of all sizes. The coordination and promotion of these opportunities are often extended through various partner agencies including economic development, Chamber of Commerce, Community College, HR groups and others. The addition of the ARPA Work Based Learning funds has increased our outreach and exposure of services to our small business population. Incumbent Worker Grant application numbers have increased, as well as paid work experience and on-the-job training opportunities. We understand the value and importance of work based learning for both of our customers- job seekers and employers- in ensuring economic growth for our region.

8. Briefly describe 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 employers, and workers and jobseekers. [WIOA Section 108(b)(6)(A)]

With a smaller board who receives less funding, attracting eligible service providers is problematic. While we continue to work to expand our bidders list, we are also working with our current providers. Over the past several years, we have worked to provide more technical assistance to our providers. We have implemented monthly meetings with our services providers to discuss issues and provide and receive feedback. We have created a technical assistance guide for the career advisors, implemented scheduled quarterly training, held webinars, added all policy and forms to our website for easy access, and are currently working to update policy and procedure to simplify our processes.

V. NCWorks Career Centers

North Carolina's workforce system includes multiple agencies, programs, and funders. Collaboration, policy alignment, systemic communication, integration, and modernization of the workforce system will ensure a strong and healthy workforce system that can adapt to a changing economy.

For any documents that are missing or are unnecessary based on the response provided, please state, "No document is loaded and/or it will be loaded by a specific date".

1. Identify PY 2024 NCWorks Career Center location(s) including Comprehensive and Affiliate Sites; On-site partners; how NCWorks Career Center operator(s) are designated; provider(s) of WIOA career services and method of selection; whether youth service provider is on-site and, if so, youth services offered. Use the PY 2024 NCWorks Career Center Chart. [WIOA Section 121(b)(1)(A) and (b)(1)(B)]

- Name document: Local Area Name PY 2024 NCWorks Career Centers.

2. Provide the name(s) of the current One-Stop provider(s), date, and process for when the competitive procurement of the One-Stop Operator(s) occurred. Include the expected length of the contract(s) (one to four years and the current year the contract is (e.g., two of three years). [WIOA Section 108(b)(16)]

The current One Stop Provider, Two Hawk Workforce Services was procured and selected through an RFP process in May 2023. The contract was for a 2 year period beginning July 1, 2023 with an option to review yearly based on performance. At the March 13, 2024 WDB Meeting, the Board voted to continue the current One-Stop Operator for an additional year (July 1, 2024-June 30, 2025)

3. Provide a brief description of how Career and Training Services are provided. [WIOA Section 121(e), 134(c)]

- Provide a description of how Career and Training services are provided to adults.
 - Provide a description of how Career and Training services are provided to dislocated workers.
 - Provide a description of how Career and Training services are provided to youth.
- a. Rivers East WDB provides all services in Center using the Integrated Service Delivery model. Using an integrated staffing approach, all career services including outreach, intake, assessment(s), job search activities, workforce preparation, career counseling and provision of labor market and career pathways

information are provided by all staff.

All staff are able to pre-screen for Title I eligibility (Adult, DW and Youth) for those interested or in need of classroom or on-the-job training opportunities, or additional assistance overcoming barriers to reach their employment goal.

For Adult , if the customer elects to move into training services, an orientation session is held in a group or individual session to provide additional information on services available. Title I staff provide additional individualized assessments to determine eligibility and suitability to receive additional services. Customers are provided career counseling and development of an individual employment plan to determine the best next steps toward their future.

- b. Rivers East WDB provides all services in Center using the Integrated Service Delivery model. Using an integrated staffing approach, all career services including outreach, intake, assessment(s), job search activities, workforce preparation, career counseling and provision of labor market and career pathways information are provided by all staff.

All staff are able to pre-screen for Title I eligibility (Adult, DW and Youth) for those interested or in need of classroom or on-the-job training opportunities, or additional assistance overcoming barriers to reach their employment goal.

Like for Adults, Dislocated Workers who elect to move into training services, an orientation session is held in a group or individual session to provide additional information on services available. Title I staff provide additional individualized assessments to determine eligibility and suitability to receive additional services. Customers are provided career counseling and development of an individual employment plan to determine the best next steps toward their future.

- c. For Youth, an orientation session is held in a group or individual session to provide additional information on services available. NextGen staff provide additional individualized assessments to determine eligibility and suitability to receive additional services. Youth are provided career counseling and development of an individual service strategy to overcome any identified barriers and determine their best next steps toward their future and goal attainment.

4. Describe how Local Area WDBs determine the need for enrollment in Training Services.

NCWorks Career Center staff performs WIOA eligibility verification for all customers interested in or referred to training services. An interview, evaluation or assessment and career planning determines the appropriate course of training for each customer. Through this process staff determines if the customer:

- Is unlikely to obtain or retain employment, that leads to economic self-sufficiency or wage comparable to or higher than wages from previous employment through career services alone;
- Is in need of training services to obtain or retain employment that leads to economic self-sufficiency or wages comparable to or higher than wages from previous employment through career services alone, and
- Has the skills and qualifications to successfully participate in the selected program of training services.

Training services are provided either through an Individual Training Account (ITA) or through a training contract. Training services are linked to in-demand employment opportunities in the local area or planning region or in a geographic area in which the adult or dislocated worker is willing to commute or relocate. A list of training services and eligible training providers is supplied to maximize customer choice, identify in-demand occupations, inform customers of relevant training provider performance, and coordinate to the greatest extent possible with other sources of assistance.

5. Describe how follow-up services are provided through the NCWorks Career Centers. [WIOA Section 134(c)(2)(xiii)]

Follow-up services will be provided, as appropriate, for participants in adult or dislocated worker activities who are placed in unsubsidized employment for a minimum of 12 months after the first day of employment. NCWorks Career Center staff will provide counseling regarding the workplace and labor exchange services, including job search and placement assistance along with other Career Services as appropriate. Follow-up is provided in a variety of methods including by phone, text, e-mail or in person.

6. Describe how:

- a. New NCWorks Career Center staff (DWS, service providers, and partner staff) are trained in the integrated service delivery system model (include a training timeline).
- b. How long after the initial start date does staff have full access to NCWorks.gov?
- c. The staff development activities reinforce and improve the initial training efforts.
- d. Describe the specific training that staff receive around diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility.

a. NCWorks Career Center staff in each of our centers are trained according to the onboarding checklist established by the training entity prior to being granted full access to the NCWorks system. The One Stop Operator coordinates and provides Center operations training, including ISD processes. Title I staff receive additional training from the respective Program Specialist (Youth or Adult/DW). Title III staff receive training from the DWS Regional Analyst. All training is provided as soon as possible after hiring, normally within the first one to two weeks. Welcome to Workforce training is also included as part of the onboarding process, and is self paced.

b. Typically staff receive full access to NCWorks.gov once they have completed training with their Program Specialist, DWS Center Manager or the Regional Analyst and have demonstrated adequate understanding of the system. This usually occurs within the first week.

c. In addition, Local Area staff and the DWS Regional Analyst offer periodic on-site training, group training, and disseminate updated procedures via e-mail. Additional training is provided as needed utilizing the NCWorks Training Center to continuously improve their knowledge. In Rivers East, all Centers close at noon on the 2nd Thursday once each quarter for Center Staff Training which is held collaboratively, generally regionwide. It can also be provided by Center or via webinar if needed.

d. Diversity and Inclusion/EO training is being provided online through the Training Center, followed by quarterly facilitated discussions that occur at least quarterly. This training, along with those listed above, are held on an on-going basis to keep all staff current.

7. Briefly explain coordination with the Trade Adjustment Act (TAA) to maximize resources and prevent duplicative services. Please include specific details on how case managers for WIOA and TAA programs coordinate to provide seamless services to eligible participants.

While in the Rivers East WDB area, there is currently no TAA activity, the programs have a history of working together to mutually assist the participant, maximize resources and prevent duplication. Through dual enrollment, the participants can receive their weekly benefit from TAA, along with receiving assistance with tuition, books, fees, supplies, transportation, child care and other supportive services. Ultimately, the two programs work together to determine which combination of services best fits the individual's needs and which program can provide the maximum benefit to the participant.

8. Briefly describe how the NCWorks Career Center serves persons with disabilities.

All of the Centers in the region are programmatically and physically accessible to persons with disabilities. Center staff have also received Unconscious Bias training as well as Vocational Rehabilitation- Employment and Independence for people with Disabilities (EIPD) - Employment and Independence for people with Disabilities (EIPD) 's Windmills Training. In addition, the Board has purchased multiple assistive technology tools for each center and staff received training. Each Center is equipped with an adjustable height desk, armed desk chair, roller mouse, e-z see keyboard, pocket talker, smart pen, pen reader, and pen friend, as recommended by the NCDHHS Assistive Technology Center.

