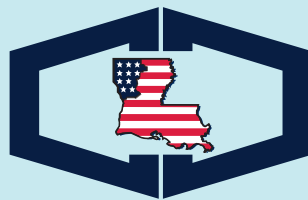


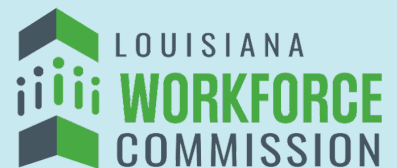
REGION 7 REGIONAL AND LOCAL PLAN

PY 2024 - 2027



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CHAPTER 1: ECONOMIC AND WORKFORCE ANALYSIS: REGIONAL

The Combined Plan must include the Strategic Planning Elements section that analyzes the Region's current economic environment and identifies the Regional/Local's overall vision for its workforce development system. The required elements in this section allows the Regional/Local area to develop data-driven goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce and to identify successful strategies for aligning workforce development programs to support economic growth. Unless otherwise noted, all Strategic Planning Elements apply to Combined Regional/Local Plan core and partner programs, which are included in this plan.

This regional component of the plan must discuss how the region has collected and analyzed regional labor market information including the local planning requirements. Additionally, the chapter must demonstrate alignment with education and economic development. Regional teams are encouraged to use the labor market information that will provide consistency in the data used for regional analysis throughout the state.

A. Provide an analysis of the:

1. Economic conditions including existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations (§ 679.560(a)(1)(i));

- What are the targeted industries, high-impact industry clusters, and in-demand occupations in the region?
- What industries and occupations have favorable location quotients?
- What industries and occupations have favorable demand projections based on growth?
- What industries and occupations have favorable demand projections based on replacements?
- What industries and occupations are considered mature but still important to the economy?
- What industries and occupations are considered emerging in the regional economy?
- What sources of supply and demand data were used to determine the targeted industries occupations and skills?

As with the national and state economies, Region 7 (LWDA 70/LWDA 71) was devastated by the coronavirus pandemic but has generally recovered in regaining the jobs that were lost along with a rapid drop in the record unemployment rates for the ten parishes that comprise the region. The chart below demonstrates how total covered employment for Region 7's ten parishes has recovered comparing 2020 (the year the pandemic arrived) with 2023. The ten parishes are ranked in their total covered employment with Caddo and Bossier combined (in which are located the City of Shreveport and Bossier City) the location of close to 70% of the region's employed labor force.

Total Covered Employment in 2020 and 2023 – Ten Parishes in Seventh Planning District

Source: www.laworks.net, Labor Market Information

Parish	Covered Employment 2020	Covered Employment 2023	2023 as % of 2020
Caddo	103,532	107,964	104.2%
Bossier	40,975	44,883	109.5%
Lincoln	18,115	18,503	102.1%
Natchitoches	12,853	14,345	111.6%
Webster	11,188	11,228	100.3%
DeSoto	6,470	8,230	127.2%
Sabine	5,352	5,515	103.0%
Bienville	4,007	3,728	93.0%
Claiborne	3,003	3,031	100.9%
Red River	2,326	2,533	108.9%
Region 7 Total	207,821	219,960	105.8%

With the exception of Bienville Parish, employment levels in 2023 for the ten parishes in Region 7 were well beyond where they were for the year 2020 when the pandemic began its grip on the economy. However, total covered employment in Region 7 for the year 2023 was not quite where it was for the pre-pandemic year of 2019. At 219,960, total covered employment in 2023 was about 99.0% of its 2019 level of 222,343 (source: laworks.net). The remaining employment gap of 2,383 (comparing 2019 with 2023) may not all be attributed to the impact of the coronavirus pandemic.

Unemployment rates surged in 2020 as businesses closed and placed many employees on layoff as a result of the coronavirus pandemic. A chart below compares unemployment rates in 2020 for the ten parishes in Region 7 with the year 2023. As can be seen in the chart, the recovery of jobs post-pandemic brought unemployment rates back down to the 3.0% to 4.0% range - unemployment rates more in line with the national and state economies for the year 2023.

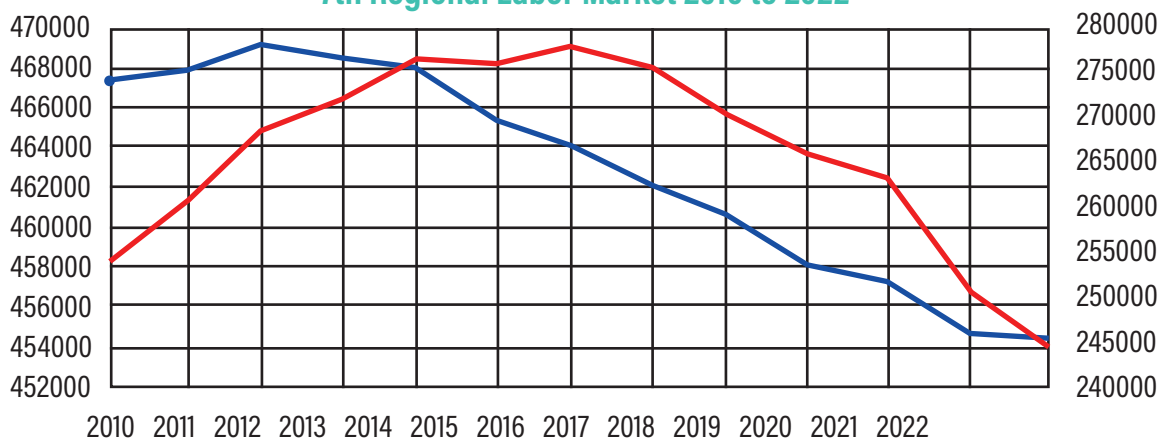
Although the post-pandemic recovery of jobs and falling unemployment rates for Region 7 have been a welcomed development, they do not reflect an ongoing problem for the region's economy - population loss and, with it, a declining civilian labor force along with somewhat "weak" labor force participation rates. Using data from the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey, the included graph displays trends in Region 7's population 16 years of age and over and civilian labor force over the years 2010 to 2022. Beginning with the year 2014, both trend lines follow the same path - a sharp downturn. This may have repercussions for the available labor supply in meeting the needs of existing businesses or new businesses brought to the region through the efforts of local, regional, and state economic development agencies.

Unemployment Rates in 2020 and 2023 - Ten Parishes in Seventh Planning District

Source: www.laworks.net, Labor Market Information

Parish	Unemployment Rate 2020	Unemployment Rate 2023
Bienville Parish	8.1%	4.3%
Bossier Parish	6.6%	3.2%
Caddo Parish	9.4%	4.1%
Claiborne Parish	7.0%	4.0%
DeSoto Parish	7.6%	4.1%
Lincoln Parish	6.6%	3.8%

Trends in Population 16 Years and Over and Civilian Labor Force 7th Regional Labor Market 2010 to 2022



Based on data from U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey, Tables DP03 & DP05

Red trend line = Population 16 years and over, Blue trend line = Civilian Labor Force

Labor force participation rates for the region's ten parishes remain, with the exception of Bossier Parish, below that of Louisiana and the United States as can be seen below:

Estimates of Labor Force Participation Rates for Ten Parishes in Region 7 for Year 2023

Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey, Table S2301

Bossier Parish = 61.8%
Caddo Parish = 56.7%
Lincoln Parish = 54.5%
Natchitoches Parish = 53.4%
DeSoto Parish = 50.7%
Red River Parish = 48.2%
Webster Parish = 47.0%
Sabine Parish = 46.7%
Bienville Parish = 45.9%
Claiborne Parish = 36.5%

Louisiana = 59.3%
United States = 62.6%
(source: www.bls.gov)

It is speculated that declines in the population 16 years of age and over and the civilian labor force may be behind the region's "below average" labor force participation rates (compared to Louisiana and the United States). At 61.8%, the labor force participation rate for Bossier Parish may be related to its steady growth in population. From 2010 to 2022, the population of Bossier Parish grew by 13.2%, from 113,837 to 128,877 (source: U.S. Census Bureau). All other parishes in Region 7 experienced minimal population growth or a decline in population.

Targeted Industries and High-Impact Industry Clusters

The chart below ranks employment by major NAICS sectors for Region 7 in 2023. Obviously, Health Care and Social Assistance takes the lead in providing jobs for one out of five workers in Northwest Louisiana. The City of Shreveport and Bossier City are the location of major hospital and health clinic operations such as Ochsner and Willis-Knighton and a plethora of independent doctor and dentist offices. As a "cluster," the top four sectors combined employ a little over half (53%) of the region's labor force. Despite the increasing popularity on Online shopping, Retail Trade ranks second in employment at 12.6% and includes "big-box stores" such as Wal-Mart, Home Depot, Target and Best Buy, in addition to the major retail grocery chains (e.g., Kroger, Brookshires, Albertsons). Food Services captures the many fast-food establishments present in every city, town, and village within the region. Educational Services is also diverse in including local school boards (elementary and secondary public schools), colleges and universities, and vocational schools (both public and private). LSU Health in Shreveport is a major educational institution for conducting medical research and training healthcare professionals.

Employment by Major NAICS Sectors in 2023 – Seventh Planning District

Source: www.laworks.net, Labor Market Information

NAICS Industry Sectors	Employment 2023	% Total Employment
Total	219,953	
Health Care and Social Assistance 62	44,470	20.2%
Retail Trade 44-45	27,626	12.6%
Accommodation & Food Services 72	22,806	10.4%
Educational Services 61	20,977	9.5%
Manufacturing 31-33	17,117	7.8%
Construction 23	11,437	5.2%
Administrative & Waste Services 56	10,717	4.9%
Public Administration 92	10,251	4.7%
Professional & Technical Services 54	8,530	3.9%
Transportation & Warehousing 48-49	7,907	3.6%
Wholesale Trade 42	7,543	3.4%
Mining 21	6,244	2.8%
Finance & Insurance 52	5,257	2.4%
Other Services, except Public Administration 81	5,255	2.4%
Real Estate, Rental, and Leasing 53	3,870	1.8%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation 71	3,427	1.6%
Information 51	2,392	1.1%
Utilities 22	1,560	.71%
Management of Companies & Enterprises 55	1,515	.69%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting 11	1,052	.48%

In-Demand Occupations

There are two “dimensions” to what constitutes an “in-demand” occupation: 1) its place, or ranking, in employing members of the labor force and, 2) the number of job openings, or vacancies, for the occupation, whether the openings are a result of employee turnover (e.g., separations, retirements) or openings newly created based on an increased demand for an employer’s products or services.

The chart below ranks the distribution of employment for twenty-two (22) major occupational groups in Region 7 including information on each occupational group’s mean annual earnings. There is considerable variation within each occupational group in terms of more specific occupational titles and earnings (wages/salaries). Each occupational group also requires different experience and skill sets whether acquired through formal education or on-the-job training. Some occupations are specific to an industry group (e.g., Healthcare Practitioners) while some occupations can be found across several industry groups (e.g., Office & Administrative Support, Management Occupations).

The top four (4) occupations in the chart employ 41% of Region 7’s labor force, providing estimated annual earnings in the range of \$25,962 to \$39,844. The ten (10) occupational groups with annual earnings at or greater than \$50,000 employ approximately a third (33%) of Region 7’s labor force.

Employment by Major Occupational Groups in Region 7 and Mean Annual Earnings for 2023

Source: www.laworks.net, Labor Market Information

Major Occupational Groups	Estimated Employment	Annual Mean Earnings
Office & Administrative Support	29,260 (13.4%)	\$39,104
Food Preparation & Serving Related	20,790 (9.5%)	\$25,962
Sales & Related Occupations	20,440 (9.4%)	\$37,557
Transportation & Material Moving	19,910 (9.1%)	\$39,844
Healthcare Practitioners & Technical	18,150 (8.3%)	\$83,406
Educational Instruction & Library	14,570 (6.7%)	\$58,437
Management Occupations	13,000 (6.0%)	\$108,739
Production Occupations	11,560 (5.3%)	\$48,031
Installation, Maintenance & Repair	11,490 (5.3%)	\$52,472
Healthcare Support Occupations	11,390 (5.2%)	\$29,407
Construction & Extraction	10,480 (4.8%)	\$46,004
Building, Grounds Cleaning & Maintenance	8,130 (3.7%)	\$27,556
Business & Financial Operations	7,700 (3.5%)	\$70,242
Protective Service Occupations	6,160 (2.8%)	\$46,593
Personal Care & Service Occupations	4,630 (2.1%)	\$32,001
Community & Social Service Occupations	2,860 (1.3%)	\$47,746
Architecture & Engineering	1,840 (.84%)	\$83,209
Computer & Mathematical Occupations	1,790 (.82%)	\$89,763
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, Media	1,500 (.69%)	\$47,724
Legal Occupations	1,000 (.46%)	\$85,597
Life, Physical, & Social Sciences	970 (.44%)	\$74,187
Farming, Fishing, Forestry	510 (.23%)	\$51,068
Total Occupational Employment	218,130	

Industries with Favorable Location Quotients for Region 7

A location quotient reflects an industry's relative importance in providing employment for a specific geographical area's labor force compared to that of the national economy. Using data from the Louisiana Workforce Commission and the Bureau of Labor Statistics (www.bls.gov) it is estimated that there are nine (9) industry groups (NAICS sectors) in Region 7 with a location quotient greater than 1.0:

Estimated Location Quotients for Seventh Planning District Greater than 1.0

Mining = 7.6

Utilities = 1.9

Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting = 1.8

Health Care and Social Assistance = 1.4

Retail Trade = 1.2

Accommodation and Food Services = 1.1

Educational Services = 1.1

Real Estate, Rental, and Leasing = 1.1,

Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, Media = 1.1

As with Louisiana, oil and natural gas exploration and extraction, in addition to numerous companies providing oil field services, make a considerable contribution to Region 7's economy. The Haynesville Shale, present in several Northwest Louisiana parishes, continues to be one of largest natural gas fields in the United States. Data from the Louisiana Department of Energy and Natural Resources indicates that there are presently 17,000 "Producing Wells" in Region 7's ten parishes with half of this figure located in Caddo Parish. The Mining Sector (NAICS 21) in Region 7 may employ a relatively small percentage of the labor force (2.8%) but, its 427 reporting units in 2023 offered the highest average weekly wage at \$1,825 (an annual equivalent of close to \$95,000). If a location quotient is to be an indicator of an industry's high concentration or "specialization" for a regional economy, the oil and gas industry represents this for Region 7.

Information from the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry shows that, in the year 2020, five parishes in Region 7 were among the top producers in Louisiana of sawtimber, pine and hardwood/pulpwood (Forestry), possibly contributing to the high location quotient of 1.8. A location quotient of 1.4 reflects the Health Care and Social Assistance sector's critical importance to Region 7's economy employing, as already noted, 20% of the labor force with growth in employment expected to continue. The casino industry present in Shreveport and Bossier City (NAICS 71) continues to be a major employer as reflected in its location quotient of 1.1 and may further increase employment with the 2025 opening of the Live! Casino in Bossier City.

Occupations with Favorable Location Quotients for Region 7

Again, using data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (www.bls.gov) and the Louisiana Workforce Commission, relatively high location quotients were estimated for the following six occupational groups:

Healthcare Practitioners & Technical = 1.5

Installation, Maintenance & Repair = 1.4

Building, Grounds Cleaning & Maintenance = 1.3

Educational Instruction & Library = 1.2

Healthcare Support = 1.2

Construction & Extraction = 1.2

The health care industry (NAICS 62) and Educational Services (NAICS 61) combined employ 30% of Region 7's labor force, contributing to the relatively high location quotients for three occupational groups: Healthcare Practitioners & Technical (1.5), Educational Instruction & Library (1.2), and Healthcare Support (1.2).

The Installation, Maintenance & Repair occupational group is highly concentrated in the Utilities industry, the Building, Grounds Cleanings & Maintenance group in the Accommodations and Casino industries, and the Construction & Extraction occupational group aligned with Mining, possibly contributing to their relatively high location quotients for Region 7.

Industries with Favorable Demand Projections for Region 7

The chart below shows employment projections for the major NAICS Industry Sectors in Region 7 over the period of 2022 to 2032. The twenty sectors are ranked in their percentage employment growth or decline over this ten year period.

Projected Increases in Employment for NAICS Industry Sectors in Seventh Planning District
Period: 2022 to 2032 - Source: www.laworks.net (Labor Market Information)

NAICS Industry Sectors	% Change 2022 to 2032	Employment Change
Health Care & Social Assistance	+8.4%	+3,398
Construction	+7.9%	+771
Manufacturing	+4.7%	+751
Wholesale Trade	+4.3%	+318
Accommodation & Food Services	+2.5%	+554
Educational Services	+2.1%	+433
Professional, Scientific, & Technical Services	+1.2%	+99
Other Services, Except Public Administration	+1.2%	+212
Transportation & Warehousing	+1.0%	+79
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	+0.7%	+20
Government	+0.4%	+68
Agriculture, Fishing, Forestry & Hunting	+0.4%	+4
Utilities	+0.3%	+3
Real Estate & Rental & Leasing	0%	0
Information	-1.4%	-27
Mining	-1.5%	-81
Retail Trade	-1.5%	-415
Administrative & Waste Services	-1.6%	-175
Finance & Insurance	-6.3%	-330
Management of Companies & Enterprises	-13.4%	-186

Total Increase in Employment, All Sectors = +6,710

Sector Percent Contribution to Increase in Employment

Health Care & Social Assistance = 50.6%
 Construction = 11.5%
 Manufacturing = 11.2%
 Accommodation & Food Services = 8.3%
 Educational Services = 6.5%
 Wholesale Trade = 4.7%
 Other Services, Except Public Administration = 3.2%
 Professional, Scientific, & Technical Services = 1.5%
 Transportation & Warehousing = 1.2%
 Government = 1.0%

As the chart shows, thirteen of the twenty sectors are projected to see an increase in employment (+6,710) with seven sectors to see a decline in employment giving a net increase in employment over the ten year period of +5,497 (6,710 - 1,215). Probably the most significant observation derived from this chart is that 50% of the projected employment increase is to come from one sector, Health Care & Social Assistance. Economists studying this issue note one reason to be an increase in the aging population, especially the baby-boomer generation entering its retirement years. The expected increase in Construction Sector employment may stem partially from greater government infrastructure investments (federal, state, local). The Manufacturing Sector in Region 7, although experiencing a long-term historical decline in employment, will add 751 employees. Existing and new businesses being established at the Caddo-Bossier Port may be behind this projected increase.

Occupations with Favorable Demand Projections for Region 7

The Louisiana Workforce Commission provides long term (2022 to 2032) employment projections for several hundred occupations in Region 7. Given this large number, occupations with 4 and 5 Star demand ratings (top demand) within twenty-one major occupational groups were identified and presented in the chart below:

Number of 4 and 5 Star Demand Occupations for Twenty-One Major Occupational Categories Long Term Occupational Projections (2022 to 2032) for Seventh Planning District

Source: www.laworks.net, Labor Market Information

Major Occupational Groups	4 and 5 Star Demand Occupations
29-0000 Healthcare Practitioners & Technical	39
11-0000 Management Occupations	26
25-0000 Educational Instruction & Library	18
17-0000 Architecture & Engineering	17
49-0000 Installation, Maintenance & Repair	16
13-0000 Business & Financial Operations	15
15-0000 Computer & Mathematical	14
53-0000 Transportation & Material Moving	13
19-0000 Life, Physical & Social Science	13
51-0000 Production Occupations	11
47-0000 Construction & Extraction	10
41-0000 Sales & Related	6
43-0000 Office & Administrative Support	5
31-0000 Healthcare Support Occupations	4
33-0000 Protective Service	4
21-0000 Community & Social Service	3
23-0000 Legal Occupations	2
27-0000 Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports & Media	2
37-0000 Building & Grounds Cleaning & Maintenance	1
39-0000 Personal Care & Service	1
35-0000 Food Preparation & Serving Related	0
45-0000 Farming, Fishing & Forestry	0

Since the Health Care and Educational Services sectors combined employ 30% of Region 7's labor force, it is not unexpected that the first three occupational categories in the above chart rank the highest in terms of the number of 4 and 5 Star or "top demand" occupations. Of the total 194 4 and 5 Star top demand occupations in Region 7, a little over half (52%) are concentrated in the top four occupational categories.

Occupational Demand Projections Based on Growth

Using the long term occupational employment projections for Region 7, the following identifies the top three occupations with expected openings due to "growth" for the eleven (11) major occupational categories having the greatest number of 4 and 5 Star demand ratings:

Healthcare Practitioners & Technical

Registered Nurses, 10 Year Growth = 430

Nurse Practitioners, 10 Year Growth = 187

Licensed Practical Nurses, 10 Year Growth = 165

Management Occupations

Medical & Health Services Managers, 10 Year Growth = 285

General & Operations Managers, 10 Year Growth = 182

Financial Managers, 10 Year Growth = 83

Educational, Instruction and Library

Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education, 10 Year Growth = 68

Secondary School Teachers, Except Special & Career/Technical Education, 10 Year Growth = 51

Teaching Assistants, Except Postsecondary, 10 Year Growth = 43

Architecture & Engineering

Industrial Engineers, 10 Year Growth = 17

Mechanical Engineers, 10 Year Growth = 7

Electrical & Electronics Engineering Technologists & Technicians, 10 Year Growth = 5

Installation, Maintenance & Repair

Industry Machinery Mechanics, 10 Year Growth = 139

Maintenance & Repair Workers, General = 77

Heating, Air Conditioning & Refrigeration Mechanics & Installers, 10 Year Growth = 39

Business & Financial Operations

Management Analysts, 10 Year Growth = 55

Accountants & Auditors, 10 Year Growth = 45

Market Research Analysts & Marketing Specialists, 10 Year Growth = 33

Computer & Mathematical

Software Developers, 10 Year Growth = 44

Information Security Analysts, 10 Year Growth = 15

Computer Network Support Specialists, 10 Year Growth = 13

Transportation & Material Moving

Stockers & Order Fillers, 10 Year Growth = 278

Heavy & Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers, 10 Year Growth = 113

Laborers & Freight, Stock & Material Movers, 10 Year Growth = 110

Life, Physical & Social Science

Occupational Health & Safety Specialists, 10 Year Growth = 31

Occupational Health & Safety Technicians, 10 Year Growth = 16

Forestry & Conservation Technicians, 10 Year Growth = 7

Production Occupations

First-Line Supervisors of Production & Operating Workers, 10 Year Growth = 392

Welders, Cutters, Solderers, & Brazers, 10 Year Growth = 64

Machinists, 10 Year Growth = 44

Construction & Extraction

Construction Laborers, 10 Year Growth = 315

Electricians, 10 Year Growth = 76

Operating Engineers & Other Construction Equipment Operators, 10 Year Growth = 45

Occupational Demand Projections Based on Replacements (Separations)

An occupational category with a high number of replacements may be a result of employees “separating” due primarily to retirements and voluntary or involuntary terminations. The assumption, though not always valid, is that job positions left open by separations will have to be “refilled” by an employer – the employer will have to “replace” the separated employee. This can be evaluated to some extent by identifying occupations with the greatest number of “exits” based on the long term occupational projections for Region 7. The following are examples of occupations projected to have a high number of “exits” over the ten year projection period (2022 to 2032) that are also identified as top demand (4 and 5 Star):

General & Operations Managers = 1,149 Exits (4 Star Demand Occupation)
Accountants & Auditors = 512 Exits (4 Star Demand Occupation)
Educational, Guidance, and Career Counselors & Advisors = 204 Exits (4 Star Demand Occupation)
Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education = 945 Exits (4 Star Demand Occupation)
Registered Nurses = 2,402 Exits (5 Star Demand Occupation)
Pharmacy Technicians = 329 Exits (4 Star Demand Occupations)
Licensed Practical Nurses = 1,192 Exits (4 Star Demand Occupation)
Medical Assistants = 667 Exits (4 Star Demand Occupation)
Police & Sheriff’s Patrol Officers = 532 Exits (4 Star Demand Occupation)
Sales Representatives, Wholesale & Manufacturing = 728 Exits (5 Star Demand Occupation)
First-Line Supervisors Office & Administrative Support = 1,169 Exits (4 Star Demand Occupation)
First-Line Supervisors Construction Trades & Extraction = 425 Exits (5 Star Demand Occupation)
Construction Laborers = 965 Exits (4 Star Demand Occupation)
Electricians = 337 Exits (4 Star Demand Occupation)
First-Line Supervisors Mechanics, Installers, Repairers = 463 Exits (5 Star Demand Occupation)
Automotive Services Technicians & Mechanics = 453 Exits (4 Star Demand Occupation)
Maintenance & Repair Workers, General = 1,152 Exits (4 Star Demand Occupation)
Heavy & Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers = 1,819 Exits (4 Star Demand Occupation)

Industries with high replacement needs can, to some extent, be identified by occupations with high “exits” that are concentrated in those industries. Examples are: Health Care (Registered Nurses, LPNs), Public Administration/Government (Police & Sheriff’s Patrol Officers), Educational Services (Elementary School Teachers) and Construction (Construction Laborers, Electricians).

Mature Industries and Occupations of Importance to Region 7 Economy

Region 7 industries and their associated occupations that can be considered “mature” are those that have been in existence for a considerable period of time (e.g., decades) and continue to see their employment grow or remain relatively stable. For Region 7, Health Care and Educational Services are prime examples. According to data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, in 1990, these two sectors combined employed 10% of the Shreveport-Bossier City MSA labor force. By the year 2020, this had increased to 19% with employment more than doubling from 15,300 to 31,800.

The Manufacturing Sector experienced a reverse trend. In 1990, 15% of the Shreveport-Bossier City MSA was employed by a manufacturing firm but, by 2020, this had dropped to 6.0% of the employed labor force. The loss of manufacturing “giants” such as Shreveport’s General Motors Plant in 2012 and its Libbey Glass plant in 2020 dealt serious blows to Region 7’s manufacturing employment base. However, with contributions from the presence of the Caddo-Bossier Port, there are signs that manufacturing jobs may now be on an “upswing”. According to data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (www.bls.gov), employment in the Shreveport-Bossier City MSA’s Manufacturing Sector increased to 10,200 from 9,700 over the years 2021 to 2022 with a further jump to 10,700 in 2023.

As already noted, the oil and gas exploration and extraction industries have played a significant role in Region 7's economy over many years with employment in this sector fluctuating mainly as a result of price changes dictated by the national and international demand for energy (oil and natural gas). Employment in the Mining & Logging Sector within the Shreveport-Bossier City MSA reached a low point in the years 2016 – 2017 as a result of an oversupply of oil on the national and international markets with the coronavirus induced recession of 2020-2021 greatly dropping the demand for oil but then driving up the price of oil as the economy recovered and the demand for oil and gas resumed contributing to a spike in inflation. Since mid-2022, employment for the Shreveport-Bossier City MSA's Mining and Logging Sector has stabilized in the range of 5,200 to 5,300 (www.bls.gov).

2. Employment needs of employers in existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations (§679.560(a)(1)(ii));

New technologies create new industries and occupations. An example for the Region 7 economy is the established of Bossier City's Cyber Innovation Center (CIC) creating, by some estimates, 2,000 jobs requiring highly technical skills and education in the area of computer technology. In 2024, an Amazon Fulfillment Center was opened in Caddo Parish. Local media sources have employment estimates for the new center beginning at 200 with a possible expansion to 1,000 jobs by the end of 2026. This Amazon Fulfillment Center will provide jobs to the local labor force requiring both mid-level (e.g., order pickers) and highly technical skills (robotics maintenance and repair). Shreveport's Biomedical Research Foundation, associated with the LSU Health Sciences Center, is the location of cutting-edge medical research that will continue to require highly educated medical professionals and technicians.

3. Knowledge and skills needed to meet the employment needs of the employers in the region, including employment needs in in-demand industry sectors and occupations (§ 679.560(a)(2));

- What are the targeted career pathway clusters in the region?
- What are the skills that are in demand in the region?
- How well do the existing skills of job seekers match the demands of local businesses?

Long term employment projections for Region 7 (2022 to 2032) indicate that 73% of employment growth will be generated by three (3) industry sectors: Health Care & Social Assistance, Construction, and Manufacturing. The following provides a "profile" for each of these three sectors with a selection of demand occupations and their basic education or training requirements:

Region 7 Select Occupations in Health Care & Social Assistance (NAICS 62) Star Demand Rating & Basic Educational Requirements *Source: www.laworks.net (Labor Market Information)*

Occupation	Star Demand Rating	Basic Educational Requirements
Physician Assistants	5	Master's Degree
Physical Therapists	5	Doctoral or Professional Degree
Respiratory Therapists	5	Associate's Degree
Registered Nurses	5	Bachelor's Degree
Dental Hygienists	5	Associate's Degree
Clinical Lab Technicians	5	Bachelor's Degree
Radiologic Technologists	4	Associate's Degree
Pharmacy Technicians	4	High School Diploma/OJT
Licensed Practical Nurse	4	Postsecondary Non-Degree
Medical Records Specialist	4	Postsecondary Non-Degree

Region 7 Select Occupations in Construction (NAICS 23)
Star Demand Rating & Basic Educational/Training Requirements
Source: www.laworks.net (Labor Market Information)

Occupation	Star Demand Rating	Basic Educational/Training Req.
Construction Managers	5	Bachelor's Degree
First-Line Supervisors	5	High School Diploma or Equivalent
Carpenters	4	High School Diploma/Apprenticeship
Construction Laborers	4	No formal educational credential
Operating Engineers	4	High School Diploma or Equivalent
Electricians	4	High School Diploma/Apprenticeship
Plumbers, Pipefitters	4	High School Diploma/Apprenticeship
Structural Iron & Steel	4	High School Diploma/Apprenticeship

Region 7 Select Occupations in Manufacturing (NAICS 31-33)
Star Demand Rating & Basic Educational/Training Requirements
Source: www.laworks.net (Labor Market Information)

Occupation	Star Demand Rating	Basic Educational/Training Req.
First-Line Supervisors	5	High School Diploma or Equivalent
Extruding & Drawing Machine	4	High School Diploma/OJT
Lathe & Machine Tool Setters	4	High School Diploma/OJT
Welders, Cutters, Solderers	4	High School Diploma/OJT
Gas Plant Operators	4	High School Diploma/OJT
Petroleum Pump System Ops.	4	High School Diploma/OJT
Chemical Equipment Ops.	4	High School Diploma/OJT
Compacting Machine Ops.	4	High School Diploma/OJT
Packaging & Filling Machine	4	High School Diploma/OJT
Paper Goods Machine Ops.	4	High School Diploma/OJT

Career Pathways and Skills in Demand

Career pathways are largely determined by an individual's long-term occupational goals and the occupational structure and skill needs of the industry in which they are employed. To "advance" in a career pathway, an individual may have to pursue formal education outside of the workplace or avail themselves to educational or training opportunities offered by their employer. Examples may include employers offering financial assistance to employees to further their job related education, employers participating in the Incumbent Worker Program, and employers involved in union sponsored registered apprenticeship programs. Through "time on the job," some employees may pick up the skills that their employer believes qualifies them for a promotion (i.e., progression on a career pathway).

The occupations included in the charts above give examples of the diverse ways that career paths may be followed. All but one of the ten occupations for Health Care and Social Assistance require post-secondary education (Associate Degree, Bachelor's Degree, Graduate Degree). The Construction Sector includes four occupations where training and skills can be obtained through formal apprenticeships, while, in the Manufacturing Sector, on-the-job training (OJT) is the primary means of skill acquisition and, possibly, progression on a career pathway (e.g., from Laborer to Machine Tool Setter).

Existing Skills of Job Seekers and Local Business Demand

Matching the skills of job seekers with local business demand can be gauged, to some extent, by looking at information on “currently advertised jobs” available in Louisiana Star Jobs (www.laworks.net/stars). Using this as a source, the chart below shows occupations with 20 or more “openings” for the Shreveport region (7th Planning District):

Currently Advertised Jobs with 20 or More Openings for Shreveport Region as of December 13, 2024

Source: Louisiana Star Jobs (www.laworks.net)

Job Title	Number of Advertised Openings
Registered Nurses	513
First-Line Supervisors Food Preparation & Serving Workers	126
Physical Therapists	126
General & Operations Managers	125
Customer Service Representatives	121
First-Line Supervisors Retail Sales Workers	99
Licensed Practical Nurses	98
Merchandise Displayers & Window Trimmers	84
Tax Preparers	54
Speech-Language Pathologists	45
Heavy & Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	44
Receptionists & Information Clerks	37
Physical Therapy Assistants	36
First Line Supervisors Production & Operating Workers	36
Security Guard	32
Stockers & Order Fillers	31
Pharmacists	31
Sales Managers	30
Radiologic Technologists & Technicians	29
HVAC Mechanics	28
Medical Assistants	28
Pharmacy Technicians	27
Executive Secretaries & Administrative Assistants	25
Nurse Practitioners	23
Dentists	23
Occupational Therapists	22
Family Medicine Physicians	22
Food Service Managers	22
Respiratory Therapists	20

In looking at the twenty-nine (29) occupations in the above chart, clearly, those that are part of the health care industry are dominant. This coincides with the Health Care Sector employing 20% of the Region 7 labor force and as a source of half (50%) of the projected increase in employment over the period of 2022 to 2032. The phenomenal number of 513 openings for Registered Nurses may be a result of a number of factors but indicates a likely “shortage” of qualified workers in this occupation. Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) is one the most frequently requested training activities of applicants eligible for the WIOA program, both LWDA 70 and LWDA 71. Attending a truck driving school to obtain a Class A CDL is also a highly popular training activity among WIOA participants with job openings (i.e., employer demand) for Heavy & Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers continuing to be plentiful.

4. Regional workforce considering current labor force employment and unemployment data, information on labor market trends, and educational and skill levels of the workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment (§ 679.510(a)(1)(iv) and § 679.560(a)(3)).

- How is the region changing in terms of demographics, labor supply and occupational demand?
- What special populations exist in the region, what is their magnitude, and what are the policy and service implications to meet the needs of these individuals?

Changing Demographics and Labor Supply for Region 7

As described in the section General Economic Conditions, three of the challenges facing Region 7 are a declining population, especially for those 16 years of age and over and, with it, a smaller civilian labor force, in addition to lower than average labor force participation rates. With unemployment rates for Region 7's ten parishes currently remaining relatively "low" (in the 3.0% to 4.0% range), changing demographics for the region present the possibility of a "labor shortage" developing. The changing demographics (e.g., population loss) cannot be quickly reversed by policy decisions or actions taken by local government entities, although it is hoped that an increase in employment opportunities within the region will eventually result in the "in-migration" of a population segment in its prime labor force participation years (i.e., 25 to 54), a slowing of the "out-migration" of the region's population, and an increase in labor force participation rates.

Special Populations in Region 7

There are likely two "special populations" within Region 7 that educational and workforce development activities should take into consideration: 1) the population below poverty level income that is within its labor force participation years and 2) the population with an educational attainment not beyond that of a high school diploma or equivalency.

Population 18 to 64 with Income Below Poverty Level and Households Receiving SNAP Benefits

Source: Census Bureau American Community Survey, Tables S1701 & S2201, Year 2023

Parish	% Below Poverty Level	% Households Receiving SNAP
Lincoln	32.5%	23.3%
Claiborne	31.6%	28.5%
Bienville	28.6%	23.3%
Webster	27.2%	24.7%
Red River	26.4%	18.8%
Natchitoches	26.0%	19.4%
Sabine	22.9%	20.4%
Caddo	21.4%	20.5%
DeSoto	19.7%	21.6%
Bossier	15.2%	10.3%

In the above chart, one indicator is used to evaluate the poverty status of the population 18 to 64, a population segment that includes those most likely to participate in the labor force. The second indicator shows the percent of a parish's households receiving Food Stamp (SNAP) benefits. Both of these indicators can be used to evaluate the extent of poverty in each of Region 7's ten parishes and both indicators are used in determining eligibility for the WIOA Adult program. Although not a strong correlation, there appears to be some correspondence between the two indicators – parishes in Region 7 that have a high poverty rate for their adult population are also more likely have a higher percentage of households receiving Food Stamp (SNAP) benefits. What these two indicators suggest is that there is a significant segment within each of Region 7's ten parishes that is potentially eligible for WIOA Adult program services such as occupational skills training.

There is another related indicator that shows the relationship between work experience and poverty status for the population 16 years and over. It partially answers the question to what extent is employment related to poverty status in Region 7's ten parishes.

Work Experience & Poverty Status for Population 16 Years & Over
Source: Census Bureau American Community Survey, Table S1701, Year 2023

Parish	% Work Full-Time	% Work Part-Time	% Did Not Work
Bienville	31.8% (7.4% Poverty)	16.8% (30.4% Poverty)	51.5% (35.5% Poverty)
Bossier	44.6% (4.7% Poverty)	20.1% (18.0% Poverty)	35.2% (24.0% Poverty)
Caddo	39.6% (5.2% Poverty)	19.5% (25.0% Poverty)	40.9% (31.4% Poverty)
Claiborne	28.4% (6.6% Poverty)	16.2% (32.8% Poverty)	55.4% (39.5% Poverty)
DeSoto	34.6% (6.0% Poverty)	19.8% (24.4% Poverty)	45.6% (27.2% Poverty)
Lincoln	35.0% (5.2% Poverty)	24.8% (41.8% Poverty)	40.2% (41.6% Poverty)
Natchitoches	35.5% (6.1% Poverty)	20.8% (30.8% Poverty)	43.7% (34.1% Poverty)
Red River	33.0% (9.3% Poverty)	19.3% (34.0% Poverty)	47.7% (31.5% Poverty)
Sabine	29.0% (5.0% Poverty)	21.1% (21.2% Poverty)	50.0% (30.5% Poverty)
Webster	32.1% (11.6% Poverty)	18.0% (28.1% Poverty)	50.0% (31.4% Poverty)

The percentages in parentheses indicate the percent poverty status for each of the three work experience categories. Working full-time obviously has a strong impact on reducing poverty but the variation among the ten parishes in Region 7 may be related to the presence of a parish's population in its prime labor force participation years (e.g., 25 to 54) and the availability of employment opportunities (jobs). For example, Bossier Parish and Caddo Parish are the location of two of the region's major municipalities (Bossier City, City of Shreveport) and have the highest percentage of the population 16 years and over working full-time. This may simply be because more employment opportunities (jobs) are available in these two parishes. However, this points to the contribution that WIOA program services can make in providing the adult population in each parish with occupational skills training leading to full-time employment and a reduction in poverty.

Population 18 to 64 with Income Below Poverty Level and Households Receiving SNAP Benefits
Source: Census Bureau American Community Survey, Tables S1701 & S2201, Year 2023

Parish	No High School Diploma/Eq.	High School Diploma/Eq.
Claiborne	20.6%	48.8%
Red River	18.8%	51.0%
DeSoto	15.0%	39.5%
Sabine	14.3%	45.5%
Bienville	14.0%	50.1%
Webster	13.8%	43.9%
Natchitoches	12.7%	36.1%
Caddo	12.5%	31.7%
Lincoln	10.6%	29.6%
Bossier	9.3%	50.1%

Another possible barrier to employment for the adult population is those without a high school diploma or equivalency and those who have not pursued education beyond a high school diploma such as attending college or a vocational-technical school. The first column in the chart above ranks the ten parishes in Region 7 by the percent of the population 25 years and over without a high school diploma or equivalency while the second column shows the percent with only a high school diploma. LWDA 70 and LWDA 71 have established referral relationships with Adult Education programs in Region 7 as a means of assisting WIOA program applicants without a high school diploma or equivalency which can often be an obstacle to their enrolling at a vocational-technical school for occupational skills training. Using the Louisiana Workforce Commission's Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL), LWDA 70 and LWDA 71 can provide guidance and counseling to WIOA eligible applicants in selecting occupational skills training programs that, upon successful completion, will lead to employment providing a self-sufficiency income.

Other Special Populations: At-Risk Youth, Single Parent Families, Individuals with Disability

Two indicators that may be applicable in defining "at-risk youth" are those in the 18 to 24 age group without a high school diploma or equivalency (i.e., dropouts) and those with income below the poverty level.

Population 18 to 24 without High School Diploma and Unrelated Individuals 18 to 24 with Income Below Poverty Level.

Source: Census Bureau American Community Survey, Tables S1501 & S1701 For Year 2023

Parish	18 to 24 Without High School Diploma	Unrelated 18 to 24 Below Poverty Level
DeSoto	24.4%	64.3%
Bienville	18.9%	25.7%
Webster	17.8%	56.9%
Caddo	17.6%	54.3%
Claiborne	15.5%	53.8%
Bossier	13.0%	38.7%
Red River	12.9%	75.3%
Sabine	11.0%	55.5%
Natchitoches	4.2%	75.8%
Lincoln	3.9%	79.3%

18 to 24 generally includes most out-of-school youth (OSY) potentially eligible for the WIOA Youth program. Being a "dropout" is one of the Youth program barriers determining eligibility for services. In the first column of the above chart, close to 25% of DeSoto Parish youth 18 to 24 may be dropouts and, for those the Census Bureau classified as "Unrelated Individuals", almost two-thirds (64%) have an income below the poverty level. Somewhat similar percentages are shown for Bienville, Webster, and Caddo. For LWDA 70 and LWDA 71, this presents the challenge of attracting (recruiting) these youth to the WIOA program to provide services needed to obtain their high school equivalency (HiSET), provide paid work experience, and possibly on to an occupational skills training program with the ultimate objective to lift them out of poverty.