9. Briefly describe the integrated service delivery strategy for serving employers and how the Local Area WDB staff and staff within the NCWorks Career Center coordinate outreach strategies and services to maximize resources and prevent duplicative services.

NCWorks Center staff and Rivers East WDB staff collaborate to coordinate outreach to local employers. All services are recorded in NCWorks Online, so staff are easily able to reference last contact date and related case notes. A shared database has been created in the Pitt County Center to ensure all outreach is documented properly to maximize resources and prevent duplication of services. Consistent communication is key.

10. Describe Local Area WDB strategies and services that will be used to strengthen linkages between Local Area WDBs and the NCWorks Career Center system and unemployment insurance programs. [WIOA Section 108(b)(4)(A)(iv)]

In Rivers East, the Career Advisors in each of our centers serve all customers and provide Wagner-Peyser, Adult, and Dislocated Worker services, and provides limited information regarding unemployment insurance. All staff are trained to conduct RESEA services. The DWS Regional Analyst offers periodic on-site training, group training, and disseminate updated procedures via e-mail concerning UI. The Analyst regularly attends Center Manager meetings, shares updates and addresses any questions/issues.

11. Attach a flowchart for services – flowchart must include:

- a. initial one-on-one interviews with customers,
- b. skills assessments, and
- c. determination of the need for further services.

- Name document: *Local Area WDB Name Services Flowchart 2024.*

12. Attach the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Local Area WDB and partners concerning operation of the NCWorks Career Center system. [WIOA Section 121(c)(1)(2)(A)]

- Name document: *Local Area WDB Name NCWorks Career Center MOU.*

13. Describe the Local Area WDB’s method for providing oversight to include:

- a. the review process and the frequency of review for the NCWorks Career Center system in the Local Area, including processes for ensuring quality customer service; and
- b. the roles and any resource contributions of the NCWorks Career Center partners. [WIOA Section 121(a)(3)] [WIOA Section 108(b)(6)(D)]

The Rivers East WDB has a standing NCWorks Committee which oversees the operations of the NCWorks Career Centers in the region. Performance goals are set at the beginning of each program year and are tracked with monthly reports going to the Center Managers and bi-monthly reports going to the NCWorks Committee and full board. In addition, the NCWorks Committee has established a monitoring tool and in person reviews of the Centers are reviewed at least once a year, and includes board staff and members.

A “Customer Service Feedback Initiative” was developed in November 2020, tested in December and began full use in January 2021. This is a text based system where a customer can text in a letter grade to rate the services they received. Immediately a link is shared for them to complete a short survey as well. After the first successful quarter, we had only received A & B letter grades. If we were to receive a D or F, the customer would be contacted by the Center Manager to address the issue or concern and work with the customer to resolve it.

The MOU and Resource Sharing Agreement outlines the required monetary contributions of Center partners, as required by law. Outside of that, the Board enters into agreement with other partners on a case by case basis.

14. Describe how the Local Area WDB facilitates access to services provided through the NCWorks Career Center delivery system, including in remote areas, through the use of technology and through other means. [WIOA Section 108(b)(6)(B)]

The NCWorks Career Centers in the Rivers East WDB area use Text Request daily. All outreach materials include the text number to receive services by county. Keywords have been created for various services. This system is so effective we have had to upgrade our level several times to keep up with demand. We also have Job Hub text number for our NCWorks Center where local job fair and hiring event information is pushed out to those who have subscribed.

In addition, a QR code is being added to all outreach materials to collect customer information at events or in partner locations for individual follow up by phone, email or text.

In the past, we have partnered with local libraries and trained staff on NCWorks Online usage, as well as several community-based organizations.

15. Describe how NCWorks Career Centers are using virtual technology to provide integrated, technology-enabled intake and case management information systems for programs carried out under WIOA including youth programs, and programs carried out by NCWorks Career Center partners. What software are NCWorks Career Centers using? [WIOA Section 108 (b)(21)]

Due to COVID, multiple new technologies were integrated into daily Center functions, all of which remain in use now due to customer demand.. Text Request is being used for information and program inquiry, appointment scheduling, access to local events such as job fairs and specific training opportunities, as well as customer service feedback. In addition, customers may sign up for Job Hub and receive texts concerning upcoming events in their area. Zoom webinar is being used to promote employment opportunities and community resource offerings. Outreach material includes a text number and a QR code will be added for requesting more information and signing up for contact from a career advisor.

16. Describe how entities within the NCWorks Career Center system, including Career Center operators and partners, will comply with Section 188, if applicable, and 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. [WIOA Section 108(b)(6)(C)]

All of the Centers in the region are programmatically and physically accessible to persons with disabilities. Each Center is reviewed by the VR Engineer at the time of Center Certification to ensure physical accessibility to each Center. In addition, the Board has purchased multiple assistive technology tools for each center and staff received training. Each Center is equipped with an adjustable height desk, armed desk chair, roller mouse, e-z see keyboard, pocket talker, smart pen, pen reader, and pen friend, as recommended by the NCDHHS Assistive Technology Center.

VI. Employer Services

1. Please describe the efforts of the Local Area WDB staff, Employer services staff and Career Center staff have made to deliver business services on a regional basis in the following areas:
 - a. Utilizing regional and local economic data to inform priorities [WIOA Section 108 (b)(1)(A)(i)(ii) and (B)].
 - b. Collaborating with employer-facing partners such as Agricultural Services, Foreign Labor and Veteran Services to meet employer needs and jobseeker recruitment efforts.
 - c. Providing local and regional Rapid Response services, including identifying struggling and at-risk businesses and providing services to help avert layoffs. [WIOA Section 108 (b)(8)]
 - d. Coordinating with DWS TAA and Business Services staff to provide Rapid Response assistance and appropriate career and training services to workers for whom a petition has been filed. (20 CFR 618.816)
 - e. Including Historically Underutilized Businesses (OG 20-2021)

a. The priority of the team providing Business Services is to assist employers in a coordinated process to recruit, train, and retain a skilled workforce. We utilize local labor market information from LEAD and Lightcase as well as feedback from local business to inform our priorities. Local economic development entities also provide valuable information on the needs of existing business, areas of potential growth and opportunities that may be coming to the area. Those priorities align with the NENC Career Pathways work to include targeted sectors such as healthcare, advanced manufacturing, agribusiness and biotechnology and business support services such as transportation, logistics and IT.

b. The goal of NCWorks is to help employers connect with job seekers. The key is engaging employers in the use of the Workforce Development Board and NCWorks Career Center services. This requires collaboration with multiple programs and services including Agricultural Services, Foreign Labor and Veteran programs. All of these programs point back to NCWorks and encourage employers to use NCWorks online to post job orders and either connect employers with the appropriate NCWorks Career Center staff capable of providing the needed services and/or include referrals to appropriate partner agencies. Business services must be provided in an interated and collaborative manner to stay relelvant to the needs of business. The goal of the Integrated Service Delivery System - Business Services is to offer seamless business services by providing the best-in-class customer service to our internal and external customers.

c. Local rapid response services are coordinated by the Director and rely on NCWorks Center staff and partner agencies such as DES, Community College, Vocational Rehabilitation- Employment and Independence for people with Disabilities (EIPD) - Employment and Independence for people with Disabilities (EIPD) , and others to meet the needs of the displaced workers. This usually includes in person rapid response employee sessions held on-site or at a mutually agreed upon location to provide informaiton to help the employees take the next positive step into their future. These services are triggered by a WARN notice, local intel collected from local partners, or direct contact with the company. Layoff aversion services are offered, if relevant.

d. While our region has experienced several business closures in recent years, none of those quailified under TAA. However, if they did in the future, the TAA unit would be included in the planned events and local staff would receive needed training.

e. Utilizing the current ARPA Small Business Work Based Learning Grant has connected us with more historically underutilized businesses this year. Generally these are smaller businesses who we connect to through our partnerships with Chambers, Small Business Centers, or our SBTDC partners.

2. Please describe employer-focused partnership efforts in the areas of education and training and economic development in the following areas:

- a. Enhancing the use of On-the-Job Training (OJT), Incumbent Worker Training (IWT), apprenticeships, and other work-based learning opportunities to support the regional economy and individuals' career advancement.
- b. Coordinating and promoting entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services. [WIOA Section 108 (b)(5)]
- c. Participating in regional economic strategic planning and economic development recruitment, retention and expansions with employers, education partners and economic developers. [WIOA Section 108 (b)(4)(A)(iii)].

Rivers East WDB staff partners with multiple entities to provide collaborative plans and solutions to local employer needs. This includes regional and local efforts to match employers with the right services at the right time. We provide materials and training to our local partners on our programs and services in order to help us connect at the right time .

a. With the addition of a Business Services Specialist to the team this year, work based learning numbers have shown significant improvement. With focused outreach efforts and word of mouth, the use of OJT, IWT and WEX have all increased, especially small companies with less than 100 employees. Skills progression is the primary purpose. In many cases, a plan is built for the employer that includes the use of WEX as a long term interview at no cost to the employer. If the employer likes the individual and they are a good fit, the individual will move to an OJT contract for additional training and support to the employer for a portion of the wage. Once the new employee is fully trained and onboard the required time, Incumbent Worker training dollars can be used to either upskill the newer employee or to increase the skills of other employees for promotion, opening up the pipeline for advancement of lower level employees or entry level positions.

b. Through the ARPA Work Based Learning Grant, the Board is focusing more on small business development and training. This is in partnership with the Community College Small Business Centers, ECU Crisp Small Business Center and the SBTDC to coordinate and promote entrepreneurship. Also included in the grant is the provision of IceHouse training in coordination with NCIDEA, which helps new and potential entrepreneurs build and strengthen their business.

c. The Mid-East Commission, our administrative entity, leads the effort to update the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy as required by EDA and Board staff along with Board members serve on the update committees along with local economic developers, partner agencies, and local employers. As projects develop that include job creation, information is shared, and a joint plan is developed to serve the employer utilizing the many tools in our collaborative toolbox.

VII. Performance

U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) has the following WIOA Performance Indicators:

- Employment Rate – 2nd Quarter After Exit
- Employment Rate – 4th Quarter After Exit
- Median Earnings – 2nd Quarter After Exit
- Credential Attainment Rate
- Measurable Skill Gains
- Effectiveness in Serving Employers (system-wide measure, not program specific)

1. Examine the Local Area WDB's current Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth performance on the Federal Primary Indicators of Performance for PY 2022-2023 and prior Program Years. (Reports available via FutureWorks BI.) What are some factors that have impacted performance levels both positively and negatively in the current program year?
 - a. Provide at least two examples of positive factors and two examples of negative factors with an explanation of each. Some examples to consider include:
 - unemployment rate
 - factory closures/openings
 - economic development recruitment
 - retention and expansion efforts
 - regional industry growth priorities
 - weather events and natural disasters that may have impacted the area
 - internal operational factors
 - b. Are there any factors that you anticipate will impact your performance during the upcoming program year(s) either positively or negatively?

The primary factors that impact local performance include the unemployment rate, community college attendance rate, number of new and expanding businesses, number of layoffs, and barriers to employment. On a positive note, the unemployment rate is lower than prior years which is positive for our citizens and improves the employment rate. With more individuals employed and an increase the amount of earnings with more full time employment and a higher entry level wage rate, the median earnings has increased. As a negative, it also creates a lower number of individuals available needing service and often those who remain are the harder to serve with multiple barriers to employment. This also means less individuals seeking training, or seeking shorter term training. This, along with employers hiring students before they can complete training has caused a drop in the credential attainment rate of individuals attending and completing training. While there may be measurable skill gain increases, and increases in employment rates, credential rates have suffered. So while we met or exceeded all of our performance measures for PY22, we see the potential positive factor that more individuals are entering the workforce and how it also could be a negative impact of less skilled workers with credentials and certifications available in the region, which could impact

future economic development projects.. With new and expanding businesses, the opportunity for local employment increases, however, the wages offered are not always at or above the median wage required to meet performance. While we focus on promoting "good jobs" the need is great across the board from local employers, for unskilled to highly skilled labor. Our region was very fortunate and saw only the one major layoff in the past year, with a WARN notice being issued. With the new focus on small businesses, we see the struggle to find workers even with substantial pay rate increases. While for some skilled positions a skill gap remains in finding qualified workers, it seems the issue now can be best described as a "will gap"- as many are not willing to return to the workforce post COVID for various reasons.

b. With local unemployment numbers being lower than many areas, the candidate pool available for employment and training remains limited, our labor force participation rate has dropped and often this segment of the workforce will have more barriers to achieve sustainable employment. Like the community colleges, we have seen fewer participants expressing interest in long term or curriculum training, even with all of the additional grants and scholarship funds available. Instead those interested in making career changes are focused on short term skill employment that results in more sustainable and in demand jobs, such as truck driving. Suitability, completion of the credential, and related employment rates seem to be lower for this training overall, with higher than usual cost. Without diversifying our enrollments quickly, we have concerns as to how this will impact our performance for next PY.

2. What strategies and methods are in place to meet or exceed performance goals? Include information about tracking performance, ensuring accountability of positive performance outcomes, and training.

Consider including the following information:

- Who is responsible for tracking performance?
- Which reporting resources are used?
- Is FutureWorks BI employed? If so, how, and how often?
- How often is training provided to staff?

Consistent program oversight is a primary duty of the Rivers East Program Specialist, along with the WDB Director. The ability to interpret indicators to monitor the progress of the WIOA programs based on performance criteria and attainment of set goals is indicative of the regions past and future performance goals. Monthly desk monitoring is performed on program performance and contractor monthly reimbursement forms including line item budget tracking of training expenditure to ensure the appropriate percentage of expenditures.

Reports are run in NCWorks and distributed to operators to monitor performance. The Super User assists in recording/correcting data as applicable. Deficiencies and nonattainment of LA goals are addressed with the WDB and operator. Areas of performance are addressed, and training is provided at quarterly training sessions. Progress on indicators is also monitored through Futureworks.

Technical assistance is provided on a one-on-one basis in support of attainment of performance measures is also provided in areas such as: data entry and accurate recording of services, improvement in assessment and suitability screening, timely follow up, assistance with overcoming barriers, maintaining contact, career counseling, reporting of all supplemental data in NCWorks, increased coordination of services with other

entities, and employability skills training.

It is with a keen eye on the details and business instincts that the Workforce Development Board will work diligently to ensure that all federal and state performance outcomes are met.

3. Discuss what corrective action steps are in place if, at any point during the program year, the Local Area WDB is not on track to meet or exceed yearly performance indicator goals.

This question is intended to be hypothetical and is seeking what plan the Local Area WDB has in place to address failing performance, if it were to occur. Answers should address how the Local Area WDB:

- monitors performance,
- communicates with staff,
- makes changes to Local Area WDB performance and training strategies based on reporting data,
- and utilizes follow-up accountability measures.

The Rivers East WDB staff monitors performance at least monthly and communicates results to both the service provider staff and the board via email. NCWorks Reports are utilized monthly to identify failure to properly enter/key activities, services, credentials and MSG's and communicated to staff. FutureWorks data is also shared with the Board when updates are available. Discussions are held in meetings with service providers monthly and with training held with direct service staff at least quarterly concerning performance. The Board is currently reviewing policy and procedure to address potential deficiencies.

4. How is performance information shared throughout the hierarchy of staff? Please detail how the Local Area WDB addresses performance data in its relationship with its service provider(s) and how case managers are using performance data to drive Local Area WDB performance.

Consider including the following information:

- a. How is performance tracked in your organization?
- b. How is performance information communicated with staff?
- c. How are staff/contractors held accountable?
- d. How is training provided in your organization?

a. Performance is tracked using NCWorks reports and Future Works. Consistent program oversight is a primary duty of the Rivers East Program Specialist, along with the WDB Director. The ability to interpret indicators to monitor the progress of the WIOA programs based on performance criteria and attainment of set goals is indicative of the regions past and future performance goals. Monthly desk monitoring is performed on program performance and contractor monthly reimbursement forms including line-item budget tracking of training expenditure to ensure the appropriate percentage of expenditures.

b. WDB staff provide performance information to Center management (including service provider management) at least monthly. Such information is expected to be shared with the Career Advisors and

deficiencies discussed and addressed. Staff receive additional training on performance measures and the impact each staff and customer has on attaining overall performance. Specific contractor performance data is shared with their local management team and directly with local career advisors.

c. Performance data and enrollment reports are updated and shared with each Committee, the Board, and contractor at least monthly. This data is also shared with service provider management and local Career Advisors to drive actions and corrections to increase the performance. An example would be credential rates. If a contractor is not currently meeting their credential rate, board staff work closely with the contractor to follow up and identify credentials received but not properly recorded.

d. Training is provided one-on-one and through scheduled quarterly training sessions. Technical assistance is provided on a one-on-one basis in support of attainment of performance measures is also provided in areas such as: data entry and accurate recording of services, improvement in assessment and suitability screening, timely follow up, assistance with overcoming barriers, maintaining contact, career counseling, reporting of all supplemental data in NCWorks, increased coordination of services with other entities, and employability skills training.