Single parent families with minor children, especially those with a female householder, are more likely to fall into financial distress or poverty, resulting in a reliance on public assistance for income support.

Number of Female Householders with Income Below Poverty Level as Percent of All Families

Source: Census Bureau American Community Survey, Table B17006, Year 2023

Parish	Female Householders with Income Below Poverty	As % of All Families
Claiborne	1,116	42.7%
Bienville	1,162	40.1%
Lincoln	2,399	25.8%
Caddo	12,816	23.6%
Webster	1,891	23.1%
DeSoto	1,482	23.1%
Red River	337	20.3%
Natchitoches	1,649	19.6%
Sabine	958	19.2%
Bossier	4,094	13.0%

Table B17006 of the Census Bureau's American Community Survey provides data on family units in the categories of married-couple family, male householder with no spouse present, and female householder with no spouse present. A cursory look at this data shows a much greater incidence of poverty among female householders with minor children present. This is demonstrated in the above chart where the poverty rate among female householders is ranked as a percent of all families in each parish based on the data contained in Table B17006. For seven of the ten parishes in Region 7, the poverty rate among female householders is at 20% or greater with an astounding 40% for Bienville and Claiborne. There are no reliable estimates on the labor force participation of these female householders although "single parent" is one of several barriers to employment included in WIOA. Each program year, LWDA 70 and LWDA 71 enroll a significant number of "single parents" in the Adult and Youth programs providing WIOA financial assistance for occupational skills training and supportive services.

Population 18 to 64 with a Disability - Ten Parishes in Region 7

Source: Census Bureau American Community Survey, Table S1810, Year 2023

Parish	Population 18 to 64	With Disability	% With Disability
Bienville	7,047	1,272	18.1%
Bossier	71,991	9,202	12.8%
Caddo	131,971	22,273	16.9%
Claiborne	6,564	813	12.4%
DeSoto	15,355	2,890	18.8%
Lincoln	31,473	3,252	10.3%
Natchitoches	21,691	3,143	14.5%
Red River	4,195	672	16.0%
Sabine	12,145	2,460	20.3%
Webster	19,921	3,244	16.3%

Using the data in the above chart, it can be estimated that 15.3% of the population 18 to 64 in Region 7 has a disability. Table S1810 in the American Community Survey also provides data on the nature of the disabilities for this population in three categories: vision difficulty, cognitive difficulty, ambulatory difficulty. However, the data alone do not indicate the "severity" of a disability or, if the disability requires accommodations or auxiliary aids in order for an individual to hold a job or enroll in education or training programs to prepare for employment. Nonetheless, LWDA 70 and LWDA 71 have established a close liaison with staff from Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS) whose offices are present in Region 7 for technical assistance in the provision of employment and training services for individuals with disabilities. Additionally, WIOA case managers in Region 7 have been provided training on disability as a protected class under Section 188 of WIOA along with other sources for technical assistance (e.g., the Job Accommodation Network at <https://askjan.org>).

Veterans

LWDA 70 and LWDA 71 adhere to the policy that, under the Workforce & Opportunity Act (WIOA), veterans receive priority for service. Based on estimates contained in Table S2101 of the Census Bureau's American Community Survey, the following ranks for the ten parishes in Region 7, the percent of the civilian population 18 years and over with Veteran Status:

Population 18 and over with Veteran Status

Bossier = 10.7%

Caddo = 8.2%

DeSoto = 7.0%

Sabine = 6.9%

Webster = 6.7%

Claiborne = 6.6%

Natchitoches = 5.5%

Bienville = 5.3%

Lincoln = 5.1%

Red River = 3.4%

Leading at 10.7%, Bossier Parish is the location of a major military installation, Barksdale Air Force Base, with its neighboring parish, Caddo, second at 8.2%.

B. Describe the development and implementation of sector initiatives for in-demand industry sectors or occupations for the planning region (§ 679.510(a)(1)(iii)). Plans must answer the following questions:

- How will the workforce partners convene employers, foundations and regional institutions to help lead sector partnerships and make coordinated investments?
- Identify the established and active industry sector partnerships in the region.
- What other sector-based partnerships exist in the region? If any exist, are they business-led and what is their role in planning?
- What other public-private partnerships exist in the region that could support sector strategies and what is their role in planning?
- What neutral conveners with the capacity to help establish sector partnerships exist in the region and what is their role in planning?
- How will the workforce partners convene employers, foundations and regional institutions to help lead sector partnerships and make coordinated investments?

The Northwest Louisiana Healthcare Sector Partnership serves as a strong example of workforce partners bringing together key stakeholders to address sector-specific needs. The Kick-Off Meeting for this partnership occurred on September 21, 2023, hosted by CHRISTUS Shreveport-Bossier Health System and attended by over 35 individuals, including five CEOs of healthcare facilities. This event highlighted the collective effort of employers, workforce partners, educational institutions, and economic development organizations to strategize and make coordinated investments.

Key Healthcare and workforce partners involved in convening and supporting this initiative include:

- CHRISTUS Shreveport-Bossier Health
- DeSoto Regional Health System
- Natchitoches Regional Medical Center
- Claiborne Memorial Medical Center
- Brentwood Hospital
- Minden Medical Center
- Willis-Knighton Health Systems
- Ochsner LSU Health

- LSU Health Shreveport
- Barksdale Air Force Base
- Local Workforce Development Boards 70 and 71
- Louisiana Workforce Commission
- North Louisiana Economic Partnership
- Bossier Parish Community College
- Northwest Louisiana Technical & Community College
- Southern University of Shreveport

The active involvement of these partners ensures alignment of resources, strategic coordination, and actionable solutions for shared priorities in the healthcare industry.

Identify the established and active industry sector partnerships in the region.

The Northwest Louisiana Healthcare Sector Partnership is the primary active industry sector initiative in the region. It focuses on strengthening the healthcare industry through collaboration and collective action. Specific objectives include addressing workforce shortages, recruitment challenges, retention issues, and improving relationships with regional educational institutions.

The partnership has established three committees that meet quarterly:

- Education & Training Committee
- Recruitment & Retention Committee
- Policy & Regulation Committee

Each committee plays a critical role in addressing the key challenges identified by the healthcare sector employers, such as personnel shortages, burnout, soft skills development, and promoting Northwest Louisiana as a healthcare destination.

What other sector-based partnerships exist in the region? If any exist, are they business-led and what is their role in planning?

While the Northwest Louisiana Healthcare Sector Partnership is the most prominent, other sector-based partnerships may exist within individual industries, such as manufacturing, transportation, or IT. However, these partnerships are often less formalized compared to the healthcare sector initiative. The healthcare sector partnership stands out due to its business-led structure and its clear role in planning through employer-led committees and actionable priorities.

What other public-private partnerships exist in the region that could support sector strategies and what is their role in planning?

The region benefits from multiple public-private partnerships that align with sector strategies. Examples include:

- Greater Shreveport Chamber of Commerce and Bossier Chamber of Commerce, both of which have been engaged to promote the healthcare sector and its career opportunities.
- Local Economic Development Organizations such as the North Louisiana Economic Partnership provide valuable economic insights and regional coordination.
- Educational Partners, including Bossier Parish Community College, Northwest Louisiana Technical & Community College, and Southern University of Shreveport play a critical role in aligning curricula and training programs with industry needs.

These public-private partnerships help amplify the efforts of the sector strategies by promoting regional workforce solutions and supporting healthcare sector growth.

What neutral conveners with the capacity to help establish sector partnerships exist in the region and what is their role in planning?

LWC's Industry Sector Coordinator serves as a neutral convener with the expertise and capacity to facilitate and grow sector partnerships across Northwest Louisiana. LWDBs 70 and 71 works closely with LWC's Industry Sector Coordinator and the regional partners, employers, and educational institutions to ensure ongoing collaboration and progress.

LWC's Industry Sector Coordinator's role in planning includes:

- Facilitating quarterly in-person meetings and committee sessions for the healthcare partnership.
- Coordinate with the NW Louisiana Healthcare Sector Partnership Teams sector-driven initiatives, such as the 2025 Summer Healthcare Camp for middle school students, designed to address long-term workforce shortages by promoting healthcare careers to younger generations.
- Engaging chambers of commerce, educational partners, and employers to align regional resources for maximum impact.

Additional Initiative: 2025 Summer Healthcare Camp

One innovative outcome of the partnership is the planning of the 2025 Summer Healthcare Camp for middle school students, aimed at inspiring interest in healthcare careers early. Highlights of the camp include:

- Two week-long camps hosted at Bossier Parish Community College in mid-July 2025.
- Focused themes such as Lung Day, Cardiac Day, Brain & Mental Health Day, and others, sponsored by healthcare partners.
- A cost-effective program at \$75 per student with 30 students per week, ensuring broad access for the Caddo and Bossier parish communities.

Additionally, Webster Parish representatives are exploring a half-day Healthcare Camp in Spring 2025 for local middle school students in collaboration with Minden Medical Center and Northwest Louisiana Technical & Community College, while Natchitoches Parish representatives are planning a similar initiative in collaboration with Natchitoches Regional Medical Center and Bossier Parish Community College – Natchitoches Campus.

The Northwest Louisiana Healthcare Sector Partnership demonstrates a robust, collaborative approach to addressing in-demand occupations within the healthcare industry. Through employer-led committees, public-private partnerships, and innovative initiatives such as the Healthcare Summer Camp, this sector strategy is well-positioned to strengthen the healthcare workforce and promote long-term economic growth in the region.

CHAPTER 2: STRATEGIES FOR SERVICE INTEGRATION: REGIONAL

This regional component of the plan must describe the regional service strategies, including use of cooperative service delivery strategies and the connection of job seekers with employers.

A. Provide an analysis of workforce development activities, including education and training, in the region. This analysis must include the strengths and weaknesses of workforce development activities and capacity to provide the workforce development activities to address the education and skill needs of the workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment, and the employment needs of employers (§ 679.560(a)(4)). Plans must respond to the following:

- Analyze the strengths and weaknesses of workforce development activities in the region.
- Analyze the capacity of the regional partners to provide workforce development activities to address the education and skill needs of the workforce including individuals with barriers to employment.
- Analyze the capacity of the regional partners to provide activities to address the needs of employers.
- How well do existing training programs in the region and local areas prepare job seekers to enter and retain employment with regional businesses?
- Summarize the commitments of each program partner to implement the selected strategies.

Analysis of Workforce Development Activities, Including Education and Training, in the Region

Strengths:

- **Collaboration with Regional Partners:** The workforce development activities in Region 7 benefit from partnerships between Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs), community colleges, vocational training centers, and economic development agencies. This collaboration ensures that training programs are aligned with the needs of employers in the region. Programs such as WIOA-funded initiatives, industry-based certifications (IBCs), and work-based learning opportunities strengthen workforce alignment with economic demand.
 - Example: Collaboration with LCTCS campuses provides accessible post-secondary education and credential opportunities aligned with high-demand occupations.
- **Diverse Training Options:** Education and training programs include classroom training, on-the-job training (OJT), apprenticeship programs, and customized industry training. The availability of Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) ensures that participants receive industry-recognized credentials in high-growth sectors.
 - Example: Healthcare and skilled trades training address regional demand and employment opportunities.
- **Employer Engagement Initiatives:** Regional workforce systems maintain active employer partnerships through sector-based strategies, American Job Centers (AJCs), and industry-led workforce initiatives. Employers contribute to curriculum development, work-based learning opportunities, and hiring incentives.
- **Focus on Youth:** There is a strong emphasis on youth development through the WIOA Youth Program, which includes education, training, work experience, and incentives, ensuring that young people are prepared to enter the workforce with the skills they need.

Weaknesses:

- **Limited Access to Public Transportation in Rural Areas:** A significant portion of Region 7's population resides in rural areas, where transportation options are limited. This often creates barriers for participants who need to attend training programs or secure employment.
- **Skills Mismatch:** Some training programs do not fully align with evolving employer demands, particularly in rapidly changing industries like manufacturing and information technology.
- **Inconsistent Employer Engagement:** While some employers actively engage in workforce development, others are not as involved in shaping the training programs or participating in initiatives that would help address skill gaps. This lack of alignment can hinder the region's ability to meet the specific needs of employers.
- **Workforce Capacity:** Limited staffing and funding resources at AJCs and program partners can affect the ability to scale workforce development activities to meet regional demand.

- **Participant Barriers:** Individuals with barriers to employment, such as lack of digital literacy, affordable childcare, and housing instability, often face difficulties in completing education and training programs.

Analyze the capacity of the regional partners to provide workforce development activities to address the education and skill needs of the workforce including individuals with barriers to employment.

1. **Educational Institutions:** LCTCS campuses and vocational schools in Region 7 deliver industry-recognized credentials and associate degree programs aligned with regional priority sectors such as healthcare, advanced manufacturing, IT, and skilled trades.
 - **Example:** Bossier Parish Community College and Northwestern State University offer specialized training in fields like healthcare, manufacturing, and information technology, addressing regional workforce needs.
2. **AJCs:** American Job Centers provide job fairs, workshops, case management, career services, and job placement support for individuals facing employment barriers.
3. **WIOA Programs:** The WIOA programs play a crucial role in upskilling individuals with barriers to employment. Through training, job search assistance, and work experience programs, WIOA provides personalized services to meet the educational and skill needs of participants.
 - **Example:** WIOA Youth programs assist participants in developing soft skills, completing certifications, and gaining work experience, which improves their employability.
4. **Community Support:** Several community-based organizations are dedicated to providing education and training opportunities for disadvantaged populations. These organizations, in collaboration with LWDBs, ensure that the most vulnerable populations can access workforce development programs.

Challenges:

- Despite the existing capacity, there is often a need for more specialized programs in rapidly evolving fields such as digital literacy, advanced manufacturing, and green energy, where industry demands outpace current offerings.
- Limited capacity to expand training programs in rural areas due to resource constraints, lack of infrastructure, and transportation barriers.
- Cross-training between the Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC) and Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) is essential due to limited staff covering large territories; equipping local Business Services staff to assist employers with apprenticeship applications and provide timely guidance will enhance efficiency and ensure quicker turnaround times.
- There is a need to address competition among workforce programs targeting the same population and services by fostering collaboration to leverage resources more effectively and expand outreach to a broader service population.

Analyze the capacity of the regional partners to provide activities to address the needs of employers:

1. **Workforce Solutions for Employers:** Region 7's workforce development system offers services that support employers in recruiting and training employees. These services include customized training, job matching, and access to job fairs.
 - **Example:** Partnering with businesses in healthcare, manufacturing, and technology sectors to create tailored training programs that meet specific industry needs.
2. **Apprenticeship Programs:** The region has an increasing focus on apprenticeship programs, which allow employers to play a key role in the development of their future workforce. These programs provide on-the-job training while allowing employers to ensure that employees are equipped with industry-specific skills.

3. Incumbent Worker Training: Region 7 offers incumbent worker training programs that allow current employees to upgrade their skills and enhance their productivity, addressing the evolving skill needs of employers.

Challenges:

- The primary challenge is ensuring consistent employer engagement across all sectors. Some industries, particularly in rural areas, may not see the value in participating in workforce development activities.
- Many small businesses in the region have limited resources to offer training or provide internships, which reduces the potential for job seekers to gain hands-on experience with employers.
- Cross-training between the Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC) and Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) is essential due to limited staff covering large territories; equipping local Business Services staff to assist employers with apprenticeship applications and provide timely guidance will enhance efficiency and ensure quicker turnaround times.
- There is a need to address competition among workforce programs targeting the same population and services by fostering collaboration to leverage resources more effectively and expand outreach to a broader service population.

How well do existing training programs in the region and local areas prepare job seekers to enter and retain employment with regional businesses?

1. Technical and Vocational Training: Many local training programs, especially those in partnership with community colleges, prepare job seekers well for entry-level employment. For example, technical training in welding, healthcare certifications, and IT skills help individuals secure positions in high-demand industries.

2. Sector-Specific Training: Programs are increasingly focusing on sectors that drive regional growth, including healthcare, manufacturing, and information technology. However, there is still room for improvement in aligning programs with specific employer needs in emerging fields and overcome a “silo” mentality.

3. Work-Based Learning: Many training programs integrate work-based learning, such as internships, apprenticeships, and on-the-job training, which provide participants with real-world experience and increase their chances of retention in the workforce.

Challenges:

- Although training programs are in place, at times, there can be a lack of alignment between the skills taught and the skills employers need. This gap is particularly noticeable in fast-growing industries where new technologies require more specialized skills.
 - Example: Despite Region 7's successful collaboration with the Louisiana Workforce Commission and Bossier Parish Community College (BPCC) to secure BPCC's Fiber Optics Technology training program on the ETPL, challenges arose in connecting program graduates with employment opportunities at internet service providers awarded grants for broadband construction and deployment, despite extensive stakeholder preparation and coordination.
- Increased focus on retention support, such as mentorship and career coaching, is needed to ensure long-term employment outcomes.

Commitments of Program Partners to Implement Strategies

Region 7's workforce development partners have demonstrated a growing commitment to unifying and addressing both the educational and employment needs of individuals and the workforce demands of employers. Their collaborative efforts include:

Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) and American Job Centers (AJCs)

- Provide comprehensive career services, including case management, career coaching, and job placement assistance.

- Facilitate access to Individual Training Accounts (ITAs), On-the-Job Training (OJT), and work-based learning opportunities.
- Ensure individuals with barriers to employment receive supportive services, such as transportation assistance, digital literacy training, and financial aid navigation.

Community Colleges, Vocational Training Providers, and LCTCS Institutions

- Develop and deliver industry-relevant training programs in alignment with regional demand sectors and employer feedback.
- Expand credential programs in high-demand industries, such as healthcare, advanced manufacturing, and information technology.
- Collaborate with employers to create tailored curricula that meet workforce needs.
- Increase dual-enrollment opportunities for high school students to support early career preparation.

Employers and Industry Partners

- Engage actively in workforce development efforts, particularly in key sectors like healthcare and manufacturing.
- Support initiatives such as job fairs, apprenticeship programs, and customized training to strengthen talent pipelines.

Partner Agencies and Community-Based Organizations (DCFS, LRS, CSBG, CBOs)

- Provide complementary services, including childcare, housing assistance, transportation, and financial aid, to individuals facing barriers to employment.
- Offer wraparound support services, such as mentorship, to ensure successful workforce participation.

WIOA Youth Programs

- Expand outreach and engagement to serve in-school and out-of-school youth.
- Provide targeted training, credentialing, and soft skills development programs.
- Encourage program completion through incentives like the Conover Workplace Readiness certificates.

Through these commitments, regional partners will continue to enhance workforce development activities, address barriers to employment, and meet the evolving needs of employers to ensure a skilled and prepared workforce in Region 7.

B. Describe how transportation and other supportive services are coordinated within the region (§ 679.510(a)(1)(vi)). Plans must respond to the following questions:

- What regional organizations currently provide or could provide supportive services?
- What policies and procedures will be established to promote coordination of supportive services delivery?

Regional Organizations Providing Supportive Services

In Region 7, various regional organizations currently provide or could provide supportive services that address critical barriers to employment, such as transportation, housing, and childcare. Key partners in the region include:

- Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS): Offers a range of services that assist low-income populations, including transportation assistance and childcare.
- Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS): Supports individuals with disabilities, offering services that may include transportation and other needs-related support.
- Community Services Block Grant (CSBG): Provides resources to assist low income individuals and families in achieving self-sufficiency.
- SporTran public transportation in Shreveport/Bossier area sports a fleet of modern heavy duty and smaller cutaway buses equipped to handle all passengers, including those with disabilities. Thanks to the Zero Fare Program, residents ride FREE through year 2025.

- Rural Public Transit Program: A pilot operated by the Rapides Area Planning Commission, offering curb-to-curb transportation in Grant and Natchitoches Parishes for the general public and ADA-eligible individuals, Monday–Friday, with service running from 7:00 AM to 5:00 PM.
- Local Public Transportation Providers: Many urban areas in Region 7 have public transportation systems that can offer affordable commuting options.
- However, rural areas may experience limited availability, making transportation a significant barrier.
- Private Transportation Providers: Ride-sharing services such as Uber and Lyft help provide transportation options in rural areas where public transportation may be lacking.

These organizations collaborate to provide services that address the specific needs of individuals in Region 7, particularly those with barriers to employment.

- What policies and procedures will be established to promote coordination of supportive services delivery?

Policies and Procedures for Coordinating Supportive Services

To maximize resources and ensure the efficient delivery of supportive services, Region 7 has established several policies and procedures:

1. Coordination of Transportation and Other Supportive Services:

- The Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) will work in collaboration with core partners, including CSBG, LRS, DCFS, and local transportation providers, to identify the needs of participants and develop strategies to reduce transportation barriers.
- Transportation assistance will be provided on an as-needed basis, based on individual assessments, and could include bus passes, gas cards, or stipends.
- In areas with limited public transportation options, shared ride services like Uber and Lyft will be leveraged to help participants get to training programs or employment opportunities.

2. Maximizing Resource Utilization:

- LWDBs will share best practices and explore opportunities for replicating successful strategies across both LWDA 70 and LWDA 71. This could include sharing transportation services or developing joint service offerings to help participants more efficiently access training and employment.
- Coordination with partner organizations offering additional supportive services, such as housing or childcare, has helped streamline service delivery and reduce duplication of efforts. This approach improves efficiency and makes the best use of available resources.

3. Payment for Supportive Services:

- Supportive services payments will be available for adult, dislocated worker, and youth participants. These payments are designed to help customers participate in workforce programs, secure, and retain employment.
- Payments for transportation and other services will be based on the individual's assessment and availability of funds, with careful monitoring to ensure the fair and effective use of resources.

4. Avoiding Redundancy and Promoting Efficiency:

- LWDBs will maintain clear policies and procedures for administering supportive services. These guidelines will ensure that funding is used efficiently and that services are provided in a coordinated manner, minimizing duplication and redundancy across programs.
- By creating a unified approach, Region 7 can deliver a comprehensive suite of supportive services that helps participants overcome barriers to employment and achieve long-term success.

In summary, Region 7 is committed to providing a holistic approach to workforce development by coordinating transportation and other supportive services. This collaborative effort will ensure that participants have the resources they need to succeed in workforce programs and secure sustainable employment opportunities.

C. Describe the coordination of services with regional economic development services and WIOA service providers (§679.510(a)(1)(vii)). Plans must answer the following questions:

- What economic development organizations, WIOA service providers or businesses are actively engaged in regional planning?
- What economic development organizations, WIOA service providers or businesses were invited to participate but declined?

Active Engagement in Regional Planning

Each Local Area Board is comprised of at least 51% private sector representatives from local businesses, representing a variety of sectors, including the region's top industry sectors. These representatives provide ongoing feedback on strategy development.

Economic development representatives have been invited to and have participated in local and regional planning, offering meaningful and strategic input into the development of sector strategies.

Business Engagement Strategies

Business Services Team representatives actively engage with the community through:

- Participation in Regional Meetings and Chamber events.
 - o Speaking at workforce community meetings.
 - o Conducting in-person employer site visits.
 - o Maintaining consistent communication via email and phone.
- This proactive engagement generates regular feedback from employers, which informs workforce strategies and initiatives.

Stakeholder Feedback and Plan Review

To ensure an open forum for all stakeholders:

- Opportunities were provided for stakeholders to address the comprehensive four-year plan directly.
- Feedback was gathered through outreach efforts, including partnerships with economic development organizations, educational institutions, and local municipalities.
- The Local Area Workforce Boards review and approve the plan every two years, with the opportunity to vote on the plan during Board meetings.

Public Comment and Transparency

The updated plan is:

- Presented to the Board for comments.
- Publicly posted on each Local Workforce Development Area's (LWDA) webpage.
- Noticed in local newspapers throughout the ten-parish region for four weeks to invite public comment.

Economic development organizations, WIOA service providers and businesses that actively engaged in regional planning:

- Bossier Parish Community College (BPCC) - Adult Education (BPCC)
- Community Development/City of Shreveport - WIOA Title 1 (Adult, Dislocated Worker & Youth)
- Community Foundation of North Louisiana
- Incumbent Worker Training Program (IWTP) Unemployment Insurance (UI)
- Job Corps – Shreveport Job Corps
- Jobs for Veterans (JSVG)
- Labor Programs

- Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC) Wagner-Peyser (includes MSFW)
- Motivation Education & Training, Inc. (MET) - National Farm Worker Job Programs (NFJP)
- National Association for Hispanic Elderly (AYUDA) - Senior Employment
- North Louisiana Economic Partnership
- Northwest Louisiana Technical Community College (NLTCC) - Adult Education
- Office of Administration
- Rapid Response
- Reentry Employment Opportunities
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (STEP)
- The Coordinating & Development Corporation - WIOA Title 1 (Adult, Dislocated Worker & Youth
- Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA)
- Vocational Rehabilitation Services

What economic development organizations, WIOA service providers or businesses were invited to participate but declined?

No economic development organizations, WIOA service providers, or businesses invited to participate in the planning process declined the invitation.

D. Describe the coordination of administrative cost arrangements, including the pooling of funds for administrative costs, as appropriate (§ 679.510(a)(1)(v)).

The coordination of administrative cost arrangements, including the pooling of funds for administrative costs, is facilitated through the Infrastructure Funding Agreements (IFAs) and Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) established among American Job Center (AJC) partners. These agreements are essential for maintaining an efficient and effective One- Stop delivery system that ensures equitable and stable funding for operations and services.

Key Coordination Strategies

1. Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Agreements

- Local workforce boards (LWDA 70 and LWDA 71), through their One-Stop Operator (OSO), facilitate and complete MOUs/IFAs with core title providers and required partners.
- Each MOU outlines the following:
 - o Services Provided: Services delivered through the One-Stop system, along with methods for coordination and delivery.
 - o Cost Sharing: Funding of services and operational costs through cash, non-cash, or third party in-kind contributions to create a stable and equitable funding stream.
 - o Referral Methods: Referral processes between the OSO and partners to ensure individuals receive appropriate services and activities.
 - o Accessibility: Provisions addressing the needs of workers, youth, and individuals with barriers to employment, including those with disabilities, to ensure access to necessary services, technology, and materials.
 - o Amendments and Reviews: Procedures for amending the MOU and assurances of a review at least every three years to maintain proper funding and service delivery.

2. Cost Allocation and Resource Sharing

- MOUs and IFAs ensure the equitable sharing of infrastructure costs among partner programs, proportional to their use of AJCs and the relative benefits they receive.
- Agreements are structured to leverage resources, eliminate duplication of services, and improve overall efficiency, thereby reducing both administrative and program costs.

3. Staff Training

- MOUs enable AJC partners to provide enhanced staff training opportunities that go beyond what individual budgets might typically allow.

4. Quarterly Invoicing

- Local boards, through the OSO, invoice AJC partners quarterly to ensure timely payment of shared costs and proper financial management.

Strengthening Partnerships

Building on a foundation of robust partnerships, local boards, in collaboration with the OSO, continuously expand and deepen relationships with AJC partners. These efforts support the alignment of Regional and Local Plans, enhance local programs, and foster innovative opportunities for shared clients.

Alignment with Regional and Local Plans

The strategies outlined above integrate seamlessly with the broader goals of the Regional and Local Plans, ensuring the effective delivery of services and sustainable operations for the One-Stop system.

CHAPTER 3: VISION, GOALS AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES: REGIONAL

This section will outline how the Local Board(s) will coordinate the regional workforce, education and economic development activities with regional activities that are carried out in the local areas. The responses must ensure alignment with other plans as well as illustrate that businesses, education, and workforce development stakeholders have provided input and are involved in the development of the strategies.

A. Describe the local strategic vision to support state and regional economic growth (§ 679.560(a)(5)). Describe how this aligns with the State of Louisiana's vision and principles.

Region 7's workforce strategic vision focuses on enhancing the competitive position of Northwest Louisiana businesses by developing a highly skilled workforce that meets the needs of employers and supports regional economic growth. This vision aligns with the State of Louisiana's principles by emphasizing innovation, collaboration, and inclusiveness.

Region 7 envisions a workforce development system that is employer-centric, leveraging the collective efforts of economic development partners and fostering strong industry partnerships. The system is holistically focused on regional sector strategies, prioritizing industries that drive economic growth. By utilizing current labor market data, Region 7 addresses both the supply and demand sides of the regional economy, understanding employer needs and evaluating the effectiveness of education and training systems in meeting those demands.

The region's vision emphasizes building career pathways through educational opportunities across the region, ensuring that all individuals, regardless of barriers, have access to employment within targeted industry sectors. This includes creating pathways for low-skilled adults, youth, veterans, individuals with disabilities, returning talent, and those facing multiple challenges to enter the workforce.

To achieve this, Region 7 aims to create a unified system of workforce, education, and economic development partners that supports businesses and individuals while contributing to a vibrant and robust regional economy. This system remains responsive to changes in the economy, including shifts in dominant industries, technological advancements, and evolving skill requirements. By collaborating with educators and economic development agencies, the workforce development system provides an aligned and adaptable framework to support career advancement for workers and job seekers.

The One-Door Employment System: Building on the State of Louisiana's commitment to innovation and accessibility, Region 7 will actively be integrating the One-Door employment system into its service delivery. This initiative provides a unified platform that connects job seekers, employers, and workers, creating a seamless experience. By streamlining services and enhancing the referral process, Region 7 simplifies access to employment and training opportunities while ensuring tailored support for vulnerable populations.

The One-Stop delivery system in Region 7 complements this vision by providing a true "One-Stop" experience, offering seamless access to programs and resources for employers, workers, and job seekers—whether in person or electronically. This comprehensive approach reduces redundancies, enhances service efficiency, and ensures individuals have clear pathways to success.

By focusing on strategic alignment with Louisiana's broader goals, Region 7 strengthens labor force participation and economic resilience. Expanding work-based learning opportunities, such as Registered Apprenticeships, and leveraging sector partnerships further position the region as a leader in workforce innovation. Through collaboration, inclusivity, and targeted interventions, Region 7 is building a resilient and vibrant workforce ecosystem that supports the shared vision of economic growth and workforce excellence for all Louisianans.

B. Describe the local goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce (including youth and individuals with barriers to employment) and goals relating to the performance accountability measures based on performance indicators (§ 677.155(a)(1)).

- **Increase Access to Employment, Education, and Training Services for Those with Barriers to Employment:**
Establish and expand Career Pathways that provide clear routes to skill, credential, and degree attainment, particularly for individuals facing barriers to employment, such as low-skilled adults and youth. Leverage programs like Jump Start and WorkReady U to provide foundational and advanced skills training.
- **Promote Equity and Workforce Participation of Historically Underrepresented Populations:**
Partner with community-based organizations and stakeholders to integrate historically underrepresented populations, including individuals with disabilities, veterans, and out-of-school youth, into sector-based Career Pathways. Ensure equity by utilizing programs like WorkReady U and Jump Start to close educational gaps and increase workforce participation.
- **Align Workforce Investment, Education, and Economic Development Systems for a Coordinated Workforce Development System:**
Strengthen the alignment of Career Pathways with local economic development and education systems, ensuring a seamless transition for participants between educational opportunities, workforce services, and job placements. Integrate programs like Jump Start and STEP Forward as key elements of the Career Pathways model for in-school and out-of-school youth.
- **Develop and Maintain a High-Quality Workforce System to Meet Business Needs and Ensure Global Competitiveness:**
Foster the development of Regional Sector Partnerships with employers, industry groups, and business associations to create demand-driven Career Pathways that align with local labor market needs. Expand opportunities for Registered Apprenticeships and Pre-Apprenticeships to ensure that the workforce is equipped with the skills required for success in a global economy.
- **Support Lifelong Learning and Up-Skilling for Workers Throughout Their Careers:**
Provide ongoing opportunities for career advancement and up-skilling through initiatives like Registered Apprenticeships, Pre-Apprenticeships, and seamless credit transfers between postsecondary institutions. Ensure that workers have the tools to continuously build skills and adapt to evolving workforce demands.
- **Increase Opportunities for Youth Work-Based Learning Experiences:**
Expand work-based learning opportunities for youth by increasing access to summer employment, apprenticeships, internships, and other hands-on experiences that are integrated into the Career Pathways model. Ensure that youth gain valuable work experience to improve their skills and future employability.

Region 7's performance accountability goals focus on improving employer engagement, increasing jobseeker outcomes, and expanding access to Career Pathways. Key objectives include increasing employer participation in the HiRE system, tracking Repeat Business Customers, and enhancing career opportunities for individuals, particularly those facing barriers to employment. By expanding sector-based Career Pathways and incorporating supportive services like transportation and childcare, Region 7 aims to reduce barriers and improve workforce participation, ensuring that both youth and adults can access quality training and education that aligns with industry needs.

The region also focuses on youth engagement in work-based learning opportunities like internships, apprenticeships, and summer employment to prepare them for stable, sustainable employment. By fostering partnerships with businesses, Region 7 will align training programs with workforce demands and measure success through metrics like credential attainment, employment placement, and retention rates.

Lastly, Region 7 aims to establish a comprehensive accountability system that evaluates the effectiveness of workforce programs using both business-focused and jobseeker metrics. This approach will ensure that the region's workforce system continues to evolve to meet the needs of both employers and workers, driving economic growth and improving individual career outcomes.

C. Provide a description of the regional and local strategies that will achieve the vision and principles. This must include a description of the strategies and services that will be used in the local areas:

1. To facilitate engagement of employers in workforce development programs, including small employers and employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations (§ 679.560(b)(3)(i));

Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) 70 and 71 collaborate with regional economic development entities to address workforce needs in Region 7, with a focus on manufacturing, healthcare, and construction.

Key strategies include:

- **Quarterly Workforce Development Ecosystem Meetings:**
Led by the COO of the Northwest Louisiana Economic Partnership, these meetings engage stakeholders to identify workforce needs by parish and drive regional alignment.
- **Business Engagement Initiative:**
Focused on developing tailored service packages to meet business needs, particularly for small businesses and targeted industry sectors.

Regional Business Services Strategy

A regional sector-based approach transforms workforce development service delivery in Region 7, ensuring:

- **Strategic Partnerships:**
Collaboration among businesses, training providers, community organizations, and key stakeholders to address workforce challenges and promote economic competitiveness.
- **Employer-Centric Solutions:**
This problem-oriented approach addresses specific needs of businesses within high-demand sectors, fostering systemic change.

Benefits of the Regional Approach

- **Coordinated Service Delivery:**
Regional Business Services Teams (RBSTs) unify workforce agencies, including Rapid Response, Business Service Representatives, and others, to serve businesses effectively across parish boundaries.
- **Enhanced Talent Pool:**
Expanding geographic service areas increases the number of qualified job seekers available to employers.
- **Support for Economically Less-Developed Areas:**
Recruiting, training, and retaining workers in underserved areas is prioritized.
- **Skill Alignment:**
Meeting employer needs for recruitment, retention, and training, while promoting career advancement for workers.

Key Components of the Regional Business Services Team (RBST)

The RBST integrates programs such as:

- Wagner-Peyser
- Veterans/LVER
- WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Programs
- Louisiana Rehabilitation Services/REDS
- Incumbent Worker Training Program
- Rapid Response Team
- Other employer-focused stakeholders

This alignment ensures seamless delivery of services to small businesses and industries across the region.

Partner Co-Location for Enhanced Communication

Several American Job Centers in Region 7 houses multiple programs, including:

- Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA)
- Business Service Representatives (BSRs)
- Incumbent Worker Training Program (IWTP)
- Rapid Response (RR)
- Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP)
- WIOA Adult, Youth, and Dislocated Worker Programs
- Wagner Peyser (WP)
- Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS)

Daily communication among co-located partners fosters collaboration, strengthens service delivery, and facilitates cross-regional coordination, adding credibility to workforce services.

Employer Engagement Services and Activities

- Facilitating and supporting employer events.
- Participating in regional business services coordination and outreach efforts.
- Engaging employers in high-wage and high-demand industries, alongside other key sectors.

This strategy aligns workforce development efforts with regional labor market needs, supporting economic growth and workforce advancement throughout Region 7

2. To support a local workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses in the local area (§ 679.560(b)(3)(ii));

The Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) 70 and 71 will continue implementing a proactive, strategic approach to engage local employers and ensure alignment with the workforce needs of in-demand industries and growing sectors. Through targeted sector strategy discussions, the Boards will foster collaboration with employers, economic developers, and community partners to create a workforce system that enhances employment opportunities and supports the economic well-being of Louisiana families.

To strengthen this alignment, the Boards are focusing on expanding employer outreach and enhancing service delivery through the efforts of Title I programs. Local American Job Centers (AJCs) are encouraged to play a pivotal role in community engagement by participating in local chambers of commerce, attending business events, and strengthening relationships with regional employers. The Region 7 One-Stop Operators will facilitate collaboration among AJCs, chambers, and community partners to ensure cohesive efforts and effective outreach.

LWDBs 70 and 71, in partnership with operators, will develop and promote strategies to inform employers about the comprehensive range of services offered through the AJCs, including:

- Employee Recruitment and Screening
- Job Posting Assistance
- Organizing and Participating in Hiring Events
- Prescreening and Referring Qualified Candidates
- Work-Based Learning Opportunities
- Information on Tax Credits
- Access to Labor Market Information (LMI)
- Labor Law Compliance Guidance
- Rapid Response Program Support

By disseminating this information, the Boards aim to strengthen partnerships with local businesses, enhance service accessibility, and address workforce challenges effectively.

Utilizing local labor market information (LMI) will be a cornerstone of the Boards' data-driven approach. By analyzing trends, industry demands, skill gaps, and economic conditions, the Boards will develop initiatives that meet the evolving needs of employers. Louisiana's LMI will guide decisions to identify in-demand industries, forecast job growth, and align workforce training programs with employer requirements.

Through these efforts, LWDBs 70 and 71 are committed to building a responsive, data-informed workforce development system that meets business needs, promotes economic growth, and delivers meaningful employment outcomes for Region 7.

3. To better coordinate workforce development programs and economic development (§ 679.560(b)(3)(iii));

The Regional Labor Market Area for Northwest Louisiana contains Regional and Local Economic Development Organizations (EDOs) that have a history of partnering with each other, higher education institutions, industry associations, and Local and State government to achieve shared workforce goals that will advance their Regional economies, along the lines of the activities identified in this Plan. Partnership with Regional and Local EDOs will be most beneficial in achieving these strategic goals of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Regional/Local Plan.

1. Establish Career Pathways as a model for skill, credential, and degree attainment for Louisiana citizens to secure jobs that provide opportunities for economic independence and family stability.

2. Increase the participation and utilization of the workforce system by employers and job-seekers.

In particular, Regional and Local EDOs have agreed to:

- Use their strategic plans, industry targets, and priority programs to work with the WIOA Regional Planning Team to develop common goals and priorities for workforce development.
- Provide feedback on priority status of top industries for this Region based on data and emerging trends learned from existing, new, and prospective employers.
 - o For example, the North Louisiana Economic Partnership (NLEP) conducted a 5-year strategic plan that identifies target industries for business development based on our Regional strengths and assets (Advanced Manufacturing to include Aerospace, Professional Services to include Information Technology, Forestry and Agribusiness, and Transportation, Distribution & Logistics), and target talent clusters that should be prioritized to ensure a skilled workforce for our economic driver industries. These talent clusters (skilled trades, healthcare, and information technology) line up well with the Star Jobs and Tiered Job analysis done by the State.

- Assist in development of sector partnerships by:
 - o Providing guidance on priority target sectors (see above)
 - o Identifying employers in priority target sectors
 - o Identifying existing industry associations to leverage in development of sector partnerships (e.g. Manufacturing Managers Council, FAME Northwest Louisiana, TECHBY20, Louisiana Associated General Contractors)
 - o Invite new employers in target sectors to join sector partnership
- Serve on Regional Business Services Team, including attending regular Team meetings and providing feedback from employers on employment needs, existing and emerging, as well as skills gaps.
- Assist in development of Career Pathways and stackable credentials based on employer feedback.
 - o Based on strong existing relationships with higher education institutions in developing or updating certification programs to meet the needs of employers (e.g. Advisory Board participation, scheduling intensive interviews/tours of employers' facilities and critical skill needs), EDOs can convene industry-education-training work sessions to develop detailed Career Pathways with relevant industry-valued credentials.
- Assist in alignment of sector training between K-12 (Jump Start) and post-secondary to ensure there are not gaps and that students can easily transition from industry training under Jump Start to related industry training at a post-secondary institution within their Region.
- Identify employers that could form consortia for training (Incumbent Worker Training, in particular) or Apprenticeship programs (e.g. FAME).
- Solicit feedback from employers about Star Jobs identified for this Region (are they relevant for Regional employers, what jobs are missing). Assist in creation and dissemination of target sector employer skill surveys.
- Market workforce solutions offered by the Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC), American Job Centers (AJCs), and Louisiana Economic Development (LED) Fast Start to existing and new employers.

As part of existing business outreach efforts, as well as business development proposals, it is critical that EDOs fully understand all workforce training and recruitment programs and services available to assist employers and can relay the information to employers and assist in any follow-up.

- Assist in development and implementation of public marketing strategies to highlight Star Jobs and training programs that support them to all segments of the community (parents, elected officials, non-profits organizations, other government agencies, etc).
 - o North Louisiana Manufacturing Month is one way the North Louisiana Economic Partnership (NLEP) is providing career exploration, by coordinating tours of manufacturing plants and manufacturing training programs for high school students in Northwest Louisiana. Each student receives a take-home booklet of information on manufacturing occupations, average salaries, and Regional training programs.
 - o NLEP facilitates 2-3 convenings a year of the Northwest Louisiana Workforce Development Ecosystem, which is made up of a variety of governmental, nonprofit, education, chamber and economic development organizations that have at least some parts of their mission and programming dedicated to helping residents qualify for family-supporting jobs. At these convenings, partner organizations share information about new programs or new funding sources that are tied to high-demand, good-wage jobs so all entities present can connect their clients to them.
- Assist in identifying alternate funding (private sector, Federal government, non-profit) for critical training programs or services that support Star Jobs.
 - o This could include organizing employer consortia for Apprenticeship programs, soliciting private, public, and foundation dollars for support of Jump Start implementation and marketing, and bringing together collaborators on Federal or National foundation grant opportunities.

- o An example of this is the Federation for Advanced Manufacturing Education (FAME), which has a chapter in Northwest Louisiana based in the Shreveport-Bossier market. The program is a partnership between participating manufacturers, Bossier Parish Community College, and “backbone” organization NLEP to develop and administer a work-study model that prepares students to become skilled maintenance technicians, a high-demand occupation across the nation.

Region 7 is committed to fostering seamless integration between workforce development and economic development efforts to drive job creation, enhance skill development, and support long-term economic growth. By working closely with the Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC), regional economic development organizations, and local business leaders, Region 7 ensures alignment of workforce strategies with the broader economic goals of the region.

Engaging New Employers

- Collaborate with the Louisiana Workforce Commission and regional economic development partners to provide incoming employers with comprehensive information about the workforce services and resources available to them.
- Offer customized support to new employers, including access to recruitment, training, and work-based learning programs, to ensure their workforce needs are met.

Strengthening Communication Channels

- Maintain ongoing communication with economic developers to exchange critical workforce intelligence and share insights about industry trends, employer needs, and regional priorities.
- Use shared intelligence to inform training providers and partners about current and anticipated workforce demands, ensuring alignment of training programs with employer needs.

Participation in Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Planning

- Actively participate in regional CEDS planning meetings alongside economic development partners, business leaders, and other stakeholders.
- Contribute to the development of long-term strategic plans that integrate workforce development as a key component of regional economic growth.

Enhancing Collaboration with Local Business Leaders

- Work with local employers to identify skill gaps and develop tailored workforce solutions, including on-the-job training, apprenticeships, and upskilling initiatives.
- Engage business leaders in discussions about emerging industries and opportunities to create sustainable jobs in the region.

Through these coordinated efforts, Region 7 will ensure that workforce development programs remain responsive to the economic development needs of the region, supporting sustainable growth and the creation of a skilled and competitive workforce.

4. To strengthen linkages between the one-stop delivery system and unemployment insurance programs (§ 679.560(b)(3)(iv));

Region 7 will strengthen linkages between the one-stop delivery system and unemployment insurance programs by developing seamless referral processes and ensuring effective coordination between services. Formal referral procedures are established to connect unemployment insurance claimants with one-stop services, supported by regular staff training on eligibility criteria and application processes. Integrated service delivery can further enhance these connections by co-locating unemployment insurance program representatives at the one-stop center, where feasible, and using shared technology systems like HiRE to provide unified access to reemployment assistance, job matching, and training opportunities.

Additionally, the one-stop delivery system can collaborate with unemployment insurance programs to deliver tailored job search support that meets work-search requirements, such as hosting workshops on resume writing, interview skills, and labor market navigation. Offering targeted Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessments (RESEA) can further assist claimants in transitioning from unemployment to employment by providing career planning, skills development, and job matching.

Louisiana is one of the few states to operate the Re-employment and Services Eligibility Assessment Grant (RESEA) state-wide due to its integrated service delivery system. Louisiana's system is demand-driven and operated under continuous improvement process. Therefore, the system is able to respond quickly to immediate and long-term credentials in demand occupations. Louisiana's integrated service-delivery process was redesigned as a foundation for establishing operations that support the key principles found in the new Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) law and to initiate expanding partnerships and services.

All of the Region's American Job Centers (AJCs) staff members are trained in the program overview, case management, and all key aspects of job-specific functions. Administrative and managerial staff members at all levels provide operational oversight and technical support for programs.

Functional Supervisors through their Local managerial structure and in cooperation with Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA) leadership are responsible for ensuring a seamless process in AJCs through coordinating staff training, providing technical support, maintaining program documentation and continuous communication and dissemination of information. These leaders work in coordination with Management Information Systems (MIS) technicians and Unemployment Insurance (UI) technical support teams on all issues relating to UI eligibility, disqualifications and requalification.

State management, with support from Local management, also provides fiscal And programmatic monitoring and functions as a liaison between workforce and UI, and UI staff (the claim center, adjudication, appeals and the technical support unit) and provides technical support for external customers (job seekers/claimants) and internal staff (Workforce Development Specialists (WFDS), and workforce management). The UI technical support unit provides training to all WIOA and Wagner-Peyser (WP) staff concerning Federal and State UI regulations, eligibility reviews, adjudications services, appeal processes and all other related UI services for jobseekers/claimants.

MIS also provides technical assistance for State and Local staff using Louisiana Workforce Commission's (LWC's) integrated case-management system, Helping Individuals Reach Employment (HiRE). This system is used to record and track all re-employment service-delivery activities. Staff training is provided quarterly via localized Statewide training, web-based courses and conferences and meetings.

Subject-matter experts in workforce services and UI facilitate initial, recurring And specialized training as part of the Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP) and As necessary to ensure all service-delivery methods and program-specific goals are being met.

After the jobseeker/claimant files an initial UI claim and is determined monetarily eligible, he/she is profiled. Jobseekers/claimants that meet specific variables for RESEA as set in the State's statistical model and receive a factor score of greater than 2.4 are placed in the RESEA selection pool. Once he/ she has claimed their 2nd week within their claim series, they are selected to participate in the RESEA program and participation becomes mandatory.

All UI for Ex-servicemembers (UCX) jobseekers/claimants who are determined monetarily eligible will be required to participate in the RESEA program. Their factor score will not be used to determine participation, but rather determine job readiness.

Description of a RESEA

Group and/or Individual RESEA Orientation: Provides general information concerning Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefit eligibility, available reemployment services, guidance on the use of self-assisted services, provision of Labor Market Information (LMI) and other services available through Helping Individuals Reach Employment (HiRE) and workforce partners.

Eligibility Review

Provides immediate feedback on UI eligibility of each jobseeker/claimant by reviewing work-search activities, ensuring job-seeker/claimant is actively seeking employment and is able and available for work. Any issues discovered, such as able and available, are immediately referred to the adjudication unit to be investigated and eligibility determination assigned.

Labor Market Information

Provides information on labor market and career information that addresses the jobseeker/ claimant's specific employment needs.

Employment Strategy Plan

Face-to-face interviews conducted by Workforce Development Specialist (WFDS) staff to assist in the development and review of the jobseeker/claimant's plan. Once a job-seeker/claimant registers in HiRE, a general plan is automatically created in HiRE, with populated information such as the last occupation, information on job-search activities and online courses taken in HiRE. Staff discusses strategies to create job alerts and suggests trainings and other re-employment services. Staff assists the job-seeker/claimant to build their Plan and explore career and educational goals.

Individual Employment Plan (IEP)

Face-to-face interaction conducted by WFDS staff to assist in evaluating the needs of the jobseeker/claimant including a structured assessment identifying barriers to employment and establishment of employment and/or educational goals with attainable objectives and outcomes. Plans are developed, updated, and tracked using the State's web-based case management system HiRE.

Referral to Re-employment Services and Appropriate Training

Through identified barriers, employment challenges, and career goals during the face-to-face interview session, referrals to reemployment services which include, but are not limited to, workshops and/or appropriate training will be provided to each jobseeker/claimant in order to meet the expected objective of the plan and documented in HiRE. The plan will be amended as needed through career counseling.

Re-employment Services

Job-seekers/claimants will be provided an array of re-employment services that include, but are not limited to, workshops (resume writing, interviewing techniques, and job readiness), and job clubs that support peer-to-peer networking, computer literacy, and financial literacy.

Once the jobseeker/claimant has filed their second week of a monetarily eligible claim within their claim series and has met profiling criteria, he/she is selected for participation in RESEA and notified via a letter generated through an automated process. Letters provide notice of their RESEA appointment with aWFDS and the requirements and date the service must be completed in order to maintain UI eligibility. Jobseekers/claimants have two weeks (14 days) to comply with the service requirement from the date on their notification letter.

Initial notification letters mailed to selected jobseekers/claimants scheduling their RESEA appointment, failure to keep this appointment may result in a denial of UI benefits.

Jobseekers/claimants who fail to report for their scheduled RESEA with no contact with the WFDS or UI Claim Center are considered a Failure to Report and are in jeopardy of losing benefits for one (1) week. Subsequent RESEA non-compliance determinations will result in an indefinite disqualification until the jobseeker/claimant complies. A non-monetary determination is issued to the job-seeker/ claimant explaining the reason for their disqualification resulting in a stoppage of benefits. Notification is mailed to the jobseeker/claimant and a copy is sent to their personal message center in the HiRE system. The UI Claim Center number is provided for assistance on all correspondence.

The Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC) has taken an aggressive approach in developing more comprehensive integrated systems throughout the agency. True integration and collaborative processes have been established through building stronger links among Office of Workforce Development (OWD), UI, and IT working together to provide a full array of services to our customer base. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is currently in place with all partners.

Any person filing a UI claim in Louisiana is automatically registered in HiRE, subsequent to the completion of any UI claim and prior to determination of monetary eligibility all claimants are enrolled in Wagner-Peyser (WP) services and are then profiled and placed on a standardized service delivery track as delineated in the State's Integrated Service Delivery policy.

Multiple strategies strengthen the linkages between the one-stop delivery system and unemployment insurance programs. RESEA participants are directly linked to the unemployment insurance program; these participants are expected to meet with an employment specialist/case manager to more intensely engage in career services. Wagner-Peyser staff encourage unemployment insurance participants to meet with case management staff for employment services beyond basic career services.

Regular communication and coordination between one-stop staff, unemployment insurance program representatives, and other workforce partners are essential to ensure services are aligned and responsive to the needs of claimants. Shared outreach campaigns and marketing efforts can effectively inform unemployment insurance claimants of available services, while supportive services, such as assistance with transportation or childcare, can help overcome barriers to participation. Leveraging data analytics to identify workforce trends and evaluate linkage efforts is crucial to tailoring services and improving outcomes. By integrating efforts, such as co-hosting job fairs and connecting claimants to in-demand industry opportunities, the one-stop delivery system can enhance the effectiveness of these partnerships. These actions create a cohesive approach to workforce development, ensuring unemployment insurance claimants receive the comprehensive support they need to reenter the labor market successfully.

5. To promote entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services (§ 679.560(b)(4));

Region 7 relies on the expertise of Regional Industry Coordinators and Business Service Representatives (BSRs) to champion entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise development. These professionals play a critical role in engaging businesses and industry leaders to identify workforce needs and in assisting Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) and American Job Centers (AJCs) with setting goals, objectives, and strategies to address these needs effectively.

Incorporate entrepreneurial training as a career pathway option for participants interested in self-employment. Training programs can include workshops on business start-up strategies, accessing capital, risk management, and leveraging technology. Microenterprise services, such as mentorship programs and connections to business incubators or co-working spaces, can further support participants in turning business ideas into viable ventures. One local option of microenterprise is The Milam Street Kitchen Incubator/Community Kitchen which functions as a kitchen incubator/workforce development hybrid to encourage culinary and workforce training entrepreneurship opportunities to the Allendale/Ledbetter Heights community. The proposed project builds upon an existing economic strength and targeted economic development industry for the state – food production and culinary arts – making use of idle, abandoned, and adjudicated properties acquired by the City of Shreveport for Choice Implementation activities. The multi-faceted project has an immediate economic impact by providing affordable workspace, opportunities for business expansion, a means for like-minded businesses to partner and network with one another, technical assistance to culinary businesses for marketing, financial training, and other needed skills, and a place for the community to come together through the Community Kitchen's Community Café. Targeted outreach should focus on specific populations, such as youth, veterans, dislocated workers, and individuals with barriers to employment, while marketing strategies should highlight entrepreneurship as a path to economic independence.

Additionally, hosting events such as business pitch competitions, entrepreneurial expos, and networking sessions can foster innovation and connect participants with potential investors and community resources. To support program sustainability, LWDBs can use WIOA funds to deliver microenterprise activities, provide technical assistance, and establish referral networks to connect participants with financing options like microloans.

Finally, measurable outcomes such as the number of businesses launched, participants completing training, or jobs created should be tracked to evaluate program success and drive continuous improvement. By aligning efforts workforce systems can promote entrepreneurship as a dynamic pathway to self-sufficiency and economic growth.

Through a collaborative approach, Region 7 has identified healthcare, manufacturing, transportation, and IT as the region's top industries with the most pressing workforce demands. Using Labor Market Information (LMI) and partnerships with Regional Economic Development Organizations (EDOs), high-demand occupations in these industries are targeted, with a specific focus on positions rated as 3-5 stars by Louisiana Star Jobs. This strategic alignment ensures that workforce initiatives directly support the region's economic priorities.

To measure the effectiveness of services provided, Region 7 has implemented business metrics designed to evaluate market penetration and track repeat business customers. These metrics provide a framework for assessing the region's impact on businesses and ensuring that workforce services are meeting employer needs and driving economic growth.

Entrepreneurial skills training is further supported by collaborations between regional boards and educational institutions. This partnership creates opportunities to tailor training programs that incorporate employer feedback and address skill gaps in the workforce. By staying attuned to employer needs and adapting to evolving economic conditions, the region enhances its capacity to prepare individuals for entrepreneurial opportunities.

The AJCs in Region 7, working in partnership with the Louisiana Workforce Commission, extend robust support to microenterprise ventures. These services include hosting recruitment events, pre-screening candidates for small business needs, assisting with job postings, and providing free resources available through the workforce system. These initiatives aim to empower small businesses by equipping them with the tools and support necessary to succeed.

By fostering entrepreneurial skills and supporting microenterprise development, Region 7 is advancing a comprehensive approach to workforce development that aligns with employer needs and promotes long-term regional economic growth.

6. To implement initiatives such as incumbent worker training programs, on-the-job training programs, customized training programs, industry and sector strategies, career pathways initiatives, utilization of effective business intermediaries, and other business services and strategies designed to meet the needs of regional employers (§ 679.560(b)(3)(v)).

Region 7 is dedicated to implementing and supporting innovative programs and strategies to address the workforce demands of regional employers. By leveraging partnerships with key industries, integrating career pathways, and providing targeted business services, Region 7 ensures a responsive and adaptable workforce system aligned with regional economic priorities.

- Career Pathways for All Participants

- o Provide WIOA adults, dislocated workers, and youth with clearly defined career pathways designed to lead to living-wage jobs in the region.
- o Collaborate with education and training providers to align curricula with industry standards, ensuring participants gain the skills necessary for career advancement.

Jump Start is Louisiana's innovative career and technical education (CTE) program. Jump Start prepares students to lead productive adult lives, capable of continuing their education after high school while earning certifications in high-wage, high-skill, in-demand career sectors.

Students are required to attain industry-promulgated, industry-valued credentials in order to graduate with a Career Diploma. Schools receive the same accountability grade credit for preparing students for careers in high-demand job sectors as they do for students who achieve top academic honors. The Regional Industry Coordinator with the Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC) has been an integral part of this Northwest Louisiana Jump Start Team.

Local Workforce Development Board Directors dutifully attended many meetings to supply needed input and support at the early Jump Start meetings, and now with the expanded Perkins Region 7 Leadership Team.

As a condition of approving the pathways, the board commissioned a panel that includes CTE directors to bring back to BESE further adjustments to Jump Start 2.0, including further universal courses.

We are fortunate that we have not one, but two schools dedicated to the goals of the Jump Start Initiative: Caddo Career and Technology Center and the Bossier Parish School for Technology and Innovative Learning. The Caddo Career and Technology Center has received national awards in the past, and the Bossier Parish School for Technology and Innovative Learning has the newest and latest in many training areas, for example, they have a machine in their Automotive Repair Shop that only three high schools in the nation have. These two facilities will enable this area to move forward quickly in the Jump Start Initiative, and students, parents, and business have benefited because of it. Jump Start 2.0 Northwest Louisiana offers promise of a better future for many student's man businesses.

WorkReady U, (WRU) supports the mission of educating Region 7's Adult population and moving them beyond a high school equivalency diploma through credit-earning coursework for postsecondary certificates, degrees and family-supporting jobs. Louisiana colleges and WRU providers have implemented Career

Pathways in the following industries:

- Health Sciences
- Information Technology
- Skilled Crafts
- Manufacturing
- Business Office Technology
- Transportation
- Industrial Technology

Region 7 Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC) representatives work with many entities in order to facilitate solutions to employer's needs and issues. One example is our involvement with the Jump Start Initiative. Both Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) Directors, both Program Manager/Local Area Coordinators (LACs), and the Regional Industry Coordinator have been involved in this initiative since its inception a couple of years ago. Jump Start has proposed a four-year implementation timetable. The goal was to work with and through Regional Teams so that Local experts (from the business community, economic development officials, school representatives, workforce development officials, etc.) could collaborate and create the graduation pathways, courses, internship and work-based experiences necessary to help Louisiana students attain high-value industry credentials. Due to the dedicated work of many involved, Jump Start is now over one year ahead of its implementation timetable.

- Incumbent Worker Training Programs
 - o Work with employers to develop training programs that upskill their current workforce, increasing productivity and reducing turnover.
 - o Leverage WIOA funding to support employer investments in employee development.

Unemployment Insurance Programs - Louisiana Incumbent Worker Training Programs (IWTP)

The Louisiana Employment Security Administration Fund is also known as The Incumbent Worker Training (IWTP) Account.

Amounts from this account are pledged and dedicated exclusively to fund Training for businesses operating in Louisiana that incur a State Unemployment Insurance (UI) tax liability. The purpose of this program is to upgrade job skills through training.

Additional emphasis is placed on preventing job loss caused by obsolete skills, technological change, or national or global competition; retaining jobs; and creating jobs in labor demand occupations. The IWTP is a partnership between the Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC), business and industry, and training providers. The IWTP is designed to benefit business and industry by assisting in the skill development of existing employees and thereby increasing employee productivity and the growth of the company.

These improvements are expected to result in the creation of new jobs, the retention of jobs that otherwise may have been eliminated, and an increase in wages for trained workers. The IWTP staff member in Region 7 is located at the Bossier/Caddo American Job Center.

The Louisiana Incumbent Worker Training Account funds are dedicated to support the following types of training:

- Customized Training. Designed to meet the special need and skill requirements of business and industry, customized training programs may include specialized curriculum's, instructional materials, training delivery methods, and training locations. Customized Training may also include standardized courses.
- Small Business Employee Training. This type of training is individual standardized (off-the-shelf) training and is available to businesses having fifty or fewer employees.
- Pre-employment Training. This type of training is provided for non-incumbent workers for expanding businesses. This training may include screening, skills assessment, testing, remediation, and occupational and technical training, via WorkReady U (WRU) or their higher education partners.
- On-the-Job Training (OJT) Programs

Region 7's Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDAs) actively leverage On-the-Job Training (OJT) programs to address skill gaps and connect job seekers with meaningful employment opportunities. These programs are implemented in collaboration with the Louisiana Workforce Commission's (LWC) Business Service Representatives (BSRs) and Industry Sector Coordinators to ensure seamless service delivery to local businesses.

OJT programs in Region 7 target high-demand industries such as healthcare, manufacturing, and service sectors, where workforce shortages are most prevalent. These partnerships allow employers to provide hands-on training for new hires while addressing immediate skill gaps. Business Service Representatives (BSRs) from LWDA 70 and LWDA 71 work directly with employers to facilitate demand-driven workforce solutions, including OJT contracts, ensuring alignment with industry needs.

In addition to OJT, Region 7 offers Customized Training tailored to the specific requirements of local industries. The BSRs and Youth Business Representatives (YBRs) engage directly with businesses to understand their unique challenges and serve as valuable referral sources for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) clients interested in OJT or Customized Training opportunities.

OJT programs begin with a skills-gap analysis, developed collaboratively by the BSRs and the employer. This assessment evaluates the knowledge and skills of each WIOA participant, identifies areas for improvement, and establishes a customized training plan. Employers are actively involved in setting the training timeline and objectives to ensure the program meets their needs.

For participants, OJT provides the chance to earn an income while gaining the skills necessary to succeed in a new role. Employers benefit from reduced training costs, as they can be reimbursed up to 50% of the participant's wage rate to cover the extraordinary costs of training and supervision. Eligible employers include public, private non-profit, and private sector organizations.

The duration of OJT is determined by several factors, including the target occupation, the participant's prior experience, and the service strategy. Once participants are certified for the program and hired by an employer, reimbursement for training costs begins and continues until the training period concludes.

By addressing the workforce needs of both employers and job seekers, Region 7's OJT programs play a vital role in building a skilled workforce while driving economic growth in the region.

- Customized Training Programs
 - o Design tailored training solutions to meet specific employer or industry needs, focusing on high-demand occupations and critical skills gaps in the region.
 - o Work closely with employers and training providers to ensure program relevancy and effectiveness.
- Industry and Sector Strategies
 - o Strengthen sector partnerships in healthcare, manufacturing, and service industries to identify workforce needs, design solutions, and enhance workforce pipelines.
 - o Support the development of regional strategies to address emerging demands in critical sectors.
- Sector Strategies and Career Pathways
 - o The Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) in Region 7, in collaboration with Chief Elected Officials (CEOs), are spearheading regional planning processes aimed at establishing effective service strategies and developing sector-specific initiatives for in-demand occupations. These efforts align employment, training, education, and supportive services to create career pathways tailored to the region's workforce needs.
 - o Sector strategies are employer-driven and designed to ensure that businesses recognize the value of their involvement in the partnership. They aim to address skill gaps by growing the pipeline of qualified candidates for targeted industries. Initiatives like Jump Start and WorkReady U (WRU), embedded within the education system, are key components of these efforts to enhance career readiness and support economic growth.

Sector strategies in Region 7 are not one-size-fits-all but are rooted in common principles that reflect the needs of local economies:

- Dual Purpose: Align education, training, and support services to meet employer needs while ensuring accessibility for a wide range of workers.
- Strong Intermediary Role: Depend on a dedicated organization to sustain momentum, facilitate communication, and broker relationships between service providers and employers.
- Employer-Driven Focus: Engage businesses to drive the strategy and recognize their direct benefits.
- Systemic Change: Promote workforce strategies that benefit workers across all wage and skill levels, support industry growth, and enhance the broader community.
- Workforce System Integration: Position the workforce system as a key player, serving as an intermediary, operations manager, funding source, or provider of Labor Market Information (LMI).

The "MA NOW" Training Program was proven to be a resounding success, exemplified by the seamless transition of participants into meaningful employment in healthcare. Through the combined efforts of Ochsner Health System, Southern University of Shreveport, LWDA 70, and LWDA 71, students not only received tuition-free education but also hands-on training across multiple departments, gaining essential skills and certifications in HIPAA and OSHA compliance. Graduates of the four-month program, equipped with comprehensive clinical and administrative expertise, were successfully placed into Medical Assistant positions at Ochsner's neighborhood health centers. These placements not only addressed workforce shortages but also empowered participants to embark on fulfilling healthcare careers, improving patient care and enhancing community health outcomes.

- Utilization of Effective Business Intermediaries
 - o Engage industry associations, chambers of commerce, and other business intermediaries to expand employer outreach and collaboration.

- o Use these partnerships to promote WIOA services and enhance the alignment of workforce programs with employer needs.
- Business Services and Strategies
 - o Provide a comprehensive suite of business services, including talent recruitment, labor market information, and financial incentives for workforce training.
 - o Regularly assess employer satisfaction and adapt services to meet evolving needs.

Through these initiatives, Region 7 will continue to strengthen its partnerships with employers, enhance career pathways for job seekers, and build a workforce that supports the region's economic growth and competitiveness.

D. Describe regional strategies that will increase apprenticeship and other work-based learning opportunities.

Region 7 is committed to expanding access to apprenticeships and other work-based learning (WBL) opportunities by fostering collaboration with the Louisiana Workforce Commission, employers, higher education partners, and Career and Technical Education (CTE) institutions. Through a strategic focus on enhancing employer engagement, program accessibility, and participant success, Region 7 aims to establish a comprehensive framework for workforce skill development that meets the demands of the local job market. The following strategies will guide these efforts:

1. Employer Recruitment for Work-Based Learning Opportunities

- Develop targeted outreach initiatives to recruit employers across industries to serve as sponsors for work-based learning programs.
- Educate employers about the benefits of apprenticeship and other WBL models, emphasizing their role in addressing skill gaps and workforce shortages.

2. Expansion of Registered Apprenticeship Programs

- Partner with the Louisiana Workforce Commission to expand existing Registered Apprenticeship programs and assist employers in designing and implementing new programs tailored to regional workforce needs.
- Promote the inclusion of apprenticeships within the State's Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL), ensuring access to WBL opportunities for job seekers.

3. Connecting CTE Students to Apprenticeship Pathways

- Collaborate with CTE programs, higher education partners, and employers to align technical training with apprenticeship opportunities.
- Facilitate dual enrollment and pre-apprenticeship programs to create seamless transitions from secondary education to apprenticeships.

4. Promotion of Work-Based Learning Options to Employers

- Conduct employer workshops and marketing campaigns to raise awareness of WBL models such as apprenticeship, on-the-job training (OJT), internships, and part-time job opportunities for students.
- Highlight success stories of employers and participants who have benefited from WBL programs.

5. Affordable Education Through Work-Based Learning

- Promote apprenticeships and WBL programs as debt-free pathways to higher education and career advancement.
- Showcase how participants can earn wages while gaining industry-recognized credentials.

6. Ensuring Access to Diverse Work-Based Learning Opportunities

- Work with training providers to expand the range of WBL options listed on the ETPL, ensuring a variety of opportunities for job seekers.
- Leverage federal and state funding to provide financial incentives for employers and support services for participants.

By implementing these strategies, Region 7 seeks to strengthen the workforce pipeline, address skills gaps, and offer equitable access to high-quality learning opportunities that meet the needs of both job seekers and employers.

E. Describe initiatives to shorten the time from credential to employment and address how the area will work with the education system to begin putting training opportunities in place to meet this strategy.

Region 7 is committed to expediting the transition from credentialing to employment by engaging closely with employers and educational institutions. Tailored training programs are crafted to equip jobseekers with industry-specific credentials, enhancing their employability upon completion. Additionally, many of these programs integrate On-the-Job Training (OJT) to provide further skill development, ensuring that participants are well-prepared to meet the immediate workforce needs of employers. This approach not only helps individuals secure jobs quickly but also supports regional economic growth by addressing critical skill shortages in key sectors.

Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) 70 and 71 have cultivated key partnerships with institutions such as Ochsner and Southern University of Shreveport to develop customized training programs that directly address industry needs. These initiatives are designed to bridge the gap between credential attainment and employment, ensuring that jobseekers acquire the skills necessary to meet the demands of the labor market. By collaborating with employers to align training with real-world requirements, these programs provide participants with both the theoretical knowledge and hands-on experience needed to succeed.

F. Describe the steps that will be taken to support the state's efforts to align and integrate education, workforce and economic development including:

- Fostering the improvement and expansion of employer-driven regional sector partnerships to increase the focus on critical in-demand occupations in key sectors that are the engine of economic growth for the state and its regions.
- Expanding career pathway opportunities through more accelerated and work-based training and align and integrate programs of study leading to industry-recognized credentials and improved employment and earnings.
- Expanding career services and opportunities for populations facing multiple barriers to close the gap in educational attainment and economic advancement through career pathways and improved career services and expansion of bridge programs.
- Expanding information for employers and job seekers to access services to support the alignment and integration of economic development, workforce development and education initiatives for supporting sector partnerships and career pathways.

1. Fostering the improvement and expansion of employer-driven regional sector partnerships:

- Sector Partnerships: LWDA 70 and LWDA 71 will work with employers, economic development organizations, and education providers to create and expand employer-driven sector partnerships in key industries, such as health-care, manufacturing, and information technology. These partnerships will focus on identifying and addressing critical workforce needs in high-demand occupations that drive economic growth.
 - o Establish regional employer advisory councils to ensure industry input on training curriculum and work-based learning initiatives.
 - o Partner with Louisiana Economic Development (LED) and local chambers of commerce to facilitate regular sector meetings that align workforce strategies with economic priorities.

2. Expanding career pathway opportunities through accelerated and work-based training:

- Career Pathways Development: Programs will emphasize streamlined pathways to employment, focusing on accelerated training models, apprenticeships, and dual-enrollment opportunities for students to earn industry-recognized credentials.

- o Partner with LCTCS campuses to offer short-term credential programs that align with regional demand sectors.
- o Expand apprenticeship and work-based learning opportunities, such as on-the-job training (OJT) and incumbent worker training, to enhance skills and employment outcomes.

3. Expanding career services and opportunities for populations facing multiple barriers:

- Targeted Support Services: LWDA 70 and LWDA 71 will work to close educational and economic attainment gaps by expanding bridge programs, career services, and wraparound support for individuals with barriers to employment.
 - o Implement bridge programs to help individuals with low educational attainment transition into career pathways that lead to family-sustaining wages.
 - o Enhance outreach to underserved and rural populations through mobile career centers, virtual career services, and partnerships with community-based organizations.
 - o Provide supportive services, such as transportation assistance, childcare, and mentorship, to ensure successful program completion.

4. Expanding access to information for employers and job seekers to support alignment and integration:

- Enhanced Communication Tools: LWDA 70 and LWDA 71 will develop and expand resources to improve information sharing among employers, job seekers, and stakeholders.
 - o Work towards launching a regional workforce portal to connect employers, job seekers, and training providers with workforce development services and programs.
 - o Continue to provide employers with labor market information (LMI) to support hiring decisions and workforce planning.
 - o Collaborate with local school systems and LCTCS campuses to improve career awareness initiatives for youth, including job fairs, career exploration programs, and work-based learning opportunities.

Conclusion

The partnership between Local Workforce Development Areas 70 and 71 reflects a shared dedication to enhancing workforce opportunities and strengthening the economic foundation of Northwest Louisiana. By uniting resources and building meaningful collaborations with employers, educational institutions, and community organizations, this regional plan positions both areas to address local challenges and meet workforce demands effectively.

This plan underscores the importance of tailoring strategies to the unique needs of our communities while remaining flexible in an ever-changing labor market. By prioritizing skills development, fostering equitable access to opportunities, and aligning efforts with regional economic goals, we can create pathways to success for individuals and families while supporting local businesses.

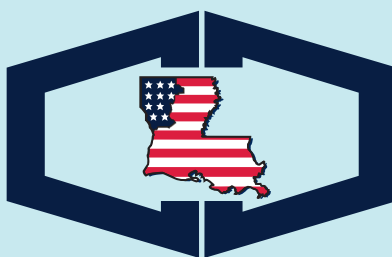
Moving forward, the collaboration between LWDA 70 and LWDA 71 will serve as a model of effective workforce development, ensuring that our region is not only prepared to meet current workforce needs but is also poised for future growth and innovation. Together, we are building a stronger, more resilient workforce that benefits everyone in the communities we serve.

Attachments: Region 7 – Local Workforce Development Area Plans

- LWDA 70: Seventh Planning District Consortium Local Plan & Attachments
- LWDA 71: City of Shreveport, Department of Community Development Local Plan & Attachments

The Seventh District Planning Consortium Workforce Development Board (LWDA 70)

Plan Effective Date: July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2027



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CHAPTER 4: OPERATING SYSTEMS AND POLICIES: LOCAL

This chapter provides an overview of all the operating systems and policies within the Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDAs). LWDAs must incorporate key documents in the plan that describe the one-stop delivery system and the services provided by the workforce partners.

A. Coordination of Planning Requirements: The plan will incorporate the Memorandum of Understanding and Service Integration Action Plan and include the following statements in this chapter:

1. The Local Workforce Development Area Memorandum of Understanding provides a description of the one-stop delivery system, and other information that is essential to the establishment and operation of effective local workforce development systems as required by the WIOA Rule (20 CFR Part 678.705). The Memorandum of Understanding and any subsequent modifications is incorporated by reference into this plan.

The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) among partners is foundational to the one-stop delivery system in Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA) 70. This document formalizes the roles and responsibilities of all core and required partners, ensuring alignment with the goals of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). By clearly defining how partners contribute to the system, the MOU ensures shared accountability and collaboration to provide seamless access to workforce services for job seekers and employers.

Infrastructure Funding Agreements (IFA) are essential for the sustainability of the one-stop centers by outlining the shared costs among partners. These agreements ensure a fair and equitable distribution of expenses related to the operation and maintenance of the centers. By adhering to federal and state cost allocation guidelines, LWDA 70 upholds transparency and accountability while ensuring the long-term viability of its one-stop system.

Communication and collaboration are reinforced through quarterly partner meetings and business service meetings. These gatherings enable stakeholders to share best practices, address challenges, and align strategies with the evolving needs of the local economy. Partner engagement with local businesses ensures workforce services remain relevant and responsive, strengthening connections between job seekers and employment opportunities.

Accessibility is a cornerstone of the one-stop system. The comprehensive center in LWDA 70 is fully compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), ensuring that all individuals, regardless of physical or technological barriers, have equal access to workforce services. Additionally, assistive technologies are in place to enhance the service experience for individuals with disabilities, further promoting inclusion and equity.

LWDA 70 embraces remote and hybrid service models, utilizing virtual platforms to ensure the continuity of services during disruptions. These adaptations not only address immediate needs but also highlight opportunities for long-term improvements in accessibility and efficiency. Innovations introduced during the Covid-19 pandemic have now become an integral part of ongoing operations, creating a more resilient system.

Collaboration among Local Workforce Development Areas strengthens the regional impact of workforce services. Resource sharing and joint initiatives enable LWDAs to address large-scale workforce challenges and support local economic development. This partnership model allows the system to respond effectively to employer needs and labor market demands, fostering sustainable economic growth across Northwest Louisiana.

A narrative that follows describes coordination with the WIOA core and other required program partners as prescribed by the WIOA.

Partner Name	Program	Program Authority
Bossier Parish Community College (BPCC) Northwest Louisiana Technical Community College (NLTC)	Adult Education and Literacy	Adult Education and literacy (WIOA 121(b)(1)(B)(iii) – Title II
Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC)	Community Services Block Grant	Community Services Block Grant Employment & Training Programs (42 USC 9901 et seq.)
Bossier Parish Community College (BPCC) Northwest Louisiana Technical Community College (NLTC)	Post-Secondary Vocational Education	Carl D. Perkins Career & Technical Education Improvement Act 2006 (20 USC 2301)
Louisiana Rehabilitation Services Or Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC)	Vocational Rehabilitation	Rehabilitation Act, Title I, Parts A & B – Rehabilitation Services Commission (29 USC 720)
Department of Children and Family Services	TANF/SNAP/STEP	Social Security Act – Parts A, Title IV (TANF) (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.), subject to subparagraph (C)
A.N.P.P.M Project Ayuda Or Association National Pro Personas Mayores/National Association for Hispanic Elderly (AYDUA)	Senior Community Service Employment Program	Older Americans Act Title V – Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) (42 USC 3056)
Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC)	Trade Adjustment Act	Trade Act Title II, Chapter 2 – Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) (19 USC 2271)
Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC)	Unemployment Insurance	Unemployment Insurance (UI) – (5 USC 85) (ORC Chapter 4141)
Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC)	Wagner-Peyser	WIOA Title III – Wagner-Peyser Act Programs (29 USC 49)
Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC)	Jobs for Veteran's Programs	Veteran's Workforce Programs – Chapter 41 of title 38, US Code; WIOA 121(b)(1)(B)(viii)
Motivation Education & Training, Inc. (MET)	National Farmworker Jobs Program/ Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers	WIOA Title I – Migrant and Seasonal Farm Worker Programs (29 USC 2912, 29 USC 2919)
The Coordinating & Development Corporation (LWDA 70)	WIOA Title I – Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth Programs	WIOA Title I – Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth Programs
Shreveport Job Corps Center/ (Human Learning System)	Job Corps	WIOA Title I – Job Corps (29 USC 2881-2900, 29 USC 2901)
Housing Authority of the City of Shreveport (HACS) (LWDA 71)	YouthBuild	

Additional Partners Include:

Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC)	Rapid Response Services
Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC)	Incumbent Worker Training Program (IWTP)
Goodwill Industries, Inc.	ReEntry
Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC)	Labor Programs

The following information summarizes the ways in which Region 7 and the local workforce system collaborate with organizations managing the federally mandated One-Stop partner programs.

WIOA Title I – Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth Programs

The three (3) formula funded programs are administered by LWDA 70. LWDA 70 services are delivered at one comprehensive and five (5) affiliate America's Job Centers.

WIOA Title II – Adult Education and Literacy

Provide WIOA Title II adult education and literacy services in the local areas. Referrals are regularly made between the Title I and Title II programs, and many participants are co-enrolled.

WIOA Title III – Wagner-Peyser

Wagner-Peyser staff are co-located in the LWDA 70 AJC Centers in Region 7. In addition, LWDA AJC staff work with LWC to co-ordinate marketing and outreach to Unemployment Insurance claimants, ensuring full access to all available WIOA services. LWC and LWDA staff also collaborate on Rapid Response orientations for laid off workers.

WIOA Title IV – Vocational Rehabilitation

WIOA Title IV staff is co-located at the American Job Center. LRS staff are available to provide technical assistance and training to AJC and partner staff in the areas of disability awareness and the use of competitive integrated employment.

Carl Perkins Career Technical Education

The Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (Perkins IV) is a principal source of federal funding to states and discretionary grantees for the improvement of secondary and postsecondary career and technical education programs across the nation. The purpose of the Act is to develop more fully the academic, career, and technical skills of secondary and post-secondary students who elect to enroll in career and technical education programs.

The community colleges, which as the primary recipients of Perkins funding in Region 7, regularly make referrals to and receive referrals from staff of the AJCs.

Title V Older Americans Act

Senior Community Services Employment Programs (SCSEP) that serve Region 7 Residents. The program enrolls eligible seniors who are 55+, low income, and have barriers to employment; and provides part-time, temporary on the job training through community service assignments at local nonprofits and government agencies to enrolled participants.

Job Corps

Program representatives conduct eligibility determination for Job Corps services. Their principal activity at the AJC is to promote the Job Corps program to potential applicants who are youth and young adults ages 18 to 24.

Native American Programs

LWC and WIOA program staff collaborates with AJC staff to provide referrals and co-enrollment opportunities to provide Indian and Native American job seekers access to all WIOA and partner services in available through Regions 7's local network of AJCs.

Migrant Seasonal Farmworker Program

LWC and WIOA program staff works with MSFW staff to provide referrals and co-enrollment opportunities to ensure MSFW programs services are available for eligible agricultural participants.

Veterans Services

LWC administers this program and designated Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) and Local Veterans' Employment Representatives (LVER) Specialists are stationed at the comprehensive center to assist veterans seeking employment.

Trade Adjustment Assistance Act

Trade Adjustment Assistance Act (TAA) is a federal program that provides aid to workers who lose their jobs or whose hours of work and wages are reduced as a result of increased imports. The TAA program offers a variety of benefits and reemployment services to help unemployed workers prepare for and obtain suitable employment. Workers may be eligible for training, job search and other reemployment services. Coordination with TAA generally includes co-enrollment into WIOA, which provides multiple benefits, including TAA funds being used to cover all training costs.

Community Services Block Grant

Supports AJC staff in accepting referrals, depending on identified needs and eligibility requirements. CSBG staff may also make referrals to any AJC location in the region for employment and training services.

Unemployment Compensation

The Unemployment Insurance program is generally represented in the AJCs by LWC's Wagner-Peyser staff. AJC staff work with LWC staff to coordinate marketing and outreach to UI claimants, ensuring full access to all available WIOA services.

Department of Child and Family Service

Supports AJC staff in accepting referrals, depending on identified needs and eligibility requirements. DCFS staff may also make referrals to any AJC location in the region for employment and training services.

2. The Local Workforce Development Area Service Integration Action Plan provides a description of how local workforce partners will align and coordinate services as required by the State of Louisiana Integrated Service Delivery Policy (OWD 2-23.2). The Service Integration Action Plan and any subsequent modifications is incorporated by reference into this plan.