5. Discuss the factors that contribute to the Local Area WDB’s credential attainment indicator.

- a. What are the challenges that the Local Area WDB faces in achieving its credential attainment goal?
- b. What are some of the strategies that contribute to the Local Area WDB’s success in achieving its credential attainment goal?
- c. How do case managers make use of NCCareers.org and the NC Workforce Credentials list?

- a. The challenges in reaching credential attainment goals are a combination of things. The offerings by the community college that result in credentials varies across the region. Often, the focus is on completion of the course without a true credential as a result. In addition, the completion of the course does not guarantee the attainment of a credential.
- b. One strategy we implemented was for the NA I Course, as an example. For NA I courses, we had the curriculum profiled by an ACT profiler which found that those with a Silver CRC were more likely to pass the course and the state exam. Therefore, we now require a Silver CRC as a pre-requisite (regardless of the college’s requirement) in order for us to support the training. With the issues we are experience with truck driving and attainment of the actual CDL license, we are considering implementing an additional assessment prior to enrollment into that training as well.
- c. NCCareers.org is required as part of the enrollment process in our region to ensure customers are seeking training assistance in an area that will provide them a career, not just a job. The NCWorkforce Credentials list is utilized to ensure the credential being sought is viable and results in an industry recognized credential that is included in performance.

6. When selecting an eligible training provider from the State Eligible Training Provider List to certify for local use, what is the review process the Local Area WDB uses to make this decision? How does the Local Area WDB ensure informed customer choice in the selection of training providers? In other words, how are customers advised that they have options in choosing their provider? [WIOA Section 108(b)(19)]

Rivers East’s goal is to offer a wide variety of training programs and occupational choices that are in demand and align with our established career pathways. Current programs, along with any additional local area approved programs, are evaluated based on demonstrated performance regarding credentialing/licensure rates and employment rates along with the capacity to provide comprehensive training at a reasonable cost. The Super User and the Director review all new providers or programs for relevance to the local labor market before approval. Providers are reviewed every two years on program outcomes including overall program completion rate, WIOA completion rate, and training completers and noncompleters that enter employment. This list of programs by provider is shared with and approved by the WDB.

A full list of eligible providers and programs is available in each Center and NCWorks Online. The list is reviewed with any customer who expresses a need and/or interest in training. Rivers East most often utilizes the local community college and university system, along with private providers for classroom training. Local area staff will continue to ensure many competent providers are available to maximize customer choice. A training research worksheet is often provided to the customer for them to research all available option to ensure they choose the one that is the best fit for them.

7. Indicate whether the Local Area WDB has additional requirements for training providers above and beyond those requirements stated in the State ETPL policy. Does the Local Area WDB make use of USDOL’s trainingproviderresults.gov website in its evaluation of which training providers to certify for local area use? If so, how?

No- Rivers East follows the state ETPL policy.

No- Rivers East evaluates training providers based on performance, cost and local labor market information.

- Name Document: Local Area WDB Name ETPL Policy.

VIII. Equal Opportunity

1. Describe processes to ensure individuals are not discriminated against based on age, disability, sex, race, color, or national origin. [WIOA Section 188]

Rivers East WDB EO Officer provides yearly training to all staff (Center and Board) on all EO policies. In addition, Center staff have participated in DEI online training and facilitated discussion. Forms are reviewed each year and new signature obtained.

2. Attach the Local Area WDB’s current Equal Opportunity (EO) Complaint Grievance Procedure to address EO requirements [29 CFR 38.35].

- Name document: *Local Area WDB Name EO Complaint Grievance Procedure*.

3. Describe the methods used to ensure local Equal Opportunity procedures are updated.

The EO officer reviews and updates the policy yearly and remains abreast of policy updates through review of federal and state provided guidance.

IX. Adult and Dislocated Worker Services

1. Provide an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of existing Adult and Dislocated Worker education and training services.

- a. Include how services are provided and the capacity to address the identified education and skill needs of the workforce and the employment needs of employers.
- b. Describe plans to address any weaknesses identified. [WIOA Section 108(b)(1)(D)]

A. Strengths-

- a. Occupational Skills Training (ITAs) – ITA services are delivered through the NCWorks Career Center WIOA service providers for short and long term trainings. The course offerings vary across the region, but generally align to our established career pathways and local labor market data. .
- b. Work Based Learning (OJT, WEX, Incumbent Worker and Apprenticeship) – A portion of the local area’s county budgets is allocated for paid Work Experience and On-the-Job Training contracts. In addition, the Board sets aside funding each year for Incumbent Worker Training. We are currently working on better incorporating Apprenticeship into this model. Work based learning offers an “earn and learn” option for many customers who are not interested in classroom training. It is most often a win-win for the job seeker and employer.

B. Weaknesses

- a. Occupational Skills Training varies across the region. While there seem to be many resources for tuition and fees assistance, our customers are often also seeking supportive services funds. Transportation is the largest barrier, along with other supportive services which weigh heavily on success. In addition, with more private providers being added, the cost is high for the rate of return.
- b. Work Based Learning is increasing across the region. More work is needed on integrating with apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship to better coordinate services and braid available funding.

2. Provide a description and assessment of the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the local area. [WIOA Section 108(b)(7)]

There is a multitude of employment and training opportunities in the local area, most of which are directly aligned to in demand occupations. The NENC career pathways serves as a framework and includes most offerings. Our targets remain on careers related to healthcare, advanced manufacturing, agriscience and biotechnology and business support services. As always, there are other career paths available that are not supported by the WDB due to low demand, low wages, poor past performance or those that lead to self-employment. With the addition of many hybrid and virtual training options, the availability has expanded over the last few years. With additional scholarships and funding options, community college enrollment across region has seen an overall increase.

3. Provide the date and process for the competitive procurement of the Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs that ensures an arm’s-length relationship between the Local Area WDB and service delivery. Include the expected length of the contract(s) (one to three years and the current year status of the contract (e.g., two of three years). Identify any service provider contract extensions. [WIOA Section 108(b)(16), CPS 04-2022]

An RFP was released on March 30, 2023 and was due April 30, 2023. At the May 10, 2023 WDB Meeting the Board voted to award the contract to Two Hawk Workforce Services beginning July 1, 2023 for a two year period pending performance. At the March 13, 2024 meeting, the board reviewed the performance of this contract and agreed to extend the contract for the second year beginning July 1, 2024.

Note: While Final Regulations Section 679.410 (b) and (c) provide exceptions to the competitive procurement process, Local Area WDBs must have an arm’s-length relationship to the delivery of services.

4. Attach the Local Area WDB’s Adult/Dislocated Worker Service Provider list effective July 1, 2024 using the PY 2024 Adult/Dislocated Worker Service Provider List provided.

- Name document: Local Area WDB Name PY 2024 Adult/Dislocated Worker Service Provider List.

5. Describe the Local Area WDB’s vision for serving the WIOA eligible Adults and Dislocated Workers to include (a) high level goals, (b) outreach strategies, (c) services delivery, and (d) expected outcomes.

The vision promoted by the Rivers East Workforce Development Board is holistic in scope and principal. The primary objective is to maximize the WIOA services offered to our customers. This is accomplished by utilizing a network of public and private entities to build collaborations and leveraging resources to meet the needs of our customers by establishing and maintaining a synergetic relationship between education, economic development, and workforce development. These relationships, along with those of our other partnering agencies, help extend the outreach of the WIOA programs and Career Center services provided into our local communities.

To improve integrated service delivery we must provide 21st century training for all front-line staff and partners that will imbue innovation and real-world tactics to effectively serve our customers. It is imperative to address our internal skill gaps by using proven career planning and business development procedures to gain the trust of those we serve. To achieve performance measures with integrated service delivery, a more

comprehensive and individualized level of service and coaching is required. It is a paradigm shift from referring every customer that enters the career center to an employer or to classroom training. A strong focus is placed on identified high-growth industry sectors within our region. Career Development training is a science that uses the aforementioned holistic approach to assisting our customers achieve their work and life goals. Furthermore, by training our workforce staff in the use of career development planning will demonstrate to our private sector customers that we are capable of helping them recruit, train, and retain a skilled workforce, and in turn increase performance outcomes.