LWDA 70 Service Integration Action Plan outlines the framework through which workforce partners in LWDA 70 align and coordinate services to meet the requirements of the State of Louisiana Integrated Service Delivery Policy (OWD 2-23.2). This plan emphasizes collaboration among partners to create a seamless, customer-centered service delivery system that addresses the diverse needs of job seekers and employers.

Key strategies include fostering co-enrollment across programs, leveraging partner expertise, streamlining intake and referral processes, and utilizing shared case management systems. These efforts are supported by regular partner meetings, cross-training for staff, and integrated data-sharing protocols. The plan also prioritizes accessibility and inclusivity to ensure services are equitable and impactful.

Through this coordinated approach, LWDA 70 aims to enhance resource efficiency, improve participant outcomes, and strengthen employer engagement, contributing to workforce development and economic growth across the region.

B. Provide information regarding the use of technology in the one-stop delivery system, including a description of:

1. How the workforce centers are implementing and transitioning to an integrated, technology-enabled intake and case management information system for programs carried out under WIOA (§ 679.560(b)(20)).

LWDA 70 American Job Centers have successfully implemented a technology-enabled intake and case management system through the Louisiana Workforce Commission's Helping Individuals Reach Employment (HiRE) platform. This system is used to document job development, training activities, and career services for programs such as Wagner Peyser, Trade Act, and WIOA. While HiRE facilitates effective data tracking and reporting, technological limitations currently hinder a fully integrated intake system for vocational rehabilitation and adult education programs. LWDA 70 strongly advocates for the State to prioritize developing a unified technology platform across all core programs to enhance coordination, improve customer experience, and streamline service delivery. To ensure accessibility and efficiency, LWDA 70 employs participant-focused strategies, including virtual orientations, Online pre-eligibility questionnaires, and user-friendly materials to guide individuals through the intake process. Participants receive a checklist of required documents, which can be uploaded electronically through a secure platform, minimizing in-person visits. Collaboration with partner agencies allows data sharing and eligibility verification through state databases, reducing duplicate document requests. Virtual appointments and the use of electronic signatures further enhance convenience, while case managers provide dedicated support to resolve incomplete applications and meet deadlines. These efforts collectively ensure a seamless, efficient, and participant-centered approach to workforce program services.

2. How the Local Board will facilitate access to services provided through the one-stop delivery system, including in remote areas, through the use of technology and other means (§ 679.560(b)(5)(ii)).

LWDA 70 employs a comprehensive approach to ensure accessibility to services across its one-stop delivery system, leveraging technology, mobile solutions, and direct linkages:

- Coordinated Navigation Process via Website:
 - o Through www.cdconline.org, job seekers can access services in three ways: in person, by phone, or online.
 - o Customers complete a preapplication online, with responses recorded on the platform's backend.
 - o Staff guide customers to appropriate referrals and outline the next steps tailored to their needs.
- Statewide Resources via HiRE Platform and Website:
 - o Louisiana Workforce Commission's www.laworks.net serves as a mobile-friendly entry point for job seekers and employers, offering:
 - o Job listings and career exploration tools.
 - o Employer partner profiles and hiring resources.
 - o Specialized resources for veterans and individuals with disabilities.
 - o Business services and employer needs assessments.
- Mobile Workforce Center provided by Louisiana Workforce Commission:
 - o A state-of-the-art Mobile Workforce Center equipped with broadband satellite, WiFi, computer stations, and printing/scanning capabilities brings workforce services directly to communities.
 - o Provides access to virtual job fairs, training sessions, and hiring events for underserved and rural populations.
 - o Support large-scale hiring events, Career Days, and community outreach.
- Direct Linkages to Partner Services:
 - o All partner agencies in LWDA 70 AJCs either maintain on-site staff or provide direct linkages through dedicated phone lines staffed by knowledgeable representatives.
 - o Direct linkages ensure no decline in customer service quality, offering immediate information and assistance comparable to in-person interactions.
- Rural American Job Centers:
 - o Provide computer and internet access, and staff assistance.
 - o Provide supportive services for WIOA participants who need travel assistance.
 - o Provide supportive services for WIOA participants who are in need of laptop computers for approved ETPL programs.

By integrating these tools and strategies, LWDA 70 enhances service delivery, broadens access to resources, and ensures equity in workforce development services for all community members, including those in remote or underserved areas.

C. Describe how the Local Board will support the strategies identified in the Combined State Plan and work with entities carrying out core programs, including a description of (§679.560(b)(1)(ii)):

1. Expanding access to employment, training, education and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals with barriers to employment (§ 679.560(b)(2)(i));

- Scaling up the use of Integrated Education and Training models to help adults get their GED and work on other basic skills and English language acquisition while earning credential and industry-recognized credentials that lead to in-demand occupations;
- Using the insights and lessons learned from successful dual credit programs to scale up similar efforts in other sectors and regions;
- Determining the most effective marketing methods and messages for informing college and university students about Prior Learning Assessments;
- Investigating how targeted marketing can identify segments of the labor force, such as mature workers and the underemployed, who may not require extensive education or training to qualify for jobs in high demand occupations;

In alignment with the strategies outlined in the Combined State Plan, LWDA 70 is committed to expanding access to employment, training, education, and supportive services for eligible individuals, with a particular focus on those facing barriers to employment. We achieve this through the following key approaches:

Integrated Education and Training (IET) Models

LWDA 70 is scaling up the use of Integrated Education and Training models to help adults improve their foundational skills, such as obtaining their HiSET (high school equivalency diploma) and enhancing English language proficiency, while simultaneously earning industry-recognized credentials in high-demand occupations. These efforts ensure that individuals gain not only basic education but also the necessary credentials to be competitive in the workforce. WIOA case managers provide career guidance based on the participants assessments, Labor Market Information, and their capacity to enter self-sufficient employment. WIOA Business Service Representatives provide access to in-demand occupations to match the need of the employer with a ready workforce. For those individuals who are lacking the necessary skill level, Work-Based-Learning agreements or contracts are put in place to leverage the opportunity for skill development, and employers to keep their demand growing. These agreements and contracts provide a part of economic stability for Region.

Dual Credit Programs

The successful implementation of Dual Credit Programs continues to be a cornerstone of our strategy. These programs, in partnership with high schools and local colleges, allow students to earn both high school and college credits simultaneously. This approach not only accelerates postsecondary education but also aligns with career pathways that directly address labor market needs, particularly in fields like manufacturing, healthcare, and IT.

Targeted Marketing for Mature Workers and the Underemployed

Recognizing the diverse needs of the workforce, LWDA 70 employs targeted marketing strategies to engage underemployed individuals and mature workers (ages 55 and over). For mature workers, we leverage the Senior Community Service Employment Program (Project Ayuda) to connect individuals with resources tailored to their needs. We also use Rapid Response services to assist those impacted by layoffs, helping them navigate new career opportunities and access necessary retraining or reskilling programs. As long as the individual can demonstrate that they will enter full-time employment, WIOA staff provide the same opportunities as anyone who applies for the services of the grant.

Prior Learning Assessments (PLA)

For adults with extensive career histories, LWDA 70 encourages individuals to pursue Prior Learning Assessments (PLAs). This process helps identify prior work experience and educational achievements that may reduce the amount of training required, streamlining their path to new employment opportunities in high-demand fields.

Support Services and Case Management

LWDA 70 ensures that eligible individuals, especially those with barriers to employment, receive necessary support services. These include financial assistance for training, childcare, transportation, and other critical needs. Our staff follows a thorough case management process to document the need for these services, ensuring that they are provided in compliance with all applicable regulations. We make a concerted effort to work with job seekers to overcome barriers to employment and help them achieve their career goals.

Language Services and Accessibility

LWDA 70 is dedicated to providing equitable access to services for individuals with limited English proficiency (LEP) and those with disabilities. Through services such as Language Line and referrals to appropriate partner agencies, we ensure that all individuals, regardless of their language or disability status, have the support they need to succeed in training and employment.

Career Pathways and Coordination with Employers

Career pathways are a core focus of our strategy, providing job seekers with clear and structured routes to in-demand occupations. We continue to develop career pathways with input from local employers, ensuring alignment with industry standards and work readiness. These pathways are designed to be accessible to diverse populations, including youth, adults, and dislocated workers, with a particular emphasis on underrepresented groups in sectors like healthcare, IT, and manufacturing.

In addition to these efforts, LWDA 70 continues to refine and adapt our strategies in response to emerging needs and lessons learned, ensuring that all individuals—especially those with barriers to employment—have the opportunity to succeed in the workforce. Through integrated education and training, targeted marketing, and a focus on support services, we are creating a more inclusive and effective workforce system that meets the needs of all residents in our region.

2. Facilitating the development of career pathways and co-enrollment, as appropriate, in core programs (§ 679.560(b)(2)(ii)); and

Louisiana Career Pathways

Region 7 Higher Education community college schools are working to streamline the processes for community stakeholders who are transitioning from unemployment, high school graduation, and high dropout status. These community college institutions include Northwest Louisiana Technical Community College, Bossier Parish Community College, Louisiana Delta Community College, Central Louisiana Technical Community College, and Southern University Shreveport. In working together these colleges have developed extensive crosswalks that will map out a career to employment starting in Secondary Education through Employment. Based on feedback and labor market analysis the high demand high wage focus will include Health Sciences, Information Technology, and Manufacturing.

The crosswalks include Industry Based Credentials so that an individual will have knowledge of progress toward employment along their selected career path. The above-mentioned institutions are striving to partner with Region 7 businesses to further develop internships and work-based learning opportunities. Region 7 Industry partners are working with the institutions work force divisions to develop short term Industry Based Credentials that will also help the community stakeholders who maybe underemployed transition into a high demand high wage job. Crosswalks have been developed as well for these individuals.

Through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) planning process, the State's education and workforce partners developed a vision and framework for Louisiana Career Pathways. The following describes their approach in creating a vision and framework for the implementation of a Career Pathway strategy that aligns within demand occupations.

Vision: Louisiana Career Pathways are designed to improve lives and the economy.

Through integrated Career Pathways, all citizens of Louisiana will have the opportunity to access progressive levels of education and training leading to high-value, high-demand careers.

The Career Pathways approach meets learners where they are, by spanning high school, Adult Education, post-secondary education and beyond, leading to sustainable employment.

Louisiana Career Pathways connect education and training programs and support services that enable individuals to secure employment within a specific industry or occupational sector, and to advance, over time, to successively higher levels of education and employment in that sector. Each step on the Career Pathway is designed explicitly to prepare workers and students for the next level of employment and education.

Minimally, all Louisiana Career Pathways must:

- Be designed in partnership with business and industry as well as Regional economic development entities (in order to meet both current and future sector needs).
- Have multiple entry points, including for those with limited basic skills and those with prior educational and work experience.
- Incorporate multiple exit points (off-ramps, stop-out points) connected to the attainment of industry-recognized stackable credentials and/or academic credentials.
 - o First stop-out point must be aligned with a viable career opportunity.
 - o Exit points must be embedded in a longer pathway that ultimately leads to high-wage, high-demand careers.
- Pathways include opportunities, where appropriate, for acceleration, contextualization, work based learning and co- or dual-enrollment.
- Include a logical progression/sequence of courses that are applicable to the target credential.
 - o Could define this as blocks of courses tied to defined entry/exit points.
 - o Course sequence provides a clear plan for what students take and when.
- Integrate student (participant) supports, including academic supports, non-academic/general support, transitional support, up-front career exploration and ongoing career development, as well as job-placement assistance.
- Provide the opportunity to earn college credit.
 - o Can include noncredit programs leading to Industry-Based Credentials (IBC's) but need consistent State policy on how to award college credit for IBC's.
 - o Noncredit Pathways are aligned with credit Pathways so that students can continue into credit bearing Pathways with transcript credit and without repeating coursework.

3. Improving access to activities leading to a recognized post-secondary credential (including a credential that is an industry-recognized certificate or certification, portable, and stackable) (§ 679.560(b)(2)(iii)).

LWDA 70 remains dedicated to expanding access to activities that lead to recognized post-secondary credentials, including industry-recognized certifications, diplomas, and credentials that are portable and stackable. Collaborative efforts with local technical colleges, four-year institutions, and training providers will ensure that these resources are readily available to participants. Technical colleges will remain actively involved at sites where workforce activities are delivered, providing clients with direct access to educational opportunities and guidance.

To further enhance career pathways, LWDA 70 will strengthen relationships with secondary education, adult education, and post-secondary stakeholders. These partnerships will focus on integrating career pathway exploration into K-12 education, preparing students for in-demand occupations and emerging industries. Adult education providers will continue offering Integrated Education and Training (IET) programs that create valuable entry points into high-demand industries and allow participants to earn certificates and credentials in vocational or post-secondary fields.

Emphasis will also be placed on occupational skills training that culminates in certifications recognized across industries. These certifications will align with career clusters critical to the local economy, ensuring they are both relevant and adaptable to future workforce needs.

LWDA 70 values partnerships with employers and training providers to create career pathways tailored to workforce demands. Additionally, program providers will offer supportive services, including transportation assistance, work attire, and other essential resources, to assist individuals with barriers to employment. Partnerships with career and technical education institutions approved for workforce training will remain a cornerstone of these efforts, ensuring high-quality training programs are accessible to all eligible participants.

D. Provide information regarding the local coordination strategies with state (including the Combined State Plan), regional and local partners to enhance services and avoid duplication of activities, including a description of:

1. Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth employment and training activities under WIOA Title I (§ 679.560(b)(6)).

LWDA 70 has developed comprehensive coordination strategies with state, regional, and local partners to ensure seamless service delivery for Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth employment and training activities under WIOA Title I. These strategies are designed to enhance service quality, prevent the duplication of efforts, and ensure that individuals receive the services that best meet their needs, while also leveraging available resources effectively. When necessary, Memorandum of Understanding between LWDA 70 and a partner who are utilizing federal money, or can provide similar services, is issued to ensure the duplication of services/funds is not taking place.

Adult Employment and Training

LWDA 70 prioritizes enhancing access to education and training for low-skilled and disadvantaged adults, recognizing that education and credentialing, particularly in high-demand fields, are the primary factors for improving lifetime earnings. Local employers increasingly require postsecondary credentials for positions offering family-sustaining wages. To address this demand, LWDA 70 focuses on creating training pathways that align with the labor market's needs.

The adult training program is designed to identify workers who need additional education or skill development to succeed in the labor market. LWDA 70 operates a structured approach where participants work one-on-one with case managers to develop an Individualized Employment Plan (IEP). The IEP ensures access to career planning and counseling, job search assistance, approved training programs (such as On-the-Job Training), and other support services. The program also places significant emphasis on priority of service for specific populations, including public assistance recipients, low-income individuals, and those with barriers to employment.

The state and local boards collaborate closely to report on the number of individuals served, with particular attention to individuals facing barriers, ensuring that funding streams are utilized effectively and that services are not duplicated. The integration of services across different partners (e.g., adult education, vocational training, apprenticeship programs) helps streamline the delivery of services, thus maximizing the impact of each program.

Dislocated Worker Employment and Training

For dislocated workers, LWDA 70 partners with the state's Rapid Response Team to provide timely and effective services to individuals facing layoffs, offering support that includes job search assistance, credential attainment, and access to training opportunities. The Rapid Response team plays a crucial role in ensuring an orderly transition for workers affected by plant shutdowns or large-scale layoffs. The focus is on helping these workers transition to new roles as quickly as possible by overcoming barriers such as skill mismatches, lack of formal education, or age-related employment challenges.

LWDA 70 continues to broaden its reach with transitioning military service members and their eligible spouses, by partnering and educating regional organizations who serve this population. LWDA 70 also partners with regional agencies who are servicing Displaced Homemakers; those affected by natural disasters; and those self-employed individuals who have lost their business through economic downturn, all as defined in TEGL 19-16.

Dislocated Worker services are similarly individualized, with participants receiving one-on-one assistance from case managers. These services include career planning, job search support, and access to relevant training, such as apprenticeships or OJT. Additionally, LWDA 70 works closely with state and local partners to coordinate these services to avoid duplication and ensure that each worker receives the most appropriate resources and support tailored to their specific needs.

Youth Employment and Training

LWDA 70 has established a robust strategy to serve both In-School and Out-of-School Youth, recognizing that this group has distinct developmental needs that require specialized services. The local Youth Program aims to address these needs through career exploration, educational support, skills training, and opportunities for apprenticeships, all with the goal of guiding youth toward career pathways and post-secondary education.

Through coordination with local schools, community organizations, and employer partners, LWDA 70 integrates all fourteen required program elements into each youth participant's service strategy. These elements include, but are not limited to, academic enrichment, mentoring, work experience, and occupational skills training. By working with state and regional partners, LWDA 70 ensures that these elements are delivered effectively and without duplication, particularly when addressing the

Program Element		Service Provided
1	Tutoring / Study Skills Training	This element is provided by LWDA youth staff by using the either the Work-keys Curriculum and/or the Conover curriculum that meets and supports this element through helping individuals build the essential career-relevant skills needed for learning, personal development and effective job performance. Referrals to local schools or community-based programs, or through contracted professionals, depending on specific needs of the participant.
2	Alternative Secondary School Services or Dropout Recovery	This element will be provided by the LWDA staff utilizing Conover curriculum which supports this element through video courses, end of course exams, etc. LWDA staff maintain partnerships and referral process to and from organizations, training providers, and local school board systems such as the Red River Parish School Board. Coordination with alternative school(s) and credit recovery programs such as Natchitoches Parish Technical and Career Center. Northwest Louisiana Technical Community College (NLCCC) provides adult education and opportunities through the WorkReady U and Bossier Parish Community College (BPCC) providing adult education opportunities for secondary education include; HiSET, Secondary Credential Preparation, Basic Skills Remediation and English as a second language.
3	Work Experiences	This element is provided in-house by the LWDA staff providing training and providing help in resume creation, job applications, work ethics, etc. Staff, in collaboration with area partners and employers, develop paid and/or unpaid work experience positions for eligible youth participants throughout each program year that could include but not limited to; summer employment, pre-apprenticeship programs, internships and job shadowing, or On-the-Job training. Conover curriculum may be offered in support of this element.
4	Occupational Skills Training	This element is provided by the LWDA staff utilizing the ETPL and through referral to an eligible training provider to enroll youth for training for accredited postsecondary and occupational accredited programs for demand occupations. Tuition/fees and supportive services may be provided to eligible participants. Also, Conover curriculum may be utilized to support this element to provide virtual training to eligible youth participants.

Program Element		Service Provided
5	Career Pathways	<p>This element is provided by the LWDA staff in partnership with Caddo Career and Technology Center and the Bossier Parish School for Technology and Innovative Learning with the Jump Start Initiative, and by participating in regional events such as: youth job fairs and Fast Forward Technical Assistance Meetings. Also, staff use Conover curriculum to administer and support this element. Conover provides training and workforce preparation courses such as: Positive Mindset, Dress for Success, and Time Management and other mandatory and optional classes.</p> <p>LWDA staff, through comprehensive case management and assessment, provide an effective approach to the development of a skilled workforce through the organization of education, training, and other services to meet the particular needs of an individual in a manner that accelerates the educational and career advancement of the individual to the extent practicable.</p>
6	Leadership Development	<p>This element is provided by the LWDA staff using the Conover curriculum that meets and supports this element. Conover curriculum contains in- depth training courses that encourage responsibility, confidence, employability, self-determination, and other positive social behaviors that aid in Leadership Development. Local and Online vendors, chamber of commerce's provide leadership skills development through workshop and group discussion open to the public, or in association with the youth's Work Experience.</p>
7	Supportive Services	<p>This element is provided in-house by LWDA staff utilizing WIOA Youth program funds when the youth participant is unable to obtain financial assistance for services. Some of the supportive services provided to eligible participants include; Tuition assistance, school supplies, books, work and interview clothes, transportation assistance, rent, food, utilities, etc. LWDA Staff determine needs based on assessment and are stated in ISS. LWDA staff refers to community agencies when other resources are available, as WIOA is the last resort.</p>
8	Adult Mentoring	<p>This element is provided in-house by LWDA staff to include structured activities where the youth case manager offers guidance, support, and encouragement to help develop the competence and character of the youth participant. Conover curriculum meets and supports this element via National Online Mentorship Programs where youth are connected to Adult Mentors and courses on topics that include: Mentorship, Cultivating Relationships, Transparency, Establishing Trust, Communication, and more. This element is provided by youth staff until services are no longer needed. LWDA staff refers to worksite supervisors, in Work Experience, as mentors in development of work habits and skills.</p>
		<p>This element is provided in-house by LWDA staff for not less than 12 months after completion of participation and may include the following program elements: vocational guidance, employment services, and supportive services such as; assisting with Pell Grants, completing FAFSA application, job searches and matching, etc.</p>

Program Element		Service Provided
10	Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling	<p>This element is provided in-house by LWDA youth workforce professionals or by referral to an outside agency per the needs of the participant. Conover course curriculum, which supports this element, will be used to enhance the learning experience of the participant. Conover offers Workforce Readiness Courses including; Interviewing skills, Job Retention and Personal Maintenance.</p> <p>Staff referrals to appropriate community resources such as health department, mental health or substance abuse counseling providers, school counselors, etc.</p>
11	Financial Literacy	<p>Financial Literacy is provided in-house by LWDA staff, utilizing Conover curriculum courses that include financial literacy classes, budget, checking and saving accounts, managing spending and debt, etc. Aneca Federal Credit Union provides monthly financial Literacy workshops at our Bossier Parish American Job Center, as a free resource to the public. Referral(s) could be made to an outside agency per the needs of the participant.</p>
12	Entrepreneurial Skills Training	<p>This element is provided in-house by LWDA staff through Conover curriculum to deliver and/or support this element. Referrals to employers who will provide job shadowing in demand jobs that align with the participants skills and capabilities. Entrepreneurial skills training could also include workshops and referral to small business services.</p>
13	Provision of Labor Market and Career Awareness Information	<p>Region 7 American Job Center regularly provide all job seekers with information on jobs currently available and projected job openings, to guide them to training choices. This is required of all youth enrolled in the WIOA Youth program. Labor Market Information is provided by LWDA youth staff by utilizing LMI resources available at www.laworks.net.</p>
14	Post-Secondary Preparation Activities	<p>Activities that aid or help to prepare youth participants for and to transition to postsecondary education and training is provided in-house by LWDA staff. The staff assists youth participants with program elements could include; postsecondary transition, budgeting assistance, housing search assistance, assistance completing school applications, program area of study, Pell grants, and the FAFSA.</p> <p>In support of this training, LWDA staff might also offer coursework through the Conover curriculum.</p>

Region 7's Local Workforce Boards will work to ensure they:

- Will not require Out-of-School Youth in high-risk categories to prove low-income status to receive services.
- Will provide services to individuals who have dropped out of high school, have not attended school for at least one calendar quarter of the most recent school year, or are subject to the juvenile or Adult justice systems under the Out-of-School Youth program.
- Will target and provide services to homeless individuals, runaways, current or former foster care Youth, and individuals who or are pregnant or parenting.
- Will provide services to Youth who are not attending school, hold a secondary credential, and are either basic-skills deficient or an English language learner.

- Will consider Youth living in a high-poverty area to meet the low-income criterion for Youth activities funding and services.

To enhance services and avoid duplication, LWDA 70 engages in active coordination with various stakeholders, including state agencies, local workforce boards, educational institutions, employers, and community organizations. This coordination ensures that each partner's strengths are leveraged and that services are streamlined across programs.

The coordination includes regular meetings, data sharing, and collaborative planning with regional and local partners to align service delivery and avoid overlap. For example, LWDA 70 works closely with educational institutions such as community colleges to offer training that meets both local labor market demands and the needs of disadvantaged adults, dislocated workers, and youth.

Additionally, LWDA 70's partnerships with local employers and industry leaders play a pivotal role in creating apprenticeship opportunities and workforce development initiatives. The continued development of apprenticeships in the region has been a focal point, with LWDA 70 and local boards collaborating on both new initiatives and the continuous support of existing apprenticeship programs. This proactive engagement with employers ensures that training programs are tailored to meet the actual needs of local businesses, while also providing workers with the skills needed for sustainable employment.

In terms of data coordination, LWDA 70 collaborates with state and local partners to collect and share information on participant outcomes, ensuring that performance metrics are met, and reporting is accurate. This coordination allows for continuous program improvement and provides a holistic understanding of regional workforce development needs.

Through these coordinated strategies, LWDA 70 aims to provide high-quality, non-duplicative services that effectively address the needs of adults, dislocated workers, and youth, while also preparing the region's workforce for success in a rapidly changing labor market. The integration of services, ongoing partnerships, and tailored training opportunities help ensure that individuals in Region 7 can achieve long-term career success.

Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA)

The State continues to administer the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program, which is available to workers who lose their jobs or experience reduced hours or income as a result of increased foreign trade activity.

Region 7 will actively reach out to affected workers to provide Trade funded training with the same goals as provided for Dislocated Workers.

TAA services are considered an integral part of the American Job Centers (AJCs) service delivery and may involve any and all partners based on the particular needs of individual clients. As such trade-affected workers may be eligible for:

- Training Services
- Job-Search Allowances
- Relocation Allowances
- Re-Employment Services
- Funded Training
- On-The-Job Training

Like Dislocated Worker, TAA-funded training helps trade-impacted workers obtain the skills necessary to gain suitable employment. TAA will pay 100 percent of tuition, course fees, books and required supplies and equipment, transportation, and other items or services deemed necessary for completion of an approved occupational skills training program.

Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG)

Louisiana provides employment, training and placement services to all Veterans through a network of strategically located in the American Job Centers (AJC) and supported by Helping Individuals Reach Employment (HiRE). Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG) provides services to Veterans and eligible persons according to need and significant barriers to employment. The Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC) JSVG funded activities are co-located within the State's American Job Centers.

Local Veteran Employment Representative (LVER) and a Disabled Veteran Outreach Program (DVOP) Specialist are essential parts of and fully integrated into the workforce development network. The LVER staff member in Region 7 is located at the Caddo American Job Center.

There are four DVOP staff members in Region 7, and one located in Region 8 that covers Lincoln Parish. There are two DVOP staff members at the Caddo AJC that cover Caddo Parish, there is one DVOP located in the Bossier AJC that covers Bossier, Bienville, Claiborne, and Webster Parishes. There is one DVOP located in the Natchitoches AJC that covers DeSoto, Natchitoches, Red River, and Sabine Parishes.

Region 7's Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDAs) provide employment training and placement services to all Veterans through a network of strategically located American Job Centers (AJCs) and supported by Helping Individuals Reach Employment (HiRE). Services are provided to Veterans and eligible persons according to need, and significant barriers to employment. Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC) Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG) funded activities are co-located within the State's AJCs. JVSG staff referred to as Local Veteran Employment Representative (LVER) and Disabled Veteran Outreach Program (DVOP) Specialist, are essential parts of and fully integrated into the workforce development network. Further, the Veterans program is operating a fully functional re-entry program for returning citizens that is acting as a pilot program for non-Veteran returning citizens.

The Region provides priority of service in accordance with TEG-05-03. When a Veteran is identified as having barriers to employment, they are fast tracked on a priority basis to ensure that those barriers are resolved as expeditiously as possible. The State has Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with U. S. Department of Labor-funded programs covered by Section 4215 on Veteran's priority and refers Veterans to training and supportive services within that network on a priority basis. The Region's partners with educational entities within the area and the Vocational Technical Institutions, which also provide priority service for Veterans and assists them with their educational and literacy needs.

Veterans receive priority for employment and job training opportunities available through Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funding, On-the-Job Training (OJT), skills development training, and Youth training contracts.

Veterans can locate training opportunities through use of the Helping Individuals Reach Employment (HiRE) database and receive training at private facilities, which have been approved through the Statewide Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). Should Veterans meet the eligibility criteria, their training costs are paid by the WIOA program or through Individual Training Accounts (ITAs). Veterans take priority in instances of training fund shortages. Local LVER staff and other AJC staff identify jobs and training opportunities specifically tailored for Veterans, as they promote Veterans as potential employees. These priority services are made available and provided to Veterans, transitioning service members, Chapter 31 Veterans, Native American Veterans, and other groups targeted for special consideration, including difficult-to-serve Veterans and Veterans with barriers to employment.

JVSG management and the Region's Local Area Coordinators with both LWDAs shall periodically conduct site checks to ensure all required priority of service signs are present and properly displayed, and that AJC staff understand both the requirement of priority of service and its proper implementation.

During these site visits, monitors pay particular attention to the implementation of priority of service beyond core services, particularly in the allocation of training funds. The State shall consider an indicated referral rate in any one of these areas being lower for Veterans and other eligible persons than for non-Veterans to be evidence of a potential priority-of-implementation problem.

The State shall immediately place the affected Region under examination and take corrective action measures to include, but not be limited, to additional training.

The Regional JVSG staff shall provide priority of service for Veterans in accordance with 38 U.S.C. § 4215(b). The term priority of service means, with respect to any qualified job training program, that a covered person shall be given priority over non-Veterans for the receipt of employment, training, and placement services provided under that program, notwithstanding any other provision of law. Such priority includes giving access services to a covered person before a non-covered person, or, if resources are limited, giving access to such services to a covered person instead of a non-covered person.

Priority starts with the first AJC member that comes in contact with the Veteran or eligible person. During the reception process, a series of questions identifies Veteran or eligibility status. Qualified Veterans and/or qualified spouses are provided services prior to other customers and an initial assessment is completed by the first available BSCS staff member. If during the initial assessment it is determined that the Veteran is a member of another special category, the Veteran is immediately referred to a DVOP specialist.

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

The Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) issues TANF cash assistance through the Family Independence Temporary Assistance Program (FITAP). The overall goal of FITAP is to decrease long-term dependency on public assistance by promoting job preparation and work opportunities. Public assistance is no longer a lifetime benefit but an opportunity to become independent after a financial crisis.

FITAP promotes career development and financial independence in addition to the commitment of providing cash assistance and supportive services to needy families which is in alignment with the goals and purposes of Section 401 of the Social Security Act (42 USC 601):

- provide assistance to needy families so that children may be cared for in their own homes or in the homes of relatives;
- end the dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work, and marriage;
- prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies and establish annual numerical goals for preventing and reducing the incidence of these pregnancies, and;
- encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families.

DCFS Workforce Development (WD)/ TANF Section

DCFS operates a WD/TANF Section that supports the work of DCFS employment and training programs; STEP, SNAP, and CSE E&T. The DCFS WD/TANF Section is committed to entering into contracts with Community Based Organizations to provide case management and supportive wrap-around support services to our WD/TANF program participants to bring them to a place of self-sufficiency with high-demand jobs that produce a livable wage. WD/TANF wants to strengthen our relationship with Region 7 and we hope to include our program participants in WIOA services.

DCFS -Strategies to Empower People (STEP)

The goal of the STEP program is to provide opportunities for work-eligible FITAP recipients to receive job training, employment and supportive services to enable them to become self-sufficient. STEP is the result of the Personal Responsibility and Universal Engagement Act of 2003 passed by the Louisiana Legislature.

All work-eligible FITAP recipients must participate in the STEP Program. DCFS defines work-eligible as FITAP adults under age 60 and FITAP teen heads of household, excluding those FITAP adults and teen heads of household who are disabled or caring for a family member who is disabled. STEP operates statewide.

DCFS -Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training (SNAP E&T)

The SNAP E&T program offers SNAP recipients in Louisiana the opportunity to participate in training and employment programs in order to improve their employment prospects and reduce their reliance on SNAP benefits.

SNAP E&T services include job search assistance and training, basic and vocational education, essential skills training, job retention services. SNAP E&T also provides wrap-around supportive services including transportation and childcare assistance to facilitate successful program completion. SNAP E&T operates statewide.

DCFS -Child Support Enforcement Employment and Training (CSE E&T)

CSE E&T is the newest DCFS employment and training program and is for parents with open child support cases within the DCFS, Child Support Enforcement (CSE) caseload. Both noncustodial and custodial parents have access to the services. The parent cannot receive services from other DCFS employment and training programs including the STEP and SNAP E&T programs. CPs must meet an income threshold to be eligible.

CSE E&T helps parents with employment barriers gain skills, education, and training that will lead to successful, long-term employment. The goals are to reduce poverty, increase money flow into the households, and provide NCPs and CPs with the ability to sufficiently, support their families. CSE E&T offers wrap-around supportive services and operates a pilot program in Caddo and Bossier parishes. CSE E&T is working on expansion plans to serve all parishes in Louisiana.

Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)

Region 7 is committed to bringing together diverse stakeholders (including its Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) and One-Stop Operators) in the development of employment and training opportunities for the senior citizens of the Region. Senior citizens are an integral part of Region 7 and should be afforded the opportunity to provide useful contributions to the Region's workforce. This plan is designed to take a long-term, strategic view of the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) in Region 7 and help develop workforce strategies. The Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) is a community service and work-based training program for older workers.

Authorized by the Older Americans Act, the program provides subsidized, service-based training for low-income persons 55 or older who are unemployed and have poor employment prospects. Participants have access to both SCSEP services and other employment assistance through One-Stop Centers.

SCSEP program staff coordinate referrals with other Partner programs, co-enroll participants as appropriate, provide staffing assistance for basic career services and the resource and intake areas of the facility, and participate in staff capacity building activities with other Partner programs.

Job Corps

The Job Corps Program in Region 7 has a residential and non-residential training center in Shreveport. Job Corps maintains offices in the Caddo and Bossier American Job Centers to provide career and counseling services. Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), Job Corps is linked to the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (Title II), and the State Vocational and Rehabilitation Programs.

LWDA 70 is committed to partnering with Job Corps with its purpose of assisting eligible Youth to connect to the labor force by providing them with:

- Social, academic, career and technical education, and service-learning opportunities.
- Obtaining secondary school diplomas or recognized post-secondary credentials leading to successful careers in in-demand industry sectors or occupations.
- Achieving economic self-sufficiency and opportunities for advancement, or enrollment in post-secondary education, including an Apprenticeship program.
- Provide ongoing transitional assistance to aide youth in becoming working class citizens.

Shreveport Job Corps and the Bossier/Caddo American Job Centers are currently operating in partnership, placing an emphasis on the Region's goals and mission. The Region's goals are strategically aligned to support Job Corps determination for:

- Placing new emphasis on credentials, post-secondary education, and training for in-demand industry sectors and occupations.
- Improving connections with the workforce system.
- Establishing consistent elements Job Corps will consider when making contracting decisions.
- Implementing new performance indicators and requiring their use in decision-making.

Community Services Block Grant (CSBG)

Region 7 is committed to providing resources and fostering partnerships in low-income communities in order to enable low-income individuals to achieve self-sufficiency enhance family stability and revitalize their community.

The Community Action Agency network through the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) will form a partnership with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) system in the coordination support services to low-income individuals and families through the American Job Centers (AJCs); thereby, contributing to the self-sufficiency and stability of individuals and families in the prevention and reduction of poverty.

Services provided by each community action agency may vary; however, services include assistance with utility bills through the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). Other services provided by the agencies include emergency rental and housing assistance, housing counseling, Home Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP), food and clothing pantry, and transportation.

Early Head Start is for children under the age of 3, infants, and pregnant mothers. The other option is Head Start, which is for children that range in age from 3-5. Bossier Office of Community Services program provides children with early education services, health and mental care, free food, and other social services. Teachers and social workers that are part of Early Head Start are also coordinating with organizations providing early intervention for infants and toddlers with disabilities. Additionally, the Shreveport Water Assistance Program (SWAP) assists residents of Shreveport only.

Reintegration of Ex-Offenders Program

Region 7, LWC, and its Local workforce partners have allied with the Northwest Louisiana ReEntry Coalition to support initiatives that assist ex-offenders and their families with a vast array of services that engender an upgraded lifestyle. These include workforce development related sources such as employment services provided by Region 7, LWC, Goodwill, and similar organizations in accessing resources connected with training programs, both subsidized and non-subsidized, and community resources that provide medical, educational, housing, military Veteran, and law enforcement/correctional information, and services that are often crucial.

The Coalition consists of representatives from Local and Regional agencies and service providers that offer the services and conducts monthly meetings, usually held at the Goodwill facility at 800 W. 70th St. in Shreveport to provide a forum to share valuable information with participating members and seek to actually make these services and this information available at the grassroots level. The coalition consist of over 200 members and monthly meetings average 40 members. As the efforts of the Coalition and the awareness of its work expand, the potential positive contributions of a re-energized and redirected returning citizen community will benefit our Region and beyond in many ways.

In addition to the partnership with the local coalition Region 7 and LWC serves an active member of the Northwest Louisiana Prisoner Reentry Initiative (LaPRI) Reentry Steering Team and participate in several Work Groups. The LaPRI Steering Team is a group of specific community leaders who help influence and lead system change within the local community and state. Work groups consist of people who work on the front line helping returning citizens and are divided into seven focus areas. The focus areas are employment, education, housing, health (mental and physical), legal, transportation, and prosocial/faith.

Work groups help identify gaps and barriers in service for returning citizens in our community and use this information to plan related events to mitigate these. Work groups work directly with the Steering Team to educate the Louisiana Department of Corrections and local community officials to help fill service gaps and stimulate system change.

2. Adult education and literacy activities under WIOA Title II. This description must include how the Local Board will carry out the review of local applications submitted under Title II consistent with WIOA Secs. 107(d)(11)(A) and (B)(i) and WIOA Sec. 232 (§ 679.560(b)(12)).

To ensure compliance with WIOA Title II requirements and to promote high-quality adult education and literacy services, the Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) has established a structured process for reviewing local applications submitted under WIOA Secs. 107(d)(11)(A), (B)(i), and Sec. 232. This process ensures alignment with regional workforce needs and supports the integration of Title II services with broader workforce development strategies.

Region 7's LWDBs coordinates with Title II providers to ensure that adult education programs address the foundational skills necessary for individuals to achieve economic self-sufficiency and advance in the workforce. This includes reviewing applications to confirm alignment with the regional and state plan objectives, prioritizing programs that serve individuals with significant barriers to employment, and ensuring equitable access to literacy services across the local areas.

The review process ensures:

- Alignment Evaluation: Applications will be reviewed to determine how well proposed activities align with the Local Plan's goals and regional labor market demands, including collaboration with employers and training providers.
- Collaboration with Partners: The LWDA's will facilitate communication between Title II applicants, one-stop partners, and community stakeholders to encourage program integration and resource-sharing.
- Performance Metrics: Applications will be assessed based on clearly defined performance goals, such as measurable skill gains, credential attainment, and participant employment outcomes.
- Support for Diverse Populations: Special emphasis will be placed on proposals targeting underrepresented groups, such as English language learners, individuals with low literacy levels, and adults with disabilities.

The LWDA's will also provide recommendations and feedback to ensure continuous improvement and alignment with workforce development priorities. By actively engaging with Title II providers and maintaining an open, collaborative process, the board will foster a robust system of adult education services that supports lifelong learning and regional economic growth.

This process exemplifies the LWDA's commitment to ensuring that adult education and literacy activities serve as a vital bridge to workforce success for all individuals in the local area.

The Louisiana Community and Technical College System (LCTCS) currently operates Louisiana's Comprehensive Adult Education System, WorkReady U (WRU) and partners through co-enrollment with the Louisiana Workforce Commission's (LWC's) American Job Centers (AJCs), offering services at nearly 200 Adult Education instructional sites around Louisiana.

In 2010, The Louisiana Legislature finalized the transference of responsibility of Louisiana's Adult Education Delivery System from the Department of Education (DOE) to Louisiana Community and Technical College System (LCTCS). This effort was not simply about moving a program's administration from one agency to another. It was about reconsidering completely the goals, outcomes, and direction of Adult Basic Education in Louisiana.

LCTCS developed a new policy framework whose primary focus is putting Louisiana Adults to work by providing high-quality basic skills instruction, in addition to wrap-around student services that lead to a seamless transition to post-secondary enrollment, technical skill training, credentialing, and sustainable employment. The LCTCS, Moving Adult Education Forward, A Pro Forma Business Plan, was a milestone in redefining the vision for Adult Education, focusing on new performance goals, including high school equivalency diplomas, post-secondary enrollments, post-secondary completers, and placement in sustainable employment at family-supporting wages.

As a symbol of the new vision, the Louisiana Adult Education program was renamed WRU, to reflect Louisiana's Comprehensive Adult Education Delivery System. Since the 2010 renewed set of expectations and vastly different philosophy in Louisiana with regards to Adult Education, Adult Education programs have progressively adjusted educational service and delivery, and are well-positioned to provide, deliver, and coordinate the required activities under Title II of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

Adult Education connects into the One-Stop System through the intake and assessment process to identify Adults with limited basic skills, and then to use innovative instructional models as necessary to prepare Adult learners for post-secondary education within the context of serving learners at the lowest skill levels. The LCTCS Adult Education and Family Literacy Program, WRU, administers and provides program performance oversight to eligible Local entities that provide Adult Education services. These services include academic instruction and education services that increase the individual's ability to:

- Read, write, and speak English and perform mathematics or other activities necessary for attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent.
- Transition to post-secondary education and training (Train to Attain) is a program of WRU and allows for the earning of an Industry Based Certification (IBC) while enrolled in HiSET courses.
- Obtain employment.

3. Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 49 et seq.) services (§ 679.560(b)(11)).

LWDA 70 already meets a major requirement of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) with the co-location of Wagner-Peyser (WP) Employment Services in LWDA 70's American Job Centers (AJCs). The intent is to ensure that unemployment insurance claimants receive the same services as all other jobseekers, including job training, labor exchange, career counseling, and labor market intelligence. The Unemployment Insurance (UI) claimant/jobseeker will also receive eligibility assessments and referrals to an array of education resources and training through the WP Employment Service Program.

The public workforce development system across Louisiana is comprised of 8 Regional Local Market Areas, 15 local workforce development boards, and 62 American Job Centers (AJC). All AJCs around the State offer skills assessment services, job search assistance, and referrals to Adult Education programs seeking to connect individuals with meaningful and sustainable employment.

LWDA 70 has six American Job Centers dispersed throughout the ten-parish area. There are five affiliated Centers in LWDA 70.

LWDA 70 has one comprehensive One-Stop Center in Bossier Parish.

LWDA 70's leadership utilizes weekly professional staff development activities for staff members located at the AJCs to ensure that high quality services are provided to both job seekers and employers.

The structure is a combination of training for the whole staff in a joint session as well as for individual team members, such as the Recruitment and Placement Team, Membership Team, and Regional Business Services Team.

The Louisiana Workforce Commission, Office of Workforce Development (OWD), has developed and implemented the following internal training program for employment service staff, which includes:

- Standardized performance ratings for individual staff members with technical competencies based on Federal and State laws, regulations, statutes, and standardized operating procedures were developed for use statewide with behavioral competencies required for effective case management and provision of service.
- Standardized performance monitoring of case management and career services.
- A streamlined and effective Service Delivery Model that fit within the requirements of WIOA and WP, with the nuances required under other programs, and training to board leadership.

Many of the funded employment and training programs under the umbrella of the Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC), such as Wagner-Peyser (WP), Veterans Program, Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) and Rapid Response, WIOP, RESEA, IWTP, STEP, LRS, have long standing working relationships with the local Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) program. The operators of these programs have demonstrated over the years their knowledge of the sponsored activities and how these activities complement each other. Some of the sponsors of these programs serve as representatives on the Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs). They have input on the kinds of activities that are implemented through the WIOA program. They will sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that describes the scope of each program and values shared by each entity for the American Job Center (AJC) system. The MOU also addresses how partner programs can utilize a common client referral process.

Several cross-training sessions have been held with Local partners to acquaint each other with their services, and how services can be improved for our customers, and the integrity of the system.

Finally, as stated in other parts of this document, the goal in Region 7 has been to better coordinate the delivery of employment and training services by LWC's WP funded program staff and the staff under the authority of the LWDB. This required the alignment of workforce services functions across WP and WIOA programs.

The staff of the LWDBs have long-standing working relationships in employment and training programs. They have engaged in combined activities such as coordinating Employer-Based Training activities with employers, Rapid Response, the Region's Business Services Team, and training.

In fact, the two (2) LWDBs in Region 7 have several of the same members participating on each Board. They are knowledgeable of what's happening with the two (2) LWDBs in the Region and can convey such information to other Board members.

The staff of the LWDBs have come together on the writing of the program plan. The staff have also discussed ways of combining Employer-Based Training activities under one contract with specific employers.

The Directors actively participate in the Louisiana Workforce Association and maintain ongoing communication about State, Local, and Regional matters. They are attuned to the needs and priorities of their respective LWDBs, enabling them to develop policies and procedures that foster effective collaboration across the boards.

4. Vocational rehabilitation service activities under WIOA Title IV (§ 679.560(b)(13)).

Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS) continues its collaboration efforts in identifying effective ways to integrate services in the American Job Centers (AJCs) located within Region 7. LRS has a good working relationship with the AJCs in Region 7 and continues to share resources with those Centers.

LRS provides access to services in the comprehensive One-Stop Centers in the Region and in affiliate locations as necessary to assure effective services to individuals with disabilities through participant's skills training which enhances participant ability to obtain employment in their desired field, in particular, high demand jobs.

To improve knowledge regarding assistive technology and address other accessibility issues, the LRS Program Coordinator for Rehabilitation Technology continues to provide consultation to the AJCs in Region 7.

In addition, the agency's Rehabilitation Employment Development Specialist (REDS) serves as the LRS liaison for all AJCs in Region 7 which includes providing LRS Public Awareness as well as services to consumers such as building job seeking skills and employment development. LRS is committed to the success of the AJCs and works collaboratively to serve individuals with disabilities at assigned Centers. To improve knowledge regarding assistive technology and address other accessibility issues, LRS Program Coordinator for Rehabilitation Technology continues to provide consultation to the AJCs.

LRS will continue to uphold the achievement of competitive integrated employment of individuals with disabilities. Our Vocational Rehabilitation Program sets out to accomplish this task by building relationships with employers in the communities and various cities in the State of Louisiana. In order to form these connections, LRS REDS begin to build these relations by first gaining an understanding of what the business and workforce needs are in each area of the State. This is done by expanding our outreach to the business community and then by referring or recommending those clients that will fit their workforce needs.

LRS REDS are involved with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Board meetings and have formed relationships with the Louisiana Workforce Commission's (LWC's) Regional Industry Coordinator which helps to identify workforce needs in Region 7.

Industry Coordinators are Region specific and have knowledge related to the needs of the businesses, the qualifications needed to obtain employment in a given industry, and resources, such as Apprenticeship programs, that may be available to help our consumers achieve competitive integrated employment. The Program Coordinator over employment initiatives provides further technical assistance to the REDs to assist them in outreach efforts to businesses and their Human Resource Management Teams. Outreach efforts include attendance at Local and Regional job fairs, Chamber of Commerce meetings, and the Society of Human Resource Management monthly meetings. REDs also contact hundreds of employers every month in an effort to identify workforce needs and determine if we have consumers that are job ready and meet the qualifications for positions available.

When REDs place the consumers in competitive and integrated employment, they continue to work with the business and the consumer, ensuring the employment opportunity is a good fit for both. LRS continues to renew and revise existing Local cooperative agreements, as applicable, with school districts and Charter Schools in Region 7.

The Louisiana Rehabilitation Council (LRC), which is the State's rehabilitation council, meets with LRS quarterly as a part of the council meeting. During these meetings, LRS provides quarterly updates, and LRC provides input and recommendations to LRS. The LRC incorporates public forums, consumer/ counselor interviews, etc., to ensure the services provided by LRS meet the needs of Louisiana's citizens with disabilities.

As part of the State Transition Plan, the Department of Education (DOE) and LRS continue to work together to establish Regional Core Teams. The LRS Transition Program Coordinator continues to collaborate and partner with DOE, Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities (OCDD), Work Incentive Planning Program, Office of Community Services, LWC, and the Office of Youth Development in an effort to network, share information, and utilize comparable benefits to enhance Vocational Rehabilitation services to transition students.

The primary focus of LRS collaboration is to identify and address barriers, (e.g. policies, eligibility process, resource allocation), assure effective service provision through the support of Local interagency core teams, provide cross-agency training, outreach, engage in capacity building of young Adults and family outreach efforts, provide continued support of innovative models and practices related to transition, and provide information and technical assistance.

LRS has appropriate cooperative arrangements with, and uses the services and facilities of, various Federal, State, and Local agencies and programs. LRS coordinates with other agencies and programs to ensure individuals with disabilities receive appropriate services. These agencies and programs include:

- Department of Education, Division of Special Populations (DOE)
- Department of Health and Hospitals, Office of Behavioral Health (DDH)
- Department of Veteran Affairs (VA)
- Louisiana Workforce Commission, Office of Workforce Development (OWD)
- Louisiana Workforce Commission, Work Opportunity Tax Credit Program (WOTC)
- Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities (OCDD)
- Office of Disability Affairs
- Department of Children and Family Services, Office of Disability Determination (DCFS)
- Department of Children and Family Services, Office of Family Support, Family Independence Temporary Assistance Program (FITAP)
- Social Security Administration
- Social Security – Bendex (2002)
- Central Louisiana Intertribal Vocational Rehabilitation Program (Title 121)
- United Houma Nation (Title 121)
- U. S. Department of Labor, Office of Worker’s Compensation Program.

5. Relevant secondary and post-secondary education programs and activities with education and workforce investment activities (§ 679.560(b)(9)).

The local workforce system in Region 7 is committed to aligning secondary and post-secondary education programs with workforce development activities to respond effectively to the region's economic needs. This approach is focused on ensuring that businesses can hire, retain, train, and advance workers to meet current and future demands. By connecting businesses with qualified job seekers, the workforce system eliminates service duplication and reduces administrative overhead, which enhances the overall effectiveness of our programs.

To further strengthen these connections, the region utilizes a Comprehensive Labor Market Information System that provides key insights into employment and training, tracks the effectiveness of training programs, forecasts job growth, and matches job seekers with employers. These tools, including the HiRE system, ensure that both job seekers and employers are equipped with the information needed to make informed decisions about careers and hiring.

LWDA 70 and LWDA 71 work closely with core partners and One-Stop partners to provide coordinated, high-quality services designed to meet the needs of both job seekers and employers. The partnership model is particularly effective in ensuring that workforce development efforts are responsive to labor demand, moving beyond traditional job matching and training to address the collective needs of the region's workforce.

Educational institutions, particularly those within the Louisiana Community and Technical College System, play a critical role in this alignment. These institutions, alongside other partners, are engaged in providing sector-specific training programs and work-based learning opportunities, such as apprenticeships and internships, to help individuals gain the skills needed to secure high-wage, high-demand jobs. The focus on Career Pathways, which integrates education, training, and support services, prepares students and workers for successful careers and economic independence.

Additionally, the Louisiana Workforce Commission's Star Jobs ratings system plays a pivotal role in guiding educational programs and workforce development efforts. By ranking the highest-demand, highest-wage jobs, the Star Jobs system informs decisions at educational institutions, ensuring that training programs are aligned with the region's labor market needs. This system is used by institutions to guide funding decisions, curriculum development, and career counseling, ensuring that individuals are prepared for careers that offer both growth potential and financial stability.

Through these efforts, LWDA in Region 7 works to ensure that the workforce system is well-integrated with educational opportunities, providing pathways for individuals to gain the skills needed for sustainable employment and contributing to the region's economic development.

6. How the Local Board will support the state strategies identified under § 676.105 and work with the entities carrying out core programs and other workforce development programs, including programs of study and career pathway programs under the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.) to support service alignment and needs identified in regional or local level assessments including the Perkins Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment (§ 679.560(b)(1)(ii)).

Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education

The Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V) was signed into law July 31, 2018. This Act, which became Public Law 115-224, reauthorizes the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (Perkins IV). It was approved unanimously by both chambers of Congress, reflecting broad bipartisan support for career and technical education (CTE) programs. Perkins V is largely based on the structure and content of current law but makes some key changes that will impact the implementation of CTE programs and administrative processes around the country. As the new law was making its way through the reauthorization process, a key area of debate was "Secretarial authority" or the role of the U.S. Secretary of Education (Secretary) in the process of state and local planning and accountability. In Perkins V, we see evidence of the compromise on this issue, with enhanced prohibition language that limits the Secretary's role and the elimination of the negotiation process between the Secretary and states on performance measure targets. In turn, we also see more specific requirements for setting these targets, including additional stakeholder engagement and expanded definitions.

The new law went into effect on July 1, 2019, and the first year of implementation was considered a "transition year." Louisiana's Perkins V State Perkins Plan was approved by the Secretary of Education on June 12, 2020.

The State Plan focuses on improving efforts in Career and Technical Education (CTE), academic and technical skills training delivered to youth and adults through the dedicated efforts of talented literate, numerate and qualified teachers, faculty and administrators at geographical and charter Local Education Agencies (LEAs) and postsecondary institutions. Louisiana's program completer's will acquire the core academic and technical learning skills they need to be lifelong learners, readily adapting to the changing needs of the workplace. They will possess specific technical (or occupational) skills in the career field for which they are prepared. Just as important, program completer's will understand the value that employers place on essential employability skills such as the ability to:

- Communicate
- Manage Information Responsibly;
- Think and Solve Problems;
- Demonstrate a Positive Attitude;
- Work with Others;
- Assume Personal Responsibility; and
- Portray Resiliency.

This Louisiana Perkins V State Plan for CTE is designed to:

- Ensure students are provided academic skills such as literacy and numeracy, technical skills and knowledge, and essential employability skills via all Perkins Eligible CTE Programs of Study;
- Give individuals the best opportunity for workplace success in high-skill, high-wage, in-demand or emerging occupations; and
- Partner with business and industry to strengthen and expand existing businesses as well as attract new employers to Louisiana with a highly skilled workforce. To reach these outcomes, Louisiana is working to improve the quality of every CTE course and program, to align secondary and postsecondary programs, to ensure a seamless transition from one level to the next, to provide sequenced and non-duplicative coursework, and articulated, dual, and prior learning, where possible. All Perkins funded programs will meet the definition of a Perkins Eligible CTE Program of Study.

Region 7 LWDAs will work with the Perkins Region 7 Leadership Team, Small Business Development Centers and Biz Camps in Northwest Louisiana to provide entrepreneurial training and advising services. Information on these programs and referrals will be made to WIOA customers as determined appropriate in the Individual Service Strategy.

The Perkins Region 7 Leadership Team consists of Secondary, Adult, and Post Secondary Education Partners, Workforce Development and One Stop Shops, Youth and Adult Corrections, Industry representatives, and Community Service Organizations (including students and parents). This team facilitates the recruitment and participation of larger stakeholder groups in the creation and evaluation of a Regional Comprehensive Needs Assessment. The Regional Perkins Region 7 Large Stakeholders Team evaluates and makes recommendations on the topics of:

- Student Performance in CTE Programs;
- Program Size, Scope, and Quality;
- Alignment of Programs to Labor Market Needs;
- Progress Toward Implementing CTE Programs and Programs of Study;
- Recruitment, Retention, and Training of CTE Educators; and
- Progress Toward Improving Equity and Access.

If the Department of Labor grants the State of Louisiana its petitioned waiver of Local Boards to expend 50% of Youth funds on both ISY and OSY; LWDA 70 will continue its work with Regional school systems to strengthen the opportunity for CTE students to receive paid Work Experience in in-demand occupations. Thus, providing greater opportunities for rural youth, who face significant barriers to employment, the leveraged opportunity to earn themselves skilled experience and a stronger likelihood to progress on a career pathway toward self-sufficiency.

Higher education is not a mandated partner in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), however, the Region 7 Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) consist of adult education leadership and higher education leadership, which includes the Louisiana Community and Technical College System and universities in the region. The region's LWDA's provide policy leadership, guidance, and support for the innovation of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

Region 7 will follow Louisiana's developed definition and framework for career pathways as the model for the alignment of education, training, and work-based learning (apprenticeships, internships) and support services that enable individuals and students to be better prepared to achieve economic independence and family stability.

The region's WIOA partners are embarking on a new concept to organize resources (staff, supports, etc.) around target job-seeker populations and business development using a pathway model that will encourage separate agencies to wrap resources, staff, and supports around the customer base.

Regional business and sector strategies, and the educational partners, particularly the Louisiana Community and Technical College System institutions, are key partners in the regional and sector strategies, providing workforce skill training and integrated work-based training to meet regional employer and economic development needs.

State partners will work with the region's LWDBs and partners to define and build pathways appropriate to the region. Region 7's LWDBs are charged with aligning education and training resources in their region to provide maximum opportunities for job-seekers to attain skills and experiences needed to obtain employment.

Region 7's LWDBs has been a catalyst for the leveraging of federal, state, and local investments to expand access to workforce development programs in education and training institutions. The region's LWDBs will continue to work closely with post-secondary education partners, including all Perkins post-secondary recipients, to leverage federal, state, and local resources to coordinate strategies, enhance services, and avoid duplication of services.

The basic education skills acquired through a high school diploma (or its equivalent) are the foundation needed to pursue additional education or vocational training to obtain the skills required for the job opportunities being created by the employers that make up Region 7's economy. With close to 20% of the adult working age population possibly lacking a high school diploma, adult education programs offered through Louisiana Technical Colleges in Region 7 will be an essential component of workforce development activities.

Staff involved in the administration of adult education programs located at Louisiana Technical Colleges are members of both Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) in Region 7. This will provide the opportunity to better coordinate the provision of adult education services to the customers of Region 7's American Job Centers (AJCs) who are in need of increasing their basic education and literacy skills in order to enhance their employability or to pursue vocational training to qualify for most demand occupations.

Through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) program, both LWDBs in Region 7 have already undertaken the support of older youth dropouts enrolled in HiSET (Adult Education) programs operated at Louisiana Technical Colleges. Some of these Youth have also been placed in WIOA funded work experience positions with public and private employers as part of their Individual Service Strategies (ISS). The cooperation of staff (administrative and instructional) involved in the operation of adult education programs at Region 7's Louisiana Technical Colleges has been essential to the successful implementation of this program initiative.

The local boards support the state strategies by carrying out core programs and other workforce development programs, including programs of study and career pathway programs under the Strengthening Career and Technical Education to support service alignment and needs identified in regional or local level assessments including the Perkins Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment.

7. Provide a copy of the local supportive service policies and describe how the Local Board will coordinate the provision of transportation and other appropriate supportive services in the local area (§ 679.560(b) (10)) and include information on the supportive services by each local program as appropriate.

LWDA 70 is dedicated to implementing supportive service policies that effectively address participant needs and align with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) goals. These policies are designed to ensure that participants have the necessary resources To overcome barriers to training, employment, and career advancement, while maintaining compliance with § 679.560(b)(10).

LWDA 70's supportive service policies provide a structured framework for assisting WIOA-enrolled individuals. Supportive services, including, but not limited to, transportation assistance, childcare, housing, and mental health support, are provided to enable participants to engage in workforce-funded programs and secure meaningful employment.

Supportive service payments, including stipends, bus passes, gas cards, and other resources, are made available based on individual assessments and the availability of funds. These services are administered to ensure participants can attend training, interviews, or employment and are evaluated on a case-by-case basis to avoid unnecessary duplication of resources, and to ensure WIOA is the last resort, and the cost is necessary, reasonable, and allocable.

Recognizing transportation as a significant barrier, especially in rural areas, LWDA 70 has developed strategies to expand transportation access. In urban regions, public transportation systems provide affordable commuting options, while rural areas often rely on shared-ride services like Uber and Lyft. LWDA 70 partners with these providers to facilitate transportation solutions, with payments arranged through service providers to alleviate the burden on participants.

Coordination with core partners ensures efficient utilization of limited resources for maximum impact. The region also works closely with partner organizations, community programs, and the Regional Planning Council to identify best practices for supportive services. By sharing insights and replicating successful models, LWDA 70 strengthens its ability to address participant needs comprehensively.

To maximize available funding and minimize redundancies, LWDA 70 leverages partnerships with community organizations, housing authorities, childcare providers, and mental health services. This collaboration expands participants' access to resources beyond what is available through the American Job Center (AJC) network. Regular partner meetings, cross-agency referrals, and integrated service delivery systems ensure seamless access to supportive services for participants.

The LWDA 70 Local Workforce Development Board provides strategic oversight and guidance for supportive services. Policies and procedures are continuously reviewed and refined to meet the evolving needs of participants. Emphasis is placed on the efficient allocation of resources, ensuring transparency, and avoiding redundancy in service delivery.

LWDA 70's commitment to addressing barriers through well-coordinated supportive services and strong community partnerships ensures participants are equipped to succeed in training, secure employment, and achieve career goals.

E. Provide a description of how the local area will provide adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities including:

1. A description and assessment of the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the local area (§ 679.560(b)(6)).

LWDA 70 offers comprehensive adult and dislocated worker employment and training services aimed at equipping individuals with the skills and support needed to thrive in today's labor market. The goal of these services is to reduce unemployment duration, improve job stability, and increase earnings by helping individuals develop the necessary skills to secure and retain employment.

Our adult training program is designed to address the specific needs of individuals who may require additional education or skill development to compete effectively in the workforce. The services available to adults are tailored to support a range of employment barriers and are aimed at individuals who are most in need, including:

- Public Assistance Recipients: Adults receiving public assistance benefits are given priority access to training programs to help them gain skills and find sustainable employment.
- Low-Income Individuals: We prioritize services for individuals with low-income, ensuring they have access to career services and training opportunities that will enhance their employability and long-term financial stability.
- Basic Skills Deficient Individuals: Adults who are deficient in basic skills are provided with educational opportunities, including basic skills training and remedial services, to help them overcome these barriers and become more competitive in the labor market.

For dislocated workers, LWDA 70 offers specialized services that address the unique needs of individuals who have lost their jobs due to plant closures, mass layoffs, or other significant workforce reductions. The Dislocated Worker services are highly personalized and include the development of an Individualized Employment Plan (IEP), which serves as a roadmap for each participant's job search and career development. These services include:

- Career Planning and Counseling: Dislocated workers are provided with career counseling to identify transferable skills and explore new career pathways that match their interests and the demands of the job market.
- Job Search and Placement Assistance: Our team offers direct support with job search strategies, access to job openings, and assistance in securing employment through personalized job placement services.
- Approved Training: Dislocated workers may be eligible for funding to access approved training programs, including skills development, certifications, and credentials that will increase their competitiveness in the labor market.
- Support Services: Additional support services such as transportation, childcare, or assistance with technology needs are available to ensure workers can fully participate in employment and training activities.

LWDA 70 uses a variety of assessment tools to determine the needs of our adult and dislocated worker participants. These assessments are modified as needed to best serve the diverse demographics of our region. Case managers work closely with each individual to ensure that their Individualized Employment Plans reflect their unique needs, goals, and aspirations.

Assessment components may include:

- Evaluation of Skills: This helps to determine the individual's current skill set and identify areas where additional training or education is required.

- **Career Counseling and Planning:** Participants are guided through career exploration to identify their interests and match them with suitable job opportunities.
- **Training Options:** We assess the need for various training opportunities, including both traditional classroom-based training and work-based learning options, depending on the individual's career goals and local labor market needs.

In addition to the direct employment and training services, LWDA 70 offers robust career services through the AJCs. These services include both basic career services and individualized career services as appropriate for each participant. Career services include:

- **Job Search Assistance:** Helping individuals navigate job search platforms and apply for positions.
- **Job Matching:** Matching participants' skills to current job openings.
- **Training Referrals:** Referring individuals to appropriate training programs based on their career goals.
- **Case Management:** Case managers provide ongoing support throughout the training and job search process, offering personalized guidance and follow-up services.

Staff at our AJCs, regardless of their status as state or local workforce development employees, are dedicated to providing high-quality, customer-focused services. They ensure that job seekers receive the support they need, from initial registration through post-placement follow-up. Career services are designed to help individuals find sustainable employment, and we continue to engage participants even after placement to ensure they remain supported throughout their employment journey.

LWDA 70 is dedicated to offering a broad range of employment and training activities for both adults and dislocated workers, empowering individuals to overcome barriers and thrive in the workforce. Our approach is rooted in personalization, with each participant receiving the guidance and resources necessary to succeed. Through customized training, case management, and strong partnerships with local employers and community organizations, we aim to build a workforce that is equipped with in-demand skills and ready to meet the evolving needs of the local labor market. Our programs are designed to provide meaningful support that leads to long-term job stability and career growth.

The Three Tracks for a Jobseeker

There are three tracks that any jobseeker may take. These are defined as workforce-ready in a demand occupation, workforce ready not in a demand occupation, and case management.

It is important to note that one of these tracks will apply to all job-seekers regardless of their reason for entering our staff-assisted service, and that during the course of service assessments and reevaluation the job-seeker may move from one track to another.

Entry may begin as a self-service electronic registration in or out of a American Job Centers (AJCs), an outreach contact (regardless of reason for outreach), an automatic registration created by an application for Unemployment Compensation (UI) benefits and the subsequent required service points requiring a visit to a Center, a staff-assisted registration and enrollment for a job-seeker who is a walk in to a Center, or an individual who is registered by any means while receiving Rapid Response services.

Jobseekers who are also UI claimants

Required service entry for Unemployment Insurance (UI) beneficiaries takes one of two forms based on worker profiling. They are profiled as least likely to exhaust their benefits (workforce ready) or most likely to exhaust their benefits (not workforce ready.)

These jobseekers must report to the American Job Centers (AJCs) at specified service points as a requirement of continued eligibility to receive UI benefits (following the most current U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) and State guidance for grant specific requirements). Any jobseeker who is also a UI recipient entering a Center for service shall receive an orientation (e.g. provision of labor market information and career information, information on assessment tools, and orientation to services available through the Center and partner organizations). Orientation is optional but is encouraged for all non-UI recipient jobseekers as well.

Workforce Ready, in a Demand Occupation

Jobseekers who are not Unemployment Insurance (UI) recipients may arrive at the American Job Centers (AJCs) for a variety of reasons, and they may be unemployed by choice or seeking a career change. If the initial assessment indicates they have no significant barriers to employment and are workforce ready in a demand occupation, they will be considered workforce ready in a demand occupation.

When an initial assessment indicates no significant barriers to employment, and the job-seeker has skills, credentials, certification, education, soft skills, previous experience, or a combination of these factors that qualifies them in a demand occupation, they will be sent to career specialists performing business services or other career specialists by Local management for job referral.

AJC Staff shall review the job-seeker's skills comparing them to specific demand occupation job vacancies, match those skills to job vacancies, and make a staff referral. The career specialist who made the referral, or who is case managing the jobseeker, should plan for a formalized follow-up process, such as a 30, 60, or 90-day cycle, developed locally with documented reassessment. Follow-up does not necessarily require a contact call. Alerts and electronic messaging available in HiRE may be utilized.

Workforce Ready, Not in a Demand Occupation

When the initial assessment indicates a job-seeker is workforce ready, but not in a demand occupation (including Unemployment Insurance (UI) recipients determined to be least likely to exhaust their UI benefits), that job-seeker shall be referred to self-service and offered assistance as needed with informational services.

Informational services will include guiding the jobseeker to Labor Market Information (LMI), including jobs in demand, wage rates, education requirements, work search tools, skills, and interest-matching assessments.

AJC Staff should plan for effective follow-up, reassessing as necessary. This is critical because continued failure to achieve employment may indicate the existence of a barrier to employment that was not identified earlier in the assessment process.

Should follow-up for any jobseeker on the workforce ready track show continued unemployment, more individualized career services may be indicated. These jobseekers shall be moved to a case management track.

Case Management Track

Job-seekers who have poor or large gaps in their work history, limited, obsolete, or unknown skills, limited education, lack credentials, lack soft skills, have significant barriers to employment, or a combination of any of these factors, as well as, any job-seeker determined most likely to exhaust all their Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits, shall be considered not workforce ready.

Jobseekers who are not workforce ready shall be provided individualized career services, consisting of a minimum of a Comprehensive Assessment and development of an Individualized Employment Plan (IEP) in the context of case management.

Comprehensive Assessment is vital to collecting information on job-seeker barriers to employment, employment goals, knowledge skills and abilities, and proficiency in occupational knowledge. This Assessment shall be done as a client-centered approach to evaluating the needs of a participant without regard to services or training program availability. The purpose is not to match the jobseeker to what is available, rather to determine job-seeker needs.

This Comprehensive Assessment is best defined operatively as an intensive interviewing process, which includes behavioral observations, and may also require the use of structured assessment tools. Other information gathered may include detailed work history, family support available, social services affiliations, offender status, and a detailed education history.

Comprehensive Assessment must be documented via case note(s), with regard for privacy and Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) rules. It is the responsibility of Local management to ensure staff is cognizant of HIPAA rules.

The Comprehensive Assessment is the foundation for development of an IEP, and no IEP shall be created without completing a Comprehensive Assessment. In many cases the Comprehensive Assessment will then be an ongoing process that may result in changes to the goals and objectives of the IEP.

The IEP is developed with a jobseeker to identify or create employment goals, appropriate achievement objectives, and the right combination of services to assist in achieving goals and objectives.

The IEP must include goals and objectives that are SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and time bound). A case note must accompany the IEP and must justify the Plan based on the identified barrier(s) to employment.

Case management requires a regular follow-up and review or revision of the IEP until such time as the jobseeker becomes workforce ready or enters a training program. In either case, follow-up is critical, using a 30-day cycle until the jobseeker attains employment or complete training.

All IEPs will be entered into Helping Individuals Reach Employment (HiRE), using the HiRE Wizard.

2. A description of how the Local Board will coordinate workforce development activities carried out in the local area with state-wide rapid response activities (§ 679.560(b)(7)).

LWDA 70 will continue to work closely with the Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC) to coordinate workforce development activities with statewide rapid response services. This collaboration is critical for assisting workers and employers during times of workforce disruption, such as plant shutdowns or large-scale layoffs.

LWC typically leads the rapid response process but always invites the participation of local boards, including our team, in these initiatives. By working together with LWC's Region 7 Rapid Response Coordinator, who is stationed at our Bossier/Caddo Comprehensive American Job Center, we ensure that workers facing layoffs receive comprehensive support and services. These services focus on overcoming barriers such as the transfer of specialized skills, market demand declines, age-related challenges, and the need for retraining. Additionally, LWDA 70's partnerships with training providers and supportive service agencies help workers gain access to the resources needed for quick reemployment.

The coordination of these services ensures that individuals affected by layoffs or closures have the necessary tools and resources to transition into new, sustainable employment opportunities as quickly as possible.

F. Provide a description of how the local area will provide youth activities including:

1. A description and assessment of the type and availability of youth workforce investment activities in the local area, including activities for youth who are individuals with disabilities, which must include an identification of successful models of such activities (§ 679.560(b)(8)).

LWDA 70 has developed a youth service delivery model that focuses on the needs of both In-School Youth (ISY) and Out-of-School Youth (OSY) under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). This model aligns with the broader goals of WIOA, emphasizing career pathways that support post-secondary education, employment readiness, and long-term career success.

Our local approach to youth services ensures that all 14 WIOA youth program elements are provided, with a particular focus on addressing the unique needs of youth in our region, especially low-income and high-risk youth populations. Key activities include:

- **Career Exploration and Planning:** We provide career assessments and development plans tailored to individual interests and abilities, ensuring that youth are prepared for post-secondary education or direct entry into the workforce.
- **Work Experience and Work-Based Learning:** We offer summer employment, internships, and other work experience opportunities for youth, including youth with disabilities. These experiences help youth gain practical skills, improve work readiness, and increase employability.
- **Tutoring and Study Skills Training:** For youth facing academic challenges, we offer tutoring, study skills training, and support for attaining high school diplomas or HiSET certification.
- **Mentorship and Support Services:** We provide mentorship and supportive services, including transportation, housing, and childcare assistance, to help youth overcome barriers and successfully participate in workforce activities.
- **Vocational Training and ITAs:** Through Individual Training Accounts (ITAs), we support youth in gaining industry-recognized certifications and credentials, with a strong focus on out-of-school youth. The ITA system provides the flexibility to match training opportunities with current labor market demands.
- **Services for Special Populations:** Our services are tailored to the needs of youth facing barriers, including those who are pregnant or parenting, homeless, runaways, former foster youth, or involved in the juvenile or adult justice systems. In addition, we offer targeted services to youth with disabilities through partnerships with Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS). This collaboration ensures that youth with disabilities have access to assistive technology, accommodations, and specialized support to participate in activities like tutoring, work experience, and vocational training.

Several successful models are employed to meet the diverse needs of youth in our region:

- **Work-Based Learning Programs:** Our region has a strong partnership with employers, which allows us to provide a range of hands-on learning opportunities for youth, including apprenticeships, internships, and work placements that build job readiness.
- **Partnership with Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS):** Through this partnership, we ensure that youth with disabilities receive the necessary accommodations to participate in various program activities. LRS plays a critical role in helping us address the specific needs of this group, ensuring that they receive equal opportunities to succeed in both academic and work-based learning settings.
- **Targeted Outreach for High-Risk Youth:** We focus on outreach to youth in high-poverty areas, as well as those who are disconnected from education and employment. These efforts are designed to engage youth who might otherwise be overlooked and connect them with services that can help them succeed.

We regularly assess the effectiveness of our youth programs to ensure that they are meeting the needs of participants. This includes tracking outcomes such as the number of youth who attain a high school diploma, complete work-based learning experiences, or obtain employment after completing the program. Based on feedback from participants, employers, and community partners, we continuously improve our service delivery to ensure that youth have access to high-quality programs that meet their needs and prepare them for a successful future.

LWDA 70 is committed to providing comprehensive, accessible, and innovative services to youth in our region, particularly those facing barriers to success. By ensuring that all youth, including those with disabilities and other challenges, have access to the supports and opportunities they need, we are helping to create pathways to success that lead to sustainable employment and career advancement.

Other Youth Program Initiatives will include:

Pre-Employment Training Services (PETS)

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act requires VR agencies to make Pre-Employment Transition Services available to all students with disabilities. Students with disabilities include individuals still enrolled in secondary education (high school) or post-secondary education who have a disability (receives services under an IEP, 504 plan/IAP, or has a documented disability that meets the definition of disability per Section 504) and are at least 16 years old but less than 22 years old.

Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) are coordinated activities for a student with a disability designed within an outcome-oriented process that promotes movement from school to post-school activities leading to competitive integrated employment. Counselors must make these services available to students with disabilities receiving services under an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or is an individual with a disability for purposes of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (IAP).

Pre-ETS includes five “required” activities that, in collaboration with local education agencies, VR shall provide or arrange for the provision of these services for all potentially eligible and eligible students with disabilities. Services provided by VR enhance transition services but do not reduce the responsibility of local educational Appropriate Public Education (FAPE).

Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) required by WIOA include:

- Job Exploration Counseling
- Work-Based Learning Experiences
- Counseling on opportunities for enrollment in comprehensive transition or postsecondary educational programs at institutions of higher education
- Workplace Readiness Training
- Instruction in Self-Advocacy

Step Forward Initiative

Step Forward, an initiative of the Community Foundation of North Louisiana (CFNLA), brings together community leaders to address obstacles faced by children of color and those living in poverty. Guided by a shared vision and evidence-based decision-making, Step Forward aims to ensure all children in North Louisiana can secure sustainable, living-wage jobs by age 25.

Through its three strategic networks - Building Resilience (trauma and mental health), Building Foundations (early childhood education), and Building Futures (college and workforce preparedness) - Step Forward works collaboratively with stakeholders, including workforce development officials, educators, and business leaders, to implement impactful solutions.

Key Strategies

- Career Pathways for Marginalized Youth: Create opportunities for high school students in underserved communities to explore career paths that lead directly to employment upon graduation.
- Trauma-Informed Workforce Development: Integrate trauma-informed practices into workforce development training to address the unique needs of clients and enhance service delivery.
- Youth Career Summit: Organize an annual summit to help youth explore careers and develop resilience skills critical for success.
- Parental Support for Postsecondary Access: Partner with high schools and colleges to provide guidance for parents in navigating financial aid processes for students pursuing higher education.

Jump Start Initiative

Jump Start is Louisiana's innovative career and technical education (CTE) program. Jump Start prepares students to lead productive adult lives, capable of continuing their education after high school while earning certifications in high-wage, high-skill, in-demand career sectors.

Students are required to attain industry-promulgated, industry-valued credentials in order to graduate with a Career Diploma.

Schools receive the same accountability grade credit for preparing students for careers in high-demand job sectors as they do for students who achieve top academic honors. The Regional Industry Coordinator with the Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC) has been an integral part of this Northwest Louisiana Jump Start Team.

Local Workforce Development Board Directors have dutifully attended many meetings to supply needed input and support at the early Jump Start meetings, and now with the expanded Perkins Region 7 Leadership Team.

Each area of the State could implement parts of the Jump Start Model as soon as it was possible, but the full implementation occurred in the Fall of 2017. Spring 2020, the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) approved 11 Jump Start 2.0 pathways, along with a waiver process for facilitating changes late in students' progressions. As a condition of approving the pathways, the board commissioned a panel that includes CTE directors to bring back to BESE further adjustments to Jump Start 2.0, including further universal courses.

We are fortunate that we have not one, but two schools dedicated to the goals of the Jump Start Initiative: Caddo Career and Technology Center and the Bossier Parish School for Technology and Innovative Learning. The Caddo Career and Technology Center has received national awards in the past, and the Bossier Parish School for Technology and Innovative Learning has the newest and latest in many training areas, for example, they have a machine in their Automotive Repair Shop that only three high schools in the nation have. These two facilities will enable this area to move forward quickly in the Jump Start Initiative, and students, parents, and business have benefited because of it. Jump Start 2.0 Northwest Louisiana offers promise of a better future for many students and many businesses.

In Region 7, the Fast Forward Program addresses local workforce needs by offering youth accessible pathways to develop the skills and credentials necessary for meaningful employment in high-demand fields. This program directly supports the region's economic priorities by aligning with key industries and creating opportunities for underserved populations, including youth with disabilities.

Keyways the Fast Forward Program impacts our local workforce:

- Pathways Designed for Local Workforce Needs

- o Jump Start 2.0 Pathway: Supports youth interested in technical careers relevant to Region 7's growing industries, such as manufacturing, healthcare, and transportation. Students split time between high school and postsecondary campuses to earn both a diploma and a technical associate degree, creating a direct pipeline into local employment.
- o TOPS University Pathway: Addresses the need for highly educated professionals in fields like education, business, and technology. This pathway ensures seamless transitions to four-year institutions, aligning with Region 7's demand for degree-holding workers.
- o High-Demand Apprenticeship Pathway: Connects students with Louisiana Workforce Commission-approved pre-apprenticeships and apprenticeships, tailored to Region 7 employers in sectors like skilled trades, healthcare, and IT.

Equity and Accessibility for Region 7's Youth

The program is inclusive, with specific strategies to engage youth with disabilities and other barriers to employment. By offering flexible pathways and targeted support services, Region 7 ensures that more young people can access education and training that leads to stable careers.

Local Partnerships for Regional Growth

Fast Forward pathways rely on collaboration with local educational institutions like Northwest Louisiana Technical Community College (NLTC), Bossier Parish Community College (BPCC), and employers in Region 7. These partnerships allow students to complete coursework and participate in hands-on training tailored to our area's economic needs.

Alignment with Regional Economic Goals

Region 7's economy requires a skilled and credentialed workforce to support industries such as manufacturing, healthcare, and energy. Fast Forward ensures that youth are ready to meet these demands, providing a steady pipeline of talent to local employers while supporting upward mobility for participants.

By leveraging the Fast Forward Program, Region 7 aligns with the State's WIOA goals while addressing local workforce needs. This initiative not only prepares youth for emerging opportunities but also fosters long-term economic growth for our parishes.

2. A description of how local areas will meet the minimum expenditure rate for out-of-school youth.

In LWDA 70, we are committed to meeting the minimum expenditure rate for out-of-school youth (OSY) services by ensuring that no less than 75% of local workforce development area funds are spent on direct services to this group. However, recognizing the challenges posed by this requirement, the Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC) has worked to address flexibility through the submission of waivers. Specifically, LWC received approval for a waiver in August 2022 that reduced the expenditure requirement for out-of-school youth services from 75% to 50% for Program Years 2022 and 2023. This waiver, which also allows the use of individual training accounts (ITAs) for in-school youth (ISY), aims to provide greater flexibility in service delivery while still aligning with workforce development goals.

In response to the initial challenges in meeting the OSY expenditure rate, the Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC) plans to submit an additional waiver request to extend the flexibility into future program years, aligning with broader statewide initiatives. This request is designed to provide local areas, including LWDA 70, with the flexibility needed to better serve out-of-school youth (OSY) by fostering more innovative and targeted approaches to youth programming.

Waiver Request for Program Years 2024-2025:

1. Waiver #1: ITAs for In-School Youth (ISY) Aged 16-21

Purpose: This waiver seeks to expand access to Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) for In-School Youth (ISY) aged 16-21. Previously, ITAs were only available to Out-of-School Youth (OSY), limiting opportunities for ISY to receive critical workforce training and support. The expansion of ITAs for ISY will provide them with similar opportunities for career development, certifications, and training that align with regional labor market needs.

2. Waiver #2: Reduction in OSY Expenditure Requirement

Purpose: The second waiver modifies the requirement that 75% of youth funds be spent on OSY. The new proposal seeks to reduce this to 50%, providing local areas with greater flexibility in allocating resources to both OSY and ISY. This adjustment will allow LWDA 70 to balance funding across a wider range of youth services, supporting both OSY and ISY while continuing to prioritize OSY, as required

To complement these efforts, LWDA 70 will prioritize work-based learning opportunities for both OSY and ISY, committing at least 20% of local funds to paid and unpaid work experience elements, including summer employment, internships, job shadowing, and pre-apprenticeships. This will provide critical hands-on experience and prepare youth for both postsecondary education and unsubsidized employment.

Additionally, LWDA 70 will continue to monitor financial operations closely to ensure compliance with expenditure requirements. This includes ongoing evaluation of programs and services, particularly in areas that connect academic achievement with workforce needs. The goal is to create strong pathways from education to employment for out-of-school youth, ensuring that they are well-equipped to succeed in today's labor market.

G. Provide a description of how the local area will provide services to individuals with barriers to employment⁸ as outlined in the Combined State Plan:

1. Provide information on how priority will be given to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals and individuals who are basic skills deficient consistent with WIOA Sec. 134(c)(3)(E) (§ 679.560(b)(21)).

LWDA 70 is dedicated to ensuring equitable access to workforce and training services for individuals with barriers to employment, with a strong focus on priority groups such as recipients of public assistance, low-income individuals, and those who are basic skills deficient, in alignment with WIOA Sec. 134(c)(3)(E). Collaborating with core program partners, LWDA 70 develops and implements targeted service strategies to address the unique needs of these populations. The Helping Individuals Reach Employment (HiRE) system is a critical tool for gathering data on the placement and retention of individuals with barriers, enabling the development of data-driven approaches to improving service delivery.

Priority populations identified by LWDA 70 include low-income individuals, veterans, disabled individuals, migrant and seasonal farm workers, individuals with limited English proficiency, homeless individuals, older workers, displaced homemakers, and individuals training for nontraditional employment. These groups receive specialized services through the American Job Centers (AJCs), where partnerships with faith-based and community-based organizations (CBOs) enhance outreach and service provision. For veterans, Local Veterans' Employment Representatives (LVERs) and Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) staff provide comprehensive case management to address their unique challenges.

The LWDA 70 Adult Priority of Service Policy ensures that low-income individuals, public assistance recipients, and those who are basic skills deficient are prioritized for career and training services. In instances of limited funding, veterans who fall within these categories are given the highest priority, followed by other individuals meeting these criteria. This policy is designed to maximize the impact of WIOA resources on those with the greatest need, while also adhering to Department of Labor guidance outlined in TEGL 19-16.

To support equitable service delivery, LWDA 70 provides regular professional development and training to front-line staff, equipping them with the knowledge and tools to serve diverse populations effectively. LWDA 70 Staff are trained to identify and address barriers while ensuring non-traditional career opportunities are presented to all clients. LWDA 70 also ensures that special population service providers are represented on the Local Workforce Development Board and its partners, fostering collaboration and ensuring that the voices of underserved populations are heard.

Additionally, LWDA 70 takes a proactive approach to ensuring geographic accessibility, strategically locating AJCs to serve the populations most in need. Outreach efforts are enhanced through partnerships with media outlets to raise awareness of available services and opportunities. By combining data-driven strategies, targeted outreach, and inclusive policies, LWDA 70 remains committed to reducing barriers and empowering individuals to achieve meaningful employment and self-sufficiency.

2. Describe how the local workforce area will ensure equitable access to workforce and educational services through the following actions:

- Disaggregating data by race, gender and target population to reveal where disparities and inequities exist in policies and programs.
- Developing equity goals in conjunction with the education system and prepare action plans to achieve them.
- Exposing more high school students, particularly young women and minorities, to careers in science, technology, engineering and math fields.
- Exploring how effective mentor programs can be expanded to adults, particularly those who are displaced and moving to a new career.
- Providing training to workforce program staff on data-driven approaches to address equity gaps.
- Enduring workforce services are strategically located in relation to the populations in most need.

To ensure equitable access to workforce and educational services, LWDA 70 prioritizes a proactive, data-driven approach to identify and address disparities while fostering inclusivity and opportunity for all individuals, regardless of race, gender, or target population. The following actions are foundational to this commitment:

Disaggregating Data to Address Disparities:

LWDA 70 systematically collects and reviews data on race, gender, and disability status for all service registrants. This data is compared against local population demographics and labor force statistics, including the Louisiana Workforce Commission's Louisiana Labor Force Diversity Data. These analyses highlight gaps in service delivery, ensuring that underserved groups can be identified and addressed through targeted outreach and program adjustments.

Developing Equity Goals and Action Plans:

Equity goals are developed collaboratively with educational institutions to ensure alignment with community needs. Action plans focus on creating inclusive pathways to workforce readiness, addressing barriers identified through data analysis, and leveraging Local Market Information (LMI) tools during the Individual Employment Plan (IEP) or Individual Service Strategy (ISS) processes to meet diverse participant needs.

Expanding STEM Opportunities for Underserved Students:

LWDA 70 actively collaborates with public, private, and nonprofit organizations to expose high school students—particularly young women and minorities—to careers in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). Initiatives include career fairs, mentorship programs, and outreach activities designed to inspire interest and build awareness of these high-demand fields.

Enhancing Mentorship for Career Transitions:

Recognizing the value of mentorship in career development, LWDA 70 emphasizes the integration of mentorship components into workforce services. Staff encourage participants to engage with mentors during the IEP process and explore opportunities to expand mentorship programs, especially for adults transitioning from displaced employment to new careers.

Providing Training on Addressing Equity Gaps:

LWDA 70 staff receives regular training on nondiscrimination requirements under Section 188 of WIOA. These sessions also emphasize data-driven approaches to identifying and addressing equity gaps, ensuring staff are equipped to provide inclusive services and recognize implicit biases.

Strategically Locating Workforce Services:

To serve populations most in need, American Job Centers are strategically placed across the ten parishes of Region 7, ensuring accessible service delivery in both urban and rural areas. Outreach efforts are informed by Census data, with targeted marketing campaigns designed to increase awareness in underserved communities.

Inclusive Access to Training and Educational Resources:

LWDA 70 Staff are dedicated to ensuring that all customers have access to the comprehensive array of educational and training activities listed in the Louisiana Workforce Commission's Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). LMI tools are used during the IEP/ISS development to help participants identify career opportunities and navigate potential barriers effectively.

By employing these strategies, LWDA 70 reinforces its commitment to equity, fostering a workforce system that is inclusive, accessible, and responsive to the diverse needs of the Region 7 communities.

H. Provide a description of training policies and activities in the local area, including:

1. How local areas will meet the annual Training Expenditure Requirement;

LWDA 70 is dedicated to meeting the annual Training Expenditure Requirement by thoughtfully allocating funds to programs that align with in-demand industries and occupations. These include Individual Training Accounts (ITAs), On-the-Job Training (OJT), Customized Training, and Incumbent Worker Training (IWT). These programs are structured to prepare participants for high-demand careers while respecting their individual choices.

LWDA 70 staff works closely with the Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC) business services team and local industry partnerships to engage employers, assess hiring needs, and identify training opportunities. Through these efforts, staff ensure that workforce and training services are informed by employer feedback and tailored to meet industry demands. Participants are empowered to select training programs that align with their career aspirations, within the framework of approved training providers and programs linked to regional workforce needs.

LWDA 70 follows state training expenditure policies, emphasizing services like ITAs and work-based learning opportunities (e.g., OJT, IWT, apprenticeships, and internships). When necessary, funds can be reallocated between the Adult and Dislocated Worker streams to maximize impact and maintain flexibility.

By balancing customer choice with employer needs, LWDA 70 ensures that training funds drive meaningful outcomes, equipping individuals for success while addressing the region's labor market demands

2. How local areas will encourage the use of work-based learning strategies, including the local area goals for specific work-based learning activities and proposed outcomes related to these activities;

LWDA 70 prioritizes work-based learning strategies to help participants gain hands-on experience and practical skills that lead to meaningful employment. Goals and outcomes include:

Expanding Opportunities

Increasing access to OJT, apprenticeships, internships, and other experiential learning programs in high-demand sectors through partnerships with local employers and educational institutions.

Employer Engagement

Strengthening employer relationships by providing wage subsidies for OJT and supporting the development of apprenticeship programs. These incentives demonstrate the value of investing in workforce development.

Building Career Pathways

Collaborating with stakeholders to establish clear career pathways that integrate work-based learning at different levels, allowing participants to advance toward long-term career goals.

Measuring Success

Tracking key metrics such as completion rates, employment outcomes, and post-training earnings to evaluate the effectiveness of these initiatives and guide improvements.

Through these efforts, LWDA 70 aims to ensure that participants are well-prepared to meet the demands of local employers and achieve stable employment.

3. Provide a copy of the local Individual Training Account Policy and describe how training services outlined in WIOA Sec. 134 will be provided through the use of individual training accounts, including, if contracts for 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 (§ 679.560(b)(18)); and

LWDA 70 has included a copy of its approved Individual Training Account (ITA) Policy in the Appendix. ITAs are utilized to fund training services for occupations in demand, including all registered apprenticeship programs, as defined by the Local Workforce Development Board and offered by training providers listed on the Louisiana Workforce Commission's Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). Training services are aligned with WIOA Section 134 requirements, emphasizing customer choice and alignment with local workforce needs.

All participants seeking training services must apply for Pell Grants or other Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and any other applicable grant assistance. Proof of application for this aid is required before ITA funds can be allocated. Any Pell Grant funding received by a participant is applied toward their tuition and other education-related expenses, ensuring efficient use of WIOA resources.

In circumstances where contracts for training services are utilized, such as for cohorts of workers or specialized training programs not suitable for ITAs, LWDA 70 ensures these contracts are coordinated with ITA-based services. This coordination helps maintain flexibility while preserving the principle of customer choice in the selection of training programs. Participants are provided with information about all available training providers and programs, including performance data, to make informed decisions about their training options. This approach ensures compliance with WIOA regulations and supports participants in selecting programs that best align with their career goals and local labor market demands.

4. Provide a copy of the local training provider approval policy and procedures. Describe how the Local Board will ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers of services through the system and that the providers will meet the employment needs of local employers, workers and jobseekers.

LWDA 70 ensures the continuous improvement of eligible training providers and alignment with local employment needs through a comprehensive approach that includes performance evaluations, feedback loops, and strategic partnerships with employers and economic development stakeholders.

LWDA 70 utilizes the Louisiana Workforce Commission's (LWC) statewide Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) for access to occupational skills training. WIOA funds facilitate training for eligible participants through Individual Training Accounts (ITAs). These funds cover the cost of tuition, fees, books, and necessary supplies, such as uniforms and tools, as detailed in the training program's syllabus. Additionally, supportive services, such as transportation and childcare assistance, are available on a case-by-case basis to help participants overcome barriers to completing their training. WIOA funds cannot be used to retake courses, underscoring the importance of participant commitment and careful planning.

Although LWDA 70 does not directly approve training providers, it ensures that only those meeting state-defined performance benchmarks and addressing local workforce demands are included on the ETPL. Providers must demonstrate that their programs lead to industry-recognized credentials, align with high-demand occupations, and meet the region's labor market needs.

To ensure continuous improvement, LWDA 70 monitors training outcomes through participant data, including employment rates, earnings, credential attainment, and completion rates. These outcomes are reviewed in partnership with the LWC and local employers to assess whether the training programs remain relevant and effective in preparing participants for high-quality jobs. Providers that meet or exceed performance benchmarks are retained, while those that do not may be subject to further review or removal from the ETPL. LWDA 70 may choose not to support ETPs that fail to meet local performance standards, in accordance with state and local policies, with a process for providers to appeal a denial of eligibility.

LWDA 70 works to align training programs with industry needs by utilizing labor market data, engaging with economic development resources, and gathering feedback from participants to adjust curricula and address workforce skill gaps, supporting jobseekers in preparing for in-demand careers.

Through ongoing monitoring, evaluation, and partnerships, LWDA 70 ensures that eligible training providers continuously improve their offerings and stay aligned with the workforce needs of local employers, workers, and jobseekers.

I. Describe if the local workforce board will authorize the transfer of WIOA Title IB workforce funds, including the maximum dollar amount and/or percentage that is authorized to be transferred on an annual basis:

1. To transfer funds between the adult and dislocated worker funding streams.

Funds will be transferred between Adult and Dislocated Worker streams on an as-needed basis during the program year. State policy will limit the maximum allowable transfer to 75%. LWDA 70 may send written notice requesting a transfer of funds between Adult and Dislocated Worker funds up to a maximum amount of 50% in the first year in which funds are made available. In the second year, LWDA 70 may send written notification requesting up to an additional 25%.

2. To use funds for incumbent worker training as outlined in WIOA Sec. 134(d)(4)(A)(i).

Up to 20% of Adult and/or Dislocated Worker funds may be allocated for Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) in alignment with WIOA Sec. 134(d)(4)(A)(i). Allocations will be determined based on the overall budget and local economic conditions, with priority given to Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) and On-the-Job Training (OJT) during times of moderate to high unemployment. Preference will be given to IWT initiatives that meet one or more of the following criteria:

- Provide a clear strategy for layoff aversion.
- Result in measurable wage increases or promotions for trainees.
- Include apprenticeship or pre-apprenticeship models.
- Lead to the attainment of industry-recognized credentials.
- Significantly enhance the competitive standing of the participating business or industry.

LWDA 70 will ensure that all IWT projects align with local workforce goals and contribute to economic growth within the region.

3. To use funds for transitional jobs as outlined in WIOA Sec. 134(d)(5).

Up to 10% of combined Adult and Dislocated Worker funds may be allocated for transitional jobs to assist eligible participants, as allowed under WIOA Sec. 134(d)(5). Transitional jobs are time-limited, subsidized work experiences designed to help individuals with significant barriers to employment gain work history and develop skills to secure and retain unsubsidized employment. Target populations include, but are not limited to:

- Individuals with prior criminal justice system involvement (ex-offenders).
- Long-term unemployed individuals.
- Individuals with disabilities or other significant barriers to employment.

All transitional job opportunities will be aligned with the participant's Individual Employment Plan (IEP) and local workforce priorities to maximize outcomes.

4. To use funds for pay for performance contracts as outlined in WIOA Sec. 133(b)(2-3).

No WIOA Title IB funds will be allocated for pay-for-performance contracts unless specifically approved by the Local Workforce Development Board. If such contracts are pursued, they will be implemented in full compliance with WIOA Sec. 133(b)(2-3), ensuring that performance-based outcomes align with the strategic priorities and goals of LWDA 70. The Board will retain oversight to ensure accountability and effectiveness.

CHAPTER 5: PERFORMANCE GOALS AND EVALUATION: LOCAL

The plan must include information on the actions the Local Board will take toward becoming or remaining a high performing board, consistent with the factors developed by the State Board (WIOA Sec. 101(d)(6)) and (§ 679.560(b)(17)).

A. Provide information regarding the local levels of performance negotiated with the Governor and chief elected official consistent with WIOA Sec. 116(c), to be used to measure the performance of the local area and to be used by the Local Board for measuring the performance of the local fiscal agent (where appropriate), eligible providers under WIOA Title I Subtitle B and the one-stop delivery system (core and required partners as applicable) in the local area (§ 679.560(b)(16)).

1. WIOA Performance Measures

LWDA 70 is committed to becoming and remaining a high-performing board by consistently focusing on delivering quality services to individuals and businesses. To achieve this, the Local Board utilizes performance measures established in collaboration with the Governor and chief elected officials, in alignment with WIOA Sec. 116(c). These measures are critical for assessing the performance of the local area, the fiscal agent, and the one-stop delivery system, including core and required partners.

LWDA 70 continuously strives to meet or exceed performance targets by closely monitoring outcomes, identifying any areas of concern, and ensuring corrective actions are taken when necessary. The Local Board reviews performance data through quarterly reports that include local performance metrics. These reports cover service delivery by providers, One-Stop Operations, and Fiscal Services. Any identified deficiencies are thoroughly investigated to determine their causes. Following the analysis, targeted training is provided to appropriate staff to improve performance outcomes.

The Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) 70 fosters a collaborative environment through an open-door policy that promotes clear, ongoing communication between the local staff and AJC staff. This policy ensures that feedback from the field is actively collected and addressed. In addition to regular internal communication, the Board emphasizes the importance of teamwork among local staff and partners to consistently deliver high-quality services to the community.

Federal and state-level guidance is disseminated to all local staff, and corresponding training is provided to ensure all personnel understand the guidance and can effectively implement the required processes.

LWDA 70 uses the following Online software systems to monitor progress and ensure performance goals are being met:

- Helping Individuals Reach Employment (HiRE): An online platform that tracks individual progress through employment services and supports the measurement of performance outcomes.
- FutureWorks: A tool used for program management and performance tracking, enabling effective oversight of program operations.
- Trello: A tool for case management prioritization.

Both systems are integral to ensuring that performance measures are met throughout the year.

LWDA 70 WIOA PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Adult	LWDA 70 PY2024	LWDA 70 PY2025
Entered Employment Rate, 2nd Quarter After Exit	73.0%	73.0%
Entered Employment Rate, 4th Quarter After Exit	70.76%	70.76%
Median Earnings, 2nd Quarter After Exit	\$6,655	\$6,655
Credential Attainment	67.5%	67.5%
Measurable Skills Gain	80.0%	80.0%

Dislocated Worker	LWDA 70 PY2024	LWDA 70 PY2025
Entered Employment Rate, 2nd Quarter After Exit	70.28%	70.28%
Entered Employment Rate, 4th Quarter After Exit	73.0%	73.0%
Median Earnings, 2nd Quarter After Exit	\$7,695	\$7,695
Credential Attainment	82.0%	82.0%
Measurable Skills Gain	75.0%	75.0%

Youth	LWDA 70 PY2024	LWDA 70 PY2025
Entered Employment Rate, 2nd Quarter After Exit	64.77%	64.77%
Entered Employment Rate, 4th Quarter After Exit	63.45%	63.45%
Median Earnings, 2nd Quarter After Exit	\$4,027	\$4,027
Credential Attainment	54.11%	54.11%
Measurable Skills Gain	50.67%	50.67%

2. Additional State Performance Measures

STATE OF LOUISIANA WIOA & WP/EP PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Adult	LWC PY2024	LWC PY2025
Entered Employment Rate, 2nd Quarter After Exit	73.5%	73.5%
Entered Employment Rate, 4th Quarter After Exit	73.2%	73.2%
Median Earnings, 2nd Quarter After Exit	\$7,950	\$7,950
Credential Attainment	77.0%	77.0%
Measurable Skills Gain	78.0%	78.0%

Dislocated Worker	LWC PY2024	LWC PY2025
Entered Employment Rate, 2nd Quarter After Exit	73.5%	73.5%
Entered Employment Rate, 4th Quarter After Exit	73.0%	73.0%
Median Earnings, 2nd Quarter After Exit	\$8,750	\$8,750
Credential Attainment	84.0%	84.0%
Measurable Skills Gain	74.5%	74.5%

Youth	LWC PY2024	LWC PY2025
Entered Employment Rate, 2nd Quarter After Exit	75.4%	75.4%
Entered Employment Rate, 4th Quarter After Exit	74.5%	74.5%
Median Earnings, 2nd Quarter After Exit	\$4,782	\$4,782
Credential Attainment	62.5%	62.5%
Measurable Skills Gain	55.8%	55.8%

Wagner-Peyser	LWC PY2024	LWC PY2025
Entered Education/Employment Rate, 2nd Quarter After Exit	66.0%	66.0%
Entered Education/Employment Rate, 4th Quarter After Exit	63.5%	63.5%
Median Earnings, 2nd Quarter After Exit	\$6,875	\$6,875

B. Provide a description of the current and planned evaluation activities and how this information will be provided to the local board and program administrators as appropriate.

1. What existing service delivery strategies will be expanded based on promising return on investment?

LWDA 70 recognizes the importance of ongoing evaluation and monitoring of service delivery strategies to ensure the effective allocation of resources and continued success of workforce programs. Evaluation activities are designed to provide actionable insights into the performance of our services and identify opportunities for improvement. This information is shared with the Local Board and program administrators to ensure transparency and accountability across the region.

LWDA 70 will continuously evaluate and monitor the One-Stop Delivery System to ensure that critical services are being provided effectively to the local population. Key areas of focus include:

- Career Services: Ensuring that services outlined in Section 134 of WIOA are being delivered effectively to individuals seeking career support.
- Training Services: Providing access to training programs that align with regional workforce needs, particularly in high-demand, high-growth sectors.
- Employment and Training Activities: Facilitating access to relevant employment and training services as described in Section 134 of WIOA.
- Partner Programs and Activities: Ensuring seamless access to services provided by One-Stop partners in alignment with WIOA's mission.
- Labor Exchange Services: Delivering job search, placement, recruitment, and labor exchange services as authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act (29).

Programs yielding high ROI, such as short-term training and Online training initiatives that address regional labor market demands, will also be expanded. These programs cater to high-demand industries while providing flexibility for individuals facing barriers, such as transportation or scheduling conflicts.

2. What existing service delivery strategies will be curtailed or eliminated based on minimal return on investment?

LWDA 70 will closely monitor and evaluate programs with minimal ROI based on indicators such as completion rates, certification attainment, employment outcomes, and wage growth. Programs consistently failing to meet these benchmarks will undergo a case-by-case review to determine whether adjustments can improve outcomes or if discontinuation is necessary. Underperforming training providers and On-the-Job Training (OJT) agreements that do not lead to meaningful employment or retention will be scaled back or eliminated.

3. What new service strategies will be used to address regional educational and training needs based on promising return on investment?

- What return on investment and qualitative outcome data for various education and training programs will be collected to identify barriers to enrollments?
- What are the most cost-effective approaches to taking down those barriers or helping residents overcome them?

To address regional needs, LWDA 70 supports the development and adoption of the following new strategies:

- Short-Term Training Programs: Designed for high-demand fields, these flexible programs include weekend and evening courses to accommodate working individuals.
- Online Training Programs: These provide accessible training options for individuals facing barriers like transportation or caregiving responsibilities.
- Expanded Partner Collaboration: Collaborating with One-Stop partners, post-secondary institutions, and employers to create seamless service delivery models tailored to workforce demands.

LWDA 70 will advocate for and assist in evaluating these strategies for inclusion on the Eligible Training Provider List to ensure they align with industry-recognized standards and address regional labor market demands effectively.

LWDA 70 will collect and analyze demographic and qualitative outcome data, focusing on:

- Barriers to enrollment, such as lack of transportation or scheduling conflicts.
- Cost-effective solutions, including online training, flexible scheduling, and simplified registration processes.

This ensures that all services are accessible and responsive to the unique needs of Region 7's workforce, driving meaningful employment outcomes and sustained economic growth.

CHAPTER 6: TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS & ASSURANCES: LOCAL

This section includes the technical requirements and assurances that are required by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA Sec. 121(c)(2)(iv)).

A. Fiscal Management

1. Identify the entity responsible for the disbursement of grant funds described in WIOA Sec. 107(d)(12)(B)(i)(III) as determined by the chief elected official or the Governor under WIOA Sec. 107(d)(12)(B)(i) (§ 679.560(b)(14)).

WIOA Section 107(d)(12)(B)(i)(I) states that the chief elected official in a local area shall serve as the local grant recipient and shall be liable for any misuse of the grant funds allocated to the local area. The State of Louisiana, through its Governor, has designated the Seventh Planning District Consortium (LWDB 70), which includes the parishes of Bienville, Bossier, Caddo (Balance), Claiborne, DeSoto, Lincoln, Natchitoches, Red River, Sabine, and Webster, as the Workforce Development Board for the Seventh Planning District Consortium.

Currently, in Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA) 70, the Red River Parish Police Jury has been selected as the chief elected official and has designated The Coordinating & Development Corporation entity to serve as the local fiscal agent to assist in the administration of grant funds.

These agreements ensure that the funds are managed and disbursed in accordance with WIOA regulations, with full accountability for the proper use of the grant funds:

- The Red River Parish Police Jury, Seventh Planning District Consortium Workforce Development Board, and the Coordinating and Development Corporation – CEO-Fiscal-Agent Service Agreement.
- The Red River Parish Police Jury and Seventh Planning District Consortium Workforce Development Board CEO/LWDB Agreement.

2. Provide a copy of the local procurement policies and procedures and describe the competitive procurement process that will be used to award the sub grants and contracts for WIOA Title I activities (§ 679.560(b)(15)).

The competitive process used to award sub-grants and contracts for LWDB 70 under WIOA Title I activities adheres to the LWDB 70 WIOA Procurement Policy and complies with all applicable local, state, and federal laws and regulations. LWDB 70 ensures that all procurements are conducted in a manner that provides full and open competition and establishes written procurement policies, standards, and procedures to ensure transparency and fairness. Contracts are awarded to the most responsible offeror whose proposal demonstrates the best value for the program based on price and other evaluation factors, such as financial resources, program design, past performance, integrity, and operational capacity. Procurement methods are tailored to the nature and value of the purchase, including micro-purchases for items below the micro-purchase threshold, small purchases for goods and services up to \$25,000, and sealed bids for items exceeding \$25,000. For services exceeding \$50,000, a formal request for proposal (RFP) process is used, which includes public notifications, detailed evaluation criteria, and comprehensive reviews to select the most advantageous proposal. Noncompetitive or sole source procurement is utilized only in specific, justified cases, such as single-source availability, emergencies, or when competition is deemed infeasible, with thorough documentation required to support these decisions. This structured framework ensures that all procurement activities are conducted in a transparent, equitable, and efficient manner while allowing flexibility for unique circumstances.

Please see attached the full copy of LWDB 70's WIOA Procurement Policies and Procedures.

B. Physical and Programmatic Accessibility

1. Describe how entities within the one-stop delivery system, including one-stop operators and the one-stop partners, will comply with WIOA Sec. 188, if applicable, and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services, technology and materials for individuals with disabilities, including providing staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities (§ 679.560(b)(5)(iii)).

LWDA 70 ensures that all entities are within the one-stop delivery system, including the one-stop operator and partners, fully comply with Section 188 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Section 188 prohibits discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, political affiliation, or belief, and requires reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities. LWDA 70 upholds this mandate through established Grievance and Complaint Policy and Procedures and an Equal Opportunity Policy. The LWDA 70 Equal Opportunity Coordinator conducts an annual Section 188 review and, in partnership with the One-Stop Operator, performs annual assessments of facilities, programs, technology, and materials for compliance. Additionally, annual staff training ensures employees are knowledgeable about available resources and compliant practices.

LWDA 70 prominently displays "Equal Employment Opportunity is the Law" notices in all LWDA 70 AJCs, ensuring that all eligible individuals are informed of their rights. These notices are reviewed with program participants and documented in client files. Customers enrolled in WIOA programs receive and sign a Notice of Equal Opportunity document outlines their protections and steps to address potential violations. Outreach materials, including new and reprinted documents, include appropriate Equal Opportunity language and disclaimers. Materials are available in English and Spanish and identify the availability of auxiliary aids and services.

All LWDA 70 American Job Centers (AJCs) are ADA compliant and designed for accessibility. Features include handicapped parking spaces, curb ramps, and accessible restrooms to support Individuals with mobility challenges. Staff provide hands-on assistance to customers with physical or mobility disabilities, helping them complete paperwork, conduct job searches, create resumes, and access program activities. AJCs leverage translator services, and I Speak cards to assist individuals with speech or language barriers, and TDD/TTY relay services are available for individuals with hearing or speech disabilities. Professional rehabilitation counselors from Louisiana Rehabilitation Services are co-located at some of LWDA 70 AJCs to offer specialized support.

To further enhance services, LWDA 70 conducts regular training sessions for AJC staff on effective strategies and practices to engage and serve individuals with disabilities. These sessions involve regional partners and organizations with extensive experience in disability services. The goal is to ensure that staff are well equipped to address diverse needs and promote inclusivity across all programs and services. AJCs and their partners strictly prohibit discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, political affiliation or belief, citizenship status, or participation in WIOA-funded programs, ensuring equal access and opportunity for all individuals.

2. Provide copies of executed cooperative agreements (as applicable) which define how all local service providers, including additional providers, will carry out the requirements for integration of and access to the entire set of services available in the local one-stop system, with respect to efforts that will enhance the provision of services to individuals with disabilities (§679.560(b)(13)). This may include cross training of staff, technical assistance, use and sharing of information, cooperative efforts with employers and other efforts at cooperation, collaboration and coordination.

LWDA 70 ensures seamless integration and accessibility of services for all job seekers, including individuals with disabilities, through its Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with all WIOA Partners. This MOU outlines the collaborative efforts among workforce system partners to provide comprehensive employment services, support, and accommodations to individuals with disabilities. In addition to the MOU, LWDA 70 maintains Cooperative Endeavor Agreements (CEA) specifically with the State of Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) as a Silver Level Partner. These CEAs reinforce commitments to accessibility, resource sharing, and service provision at the following American Job Centers: Bossier/Caddo American Job Center, DeSoto/Red River American Job Center, Webster/Claiborne American Job Center, Lincoln/Bienville American Job Center, Sabine American Job Center, and Natchitoches American Job Center.

Under these CEAs, LWDA 70 and DCFS collaborate to provide integrated and accessible workforce development services. The agreements define roles and responsibilities that enhance service provision to all job seekers through various efforts. Staff members at participating American Job Centers receive training on the services provided by DCFS, including public assistance programs, workforce support initiatives, and best practices for assisting individuals facing barriers to employment, particularly those impacting individuals with disabilities. Workforce personnel are educated on program eligibility requirements, available support services, and methods to ensure equitable access to workforce development opportunities. American Job Centers maintain computer access for applicants to complete online applications for DCFS services, provide informational materials on available services, offer private spaces for applicants to enter their information confidentially, and provide a paper application option for those who prefer a non-digital method.

LWDA 70 and DCFS coordinate on service referrals to ensure individuals with disabilities receive comprehensive support. Staff members are available to answer questions and assist applicants through the application process, while DCFS staff conduct follow-up interviews and determine eligibility for services and benefits to ensure continuity of support. LWDA 70 also collaborates with employers to create inclusive hiring opportunities. LWDA 70 American Job Centers work with businesses to promote accommodations and employment retention strategies for individuals with disabilities, while employers are encouraged to engage in training and technical assistance on inclusive workplace practices.

LWDA 70 remains committed to fostering a fully integrated workforce system that ensures individuals with disabilities have meaningful access to employment services. Through its MOU with all WIOA Partners and cooperative agreements with DCFS, LWDA 70 strengthens its partnerships, enhances service delivery, and upholds the mission of providing equitable access to workforce development opportunities.

Copies of executed Cooperative Endeavor Agreements are attached for reference.

C. Plan Development and Public Comment

1. Describe the process used by the Local Board, consistent with WIOA Sec. 108(d), to provide a 30- day public comment period prior to submission of the plan, including an opportunity to have input into the development of the local plan, particularly for representatives of businesses, education and labor organizations (§ 679.560(b)(19)).

The Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) has implemented a thorough process to ensure compliance with WIOA Section 108(d) and provide all stakeholders, including representatives of businesses, education, and labor organizations, the opportunity to contribute to the development of the local plan. To begin, the plan template was shared with numerous partners to gather input and align the plan with regional needs. Specific sections of the plan were emailed to partners for their feedback and clarification, allowing for a collaborative approach to drafting the document. During this process, the Board also conducted research and reviewed existing services to identify updates and improvements that address the needs of Region 7.

Once the Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC) has reviewed the draft and provided technical assistance, the revised plan will be made available for public comment. A 30-day public comment period, as required by WIOA Section 108(d), will be held from March to April 2025. During this period, the draft plan will be accessible through the CDC website (cdconline.org), prominently displayed via a fixed banner on the homepage. This banner will include a direct link to the draft and an email address for submitting comments. In addition, legal notices will be published in official parish newspapers across Region 7 to notify the public and stakeholders of the opportunity to review and provide input.

The draft plan will also be shared with LWDA 70 Board Members and the Chief Local Elected Official (CLEO) for their review and feedback. Board members and the CLEO will have the opportunity to prepare questions ahead of or during the full LWDA 70 meeting, where the plan and its attachments will be formally approved. These steps ensure transparency and active participation from community partners and stakeholders, particularly representatives of businesses, education, and labor organizations, fostering a comprehensive and inclusive development process for the local WIOA plan.

2. Provide a summary of the public comments received and how this information was addressed by the CEO, partners and the Local Board in the final plan.

Following the conclusion of the public comment period, all comments received will be compiled and presented to the Local Board for review and consideration. The CEO, workforce development partners, and Local Board members will carefully review each comment, particularly focusing on any concerns or disagreements raised during the period.

3. Provide information regarding the regional and local plan modification procedures.

The modification procedures for the regional and local workforce development plans are designed to ensure responsiveness to emerging issues, concerns, and stakeholder feedback. In the event that concerns or disagreements arise during the public comment period or throughout the year, LWDA 70 will carefully review and address each issue. Transparent communication will be maintained with all stakeholders throughout the process.

When valid concerns or necessary adjustments are identified, modifications will be made to the plan to reflect those changes. The specific changes will be clearly outlined to ensure clarity and transparency in the decision-making process.

To ensure full transparency, a summary of all public comments and the actions taken in response to those comments will be included as an attachment in the final plan. This will provide stakeholders with a clear understanding of how their input was considered and integrated into the workforce development strategy. This approach ensures that the plan remains dynamic and responsive to the needs of the community, local businesses, and workforce development partners.

REGIONAL / LOCAL PLAN SIGNATURES

By signing the Regional / Local Plan, all signatories attest that:

1. They submit this plan on behalf of the region and the local areas within that region;
2. The planning was done with leaders throughout the region and represents the collective thinking of those regional representatives;
3. The information contained herein is true and accurate to the best of their knowledge;
4. The regional plan and accompanying local plans represent the local workforce development boards' efforts to maximize resources available under Title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and to coordinate these resources with other State and Local programs in the planning region;
5. They will operate the local system in accordance with the regional plan, their respective local area plan, and applicable federal and state laws, regulations, policies and rules.

Local Area Name: Seventh Planning District Consortium Workforce Development Board

Name of Chief Elected Official for the LWDA: Tray Murray

Signature: 

Date: 4-11-2025

Address: P.O. Box 709, Coushatta, LA 71019

Telephone Number: 318-932-5719

E-Mail Address: tray.murray.pocn@statefarm.com

Name of Local Workforce Development Board Chairman: Matt Wheeler

Signature: 

Date: 4-11-2025

Address: 1202 Louisiana Ave., Shreveport, LA 71101

Telephone Number: 318-716-4929

E-Mail Address: mwheeler@wkhs.com

Name of Local Workforce Development Board Director: Candle Sattler

Signature: 

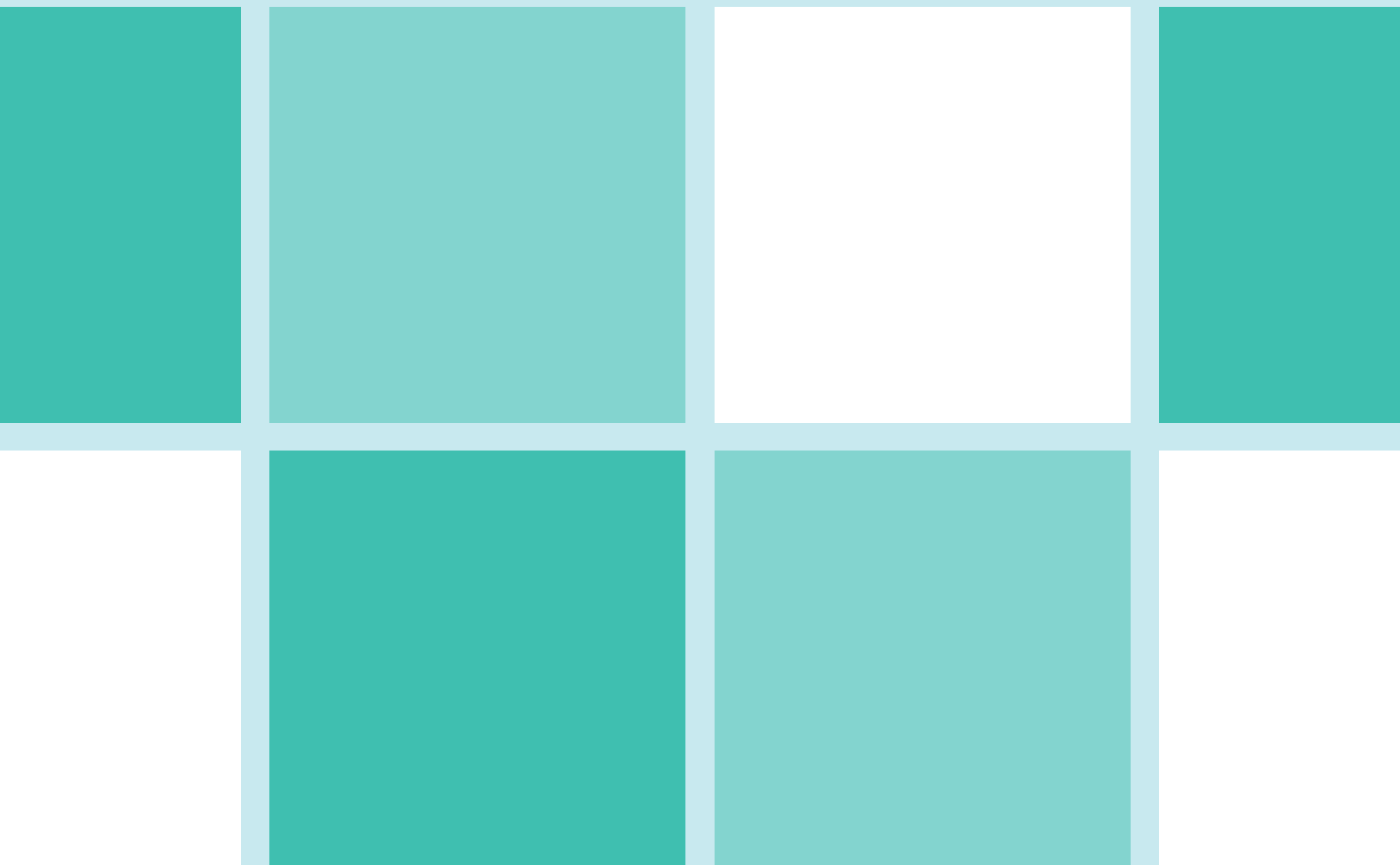
Date: 4-11-2025

Address: 4000 Viking Drive, Suite A1, Bossier City, LA 71111

Telephone Number: 318-632-2022, ext 109

E-Mail Address: csattler@cdconline.org

The Seventh District Planning Consortium Workforce Development Board (LWDA 70) attachments



LWDA 70 Supportive Services Policy
Individual Training Account Policy and Procedures
WIOA Procurement Policies and Procedures
Cooperative Endeavor Agreements (CEA)

The Seventh Planning District Consortium Workforce Development Board

Administrative Office

4000 Viking Dr., Suite A-1, Bossier City, LA 71111 | (318) 632-2022

Matt Wheeler, Chairman | Candle Sattler, Director of Workforce Development

Title: LWDA 70 Supportive Services Policy for Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Participants.

Effective Date: October 11, 2024

Purpose: The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines and criteria to be used by the Seventh Planning District Consortium Workforce Development Board (LWDB 70), and Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title 1 funded service providers in the administration of supportive services for current Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA) eligible adult, dislocated worker and youth participants residing in Region 7.

The purpose of this policy is to clarify local procedures for providing supportive services to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Adult, Dislocated Workers and Youth Customers. Supportive services may be made available to eligible Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA) participants. Said payments will be administered by The Coordinating & Development Corporation (LWDA 70 Staff) and will be based on individual need. In each case, the need will be documented in the participant's file and must be recorded on the Individual Service Strategy/Individual Employment Plan. The Seventh Planning District Consortium Workforce Development Board (LWDB 70) has set a limit of \$2,000.00 per participant, per program year for supportive services.

Background: WIOA Title I provides supportive service program guidelines for WIOA Title I eligible Adult and Dislocated Workers in WIOA Section 3(59), 134(d)(2) and (3) and for WIOA Title I eligible Youth in WIOA Section 129(c)(2)(G). Additional supportive service guidance is provided in 20 CFR 680.900 and TEGL 19-16 for WIOA Adults and Dislocated Workers, and 20 CFR 681.570 and 580 and TEGL 21-16 for WIOA Youth. OWD Supportive Services Policy 4-20.1 provides additional supportive service guidance and local policy requirements.

Procedure: LWDA 70 Staff should refer to Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I, Section 3 (59) and 134 (c) (2) and (3), 20 CFR 681.570 and 680.900, LWDB 70 Supportive Services Policy for Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Participants, Office Workforce Development Supportive Services Policy 4-20.1 Department of Labor TEGLs 19-16 and 21-16 for full eligibility requirements.

American Job Center Locations



□ **Bossier/Caddo Parish**
4000 Viking Dr., Suite B-1
Bossier City, LA 71111
(318) 741-7363

□ **DeSoto/Red River Parish**
142 Lake Rd.
Mansfield, LA 71052
(318) 871-2391

□ **Lincoln/Bienville Parish**
307 N. Homer St., Suite 307
Ruston, LA 71270
(318) 251-5023

□ **Natchitoches Parish**
303 Bienville St.
Natchitoches, LA 71457
(318) 357-2414

□ **Sabine Parish**
1125 W. Mississippi Ave., Suite A
Many, LA 71449
(318) 256-2698

□ **Webster/Claiborne Parish**
902 Lee St.
Minden, LA 71055
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POLICY:

It is the policy of the Seventh Planning District Consortium Workforce Development Board, in coordination with the One Stop partners, to provide support services to eligible individuals participating in approved Individual Career services, or Training activities consistent with Section 681.570 and Section 680.900 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and OWD 4-20 regulations.