The plan to provide more specialized training for the Integrated Service Delivery Staff will improve the odds of the desired outcomes as set forth in the WIOA performance measures. It will allow for innovative actions to build a destination where business and industry desire to build and expand.

6. Describe the Local Area WDB's method for ensuring that a sufficient number of adults receiving individualized career and training services in the Local Area are from one of the following priority of services categories: public assistance, low-income individuals and individuals who are basic skills deficient. [134(c)(3)(E), 3(24)]

Rivers East WDB has a Priority of Service policy to ensure priority to targeted groups, including low-income individuals. Any individual may receive career services, but only those qualified as low income will receive training services. The only exception to this is those who were enrolled under Finish Line Grant, which used basic adult eligibility. That percentage is tracked and reviewed at least quarterly to ensure compliance.

The NCWorks Center and our service providers have relationship and receive referrals from multiple partner agencies, such as DSS, Community College, K-12 schools, Community Based Organizations, non-profits and faith based organizations.

7. Describe follow-up services provided to Adults and Dislocated Workers. [WIOA Section 134(c)(2)(xiii)]

Follow-up services will be provided, as appropriate, for participants in adult or dislocated worker activities who are placed in unsubsidized employment for a minimum of 12 months after the first day of employment. NCWorks Career Center staff will provide counseling regarding the workplace and labor exchange services, including job search and placement assistance along with other Career Services as appropriate. Follow-up is provided in a variety of methods including by phone, text, e-mail or in person.

Per Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) 19-16 and Section 134(C)(2)(A), funds described shall be used to provide career services, which shall be available to individuals who are adults or dislocated workers through the one-stop delivery system and shall, at a minimum, include - (xiii) follow-up services, including counseling regarding the workplace, for participants in workforce investment activities authorized under this subtitle who are placed in unsubsidized employment, for not less than 12 months after the first day of the employment, as appropriate.

8. Please describe the process for monitoring the service provider(s) in the Local Area WDB. Include details such as how it is conducted, who is involved, and how often.

Formal programmatic and fiscal monitoring occurs once each year, normally near the mid-point of the program year. Each monitoring is completed using an established monitoring tool and includes a review of program management, relevant documentation, internal monitoring, administrative systems, and established policies and procedures.

Programmatic monitoring includes a review of a sample of participants (new, active and exits) in NCWorks Online to review eligibility, required documents, correct reporting of activity codes and case notes. The results of this online review are shared with the career advisor and their immediate supervisor during an in person visit. This monitoring is performed by the Board's Program Specialist.

Fiscal monitoring includes a review of required bonding, insurance policies, participant benefits, budgets, monthly expenditure reports, fiscal correspondence, staff payroll and travel, indirect, program income, profit and asset/property management. A sample of expenditures is pulled from the general ledger to match with documentation in NCWorks to ensure policies and procedures are being followed. This monitoring is performed by the Board's Compliance Manager.

In addition, beginning in PY20 a 100% review was added so all files with an associated payment are monitored each month to ensure eligibility is complete, and all activities are updated and correct. The contractor is provided a list of corrections needed and expenses are accrued until the next invoice or until all corrections are made.

X. Youth Services

USDOL provides funds to states who in turn provide local workforce areas resources to deliver a comprehensive array of youth services that focus on assisting out-of-school youth and in-school youth with one or more barriers to employment, prepare for post-secondary education and employment opportunities, attain educational and/or skills training credentials, and secure employment with career/promotional opportunities. USDOL and North Carolina's priorities are:

- *Out-of-School Youth (OSY) – A minimum of 75% of the Youth funds allocated to Local Area WDBs, except for the Local Area WDB expenditures for administration, must be used to provide services to OSY;*
- *Work Experience – Not less than 20% of Youth funds allocated to the Local Area WDB, except for the Local Area WDB expenditures for administration, must be used to provide paid and unpaid work experiences; and a*
- *Focus on Partnering – Co-enrollment encouraged where appropriate with Title II and IV.*

1. Provide a general overview of the local current total population (within five years) of the Title I WIOA eligible youth by Local Workforce Development Board area. Include the following general information:

In-School Youth Analysis

- a. Approximately, what number of the Youth are ages 14-21? 17
- b. Approximately, what percentage of these youth are low-income (eligible for WIOA In-school program)? 100%
- c. Approximately, what number of these Youth are in the current school dropout statistics? 0

Out-of-School Analysis

- a. Approximately what number of Youth ages 16-24 of the current total population (within five years) make up the population? 62
- b. Youth ages 16-24 represent what % of the population? 78%
 What are the general educational levels of this age group? High School diploma--30, high school equivalency--4, one year or more of post-secondary--1, high school drop out--27
- c. What is the general employment status of this age group? 25 are currently employed

Click here to enter text

**NC Division of Labor and Economic Analysis Division (LEAD) is a data resource.*

2. Based on the analysis in question 1, does the local Workforce Development Board plan to serve In-School Youth?

Yes, Rivers East WDB plans to continue to serve In-School Youth, not to exceed 25%.

3. Provide a description and assessment of the type and availability of youth workforce activities in the Local Area WDB, including activities for youth who are individuals with disabilities. Include identification of successful models of such youth workforce investment activities being used and/or planned. [WIOA Section 108 (b)(9)]

Youth Workforce Activity	Activities For Persons with Disabilities?	Brief Assessment/Model Used	Success Rating
Job Shadowing	Yes	Based on NCCareers.org assessment Includes use of VR headsets	Good
Paid Work Experience	Yes	Based on NCCareers.org and chosen pathway	Good
On-the-Job Training	Yes	Based on NCCareers.org and chosen pathway	Good

Industry Tours	Yes	Based on career interests	Good
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4. Describe how the Local Area WDB’s Young Adult (NextGen) Program design is unique to include:
- a. providing objective assessments;
 - b. supportive services needed; and
 - c. developmental needs of each participant, for the purpose of identifying appropriate services and career pathways for participants. [WIOA Section 129(c)(1)(A)]

An objective assessment is administered to obtain a thorough and in-depth assessment of the academic level, skill levels, and service needs of each participant at the time of enrollment into WIOA activities. Assessment is carefully planned and administered to collect specific, relevant information leading to an appropriate mix and sequence of services and interventions. Initial/entry assessment includes basic academic skills, work readiness skills, occupational skills, prior work experience, barriers to employment, family situation, occupational interests and aptitudes, financial resources and needs, supportive service needs, and developmental needs. This information is acquired through various means, including, but not limited to, standardized tests, structured interviews, behavioral observations, inventories, career guidance instruments, performance-based or competency-based assessment tools, and where the information is current and reliable, assessment results from another service provider (school or agency). Rivers East requires use of the Tests of Adult Basic Education (TABE) for basic skills testing (a Comprehensive Adult Assessment System (CASAS) is accepted with individuals co-enrolled in a Title II program that uses this assessment instead of TABE), and assessment tools for assessing career interests and aptitudes.

Assessment instruments, especially on-line tools, used to measure learning styles, life skills, etc. must be adequately researched by WIOA staff prior to use to determine that they are objective, and conform to widely accepted standards for validity and reliability. WIOA staff must have adequate training on the administration, scoring, and proper use of test results. Information collected from the assessment process serves as the basis for individualized service planning in order to achieve the educational and employment outcomes desired for each participant. Assessment is an ongoing process throughout participation in WIOA in order to track progress and to measure and record personal growth, skill goal attainment, and achievement of planned objectives for each participant.

Supportive services will be provided as needed to include: linkages to community services, assistance with books, fees, school supplies and items for postsecondary classes, assistance with transportation/travel funds, child care and dependent care, payment and fees for employment and training related applications, testing, clinical and certifications, assistance with uniforms or other appropriate work attire and work related tools, referrals to health care, housing and legal aid services, reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities and youth incentives. An assessment will be performed to identify the participant’s needs. Some supportive services will be provided through referrals and some with WIOA funds.

An Individual Employment Plan/Individual Service Strategy must be developed and updated as needed to provide a written, individualized plan of services and activities, including appropriate learning objectives and goals. The service strategy is based on the needs of the participant and is directly linked to one or more of the performance indicators. This is a plan of action to set goals which address the Youth’s educational goals, performance goals, learning objectives and provide preparation for unsubsidized employment. Goals,

objectives and services are linked to the participant's career pathway.