Support services are not entitlement services or automatic assistance. Supportive services are based on financial need and participants are not automatically entitled to supportive services. Supportive services for eligible adults, dislocated workers and youth are defined in WIOA Section 3 (59) and 134 (c) (2) and (3). Supportive services are provided to address a participant's needs or barriers as identified during the initial and on-going individual assessment process, and may include services such as transportation, childcare, eldercare, dependent care, housing, and needs-related payments that are necessary to enable an individual to participate in activities authorized under WIOA Title I.

WIOA Title I supportive services are only to be provided when they are determined necessary, reasonable and allowable. Supportive Services cannot be provided as stand-alone services and can only be provided in support of WIOA career or training services. The need for supportive services must be based on an objective assessment and described and justified when developing an Individual Employment Plan (IEP) for adults and an Individual Service Strategy (ISS) for youth. Therefore, a thorough understanding of the resources and services available from other agencies is essential in providing services with WIOA funds. *Under no circumstances should a participant be denied supportive services without the documented concurrence of the LWDA 70 Program Manager.*

Supportive services may be provided to eligible WIOA participants who:

1. Are enrolled in WIOA career or training services; or,
2. Are unable to obtain the supportive service through any other resource or program providing such services; and,
3. **For ISY and OSY only** have exited and need post-program supportive services as follow-up services (for up to 12 months after exit).

WIOA supportive services are limited and must be coordinated with other community resources. In every instance of providing supportive services, LWDA 70 Staff must ensure that no other resource exists or that the resource is not readily available and that the need is so urgent that referrals to other resources would delay the provision of the support service and create a hardship to the participant.

LWDA 70 staff should ensure that supportive services only be provided when the services are not available elsewhere, since WIOA is considered funding of last resort. When participants need supportive services, LWDA 70 staff will follow the procedures below:

1. The participants need for the service provided must be determined in the initial and ongoing assessment and must be documented in case notes; participants enrolled in Individualized Career or Training Services must demonstrate need in the Individual Employment Plan (IEP) or Individual Service Strategy (ISS).
2. The cost of supportive services must be reasonable and competitive in process. When multiple options are available for receiving supportive services, documentation must show a reasonable effort was made to determine and choose the lowest, most competitive price available.
3. The cost of Supportive Services must be necessary to participate and an allowable cost under Federal guidelines.
4. Supportive Services may not be provided prior to an individual's registration date in

WIOA activities.

5. The need for Supportive Services will be determined on individual basis, in coordination with PELL and other federal and local funds, including core partner programs, and the availability of local formula funds.
6. Supportive Services are meant to be short-term measures and may be limited both in duration and amount.
7. Supportive Services may only be provided to active Adult and Dislocated Worker participants prior to exiting from the program; however, follow-up services for youth may include supportive services.
8. Participants will only be reimbursed for training related expenses when requested and approved prior to the expense occurring.
9. If the cost of the Supportive Service exceeds the approved amount, a modification request may be submitted with verification/justification of the increased amount.
10. All Supportive Service requests must be made to the Assistant Program Manager for approval using the Supportive Service forms. When applicable, documentation must be submitted with the forms. Approved requests must be uploaded into Document (staff) and case noted.
11. The appropriate Activity Code must be used upon approval from the Assistant Program Manager.
12. Supportive services may be terminated immediately based on the following reasons:
 - Failure to meet program requirements;
 - Purchase of unauthorized items;
 - Failure to submit receipts or correct back-up documentation;
 - Supportive service system is being abused;
 - Supportive service funding is not available;
 - Individual is making unsatisfactory progress; or
 - Re-determination of financial need reveals individual has other resources to meet needs or no longer needs the service.

An Affidavit of Lost/Stolen/Destroyed Supportive Services form must be completed by the participant, if a supportive service is lost or stolen. Any reported lost/stolen supportive service should be immediately recorded. (Form attached)

For the purpose of this policy, LWDA 70 staff will ensure that all unopen and open/used items with a monetary value that LWDA 70 has purchased for supportive services and not distributed to any participant by the end of a program year are accounted for and will be reported to LWDA 70 Finance Office.

Any falsification of information on documents may result in termination from WIOA, and prosecution.

The following Supportive Services are designed to provide a participant with the resources necessary to support their participation in training and career services. Supportive Services may be provided to Adult and Dislocated Workers in WIOA Individualized Career and Training Services. Youth Supportive Services should enable an individual to participate in WIOA Activities. Per TEGL 19-16, Supportive Services may include but are not limited to:

- Assistance with transportation;
- Assistance with childcare and dependent care;
- Linkages to community services;
- Assistance with housing;
- Needs-Related Payments (available only to individuals enrolled in training services and must be consistent with 20 CFR 680.930, 680.940, 680.950, 680.960, and 680.970)

- Assistance with educational testing;
- Reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities;
- Referrals to health care;
- Assistance with uniforms or other appropriate work attire and work-related tools, including such items as eyeglasses and protective eye gear;
- Assistance with books, fees, school supplies, and other necessary items for students enrolled in post-secondary education classes;
- Payments and fees for employment and training-related applications, tests, and certifications; and
- Legal aid services.

Supportive services are one of the fourteen WIOA services elements that must be made available to eligible youth based on each participant's assessment and Individual Service Strategy (ISS). The standard to authorize supportive services for youth shall not vary from those for adults and dislocated workers.

All youth participants must receive follow-up services for a minimum duration of 12 months after program exit. Follow up services include supportive services, and continued documentation must be maintained and demonstrate an ongoing need for services.

In the event that an eligible youth is co-enrolled in an adult program, supportive services may be provided under the WIOA adult program.

SUPPORT SERVICES:

Supportive Services are services that are necessary to enable an individual to participate in activities authorized under WIOA sec. 134(c)(2) and (3).

To be eligible for supportive services, a participant must have been determined WIOA eligible and:

- Participating in programs with activities authorized under WIOA;
- Unable to obtain supportive services through other programs providing such services.

Non-WIOA funded programs may have different support service guidelines than those listed above. In these instances, funding specific grant guidelines should be followed.

In most cases, the Support Service Request Form (see ATTACHMENT 1) is used for services paid by the LWDA 70. All appropriate receipts and supporting documentation will be attached to the Support Service Request Form. The Support Service Request Form is also used for participants payments for transportation, childcare, or reimbursements and the need for these services must be identified in the IEP/ISS. LWDA 70 Staff must document Supportive Services in the participants' file located in HiRE.

In order to be considered to receive supportive services, a Supportive Services Request Form must be properly completed by the participant, a LWDA 70 staff member, and then approved by the LWDA 70 Assistant Program Manager (or designee).

The LWDA 70 will provide supportive service funds for the following but are not limited to (20 CFR 600.900 and 20 CFR 681.570): childcare, transportation, work/training clothes/uniforms, certification testing fees under certain conditions, and/ or minor tools or supplies.

NOTE: All supportive service reimbursements to participants shall be made within 90 calendar days in a program year. Reimbursements to participants older than 90 calendar days cannot be made.

Supportive Services may include, but are not limited to:

Linkages to community services;

Assistance with transportation;

- The most economical public or private transportation is allowable if it will reasonably meet the participant's need to participate in program activities. Payments may not exceed the IRS mileage rate;
- Travel from the participant's residence to the training for the beginning of training and for the return trip at the completion of the training is allowable at the IRS mileage rate. Mileage will be reimbursed up to 200 miles bi-weekly. The copy of the original Supportive Service Request, Google Map, along with the Transportation Supportive Service Reimbursement Procedure Form must be submitted at the time of bi-weekly request.
- Auto repair, including the purchase of tires, is an allowable cost if the vehicle is needed for participation in employment and training activities or for the participant to seek, accept or retain employment. A description of repairs needed must be maintained in the participant file.
- Auto repair will not exceed the value of the automobile; documentation of the vehicle value must be in the participant's case file under Document (staff). The vehicle must be owned by the participant or spouse. Vehicle registration and proof of liability insurance must be obtained and included in participant's case file under Document (staff) as documentation. Participant must provide three quotes or bids for repairs.
- Other forms of public or private transportation services may be paid for at cost which is reasonable based on local market price conditions, such as taxi, bus fare, ride-sharing agencies, or as provided by another local transportation organization.

If it is determined that transportation supportive services are needed, assistance will be provided in the form of mileage reimbursement to WIOA participants who are: enrolled in training (OJT, ITA, customized training, internships, etc.). For the employment of WIOA Adults and/or Dislocated Workers, or Youth, assistance will be provided at regular intervals, based on availability of funds. The distance required for training is determined upon initial supportive service approval, based on Map Quest or Google Maps. The standard Federal travel rate is used (\$0.67 currently). (It is reviewed for change in January and July of each year.) Participants will submit required forms bi-weekly to LWDA 70's Staff for reimbursement.

To determine the allowable transportation cost, use the transportation cost formula:
Distance (Round Trip) x Frequency x Standard Rate = allowed transportation cost (Round up to the nearest \$1.00).

Example: 23 miles Round Trip x 2 trips x \$0.67 = \$30.82. Round up to the next \$1.00, so \$30.82 would be \$31.00

Assistance with childcare and dependent care:

- Child and dependent care assistance is a supportive service provided to participants if it is determined that without it a participant will not be able to participate in services or transition to employment. Childcare assistance will not be provided when a competent adult (over the age of 18 years) residing at the same address as the participant is available to provide childcare. Only participants in Work Experience, an ITA or an OJT or Youth participants attending Adult Education are eligible to receive child/dependent care assistance.
- Participants must prove that they are not receiving assistance from any other organization. There must be documentation justifying attempts to secure funding for

childcare from other sources prior to the approval of WIOA funding. Participants may only utilize licensed childcare/dependent care providers who have been pre-approved by LWDA 70 staff. Participants must submit original receipts for reimbursement. Reimbursement will not be approved for care provided by a member of the immediate family. Participants who access services from a childcare/dependent provider not approved by LWDA 70 staff will be held responsible for any incurred costs.

Assistance with Medical Services:

- These services are directly related to employment or training outcomes, and include medical services necessary to successfully complete training, gain licensure or certification, or obtain employment. Services include a physical examination or drug testing for employment or training purposes

Assistance with housing;

- Funds may be used one time only for emergency payment of rent. An eviction notice along with a signed rental or lease agreement must be completed and maintained in the participant file prior to issuance of payment.
- One time Only – A Utilities (water, gas, or electric) may be paid if the participant/spouse/parent/legal guardian has received a disconnect notices for the participant's principle dwelling. The utility must be in the name if the participants or his or her spouse, parent, or legal guardian.
- Dormitory costs for out-of-area training (Youth Only) when these costs are not included in tuition. These costs must be pre-approved by the WIOA Program Manager prior to incurring the expense.

Needs-related payments;

- Needs-related payments provide financial assistance to individuals, enabling them to participate in training. See Needs-related section in LWDB 70 Supportive Services Policy for Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Participants for details.

Assistance with educational testing;

- Funds may be used for application fees and HiSET or State Approved High School
- Equivalency program fees or tests.
- Funds may be used for occupational testing.

Reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities;

Legal aid services;

- Legal aid services may only be provided when the service is not available through other agencies or organization and the service is necessary for the individual to participate in WIOA activities. Coordinating legal aid service, including expungement services, will require working with local bar associations, referral to Louisiana Legal Services Association as well as private counsel. Assistance may only be provided in civil, non-criminal legal problems.

Assistance with uniforms or other appropriate work attire and work-related tools and equipment;

- Includes clothing for interviews and/or clothing required as personal protective equipment not otherwise supplied by the business.
 - WIOA participants (Adult/DW/Youth) receiving Individual Career services, may be aided in purchasing clothing, tools, protective gear, scrubs, stethoscope, protective eye gear, blood pressure cuff certifications, licenses, and other needs in order to become employed. If tools or supplies are needed to participate in training or become employed, staff may provide financial assistance only if it is required by the training provider or an

employer. Participants must be enrolled in training or have a firm employment offer before this expense can be approved by staff.

- NOTE: Training related expenses for WIOA eligible adults or youth that may be covered by an Individual Training Account do not count against the supportive services limit for each registered participant. ITA related training expenses may include but are not limited to assistance with the purchase of tools required for a specific course; current school admission fees, computer and lab fees; and books and supplies
- Tools may be purchased for participants if the tools are required to continue a training program or obtain employment. Staff must determine that the tools are required and that they cannot be provided by any other source, such as the prospective employer or training provider. Participants must be enrolled in training or have a firm employment offer before this expense can be approved by staff.

Assistance with books, fees, school supplies and other necessary items for students enrolled in training services;

- Tools that are required to begin or continue a training program are an allowable cost.
- Tools may be purchased for participants if the tools are required to obtain employment. Participants must have a firm employment offer before this expense can be approved by staff
- LWDA 70 staff must first determine that the requested tools cannot be provided by any other source such as the training provider or participant.
- Tools become the property of the participant upon satisfactory completion of the WIOA training outlined in the participant's IEP, ISS or upon employment.
- Computer purchases, in limited cases, are approved expenses. This is most typically, but not exclusively, in online or distance learning situations LWDA 70 staff must complete the Supportive Service Form with the participant and submit the form to the Assistant Program Manager for approval prior to purchase for any computer or Chromebook with a value of \$350.00 or more.
 - Personal computer purchase support may not exceed \$350.00 per participant, without prior approval.
 - Once purchased the device belongs to the participant and they are responsible for all costs associated with maintenance.
 - Personal computer purchase support is included in the \$2,000.00 total per program year maximum supportive services limit.
 - Personal computer purchase support may only be considered if the participant has no other existing device available. The participant must sign a self-attestation statement stating they do not already own or have access to the required electronic device required by the training provider for them to successfully participate in the training program and the statement must be available to LWDA 70 staff upon request.
 - Receipts for purchasing personal computers for participants must be signed and within 90 days of reimbursement request.

Payments and fees for employment and training-related applications, tests and certifications;

- Allowable costs drug testing; background checks; an Assessment,
- Defensive Driving Course, Driver's license and/or state identification card
- Course, licensure or certification, and Treatment (ACT) class, and/or tools and equipment needed for self-employment.

Other supportive services may be provided as determined by the service provider. Such goods and services will be reasonable and necessary for the participant to remain in training and/or obtain or retain employment. These services may include but are not limited to:

- Eyeglasses or contacts
- Haircuts, personal grooming and hygiene needs;

- Financial counseling or assistance;
- **Tutoring Services:** Direct payments may be made to vendors to cover the cost of tutoring services for participants in an educational, short-term prevocational, online, or classroom training program, if the case manager, education or training provider determines that such tutoring services are necessary for the participant to succeed in the program. Tutoring services payments may be made to vendors who are approved or recommended by LWDB 70, the education or training provider. Such costs must be reasonable, and all direct vendor payments are subject to the LWDB 70 procurement policy. Tutoring services costs are capped at a per-participant maximum of \$1,000.

Accommodation Expenses: defined as temporary lodging (hotel/motel) services that are necessary to enable an individual to participate in training activities under WIOA Section 3 (59); Section 134(d) (2) and 20 CFR 680.330, -.900, -.910 and -.920. The training facility must be located more than 150 miles from the participant's residence in order to qualify for non-commuting lodging assistance.

Emergency Assistance: These types of support services may be provided when necessary to successfully continue training/activities and may include, but not be limited to auto repair, healthcare and medical services, rent, etc. All emergency assistance payments will be considered on a case-by case basis and proper justification must be documented.

Support services will only be provided by the LWDB 70 if funds are available.

Other types of supportive services not included in the recognized categories above may be provided to WIOA participants if they meet the definition of a supportive service as stated in the Act. Accordingly, these supportive services must also be determined to be reasonable and necessary for an individual to complete training or obtain or retain permanent employment.

Procedures and Documentation Requirements for Reimbursement

- LWDA 70 will verify evidence of participation in training, such as a copy of ITA(s) or attendance records for each period of training (quarter, semester, class, etc.) has been uploaded in HiRE.
- LWDA 70 staff will determine a participant's need for supportive services as a part of the initial and on-going assessment.
- LWDA 70 staff will determine whether other community resources are available to cover necessary expenses and show evidence of referrals to other resources, including, when feasible, outcomes of the referral. These efforts to obtain other resources before expending WIOA funds must be specifically documented in the case notes in HiRE and/or uploaded in Document (staff) in HiRE.
- LWDA 70 staff will ensure that all attendance records (timesheets) are signed by the instructors and participants in order for LWDA 70 to pay for supportive services that are tied to attendance.
- LWDA 70 staff will submit a written supportive services request to the assistant program manager for approval. The request must include the participant's name, state ID, date of service, vendor's name, justification for the service, evidence that other non-WIOA sources were explored and signatures of the participant, LWDA 70 staff and assistant program manager, or other staff who has been delegated signature authority.
- LWDA 70 staff must assure that no participant exceeds the LWDB 70 approved supportive service limit of \$2,000.00 for all WIOA Title I eligible adult, dislocated worker and youth enrolled participants per program year.
- LWDA 70 staff must maintain a supportive service tracking log provided by LWDA 70's Management that tracks the date of the service, type of service, and amount of the service disbursed to the participant and a current total of supportive services spent-to-date. LWDA 70 staff shall upload all approved supportive service request into Document (staff) and case noted in HiRE.

- LWDA 70 staff shall ensure that case notes regarding supportive service received are entered in participant's case notes in HiRE within two (2) working days from the date of service.
- Determination of need must include documentation regarding the reasonableness of the support service and how the associated cost was determined. Youth participants' supportive service needs must also be documented in their Individual Service Strategy and case noted in HiRE.
- Reimbursement payments will be made only with the submission of original sales receipts that show itemization of the service and products provided or in the case of mileage, through the submission of a supportive service request transportation mileage tracking form and map.
- Mileage reimbursement shall not exceed the Federal travel authorized per mile rate.
- Childcare reimbursement will be made only with the submission of documentation that includes verification from the childcare provider regarding the number of hours of care and that the hours correspond with the hours in the work experience/training activity.
- For incentive payments, LWDA 70 staff must have copies of awards of attainments such as certificates or diplomas or other documentation verifying successful completion of the activity. Case notes must document why the incentive was provided, the amount of the incentive, and the date the participant received the incentive. The appropriate activity code must be added.

In general, all supportive services payments must have a receipt from the vendor/provider that clearly shows the amount that was paid.

INDIVIDUAL SUPPORTIVE SERVICE FUNDING LIMITS AND DURATION:

The use of a Support Service is determined on an individual basis. Fund distribution is determined at the American Job Center with guidance from a Career Specialist as needed. Eligibility or enrollment in WIOA does not constitute entitlement to any Support Service. Support Service funding is based on availability of program funds.

The supportive service limit for each WIOA Title I eligible participant is \$2,000.00, per program year while they are enrolled in WIOA services for the duration of the individual's enrollment in the WIOA program. The Director may, on a case-by-case basis, increase this limit if the additional supportive services allocation would significantly benefit the participant's ability to continue and complete the program, or benefit the participant in job retention or wage progression.

Participants must submit such request in writing with reasonable justification along with any supporting documentation for exceeding funding or duration limits set forth in this policy. When appropriate LWDA 70 staff will submit a request with support for approval to the Assistant Program Manager. The Assistant Program Manager will forward to the Director for approval once the participants case has been reviewed.

Authorization to increase the supportive service limit above \$2,000.00 must be documented in case notes recorded in the participant's HiRE record. LWDA 70 must ensure equitable treatment in the provision of supportive services.

UNALLOWABLE SUPPORT SERVICES:

Support services may not be used to pay for expenses incurred prior to the participant's enrollment into the WIOA program. Advances against future payments are not allowed.

Examples of unallowable services include, but are not limited to:

- Fines and penalties such as traffic violations, late finance charges, and interest

- payments
- Entertainment, including tips
- Payments are not allowed for titled or deeded items or when recovery of the expense is anticipated. Such items include but are not limited to:
 - Rent deposits or housing deposits;
 - Mortgage payments, homeowner's insurance, and property taxes;
 - Car payments;
 - Purchase of vehicles;
 - Fines; and
 - Late fees.
- Other unallowable expenses include, but are not limited to:
 - Household items
 - Pet food
 - Items to be purchased for family or friends
 - Alcohol or tobacco products; and
 - Onsite meals.
- Contributions and donations
- Payments are not allowed for expenses incurred prior to enrollment in a WIOA program.
- Supportive service payments may not be paid to an Adult or Dislocated Worker participant while enrolled in follow-up.
- Out-of-state job search and relocation expenses that will be paid by the prospective employer.
- Business start-up costs that would be considered capitalization or the acquisition of business assets are not allowed.

HIRE ACTIVITY CODES:

Supportive Service Activity Codes are created in HiRE based on the type of Supportive Service received; Child/Dependent Care, Transportation Assistance, Needs Related Payments, Stipends, Incentives, and Other.

There are (9) WIOA Supportive Service Activity Codes in HiRE – 5 specific to Youth participants only.

- 180: Supportive Service - Child/Dependent Care
- 181: Supportive Service - Transportation Assistance
- 185: Supportive Service- Other
- 326: Supportive Service- Needs Related Payments
- 419: Stipends (Youth)
- 480: Supportive Service - Child/Dependent Care (Youth)
- 481: Supportive Service - Transportation Assistance (Youth)
- 484: Supportive Service - Incentives (Youth)
- 485: Supportive Service - Other (Youth)

*Note: Supportive Service Costs are to be recorded separately from tuition costs. If a Provider has supportive service costs (such as tools, books, uniforms, fees, etc.) included in the tuition costs, please record the tuition costs within the applicable training activity code and any supportive service costs using the applicable supportive service activity code. Ensure a case note is entered detailing each specific supportive service provided.

Supportive Service activity codes are not stand-alone codes. Supportive Services must be provided in conjunction or coordination with another career or training service. These

supportive services codes are not exclusive to coordination with training activities (i.e. 202- Individual Counseling and Career Planning.)

Supportive Service -Child/Dependent Care, Transportation Assistance, Stipend, and Other When creating 180/480, 181/481, 185/485, or 419 Supportive Service Activity Codes in HiRE, staff will create the Activity Code with begin and end dates that parallel the duration of the employment or training service. Staff must case note each time a Supportive Service is provided within that duration.

Example: A participant is in need of Transportation Assistance. Staff are to record the 181/481- Supportive Service Transportation activity in HiRE for the specified duration (i.e. 6 months, 1 year, etc.). A detailed case note MUST be entered each and every time a transportation payment is issued within the specified duration.

Example: A participant has completed training but is now in need of assistance with paying for testing to receive their Occupational License. Staff are to record the testing fee using the 185/485 Supportive Service-Other activity code for the specified duration. A detailed case note MUST be entered including details of the other supportive service.

Supportive Service - Needs Related Payments (WIOA Sec. 134(d)(3))

When creating a 326 Support Service- Needs Related Payments Activity Code in HiRE, staff will create the Activity Code with begin and end dates that parallel the duration of the training service. In order to qualify for needs related payments a participant MUST be enrolled in training. Staff MUST case note each time a Needs Related Payment is provided within that duration.

Supportive Service - Incentives

When creating a 484 Supportive Service- Incentives Activity Code in HiRE, staff will create an Activity Code each time an Incentive is provided; where the actual begin and end date is the date in which the Supportive Service was either requested, received, or upon agreement of purchase (per your local policy). Staff MUST enter a detailed case note each time an Incentive is awarded.

The provision of WIOA Title I funded incentives for WIOA Title I enrolled Youth is described in 20 CFR 681.640, TEGL 21-16 and OWD 5-20.1. The provision of incentives must comply with the requirements in 2 CFR 200.

WIOA Title I funded incentives are permitted for recognition and achievement directly tied to training, education, work experiences, or other accomplishments for services that are documented on the Youth's Individual Service Strategy (ISS).

WIOA Title I funded incentives are not entitlements and must be customized to the unique needs of each Youth. Federal funds may not be spent on entertainment costs. Therefore, incentives may not include entertainment such as movie or sporting event tickets or gift cards to movie theaters or other venues whose sole purpose is entertainment.

Incentives can be provided to youth during participation and follow-up if the provision of incentives is identified on the youth's Individual Service Strategy. Incentives are offered to induce the youth to work toward the achievement of a specific goal or goals. Incentives can be used as encouragement for the youth to continue participating in program activities including training, education, or work readiness activities such as work experience. No participant can receive more than \$3,000 in cumulative incentives per WIOA Program Year (i.e. July 1 through June 30).

Incentive Documentation Requirements

- Description of achievement to qualify for specific incentive award is documented in case file and HiRE as part of the ISS;
- Supporting documentation of attainment prior to issuance of incentive award (copy of credential/test scores/grades, employer evaluations, attendance record, etc.)

Please refer to LWDA 70 Youth Incentive Policy.

REQUIRED HIRE CASE NOTES:

- Sufficient case notes to determine what was purchased, from where, the cost, for what purpose the purchase was made and the date range, if applicable,
- The need and inability to obtain this service elsewhere in the community for the Supportive Services/ needs related payment service.
- Co-enrollment details as to shared costs among multiple programs and services.
- Purchase order/invoice details sufficient to determine the need for the purchase, what was purchased, from where, time frames and costs for training related costs.

Example case note language:

“Supportive service assistance for (insert type of supportive service) was requested by (insert participant name). All practical alternatives have been exhausted (name attempted resources) in an effort to obtain these supportive services through other resources. (Insert participant’s name) requires this assistance in order to complete (his/her) (insert type of activity). The cost for this supportive service is (insert actual amount). Supportive service funds will be used to pay for this supportive service, and the participant has received a total of (\$000.00) in supportive services year-to-date, not including this service.”

FOLLOW UP SERVICES:

Supportive Services may be individuals enrolled in the Youth program for up to one year after the date of exit from WIOA program, provided the services are necessary to retain employment or continue in a post-exit training program, and there is financial need documented in the participants file and case noted in HiRE.

Follow-up career services are not a qualifying service for the recipient of Supportive Services; therefore, an Adult/Dislocated Worker who is receiving follow-up services may not receive Support Services after exit date from WIOA program.

Youth follow-up services may include the Supportive Services as stated in 20 CFR 681.580.

PRIORITY OF SERVICE:

Participants in WIOA programs who face significant barriers to employment such as recipients of public assistance, low-income individuals, or individuals who are basic skills deficient should be given service according to their level of need.

AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS:

All services under WIOA are subject to change due to the availability of funding, and/or LWDB 70 policy and directive. Should funds become severely limited, the provision of supportive services will be prioritized and/or reduced or completely eliminated.

EXCEPTIONS:

Prior approval is required for any requests exceeding funding or duration limits set forth in this policy. Participants must submit such request in writing with reasonable justification and supporting documentation when appropriate to LWDA 70 staff for approval. Exceptions for

extreme circumstances may be approved at the discretion of the Director.

MONITORING:

LWDA 70 monitoring staff will provide monitoring reviews throughout a program year to ensure adherence to WIOA laws, regulations and policies to ensure that participants are provided appropriate access to programs or activities.

ACTION:

This policy supersedes WIOA Supportive Service Policy, December 2, 2022. This policy is effective immediately. LWDB 70 authorizes the LWDA 70 Director to issue additional instructions, guidance, approvals and/or forms to further implement requirements of this policy, without making substantive change to the policy except in situations where new or updated State and Federal guidance is issued.

This policy is subject to change at any time, at the discretion of the Seventh Planning District Consortium Workforce Development Board, based on appropriate factors which the Board believes warrant adjustments to this document, or conflict with local, state, or Federal regulations, laws or policies. All submitted forms are live documents and subject to change according to local, State, and Federal needs.

Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact LWDA 70 staff at (318) 632-2022.

EXPIRATION DATE:

This policy shall remain in effect until revised or canceled by the Seventh Planning District Consortium Workforce Development Board.

REFERENCES/CITATIONS:

WIOA Section 3(59)

WIOA Section 134(d)(2) – Adults & Dislocated Workers

20 CFR 680.330, 680.900, 680.910, and 680.920 – Adults & Dislocated Workers

WIOA Section 129(c)(2)(G) - Youth

WIOA Regulations at 20CFR 681.570 Youth

Training and Employment Guidance Letter WIOA NO. 19-16, Section 14

Training and Employment Guidance Letter WIOA NO. 21-16, Section 7

MIS Letter of Instruction No. 02-17 Change 2

WIOA Section 134(d)(3) Adult & Dislocated Workers

20 CFR 680.300, 680.930, 680.940, 680.950, 680.960, and 680.970 – Adults & Dislocated Workers

20 CFR 681.570 – Youth

Office Workforce Development Supportive Service Policy 4-20.1

Passed and Approved on this 11th Day of October 2024.



The Seventh Planning District Consortium Workforce Development Board
Title: Bruce Roberts, Vice-Chairperson

10-11-24

Date

The Seventh Planning District Consortium Workforce Development Board

Administrative Office

4000 Viking Dr., Suite A-1, Bossier City, LA 71111 | (318) 632-2022

Matt Wheeler, Chairman | Candle Sattler, Director of Workforce Development

Affidavit of Lost/Stolen/Destroyed Supportive Services

I, _____, hereby declare that a _____
(name of supportive service) with serial number _____ in the amount
of \$ _____ was I lost/stolen/destroyed on _____ (date).

I understand that I cannot use the aforementioned supportive service, if it comes into my
possession. If it does, I must immediately return it to The Coordinating & Development
Corporation, 4000 Viking Drive, Suite A1, Bossier City, LA 71111.

The above statement is true and correct. I have been advised and am aware that it is
unlawful to give false information and that I may be prosecuted for perjury, a felony in the
state of Louisiana, if the above information is not true. A replacement for this supportive
service was issued on _____ (date).

Witness Print Name

Participant Print Name

Witness Signature

Participant Signature

Date

Date



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☐ **Bienville Parish**
2434 Manning St.
Ringgold, LA 71068
(318) 894-9173

☐ **Bossier Parish**
4000 Viking Dr., Suite B-1
Bossier City, LA 71111
(318) 741-7363

☐ **Caddo Parish**
125 E. Louisiana Ave.
Vivian, LA 71082
(318) 676-5721

☐ **DeSoto/Red River Parish**
142 Lake Rd.
Mansfield, LA 71052
(318) 871-2391

☐ **Lincoln Parish**
307 N. Homer St., Suite 307
Ruston, LA 71270
(318) 251-5023

☐ **Natchitoches Parish**
303 Bienville St.
Natchitoches, LA 71457
(318) 357-2414

☐ **Sabine Parish**
1125 W. Mississippi Ave., Suite A
Many, LA 71449
(318) 256-2698

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THE COORDINATING & DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION



The Department of Labor

Supportive Service Request - Form A

LWDA 70 Staff Name: _____ Date of Request: _____

Participants Name: _____ State ID: _____

Parish: _____ Funding: _____

Supportive Service Requested:

- ☐ Transportation Assistance ☐ Credential/Licensing/Certification Fee ☐ Prepaid
- ☐ Books for Occupational Skills Training (not included in tuition) ☐ Training Materials/Kits
- ☐ Uniforms or Other Workplace Attire ☐ Childcare Assistance ☐ Emergency Needs Assistance
- ☐ Background Check/Drug Screen ☐ Other: _____

Dollar Amount: _____

Can the participant gain the supportive service through other programs? ☐ Yes ☐ No

**Supportive Services cannot exceed \$2,000 per program year*

LWDA 70 Staff Signature

Participants Signature

.....

☐ Approved

☐ Not Approved

Justification for Above: _____

WIOA Authorized Staff Signature

Date

LWDA 70 Justification - Form B

Briefly describe the support service that you are requesting assistance for:

Supportive Service Other Resources - Form C

REGION 7 RESOURCE AGENCIES

Bienville Parish

Minden Behavioral Health Clinic - (318) 371-3001
Bienville Community Health Center - (318) 894-2341
Bienville Parish Health Unit - (318) 894-2209
Arcadia Housing Authority - (318) 263-8471
Bienville Council on Aging - (318) 263-8936
Louisiana Veterans Affairs Office - (318) 263-7419
Pine Belt Multi-Purpose Community Action - (318) 259-7560

Caddo Parish

Workers Compensation Office - (318) 676-5331
Louisiana Rehabilitation Services - (318) 676-7155
Shreveport Behavioral Health Clinic - (318) 676-5111
Caddo Parish Health Unit - (318) 676-5721
Community Support Programs - (318) 865-1422
Caddo Parish Section 8 - (318) 227-0906
Housing Authority of the City of Shreveport - (318) 698-3600
Oil City Housing Authority - (318) 995-6669
Housing Authority of Vivian - (318) 375-2381
Caddo Council on Aging - (318) 676-7900
Louisiana Veteran's Affairs Office - (318) 676-7540
Caddo Community Action Agency - (318) 868-6360

DeSoto Parish

Shreveport Behavioral Health Clinic - (318) 676-5111
DeSoto Parish Health Unit - (318) 872-0472
DeSoto Parish Police Jury Housing Section 8 - (318) 872-0880
Housing Authority of the Town of Mansfield - (318) 872-1383
Housing Authority of the City of Logansport - (318) 697-4380
DeSoto Council on Aging - (318) 588-8349
Louisiana Veteran's Affairs Office - (318) 872-4325
DeSoto Parish Office of Community Service - (318) 872-0880

Natchitoches Parish

Natchitoches Behavioral Health Clinic - (318) 357-3122
Natchitoches Parish Health Unit - (318) 357-3132
Natchitoches Housing Authority - (318) 352-9774
Natchitoches Parish Housing Authority - (318) 357-0553
Natchitoches Parish Council on Aging - (318) 357-3250
Louisiana Veteran's Affairs Office - (318) 357-3106
Natchitoches Parish Office of Comm. Svs - (318) 357-2220
Natchitoches Office of Juvenile Justice - (318) 357-3152
Natchitoches Off. Children and Family Svs - (888) 524-3578

Sabine Parish

Sabine Comprehensive Health Clinic - (318) 256-8150
Sabine Parish Health Unit - (318) 256-4105
Sabine Parish Housing Authority - (318) 256-3359
Sabine Council on Aging - (318) 256-4140
Department of Children and Family Service - (318) 256-4104
Louisiana Veteran's Affairs Office - (318) 932-4911

Bossier Parish

Shreveport Behavioral Health Clinic - (318) 676-5111
Bossier Parish Health Unit - (318) 741-7314
Housing Authority of City of Bossier City - (888) 549-1556
Bossier Parish Section 8 Housing - (318) 747-7823
Bossier Council on Aging - (318) 741-8302
Louisiana Veteran's Affairs Office - (318) 741-8391
Bossier Office of Community Services - (318) 747-1045

Claiborne Parish

Minden Behavioral Health Clinic - (318) 371-3001
Claiborne Parish Health Unit - (318) 927-6127
Claiborne Parish Section 8 Housing Authority - (318) 251-9867
Haynesville Housing Authority - (318) 624-1272
Homer Housing Authority - (318) 927-3579
Claiborne Council on Aging - (318) 927-6922
Louisiana Veteran's Affairs Office - (318) 927-3077
Claiborne Community Services - (318) 927-3557

Lincoln Parish

Lincoln Parish Department of Children and Family Services - (888) 524-3578
LA Vocational Rehabilitation Services - (318) 676-7155
Northwest Louisiana Human Services - (318) 676-5111
Lincoln Parish Health Unit - (318) 251-4120
Ruston Housing Authority - (318) 255-3644
Lincoln Council on Aging - (318) 255-5070
Louisiana Veteran's Affairs Office - (318) 251-4142
Ruston Office of Community Service - (318) 251-5136

Red River Parish

Natchitoches Behavioral Health Clinic - (318) 357-3122
Red River Parish Health Department - (318) 932-4087
Red River Parish Section 8 Housing Authority - (318) 932-5719
Red River Council on Aging - (318) 932-5721
Louisiana Veteran's Affairs Office - (318) 932-4911
Red River Office of Family Support - (318) 932-3222
Ware Youth Center - (318) 932-4411

Webster Parish

Minden Behavioral Health Clinic - (318) 371-3001
Webster-Springhill Health Unit (Monday- (318) 539-4314
Webster-Minden Health Unit - (318) 371-3030
Webster Parish Sec. 8 Housing Authority - (318) 377-7022
Minden Housing Authority - (318) 377-1077
Webster Parish Council on Aging - (318) 371-3056
Louisiana Veteran's Affairs Office - (318) 371-3045
Webster Parish Off. Community Service - (318) 377-7022
Minden District Probation & Parole - (318) 371-3020

Supportive Service Other Resources – Form C

REGION 7 RESOURCE AGENCIES

Participant Name: _____ State ID #: _____

Local Community Agency Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____ Agency Contact Name: _____
(Print)

Supportive Service Requested: _____

Can Agency Provide the Service: ☐ Yes ☐ No

If Yes, How Much: _____

If No, Why: _____

I, _____, attest that contact was made to the resource(s) provided above to request assistance/support for the indicated barrier(s). It was determined there is not funding assistance through the provided resource(s) to address the barrier(s) hindering my participation in a WIOA training service(s), unless indicated above. I understand that my request for support service(s) provided by the Seventh Planning District Consortium Workforce Development Board will be reviewed resulting in full funding, partial funding, or no funding of my request. I acknowledge the Seventh Planning District Consortium Workforce Development Board may reduce or suspend support service funding at their discretion.

Participant Signature: _____ Date: _____

LWDA 70 Staff: _____ Date: _____

TRANSPORTATION SUPPORT SERVICE REIMBURSEMENT PROCEDURES - Form D

Participant Info:

- The participant will complete required attendance forms after beginning the training.
- The forms will cover two weeks of training.
- The forms will be submitted bi-weekly to the LWDA 70 Staff for reimbursement.
- Reimbursement will be mailed to participant to the address on file in the HiRE.

LWDA 70 Staff will:

- determine eligibility and need for support service.
- document in the HiRE eligibility, need and unable to obtain these services from another organization.
- verify participants address.
- Reimbursement Process:
 - o LWDA 70 Staff will receive completed forms from participant and will document in HiRE.
 - o LWDA 70 Staff will then forward reimbursement claim to LWDA 70 Authorized Staff for processing.

Grades - Participant must be making satisfactory progress in the training program or WIOA Transportation Support Services may be suspended. Satisfactory progress is completing the report period (i.e., semester or quarter) with a minimum of 2.0 GPA (grade point average). Grades must be submitted to LWDA 70 staff by the end of each grading period.

If GPA is below a 2.0, an improvement plan is to be developed with participant. The participant must bring their GPA to a minimum of a 2.0 the following semester/quarter in order to be re-eligible for Transportation Support Services.

WIOA Participant Info:

School/Course: _____

Residential Address: _____

School Address: _____

Dates Traveled:

_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Your bi-weekly cost for mileage: _____ miles @ \$0.67 = _____

Example: 23 miles Round Trip x 2 trips x \$0.67 = \$30.82. Round up to the next \$1.00, so \$30.82 would be \$31.00

****miles cannot exceed 200 miles bi-weekly, therefore payment should not be more than \$134.00.***

Comments: *Subject to change without notice.*

I have read the Transportation Assistance Guidelines and understand the expectations required of me in order to receive this service. My signature below verifies that my income status and economic situation has not changed from the original Supportive Service Documentation that was provided to my Case Manager. I understand that I am to report any changes in my status immediately. My signature also verifies that I will be participating in training activities during the months that transportation support services is being provided.

Participant Signature

Date

Participant Name (Print)

Revised Date: 3/6/24

WIOA Individual Training Account Policy & Procedures

The Seventh Planning District Consortium
Workforce Development Board



THE COORDINATING & DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

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The Department of Labor

The Seventh Planning District Consortium Workforce Development Board

Administrative Office

4000 Viking Dr., Suite A-1, Bossier City, LA 71111 | (318) 632-2022

Matt Wheeler, Chairman | **Candle Sattler**, Director of Workforce Development

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(318) 894-9173

☐ **Bossier Parish**
4000 Viking Dr., Suite B-1
Bossier City, LA 71111
(318) 741-7363

☐ **Caddo Parish**
125 E. Louisiana Ave.
Vivian, LA 71082
(318) 676-5721

☐ **DeSoto/Red River Parish**
142 Lake Rd.
Mansfield, LA 71052
(318) 871-2391

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307 N. Homer St., Suite 307
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1125 W. Mississippi Ave., Suite A
Many, LA 71449
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EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER/PROGRAM AUXILIARY AIDS AND SERVICES ARE AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST TO INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES.

Purpose

To establish Policy and Procedures for Individualized Training Accounts.

Policy

Implementation of Individualized Training Account Policy consistent with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC) Office of Workforce Development (OWD) Policy 2-23.1 Integrated Service Delivery Policy.

Procedure

The following procedures will be followed by LWDA 70 Staff (or designee) for the purpose of issuing Individualized Training Accounts.

.....

PURPOSE:

This policy outlines American Job Centers (AJCs) directives for providing Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) for WIOA eligible Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth participants.