Comprehensive case management provides staff support and guidance to address needs and barriers, solve problems, and assist in attainment of the identified goals and objectives.

5. How does the Local Area WDB ensure the Individual Service Strategy (ISS) identifies appropriate services based on the objective assessment and is linked to youth performance indicators, career pathways, and program elements? [WIOA Section 129(c)(1)(B)] How does the provider ensure the ISS is unique to the individual?

Each ISS is created individually with each youth. It is an individualized plan that addresses all related barriers and provides the roadmap for the participant to reach their educational and employment goal. It should be a comprehensive, and include the individual steps to reach the end goal. This may include stackable credentials and career ladders as outlined in the career pathways. All supportive services that may be needed should be documented on the ISS and objective assessment, along with any of the program elements that apply. ISS's are reviewed by the Program Specialist for quality during monthly desktop reviews and are to be reviewed and updated jointly with the participant and Career Advisor at least every 90 days.

6. Describe the Local Area WDB's strategy to ensure Youth (NextGen) Program activities lead to a high school diploma or its equivalent or a recognized post-secondary credential and post-secondary education and training opportunities. [WIOA Section 129(c)(1)(C)]

The goal of the youth program is to assist the youth in attaining their educational and employment goals. A high school diploma or equivalent is a key component of ensuring their attainment of sustainable employment. Career Advisors often visit students at their local high school or community college location to verify and encourage attendance. In addition, recruitment events are often held in these locations for these targeted audiences.

To ensure individuals are active in attaining their educational goal, we define that they must be making satisfactory progress in their education component to be allowed to participate in work experience. While the ultimate experience is a combination of both components, we realize the paid work experience component is often needed as leverage to ensure the credential completion.

7. Describe how follow-up services will be provided for (NextGen) youth. [WIOA Section 134(c)(2)(xiii)]

- Follow-up services will include:
- Leadership development and supportive service activities;
 - Regular contact with a youth participant's employer, including assistance in addressing work-related problems that arise;
 - Assistance in securing better paying jobs, career development and further education;
 - Work-related peer support groups;
 - Adult mentoring; and

- Services necessary to ensure the success of a youth in employment and/or post-secondary education.

Follow-up services will be provided in person, by phone, email, text or by mail, as appropriate.

Note: All youth participants must receive some form of follow-up for a minimum duration of 12 months.

8. Where does the Local Area WDB plan to serve the young adults (NextGen): NCWorks Career Centers Specialized Centers, Services Provider Offices, or Hybrid situations? Explain if it is both NCWorks Career Centers and Provider Offices or some other option.

NextGen staff are housed in our NCWorks Career Centers across the region. In Bertie, Hertford, and Martin counties, the NCWorks Center is located on the college campus. Additionally, to provide flexibility and improve access for youth who have transportation barriers, other partners collaborate with NextGen providers to offer services at their sites, particularly Title II and adult literacy partners who may not have a Center located on campus.

9. Attach the Local Area WDB Youth Service Provider’s chart, effective July 1, 2024, using the PY 2024 Youth Service Provider List provided. Complete each column to include specifying where Youth Services are provided.

- Name the document: *PY 2024 Local Area WDB Name Youth Service Provider List.*

10. Provide the date and process for the competitive procurement of the Youth Programs that ensures an arm’s-length relationship between the Local Area WDB and service delivery. Include the expected length of the contract(s) (one to three years and the current year status of the contract (e.g., two of three years). Identify any service provider contract extensions. [WIOA Section 108(b)(16), CPS 04-2022]

An RFP was released on March 30, 2023 and was due April 30, 2023. At the May 10, 2023 WDB Meeting the Board voted to award the contract to Visionary Connections beginning July 1, 2023 for a two year period pending performance At the March 13, 2024 meeting, the board reviewed the performance of this contract and agreed to extend the contract for the second year beginning July 1, 2024.

USDOL granted North Carolina a waiver for Program Years 2022 and 2023, which reduced the minimum Title I Youth expenditure rate requirement for OSY from 75% to 50% and allowed the maximum expenditure rate for in-school youth (ISY) to be increased from 25% to up to 50%. NC is requesting the same waiver for Program Year 2024.

11. Provide the Local Area WDB’s approach to meeting the required 75% minimum (NextGen) youth expenditures on out-of-school youth and include special outreach efforts and highlight planned program design.

- a) State how the WDB will achieve the 75% OSY expenditure rate and describe the steps that will be taken to comply with the WDB's programmatic goals and outcomes.
- b) Describe why there is a need to serve additional ISY in the local area region and state how the WDB will achieve the 25% ISY expenditure rate.
- c) Describe how the local area region will be able to meet the demand for youth services by using the waiver.

[WIOA Section 129(a)(4)(A)] (CPS 09-2021, Change 1) (OG 07-2022, Change 1)

Programs must be designed to serve and expend 75% or more on out-of-school youth and up to 25% in-school youth. There is a minimum expenditure and enrollment level for out-of-school youth. Rivers East WDB did not request the waiver due to the significant number of out of school youth living in the region (estimated by Carolina Across 100 to be over 5000).

Outreach and recruitment must be held at locations and with agencies that serve out-of-school youth, such as, but not limited to community based organizations, community colleges, housing authorities, faith based, DSS, health department, and local juvenile justice or other defender services. Recruitment events are held at locations where out-of-school youth frequent. In addition, social media and technology tools are provided to allow potential participants to engage in services from wherever they may be.

12. How does the Local Area WDB ensure that the minimum of 20% of funds is spent on work experience and is the Local Area WDB expending the 20% minimum on work experience, to include an estimate of expenditures that will be paid wages to youth? If the Local Area WDB has not been meeting the minimum of 20% of funds, please explain additional measures to be taken this year. [WIOA Section 129(c)(4)] (CPS 09-2021, Change 1)

Rivers East requires at least 30% of all funds to be budgeted for work-based learning opportunities such as paid work experience and on-the-job training. Expenditures are monitored monthly and reports provided to the Committee and Board bi-monthly. To support placement in work-based learning opportunities, the provider's Business Services Representative works closely with the Career Advisor to track participants, their career goal and progress. When ready, they work together to secure appropriate work-based learning sites for the youth to get hands on experience in their desired field of work.

Rivers East WDB met the 20% minimum expenditure goal for PY22 funds. Additional projects such as Our State Our Work/Carolina Across 100 and the addition of a Business Services Specialist to the board staff has improved our enrollment and expenditure rate.

13. Does the Local Area WDB have a dedicated full-time Youth Business Services Representative (or similar title) at the Local Area WDB level or at the Provider level. If so, state at which level, how many representatives, and how this impacts the Youth Program Design?

No, Rivers East does not have a full-time Youth Business Services Representative as funds are not adequate at this time. If additional funding were to become available, we would certainly apply.

14. Does the Local Area WDB have special programs for young adults that are Justice-Involved or have a substance use disorder? If yes, please briefly describe them.

No, while we partner with other agencies and organizations who specialize in working with these barriers, we do not have special programs in place at this time for our region due to funding constraints.

15. Describe how the Local Area WDB partners, aligns, and leverages, as appropriate with:

- a. Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy Act program resources and policies.
- b. Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation- Employment and Independence for people with Disabilities (EIPD) - Employment and Independence for people with Disabilities (EIPD) program resources and policies.
- c. Integrates adult education with occupational education and training and workforce preparation, as Local Area WDB's and the creation of career pathways for youth. [USDOL TEGL 8-15]

The local Workforce Development Board meets at least yearly with the AEFLA staff from each community college to discuss outreach and recruitment. Many of the colleges have set aside time and/or space for Youth staff to meet with potential participants on campus. Additional plans are being made to further increase collaboration between Title II and Title I Youth programs, including a Rivers East Academy-type project with Title II teachers to give them opportunity to improve knowledge about local area employment and labor market to assist co-enrolled youth in attaining employment and training goals. Co-enrollment in Title I and Title II, occupational training, and other partner programs is encouraged.

Vocational Rehabilitation- Employment and Independence for people with Disabilities (EIPD) - Employment and Independence for people with Disabilities (EIPD) sends their Employment Specialist to several of our Centers once a week to be available to customers. In addition, staff make referrals to VR and they refer individuals to the Center and specific programs for assistance. One of our Local Area staff serves on the Project SEARCH committee which is a partnership between Pitt County Schools, RHA/VR, and Vidant Health. In addition, several VR staff members serve as resource members to the Board's Inclusion Committee.

All participants in the youth program have access to all 14 program elements. Those in adult education are also "tracked" by career pathway and often lessons are taught with the practical hands on technique. Project based learning and workforce preparation are essential, and all of these tracks align with the established Career Pathways.

16. Specify if the Local Area WDB plans to offer incentives for (NextGen) youth. If yes, attach the Youth Incentive Policy, which should include:

- a. criteria to be used to award incentives;
- b. type(s) of incentive awards to be made available;
- c. whether WIOA funds will be used; and
- d. the Local Area WDB's internal controls to safeguard cash/gift cards.

- Name document: Local Area WDB Name Youth Incentive Policy.

Note: Federal funds may not be spent on entertainment costs. Youth Incentive Policies should include: compliance with the Cost Principles in 2 CFR part 200; identify types of items that may be awarded (gift cards, plaques, certificates, checks); identify types of achievements/completion of activities (an inclusive list is required); practices for internal controls for safeguarding incentives, and provide a sample list of required documentation for reimbursement (diploma, evaluations).

17. If the Local Area WDB does not offer incentives for (NextGen) youth, please explain why.

N/A

18. Describe the local strategy to prepare the youth (NextGen) for unsubsidized employment, including with small employers, specifically those that include in-demand industry sectors and occupations of the local and/or regional labor markets. [WIOA Section 129(c)(1)(C)(v)]

To prepare youth for unsubsidized employment, a multitude of services may be needed. Work Readiness training is a base needed to ensure they have the “soft skills” to not only get the job, but keep the job. In addition, leadership development opportunities help them learn to communicate, problem solve and work within a team. To ensure youth are aware of in-demand industry sectors and occupations in the local labor market, career awareness and job shadowing may be utilized. With 4 completed pathways including career ladders, youth can take their “interest” from Traitify and connect it to the education needed to get the job they want.

Employer engagement serves as a centerpiece in the development of effective career pathways and work based learning opportunities for youth. Rapport must be established with local and regional employers to promote in-demand occupations and to build connections between work and learning. We must engage industry and coordinate work-related activities for program participants. The primary role of the Contracted Business Services Representative (BSR) is to engage employers and secure work based learning opportunities including, but not limited to, internships, job shadowing, work experience, on-the-job training, pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship along with unsubsidized job placements for program participants. In order to assist with these placements, Career Advisors meet with the BSR to provide case load review information on a monthly basis including each participant's name, anticipated career path, and current status.

19. Please complete the Youth Program Elements chart provided to demonstrate how the Local Area WDB ensures each of the 14 youth program elements is made available to youth participants. Be certain to complete both columns of the chart to demonstrate partnerships and potential use of shared funding. Please specify partners. [WIOA Section 129(c)(2)(A)]

- Name document: Local Area WDB Name Youth Program Elements Chart.

20. Does the Local Area WDB have a standing committee to provide information to assist with planning, operational, and other issues relating to the provision of services to youth? [WIOA Section 107(b)(4)(A)(ii)]

a. If no, describe how oversight to planning, operational, and other issues relating to the provision of services to youth will be provided.

N/A

b. If yes, please provide a response to the following

a) Provide the committee's purpose/vision.

The Youth/NEXTGEN committee provides information and assists with planning, operational and other issues relating to the provision of services to youth, which includes community-based organizations with a demonstrated record of success in serving eligible youth. Responsibilities include the following: development of portions of the local plan related to youth with co-design by youth and business leaders; recommendation of providers of youth activities to be competitively awarded contracts; coordination and oversight of youth activities in the area with input from youth; oversight of eligible providers of youth activities; establishment of linkages with educational agencies and other youth entities and leverage of non-WIOA resources; implementation of youth friendly and on time service interventions; establishment of rapid attachment to work for out of school youth with focus on retention and advancement to higher level jobs; focus on continuous improvement. This committee also coordinates with other school-to-work programs (Career Pathways) and develops strategies to impact the success of these programs and participates in coordinated analysis of efforts to comprehensively serve youth. The committee will designate a committee member(s) as liaison with other local school-to-work efforts.

b) Provide the youth committee's top three goals or objectives for PY 2024.

Strengthen and improve work-based learning to provide opportunities for career exploration including identifying in-demand careers based on local labor market information and NCCareers.org results.

Innovative program design and implementation including increasing cohort and group activities for work-readiness skills using GADJ and Skills USA, expand the use of the VR headsets, and creating more real-world exposure through planned events

Implement a system for continuous recruitment of youth to the program by expanding outreach and assisting the provider in developing a vibrant, dedicated outreach and recruitment plan.

c) Provide a list of youth committee members to include members' agency/organization, one of which must be a community-based organization with a demonstrated record of success in serving eligible youth. Provide the Committee's Chair information in the first block (*who must be a Local Area WDB member*).

- Name document: Local Area WDB Name Youth Committee Members [WIOA Section 107(b)(4)(A)(ii)]

c. Complete the following chart for the PY 2024 Youth Committee's planned meeting schedule to include dates, time, and location. (Expand form as needed or mark Not Applicable.)

Date	Time	Location (include address and room #)
9/11/24	4pm	Via Zoom
11/13/24	” ”	” ”
1/8/25	” ”	” ”
3/12/25	“ “	“ “
5/14/25	“ “	“ “

XI. Local Area WDB Innovations

1. List all additional funding received by the Local Area WDB (for example, to include but not limited to, special grants, NC Job Ready Workforce Investment Grants, Business Services funds, National Dislocated Worker Grants (NDWG) (disaster), YouthBuild, Foundations, American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), Partners for Reentry Opportunities in Workforce Development (PROWD), NCWorks Commission Local Innovation Fund Grant, and/or outside funding to include a brief description of the source and the amount received).

Grant Name/Kind	Brief Description	Beginning and End date	Source and Amount	Partner Organization (if applicable)
NDWG/QVC	To assist dislocated workers from the QVC plant	2/1/22-4/8/24	91,667	Turning Point WDB
ARPA Work Based Learning	To provide work based and entrepreneurial training to small business with 25 or less employees	11/2/22-12/30/26	750,000	NCIDEA

Grant Name/Kind	Brief Description	Beginning and End date	Source and Amount	Partner Organization (if applicable)
Virtual Reality Grant	To provide funding to purchase VR software	3/5/2024-6/30/2024	5,000	

2. Provide a clear and detailed example of the Local Area WDB’s best or promising **Adult/Dislocated Worker** program practice that has yielded positive results with evidence, which affirms this practice is effective.

All Center staff, through ISD, are now pre-screening customers for referral to Title 1 services. This includes collecting basic information and creating a centralized referral list located on the shared drive. In addition, a new rack card was developed that asks interested individual to text a keyword by Center to upgrade their skills and a QR code is now used at all events to gather basic contact information for potential customers. Staff use the text request and constant contact results from the QR code as a referral source. Staff then follow up with attendees on a one-on-one basis for additional discussion, including basic eligibility and suitability discussions.

3. Provide a clear and detailed example of the Local Area WDB’s best or promising **Youth** program practice that has yielded positive results with evidence, which affirms this practice is effective.

Integration with our Title II providers has yielded great results this year in Beaufort County. The Career Advisor has an office space, is invited to attend orientation sessions and visit classrooms for outreach and activities with this targeted population. When goals are reached and incentives are paid, the college staff celebrate with the class and post on social media. This encourages others to want to be a part of the program. We are currently working with the other colleges in the region to create the same level of partnership.

4. Provide a clear and detailed example of the Local Area WDB’s best or promising **regional strategy** that has yielded positive results with evidence, which affirms this practice is effective.

The three WDB’s of the Northeast-Northeastern WBD, Rivers East WDB, and Turning Point WDB- have shared contract for a “Workforce Connector” (previously our Career Pathways Facilitator) for many years. We know this strategy is effective as it has been responsible for driving a thriving regional partnership we refer to as the NENC Career Pathways Partnership. This partnership consists of three workforce boards, 22 Local Education Agencies (LEA’s), 4 charter schools, 1 regional high school, 9 community colleges, 10 NCWorks Career Centers, 4 universities, and a variety of local employers and economic development agencies. We will now be using the foundation laid by our pathways work to branch out to more sector strategy based work.

5. Provide a clear and detailed example of the Local Area WDB's best or promising **virtual services strategy** that has yielded positive results with evidence, which affirms this practice is effective.

The Text Request service has yielded many positive results in the Rivers East area. It is used in our region for incoming and outgoing engagement with our customers. For outreach, all materials include a text number for each Center along with a keyword for the service they are interested in learning more about. In addition, the text service is utilized for Job Hub, a group text feature where customers sign up to receive notices about upcoming hiring events and job fairs in the region. When those hiring events are promoted, they include a keyword and text number so the job seeker can be contacted to be pre-registered for the event and even scheduled an appointment, if needed. We also use it for Customer Feedback and continuous improvement.

6. Provide a clear and detailed example of the Local Area WDB's innovative **business services strategies** and engagement practices that demonstrated employers taking charge and driving the agenda that has yielded positive results with evidence, which affirms this practice is effective.

The Rivers East WDB was fortunate to recruit a Business Services Specialist this year who has been instrumental in engaging with small businesses in the region for the ARPA WBL grant. In addition, through his networking, we have now connected with Tradesformers, a non-profit comprised of over 30 trades related companies. Most of these companies are already engaged in apprenticeship, as we are using this new partnership to look at opportunities to braid our funding with the apprenticeship program which will be mutually beneficial to the employee and employer. Partnerships like this and others have opened the door for more work based learning opportunities for our adult, dislocated worker, youth and incumbent worker populations.

XII. Program Year 2024 Local Area WDB Plan Required Policy Attachments

1. The following policies are *required* to be attached as separate documents in WISE as part of the PY 2024 Local Area Plan. The Local Area Plan is not complete without these documents.

- Name Each Document: *Local Area WDB Name, Policy Name.*

- In the first column, state if the policy is attached or why it is missing and when it can be expected. If two of the policies have been combined, please make a notation.
- In the second column mark “Yes” *only* if the policy has been changed/revised for the PY 2024 Plan and has not been previously submitted to the DWS.
- Revised policies should be submitted with a highlight or summary of the changes made to the local policy.
- Do not add an empty document in WISE as a “placeholder”.

Required Local Area WDB Policies	Attached (Yes/No). If no, why?	Revised for PY 2024 (Yes/No) and needs review
1. Adult/Dislocated Worker Experience Policy	Yes.	No
2. Competitive Procurement Policy	Yes.	No
3. Conflict of Interest Policy	Yes.	No
4. Nondiscrimination/Equal Opportunity Standards and Complaint Procedures	Yes	No
5. Financial Management Policy for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Title I	Yes	No
6. Individualized Training Account Policy	Yes	No
7. On-the-Job Training Policy	Yes	No.
8. Oversight Monitoring Policy, Tool and Schedule	Yes	No
9. Priority of Service Policy	Yes	No.
10. Youth Work Experience Policy	Yes.	No
11. Supportive Services Policy	Yes.	No
12. Local Area WDB WIOA and TAA Co-enrollment Policy	Yes	No
13. Eligible Training Provider Policy	Yes	No
14. Non-Criminal Complaint Procedures	Yes	Yes

2. Designate whether the following local *Optional Policy* is included and used at the Local Area WDB and is included in the Local Area Plan or write “N/A” implying “Not Applicable”, if the Local Area WDB does not have this policy and; therefore, does not use these services.

In the second column mark “Yes” *only* if the policy has been changed for PY 2024 and has not been previously submitted to the DWS.

- Do not add a blank document in WISE as a “placeholder”.
- These policies are required to operate/offer these services
- If “Yes”, load the policy as a separate document.
- Name document: *Local Area WDB Name, Policy Name*. (Example: IWT Policy – Yes. Attached as *Board Name IWT Policy*.)

Optional Local Area WDB Policies	Yes- the Local Area WDB has a policy or N/A (Not Applicable)	Revised for PY 2024 (Add Yes or N/A for this column)
1. Local Area WDB Guidance for Local Incumbent Worker Grants	Yes.	No
2. Local Area WDB Needs-Related Policy	N/A	N/A
3. Local Area WDB Transitional Jobs Policy	N/A	N/A
4. Local Area WDB Youth Incentive Policy	Yes	No

3. Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) are required [Regulations Section 680.300] to pay the cost of training provided with Adult and Dislocated Worker funds and limitations on duration and amount may be included [Regulations Section 680.320]. Please provide the following ITA elements in summary:

Individual Training Accounts (ITA) Summary	
Dollar Amounts	No set limit
Time Limits	No set limit
Degree or Certificates allowed (Associate, Bachelor’s, other)	Certificate, Diploma, Associate or Bachelor Degree
Procedures for determining case-by-case exceptions for training that may be allowed	Request for exceptions are submitted in writing to the LA for consideration. Information reviewed includes cost of training, past performance (outcomes) of training provided, and local labor market information

Individual Training Accounts (ITA) Summary	
Period for which ITAs are issued (semester, school year, short-term, etc.)	Semester
Supportive Services covered by ITA (provide examples such as uniforms, tools, physical exams, etc.)	Books and fees
Other	N/A

4. Provide 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. [WIOA Section 108(b)(19)]

A full list of eligible providers and programs (ETPL) is available in each Center and NCWorks Online. The list is reviewed with any customer who expresses a need and/or interest in training. Rivers East most often utilizes the local community college and university system, along with private providers for classroom training. Local area staff will continue to ensure many competent providers are available to maximize customer choice. A training research worksheet is often provided to the customer for them to research all available option to ensure they choose the one that is the best fit for them. Contracts for training services will only be utilized for incumbent worker training or other special projects, outside of the ETPL.

5. Please specify the supportive services provided by the Local Area WDB Supportive Services Policy. List specific items under Supplies, Emergency, and Other, as identified in the Local Area WDB policy. (Expand form as needed.)

Transportation	Childcare	Supplies <i>(include examples)</i>	Emergency <i>(include examples)</i>	Other <i>(include examples)</i>
Travel reimbursement @ \$0.56 per mile and a max of \$168 per week	Up to \$140/week for the first child and \$85/week for the second child	Includes pens, pencils, notebooks, calculators, etc.	As needed, case by case	Licensing/exam fees, Required uniforms, Required tools, CRC test fees
Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.

***Note:** The Local Area WDB must adequately safeguard all forms of supportive services payments (i.e., gas cards, cash, gift cards, etc.) and assure that they are used solely for authorized purposes. The Supportive Services Policy must include the Local Area WDB's internal controls to safeguard supportive services. The internal controls must address issuance, storage, and reconciliation of supportive services throughout the area and be clearly stated within the policy.*

Attachment Checklist from Local Area Plan Instructions

- Local Area WDB Signed copy of Consortium Agreement (if applicable)
- Local Area WDB Administrative Entity Organizational Chart
- Local Area WDB Board Members (*form provided*)
- Local Area WDB By-Laws
- Local Area WDB By-Laws Required Elements Crosswalk (*form provided*)
- Local Area WDB Organizational Chart
- Local Area WDB Administrative Entity Certification Regarding Debarment* (*form provided*)
- Local Area WDB Workforce Development Area Signatory Form* (*form provided*)
- Local Area WDB NCWorks Career Centers (*form provided*)
- Local Area WDB Adult and Dislocated Worker Service Provider (*form provided*)
- Local Area WDB Eligible Training Provider Policy
- Local Area WDB 14 Youth Program Elements Chart (*form provided*)
- Local Area WDB Youth Committee Meeting Schedule (*optional*)
- Local Area WDB Youth Committee Members (*optional*)
- Local Area WDB Youth Service Provider (*form provided*)
- Local Area WDB Youth Incentive Policy (*optional*)
- Local Area WDB WIOA and TAA Co-enrollment Policy (*required*)
- Local Area Adult/Dislocated Worker Work Experience Policy
- Competitive Procurement Policy
- Conflict of Interest Policy
- Nondiscrimination/Equal Opportunity Standards and Complaint Procedures
- Financial Management Policy for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Title I
- Local Area WDB Individualized Training Account Policy
- On-the-Job Training Policy
- Local Area WDB Oversight Monitoring Policy, Tool, and Schedule
- Priority of Service Policy
- Youth Work Experience Policy
- Local Area WDB Supportive Services Policy
- Local Area WDB Incumbent Worker Training Policy (*optional*)
- Local Area WDB Needs-Related Policy (*optional*)
- Non-Criminal Complaint Procedures
- Local Area WDB Transitional Jobs Policy (*optional*)
- Memorandum of Understanding
- Customer Flow Chart

*Mail signed and unfolded originals to assigned DWS Planner at:

N.C. Division of Workforce Solutions
313 Chapanoke Road, Suite 120
4316 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-4316

DocuSign® (or similar) signature pages may be uploaded in WISE.