BACKGROUND:

WIOA Title 1-B training services for WIOA eligible Adults, Dislocated Workers, and Youth are provided through ITAs. Using ITA funds, WIOA eligible Adults, Dislocated Workers, and Youth enroll in training services from eligible training providers, on the HiRE Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL), they select, in consultation with a LWDA 70 Staff (or designee). Participants may utilize information such as skills assessments, labor market information, and training providers' performance, in order to take an active role in managing their employment future through the use of ITAs.

POLICY:

INDIVIDUAL TRAINING ACCOUNTS (ITA'S)

ITAs pay for training services for skills in-demand occupations (which include all registered apprenticeship programs) as defined by the Seventh Planning District Consortium Workforce Development Board (LWDB 70) from training providers on the approved ETPL.

Expenditures directly related to training that qualify to be paid through ITAs are tuition, books, academic fees, educational testing and certification, equipment, and tools.

The ITA is established on behalf of a participant. In order for an ITA to be issued, the training program must be on the State Eligible Training Provider List. Training providers who are identified as "not in compliance" by the Louisiana Workforce Commission may not be used for training purposes.

Training Services are defined as one or more courses or classes that upon successful completion lead to:

- A certificate or associate degree; or
- A competency or skill recognized by employers and LWDA 70; or
- A training regimen that provides individuals with additional skill or competencies generally recognized by employers and LWDA 70.

The Department of Labor has determined that adult literacy or basic computer literacy (i.e. Short-Term Pre-Vocational or Workforce Preparation) services are not part of the definition of training services under WIOA Title I. The requirements for ITAs do not apply for these services.

The American Job Centers will provide training services to eligible participants as stipulated in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

CRITERIA FOR RECEIVING AN INDIVIDUAL TRAINING ACCOUNT (ITA)

An ITA will be offered to eligible participants in order to afford them the opportunity to access training determined to be necessary to achieve their employment and career goals. If sufficient funding is available, employed individuals may be eligible to receive an ITA if the individual is not earning a self-sufficient wage and the ITA is for occupational training that will result in an increase in pay leading to self-sufficiency.

WIOA financial assistance for Adults and Dislocated Workers will be limited to two years of training with four years of financial assistance available for Out of School Youth participants at an equivalent undergraduate level. Participants will be limited to three (3) years of WIOA financial assistance for apprenticeship programs. Additionally, all participants must:

- Meet training provider's admission requirements.
- Apply for a Pell Grant and, if eligible, apply Pell funds toward tuition and other required training expenses.

Other requirements of being awarded an ITA are:

- Any training that is funded should lead to full-time permanent employment opportunities in areas of high occupational demand within the local labor market.
- Undergraduate level academic training will be funded only in situations where a minimum number of credits are needed to complete a degree program and attainment of the degree will further the individual's immediate employment prospects.
- All training requests or training modifications are subject to the prior written approval of designated LWDA 70 staff.
- Recognized Postsecondary credential: This term means an occupational skills related credential consisting of an industry-recognized certificate or certification; a certificate of completion for a Registered Apprenticeship; a license recognized by the State involved or Federal Government; or, a college diploma, certificate, associate or baccalaureate degree. Credential documentation is required to be provided to the applicable LWDA 70 Staff, upon the successful completion of training.
- Training is limited to Service Providers and Programs that are listed on the HiRE Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL), as locally authorized.
- Internet-based learning may be considered for ITA Vouchers if the program/course of study meets the following conditions:
 - o The training is listed on the ETPL, as an eligible ITA training program,
 - o The final credential awarded must be equivalent in content and standard of achievement to the same program completed on campus or at an institutional training location;
 - o requires students to interact with instructors; and
 - o requires students to take periodic tests
- All training programs must be within a reasonable commute of LWDA 70 area. Out-of-the area training programs that are not within commuting, may be approved on a case-by-case basis pending the customer's demonstrated ability to incur all extraordinary costs (e.g.: living expenses).
- Training that is funded must be fully completed on an on-going basis by the time allotted for a given program.

- Training that is not limited to a structured format (content/hours/dates), such as would occur under open enrollment at a community college, vocational school, or university, is expected to be attended on a full-time basis unless extreme circumstances apply. ITAs for participants wanting to attend school as a part-time student must complete a minimum of credit hours according to training provider's policy.
- LWDB 70 will not be held responsible for any training expenditures that have not been pre-approved by LWDB 70, or that are not specifically related to the mandatory training requirement of the sponsored program.

Travel, Mileage, Out-of-the-Area Job Search, and Relocation: LWDA 70 will not fund nor be held responsible for any participant travel or relocation expenditures or expenses which are not part of a specific program's mandatory course requirement. Any travel and/or relocation expenses which are incurred will be the sole responsibility of the individual participant without prior approval.

Books: LWDA 70 will not accept financial responsibility for any books and/or supplies that are not directly related and specifically required as part of the mandatory requirements for any course(s)/curriculum LWDA 70 sponsored student is/will be attending.

- Training opportunities and continued funding support is limited to funding availability.
- LWDB 70 reserves the right to depart from any standard program processes or procedures on an individual case-by-case basis when such changes are in the best interest of the participant and/or program.
- Prospective LWDB 70 sponsored students are to be cautioned about making any personal commitments to a Vendor or signing any legally binding obligations. Any personal agreements that a student may enter into with a school beyond LWDB 70's standard procedures are by their very nature outside of LWDB 70's control, authority and responsibility.
- Distance and Online Training Providers WIOA funds may be used for programs that are conducted in a completely online format. Online providers may apply and be considered for inclusion on the state ETPL and will be required to meet the same eligibility and performance criteria established for classroom-based instructional providers.

ITA AUTHORIZATION

ITAs must be approved by a training authorized representative prior to issuance. ITA authorization must be documented in the participant record.

ITAs are authorized only for training programs listed on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL), as required in WIOA Section 134(c)(F)(iii). ITA funds are paid directly to the training provider using the Service Provider's fiscal system. Exceptions to this may occur if the expense is for a required training related item that must be purchased from a separate vendor or if the expense is incurred by the participant with a reimbursement payment subsequently provided to the participant by the Service Provider.

ITAs may be used for pre-apprenticeship programs however, only pre-apprenticeship programs listed on the ETPL may be approved.

ITAs may be authorized for training programs in other states or online training if the training program appears on Louisiana's ETPL and is approved for WIOA financial assistance. The location of such out of state training programs should be within a distance that does not present a substantial barrier to effective case management of the participant.

LOCAL BOARD ELIGIBLE TRAINING PROVIDER LIST REQUIREMENTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

LWDB 70 must ensure that there are sufficient numbers and types of providers of training services (including eligible providers with expertise in assisting individuals with disabilities and eligible providers with expertise in assisting adults in need of adult education and literacy activities) serving the local area and providing the services involved in a manner that maximizes consumer choice and leads to competitive integrated employment for individuals with disabilities. 20 CFR 680.430(c)(2)

LWDB 70 must complete other responsibilities delegated to the local boards by the state (state may not delegate responsibilities specifically designated as a state responsibility unless explicitly stated in this guidance, the WIOA Final Rule, or WIOA statute). For example, local boards must collect such performance information as the state may require and determine whether the providers meet the state's performance criteria. 20 CFR 680.430(C)(1)

LWDB 70 will remove ETPs that fail to meet local performance standards (if applicable) from the local ETP list, in accordance with state and local policies and procedures. This process must allow for appeals in accordance with the state's appeals procedure for providers of training to appeal a denial of eligibility from the local list of eligible training providers. 20 CFR 680.480(e), 683.630(6)

LWDB 70 must ensure that the state's ETP list is disseminated publicly through the local one-stop system, including in formats accessible to individuals with disabilities, and its partner programs. 20 CFR 680.430(c)(3)

Allowable Local Board Responsibilities

LWDB 70 may, except with respect to registered apprenticeship programs: 20 CFR 680.430(e)

- Require additional criteria and information from local providers as criteria to become or remain eligible within its local area; and 20 CFR 680.430(e)(1)
- Set higher levels of performance than those required by the state as criteria for local programs to become or remain eligible to provide services within its local area. 20 CFR 680.430(e)(2)

LWDB 70 may supplement the criteria and information requirements established by the governor in order to support informed consumer choice and the achievement of local performance indicators. However, LWDB 70 may not do so for registered apprenticeship programs. 20 CFR 680.510(a)

This additional information may include: 20 CFR 680.510(b)

- Information on programs of training services that are linked to occupations in demand within its local area; 20 CFR 680.510(b)(1)
- Performance and cost information, including program-specific performance and cost information, for the local outlet(s) of multi-site eligible training providers; 20 CFR 680.510(b)(2)
- Information that shows how programs are responsive to local requirements; and 20 CFR 680.510(b)(3)
- Other appropriate information related to the objectives of WIOA. 20 CFR 680.510(b)(4)

LWDB 70 may make recommendations to the Governor on the procedure used to determine eligibility of providers and programs. 20 CFR 680.430(d)

Local Board Performance Criteria

LWDA 70 Program Monitors performs program desk reviews of all training providers. These performance reviews first identify all WIOA participants issued ITAs for a provider's programs over a specified time period such as the twelve months covering a program year or calendar year. Monitoring staff then identify the WIOA participants who successfully completed their training program, those who dropped from their training program (unsuccessful completion), and those participants who are still attending training. Upon review, if the Program Monitor feels there are areas of concern, the following steps will be taken:

- Detailed review of HiRE files on each participant
- On-site monitoring visit
- Report of recommendations to the Director, if necessary to the Board.

After completing a participant program outcomes evaluation, LWDA 70 monitoring staff will issue a report which, after review by the Program Director and Program Manager, will be shared with the training provider. Providers will be notified through these reports if their programs did not meet the expected performance standards. A meeting will be scheduled with the Provider to discuss the areas of concerns and explore possible solutions. Providers will be given the opportunity to respond with a justification as to why the minimum performance standards were not met. Such response must be received by LWDA 70 from the provider within 30 days upon receipt of the monitoring report. If LWDA 70 determines the provider's response to be insufficient or unsatisfactory, the provider will be notified and have 30 days to file an appeal. The provider will be notified that its appeal must include:

- The program(s) in question.
- The reason(s) for the appeal.
- Supplemental data on participant outcomes supporting the provider's reasons for appeal.
- The training provider's signature.

Appeals must be sent to:

Attn: ETPL Appeals

Seventh Planning District Consortium Workforce Development Board (LWDB 70)

4000 Viking Drive, Suite A-1

Bossier City, LA 71111

As part of the program evaluation and appeals process, LWDA 70 and its Workforce Development Board reserve the right to remove any or all training programs offered by the provider if such programs consistently do not meet minimum performance standards. LWDA 70 and its Workforce Development Board may choose to place the provider on probation to allow for a corrective action plan to be presented, the effectiveness of which will be subsequently evaluated by monitoring staff. In reaching its decision, LWDA 70 and its Workforce Development Board will take into consideration the availability of similar training programs from other providers to ensure that residents of rural areas have access to training services.

ITA AWARD LIMITS

Funding for each ITA may not exceed costs specified by the training provider in the Louisiana Workforce Commission's ETPL.

ITA REVIEW AND APPROVAL PROCESS

LWDA 70 Staff (or designee) are responsible for verifying an ITA Application is complete and demonstrates the participant's knowledge of the training program, knowledge of job requirements, knowledge of the targeted demand occupation in the local area or proposed area of employment, and commitment to complete the training program. LWDA 70 Staff (or designee) must receive signed ITA documents prior to confirming or entering activity codes into HiRE.

LWDA 70 Staff is responsible for verifying funds prior to submission to the LWDA 70 Administrative Finance Office. ITAs must be approved by the LWDA 70 Administrative Finance Office and emailed to the Program Manager, prior to a participant beginning training. The Program Monitor is responsible for ensuring the Finance Office has received approved ITA Application and that the ITA has been entered on the ITA Log and the appropriate training activity entered in HiRE. The ITA Application must be scanned into Document (staff) and case noted by the LWDA 70 Staff.

Any changes to the ITA must be documented on a modified ITA and submitted to the Program Manager or WDB Director approval. The Program Manager is responsible for communicating such changes to the LWDA 70 Administrative Finance Department and making changes to the ITA Log.

REGISTRATION TIME LIMIT

Once an individual is awarded an ITA, the participant must register for training on time according to training institution policy. ITAs will not be used for payment of late fees caused by customer error or delay. The customer will be responsible for these fees, as he/she is responsible for other fines or penalties.

WAIVERS AND EXCEPTIONS TO POLICY

On an individual basis, Program Manager or WDB Director may waive local policy requirements for any individual with physical or sensory disabilities or other unusual circumstance and it has been determined that training is necessary for the individual to obtain employment. Under special circumstances and with proper justification, a request can be made to exceed the ITA funding limit, training duration or to authorize training in a not-in-demand or otherwise restricted occupation.

For participants who have demonstrated unsatisfactory performance under previously established ITA, Program Manager or WDB Director (or designee) shall determine if the individual should receive additional funds.

All waivers and exceptions to policy must be approved by the Program Manager or WDB Director (or designee) through email or written verification, or a new award, depending on each situation. Any waiver must be documented in case notes in HiRE and placed in participant file.

TIME LIMITS FOR TRAINING

Training programs are to be completed, as evidenced by receipt of a degree, diploma, certificate of completion, certification, and/or license.

COSTS TO BE COVERED

The ITA agreement form will specify all costs to be included and will be limited to those costs that all students attending the program are required to incur by the training provider. The ITA covers approved tuition costs, books, lab fees, supplies, uniforms, and other training costs as specified on the ITA. All training costs must be approved by the LWDA 70's administrative staff.

Allowable costs for the program are described on the Eligible Training Provider List and there is a statement in the Training Agreement that ties the payments to those published costs. Training Providers must resubmit their curricula each year and any changes in costs are incorporated at that time. The costs listed online are the same as any established catalog prices that is commercially available to any non-WIOA participants.

ITA expenditures are costs required by the training provider to complete the training. ITA costs required to complete the training may include, but are not limited to:

- Tuition and fees
- Books
- Tools
- Equipment
- Uniforms
- Tests (Background Check)
- Medical immunizations/tests
- Housing (only when required by school policy for student to live on campus)

Items required for training not consisting of required books, supplies, uniforms, tools, graduation fees, license/certification exam fees, etc. must be documented in the participant's file and case notes in HiRE at the time of the determination of enrollment into the curriculum at the school selected by the participant. Expenses not associated with items required for training may be considered as a supportive service with the need for the supportive service justified through proper documentation prepared and submitted for preapproval by the Program Manager. The provision of any supportive service will also be based on the reasonableness of cost and the availability of funding.

ITA costs do not include any supportive services' costs related to the ITA (e.g. transportation, childcare, etc.). Costs must be reasonable and necessary and must represent a sound investment of public funds.

FINANCIAL AID

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funding for training will be limited to participants who are unable to obtain grant assistance from other sources to pay the costs of their training or require assistance beyond that available under grant assistance from other sources to pay the costs of such training. It will be the sole responsibility of applicants to submit documentation of the award and acceptance of Federal, State, local, or private financial assistance to the LWDA 70 Staff during the eligibility determination period for training. LWDA 70 Staff (or designee) and training providers must coordinate funds available to pay for training and consider the availability of other sources of grants to pay for training costs such as State-funded training funds, and Federal Pell Grants, so that WIOA funds supplement other sources of training grants. The WIOA cost of the ITA, including combined funding, must not exceed the actual costs of the training program. Any scholarships (excluding G.I Bill) and all income sources available to defray training expenses, including WIOA contribution, must be identified and included in the ITA for WIOA financial planning purposes.

A WIOA participant must apply for a Pell Grant, when applicable, prior to start of training and may attend training pending approval of the Pell Grant application. However, American Job Centers must have an agreement with the training provider requiring that once the Pell Grant is received, the WIOA will be reimbursed by the training institution for any WIOA disbursements made on behalf of the participant that are covered by the Pell Grant.

Documentation must be maintained in document staff and case notes within HiRE and the participant's file by the LWDA 70 Staff to document the application and eligibility for all grant assistance and the methodology to apply any assistance received to the costs of training.

ITA CONTINUED FUNDING, SATISFACTORY PROGRESS

Continued funding of an ITA is contingent on availability of WIOA funds and on the participant's satisfactory progress in school, except for good cause. Service Providers must review the participant's training progress and expenses quarterly or more frequently depending on the training institution's schedule. A participant's training progress will be considered satisfactory upon earning:

- A grade point average that does not fall below 2.0 for two consecutive terms, or
- A grade point average sufficient to graduate from, or receive certification in, the individual's approved area of study, or
- Sufficient credit hours to finish the approved course of study within the time frame established under the approved training plan.
- In the case of self-paced or ungraded learning programs, satisfactory progress means participating in classes and passing certification examinations within the time frame established under the approved training plan.

LWDA 70 Staff (or designee) must arrange to receive training progress reports (i.e. transcripts) from participants in adequate time to process the subsequent tuition payment. Progress reports, transcripts or other training-issued updates must be scanned in the document staff and case notes within HiRE and the participant's file by the LWDA 70 Staff documented in the participant record.

LWDA 70 Staff, in collaboration with participants, must develop a service strategy to overcome barriers impacting progress for participants who are not earning satisfactory progress in their coursework. WIOA ITA funding may be terminated if participants do not earn satisfactory progress for two (2) or more consecutive school terms (i.e. quarters, semesters, etc.).

Good Cause - "Good cause" for failure to make satisfactory progress in training includes specific factors that would cause a reasonably prudent person in similar circumstances to fail to make satisfactory progress. Good cause includes, but is not limited to:

- Illness, injury or disability of the participant or a member of the participant's immediate family,
- Severe weather conditions or natural disaster precluding safe travel,
- Destruction of the participant's school records due to a natural disaster or other catastrophe not caused by the participant,
- Acting on advice received from an authority such as the training provider, instructor, or case manager,
- Training is delayed or cancelled,
- Accepting stop-gap employment with hours or other work conditions that conflict with the training, or
- Accepting goal-related employment prior to completion of training.

The Louisiana Workforce Commission also has the responsibility to remove training providers/programs from the Eligible Training Provider List under the following conditions (documented proof that these conditions exist must be provided by the LWDB).

- (1) If it is determined that the training provider intentionally supplied inaccurate information. (This termination will remain in effect for two years.)
- (2) If it is determined that the training provider substantially violated any requirement under WIOA or state policy
- (3) For failure to reapply under Subsequent eligibility Procedures.

Training Institution's listed on the ETPL are required to verify their information online and resubmit every year. This normally occurs in time for entry into class in the January semester. The Louisiana Workforce Commission gives notice to schools to update their school information as well as the curricula.

When an individual is enrolled in a curriculum at a school, and for whatever reason, the curricula does not meet the performance requirements and falls off the list, the participant may remain enrolled in the curricula through completion. However, no NEW customers may be enrolled into that curricula until the performance standards are in compliance.

REQUIREMENTS FOR FUNDING PROGRAMS EXCEEDING ITA AMOUNT

No participant will be issued an ITA until the full cost of the training program is accounted for and documents are scanned in the document staff and case notes within HiRE and the participant's file by the LWDA 70 Staff. This will include, but is not limited to, grant assistance and other sources of funds required to fully fund the cost of training. WIOA funds will be paid in proportionate, incremental amounts as specified in the ITA agreement with the training provider.

Neither the LWDB 70 nor American Job Centers will incur any responsibility for any loan incurred by any participant registered for any type of WIOA grant service.

Documentation must be maintained in the participant's HiRE file by LWDA 70 Staff specifying the required financial information relative to total training costs, source(s) of funding and financial assistance provided to the participant.

SANCTIONS FOR NON-COMPLIANCE WITH WIOA PROGRAM AND/OR TRAINING PROVIDER REQUIREMENTS

Enrolled participants must adhere to the following stipulations once enrolled:

- Maintain a "C" (2.0) grade point average each semester or quarter; otherwise, the participant will be on probation for the next semester/quarter. If two back to back terms are below the 2.0 GPA, funding may be terminated;
- Have acceptable attendance as defined by the training provider; and
- Maintain required contact with a LWDA 70 Staff.

If a participant is placed on probation, they must meet with their assigned LWDA 70 staff during the semester to review and assess their academic progression. All documentation, progress reports, transcripts or other training-issued updates must be scanned in the Document (staff) and case noted within HiRE, and the participant's file by the LWDA 70 Staff documented in the participant record. Once a participant is enrolled in an ITA approved activity and the individual is exited from the program for failure to comply with the policies and procedures as outlined in the ITA policy, they cannot be re-enrolled in a WIOA funded training program. Additionally, once a participant is enrolled in an ITA approved activity, he/she may not transfer to another training program or activity sponsored by

the American Job Centers. For example, if a participant is issued an ITA to attend one specific type of training and subsequently incurs costs under this ITA, but leaves this initial training, another ITA cannot be issued to this participant to attend a different type of training. Exceptions for this may be approved due to extenuating circumstances with the approval of the Program Manager or WDB Director. In such cases the new training must be on the Eligible Training Provider List and any monies spent on previous training must be counted towards maximum amount awarded. Additionally, an existing ITA cannot be transferred to another training provider even though it is the same type of training. In this circumstance a new ITA would need to be developed and approved and the new training provider must be on the eligible training provider list.

Exceptions to the sanction may include extenuating circumstances such as:

- Medical conditions;
- Personal barriers that require non-medical treatment;
- Transportation and childcare issues that cannot be resolved through support services; as well as
- Class scheduling issues and availability;
- Disaster;
- Additional circumstances that are determined to be beyond the participant's control by the Program Manager or WDB Director.

The decision to invoke a sanction or to waive a sanction for cause will be documented in the participant's HiRE file. In addition to considering the imposition of sanctions to a participant, the history of an applicant that has participated in a local WIOA program will be considered when making any determination regarding re-enrollment into the local program.

PARTICIPANTS CONTACT

Participant contact with the LWDA 70 Staff must occur, at a minimum, once a month during the lifetime of the training plan to ensure the individual is making satisfactory progress in training. Participant contact is expected to occur more frequently depending on individual participant circumstances to ensure proper counseling and support. Failure to remain in minimum contact can result in termination from the WIOA funded program.

LWDA 70 Staff will provide regular counseling to individuals enrolled in an approved training and awarded an ITA. Career counseling will include information deemed relevant/pertinent to the participant by the LWDA 70 Staff.

INDIVIDUAL TRAINING ACCOUNT (ITA) FORM

The ITA Forms will include all costs associated with training as required by the training provider. The ITA Form will include all necessary signatures from the LWDA 70 staff (or designee), participants, and training provider acknowledging the cost associated with training.

The level of funding set aside for ITA Forms must consider both the demand for ITAs and the total amount of the annual program allocation. All ITA forms issued through LWDA 70 will be processed through the LWDA 70 Administrative Finance Office including payment for training and the related expenses.

ITA forms must include a start date and an estimated end date consistent with the start and end date for the training period as given by the training institution.

An extension to an ITA Form may be requested in writing by the subrecipient/LWDA Staff to the Program Manager or WDB Director.

Extensions may be authorized following a case-by-case review of the circumstances. A written decision from the WDB Director must be received prior to any commitment to extend an ITA form. An Individual Training Account Form must be prepared separately for each term, semester, or period when new classes are recommended to begin.

Renewal of an ITA form/modification for a subsequent training period must be based on successful completion of each prior training period.

DOCUMENTATION

LWDA 70 Staff members are required to have monthly contact with their participants. Contact may be made by telephone, through the e-mail, personal contact, or other appropriate means of communication. Documentation, such as attendance records, grade reports, or statements from the instructing agency, are required as proof of participation and satisfactory academic progress. If the documentation indicates the client is not making satisfactory progress, LWDA 70 Staff will maintain more frequent contact. Documentation of status of the training provider must be maintained in the participant's file and HiRE case.

MODIFICATIONS OF ITA

An ITA may be modified to ensure the participant attains their educational goals and subsequent employment. In some circumstances, such as when a program of training is removed from the ETPL, or when extraordinary program expenses develop, the participant and LWDA 70 staff must agree on whether to complete the plan of training with the existing provider, seek a similar program, or discontinue training. However, an ITA should not be modified or extended for a participant beyond the original plan approval as it relates to a program of training that is no longer on the ETPL.

There is no limit to the amount of times an ITA can be modified or how often. An ITA should be modified when the original scope of the training, such as the length of time, course requirements, or overall cost, has changed. An ITA should not be modified if the individual employment goals changes or if a different service provider or program is needed.

The training provider must make the requested change to the appropriate LWDA 70 Staff. LWDA Staff will then work with the participant to request a modification/waiver, and then submit it to the Program Manager or WDB Director for approval. Any increases or changes to the current award must be approved by the Program Manager or WDB Director through email or written verification, or a new award, depending on each situation. Any modifications to the ITA must be documented in case notes and uploaded into Document (staff) in HiRE.

ACTION

This policy supersedes WIOA Individual Training Account (ITA) Policy, December 4, 2020. This policy is effective immediately. All submitted forms are live documents and subject to change according to local, State, and Federal needs. Once the forms and exhibits pertaining to this policy are approved by the LWDB 70, they will not require board approval if other changes occur, unless the change affects protocols. Should you have any question, please feel free to contact LWDA 70 staff at (318) 632-2022.

EXPIRATION DATE

This policy shall remain in effect until revised or canceled by the Seventh Planning District Consortium Workforce Development Board.

Passed and Approved on this 30 Day of June 2021.



The Seventh Planning District Consortium Workforce Development Board
Title: Matt Wheeler, Chairperson

6/30/2021
Date

REFERENCES

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA)

LWC OWD Policy 2-23.1 Integrated Service Delivery Policy

20 C.F.R. Parts 680 and 681 outlines federal regulations for training and ITAs



WIOA PROCUREMENT

Procurement Policies and Procedures

The Seventh Planning District Consortium
Workforce Development Board



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The Department of Labor

The Seventh Planning District Consortium Workforce Development Board

Administrative Office

4000 Viking Dr., Suite A-1, Bossier City, LA 71111 | (318) 632-2022

Matt Wheeler, Chairman | Candle Sattler, Interim Director of Workforce Development

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EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER/PROGRAM AUXILIARY AIDS AND SERVICES ARE AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST TO INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES.

(1) PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance and establish the federal, state, and local regulations and procedures for procurement of goods and services. Staff and subrecipients are responsible for complying with all applicable fiscal guidelines of respective funding streams.

(2) BACKGROUND

The uniform guidance under Title 2 CFR Part 200 provides fiscal and administrative guidance for the administration of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) program, including specific requirements for purchasing goods or services as related to equipment. While the format and wording of the Uniform Guidance and DOL Exceptions vary slightly from the US Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) previous circulars, the intent of the federal government is consistent. The intent is to ensure that purchases of goods or services are approved and performed through fair and open competition.

In accordance with Title 2 CFR Part 200 the procurement policies, procedures and requirements set forth herein are authorized by and in compliance with all applicable federal and state laws, rules, and regulations as determined by the Governor of the State of Louisiana.

(3) DEFINITIONS

Contract - A legal instrument by which a subrecipient purchases property or services needed to carry out the project or program under a Federal award. The term does not include a legal instrument, even if the non-federal entity considers it a contract, when the substance of the transaction meets the definition of a federal award or sub award (Uniform Guidance Section 200.22).

Contractor - An entity that receives a contract (Uniform Guidance Section 200.22).

Conflict of Interest - An employee, officer, agent, or any member of the organization that has interest in a financial gain or tangible benefit and who participates in the selection, award, or administration of a contract supported by a federal award (Uniform Guidance Section 200.318[c][1]).

Cost Analysis - An element-by-element review and evaluation of the estimated or actual cost to determine the probable cost to the contract.

Equipment - Tangible personal property (including information technology systems) having a useful life of more than one year and a per unit acquisition cost of which equals or exceeds the lesser of the capitalization level established by the non-federal entity for financial purposes, or \$5,000 (Uniform Guidance Section 200.33).

Firewall - An established policy or procedure that acts as a barrier or protection against an undesirable influence, outcome, or authority. Examples of firewalls include but are not limited to organizational arrangements that provide clear separation of duties and responsibilities, reporting hierarchy of managers, and all staff that provide clear separation between job duties and responsibilities, and conflict of interest/confidentiality/disclosure agreements.

Information Technology Systems - Information technology systems mean computing devices, ancillary equipment, software, firmware, and similar procedures, services (including support services), and related resources (Uniform Guidance 200.58).

Invitation for Bid (IFB) - A type of solicitation document, used in a formal competitive bidding process, which contains a detailed statement of what the agency is attempting to purchase. An IFB is used to obtain simple, common, or routine services that may require personal or mechanical skills. Qualifying bidders compete solely on the basis of costs.

Labor Surplus Area Firm - The Department of Labor maintains a listing of areas of the nation where the average unemployment rate is 20% or higher than the national unemployment rate. A listing of other information on labor surplus areas can be found at www.dol.gov/agency/eta/lisa.

Micro-Purchase Threshold - Fiscal threshold set by Federal Acquisition Regulation (currently \$10,500 per Federal Acquisition Regulation {FAR} 48 CFR Subpart 2.1). The threshold is periodically updated based on inflation.

Pass-Through Entity - A non-federal entity that provides a subaward to a recipient to carry out part of a federal program (Uniform Guidance Section 200.74).

Price Analysis - The process of examining and evaluating a proposed price without evaluating its separate cost elements and proposed profit. The process determines whether the price is fair and reasonable.

Procurement - All stages of the process of acquiring property or services, beginning with the process for determining the need for property, equipment, or services and ending with contract completion and close out.

Questioned Cost - Any cost or procurement that is questioned by an auditor, pass-through entity, or awarding agency representative. Purchases can be questioned due to possible violations of statutes and regulations, inadequate documentation or possible unreasonable costs (Uniform Guidance Section 2900.3).

Request for Proposal (RFP) - A type of solicitation document used in a formal competitive bidding process where an invitation is presented for suppliers to submit a proposal on a specific commodity or services. The RFP process brings structure to the procurement decision and is meant to allow the risks and benefits to be identified clearly up front. The RFP is to obtain complex services in which professional expertise is needed and may vary and/or where different methods and approaches may be applied during performance.

Request for Quote (RFQ) - A type of solicitation document used in a formal competitive bidding process, mainly when the specifications of a product are already known and when the price is the main factor or only factor in selecting the successful bidder.

Simplified Acquisition Threshold - Fiscal threshold set by Federal Acquisition Regulation (currently \$250,000 per FAR Subpart 2.1). The threshold is periodically updated based on inflation.

Subaward - An award provided by a pass-through entity to a subrecipient for the subrecipient to carry out part of a federal award received by the pass-through entity. It does not include payments to a contractor or payments to an individual that is a beneficiary of the program. A subaward maybe provided through any form of legal agreement that the pass-through entity considers a contract (Uniform Guidance 200.92).

Subrecipient - A non-federal entity that receives a subaward from a passthrough entity to carry out part of a federal program but does not include an individual that is a beneficiary of such a program. A subrecipient may also be a recipient of other federal awards directly from the awarding agency (Uniform Guidance Section 200.93).

Supplies - All tangible personal property other than equipment. A computing device is a supply if the acquisition cost is less than the lesser of the capitalization level established by the non-federal entity for financial statement purposes or \$5,000, regardless of the length of its useful life (Uniform Guidance Section 200.94).

(4) ADDITIONAL WIOA REQUIREMENTS

In addition to the requirements of Uniform Guidance Sections 200.31 through 200.326, the following requirements apply to procurements and agreements funded under WIOA:

1. All procurements between local boards and units of government must be conducted on a cost-reimbursement basis. (DOL Final Rule Section 683.200{c}{4}) (CFR 667.00[a][3]). There is no provision for profit with government agencies.
2. If a fixed amount award with a government or non-profit agency results in revenues in excess of actual costs incurred, the excess revenues are to be considered program income (CFR 683.200[c][7]). Any fixed awards should reference this requirement.
3. The local workforce board plan must contain the competitive process used to award grants and contracts under all programs funded under the WIOA training services outside the Individual Training Account (ITA) (DOL Final Rule Section 679.560[b][15]).
4. The procurement requirements addressed do not apply to the identification of Eligible Training Providers. The process for identifying eligible training providers for training services under WIOA is described in DOL Final Rule Section 680, Subpart B. The State is responsible for the development and maintenance of a State-wide provider list. While not a federal requirement, each grantee should have a formal agreement for services when a training provider is to deliver the services. This may be in the form of a purchase order, contract, voucher, or other mechanism that provides for payment information and may be incorporated or referenced in the individual ITAs.

(5) REASONABLE COSTS

All WIOA procurements must be "necessary and reasonable" in the operation of the WIOA programs and conform to the following:

1. Consistent with uniform guidance and established policies and procedures.
2. Similar costs must be considered either direct or indirect.
3. Costs must be determined with generally accepted accounting principles.
4. Costs must be adequately documented.
5. Procurement may benefit other non-WIOA organizational operations as long as the procurement is necessary to WIOA programs and the costs can be distributed in proportion of use. If the procurement benefits multiple WIOA projects, the cost should be allocated based on relative benefit. If the relative benefit cannot be determined, a reasonable and documented method may be used. Costs cannot be shifted to overcome fund deficiencies or to avoid federal restrictions (Uniform Guidance Section 200.405).

(6) PRIOR APPROVAL

Prior written approval shall be requested from LWC for any costs specified below in advance of the incurrence. All requests for prior written approval should include the timeframe or scope of the agreement. Prior approval must be requested from LWC at least 30 days prior to the effective date of the requested action.

Equipment

The Louisiana Workforce Commission has been delegated approval authority from the US Department of Labor for all equipment purchases. Prior approval shall be requested from LWC to purchase equipment described herein. Equipment purchased must be acquired, used, managed, and disposed of in accordance with 2 CFR 200.313 or 2 CFR 200.439.

Capital expenditures for general purpose equipment, buildings, and land are unallowable as direct charges, except with the prior written approval of the LWC. Equipment and other capital expenditures are unallowable as indirect costs.

Equipment must be used by the program or project for which it was acquired as long as needed, whether or not the project or program continues to be supported by the federal award, and it shall not be encumbered without prior approval of the LWC. When no longer needed for the original program or project, the equipment may be used in other activities supported by the federal awarding agency, in the following priority:

1. Activities under a federal award from the Federal awarding agency which funded the original program or project, then
2. Activities under federal awards from other federal awarding agencies. This includes consolidate equipment for information technology systems.

During the time the equipment is used on the project or the program for which it was acquired, equipment must be made available for use on other projects or programs currently or previously supported by the Federal Government, provided that such use will not interfere with the work on the projects or program for which it was originally acquired. First preference for other use must be given to programs or projects supported by federal awarding agencies. Use for non-federal funded programs or projects is also permissible. User fees should be considered if appropriate.

Equipment acquired with federal funds must not be used to provide services for a fee that is less than private companies charge for equivalent services unless specifically authorized by Federal statute for as long as the Federal Government retains interest in the equipment.

When acquiring replacement equipment, equipment to be replaced may be used as a trade-in or sell the property to use the proceeds to offset the cost of the replacement property. However, prior approval must be requested from LWC prior to trading or selling any equipment.

Management Requirements - Procedures for managing equipment, including replacement equipment, whether acquired in whole or in part under a federal award, until disposition takes place will, as a minimum, meet the following requirements:

1. Property records must be maintained that include a description of the property, a serial number or other identification number, the source for funding for the property, who holds the title, the acquisition date, the cost of the property, percentage of Federal participation in the project costs for the Federal award, the location, use and condition of property, and any ultimate disposition data including the date of disposal and the sale price of the property.
2. A physical inventory of property must be taken, and the results reconciled with the property records at least once every two years.
3. A control system must be developed to ensure adequate safeguards to prevent loss, damage, or theft of property. Any loss, damage, or theft must be investigated.
4. Adequate maintenance procedures must be developed to maintain the property in good condition.

Disposition - When original or replacement equipment acquired under Federal award is no longer needed for the original project or program or for other activities currently or previously supported by a Federal awarding agency, except as otherwise provided in Federal statutes, regulations or Federal awarding agency disposition instruction, a request must be made to LWC for disposition instructions.

(7) METHODS OF PROCUREMENT

All procurement actions are to be conducted in a manner that provides for "full and open competition" (Uniform Guidance Section 200.319). No procurement transaction will contain any requirements that restrict competition, unfairly promotes a single contractor or product, places excess burden on a contractor, or presents an organizational conflict of interest.

Within the context of open competition, there are five procurement methods which may procure goods or services; micro purchase, small purchases, sealed bids, competitive proposals, and noncompetitive proposals.

The type of purchase method is generally determined by the "per transaction" value of the procurement and the type of good or service being purchased. "Per transaction" is a single solicitation for a single item (e.g. copying machine), group of related items (e.g. office furniture), or a specific service (e.g. staff training).

1. Micro-Purchases - Procurement by micro-purchase is the acquisition of supplies or services, the aggregate dollar amount of which does not exceed the micro-purchase threshold (§ 200.67 Micro-purchase), to the extent practical, the non-Federal must distribute micro-purchases equitably among qualified suppliers. Micro-purchases may be awarded without soliciting competitive quotations if the non-Federal entity considers the price to be reasonable.

2. Small Purchases - Small purchases are simple and informal procurement methods for securing services, supplies, or other property. The following standards for procurement of small purchases:

a. Purchases shall not be broken down into several purchases merely to be able to use smaller purchase procedures.

b. Any procurement less than \$25,000 shall be made in accordance with the following small purchase procedures:

i. Purchases up to \$1,000. No competitive bidding is required.

ii. Purchases over \$1,000 not to exceed \$5,000 may be made by telephone, email or facsimile quotations solicited from at least three bona fide, prospective bidders made on the basis of the lowest responsive quotation received. Files must be documented listing persons contacted, and the terms and delivery of each bidder and any special comments. Written confirmation of price must be obtained from the successful bidder.

iii. Purchases over \$5,000, but less than \$25,000, shall be made by sending out written invitations for bids to at least five bona fide, qualified bidders. Written invitations for bids shall contain complete specifications, the quantity required, delivery point, and other information, sufficient for a supplier to make an acceptable bid.

c. Exceptions to minimum requirements:

i. Parts for repairs to equipment from an authorized dealer (not stocking of parts).

ii. Repairs to equipment from an authorized dealer.

iii. Vehicle body repairs covered by insurance recovery and in accordance with insurance requirements.

iv. Publications and copyrighted materials when purchased directly from the publisher; or state library and libraries at colleges and universities when using subscription services.

v. All public utilities and services provided by local government.

- vi. Prosthetic devices and devices for physical restoration.
 - vii. Educational and related resources (except equipment) and membership in professional organizations.
 - viii. Wire, related equipment, time and material charges to accomplish adds, moves and/or changes to telecommunication systems.
 - ix. Goods, material and supplies for home economics courses, other teaching and training where purchasing, preparing and serving part of the regularly prescribed course.
 - x. Purchase for clients of Blind and Vocational rehabilitation programs which are federally funded at a rate of at least 80%, regulated by Title 34.
- d. Telephone, e-mail, or facsimile quotations from at least three bona fide, qualified bidders where feasible:
- i. Convention and meeting facilities.
 - ii. All equipment for blind operated facilities not covered by competitive state contracts.

3. Sealed Bids - Used for purchases over \$25,000.

Bids are publicly solicited procurements for which a firm-fixed award (lump sum or unit price) or other fixed-price arrangement is awarded to the responsible bidder whose bid, conforming with all of the material terms and conditions of the invitation for bids, is the lowest price. Additional requirements follow:

- a. Contracts for \$25,000 and over shall be awarded by competitive sealed bidding, except as otherwise provided in these policies and procedures.
- b. Competitive sealed bidding shall be initiated by the issuance of an invitation for bids containing a complete, adequate and realistic description of the supplies, services or major repairs to be procured and all contractual terms and conditions applicable to the procurement.
- c. Adequate public notice of the invitation for bids shall be given at least ten (10) days prior to the date set forth therein for the opening of the bids on all matters. Notice shall be in writing and to the persons in a position to furnish the supplies, services, or major repairs required, as shown by its records and by its advertising, if the amount of the purchase is \$25,000 or more.
- d. The advertisements or written notices shall contain general descriptions of the supplies, services, or major repairs for which bids are warranted and shall state:
 - i. Name and location of the department or office for which the purchases are to be made,
 - ii. Where and how specification and quotation forms may be obtained, and
 - iii. Date and time, not later than, which bids can be received and will be opened.
- e. Each advertisement shall be published in the official journal of the state and/or parish as appropriate, or if there is no newspaper printed in the parish, in a newspaper in the nearest parish that has a general circulation in the parish in which the office is situated.
- f. Bid Opening - Bids shall be opened publicly in the presence of one or more witnesses at the time and place designated in the invitation for bids. Each bid, together with the name of the bidder, shall be recorded and open to public inspection.

g. Bid Evaluation - Bids shall be evaluated based on the requirements set forth in the invitation for bids, which may include criteria to determine acceptability such as inspection, testing, quality, workmanship, delivery, and suitability for a particular purpose and criteria affecting price such as life cycle or total ownership costs. The invitation for bid shall set forth the evaluation criteria to be used. No criteria may be used in bid evaluation that are not set forth in the invitation for bids.

h. Correction or Withdrawal of Bids - patent errors in bids or errors in bids supported by clear and convincing evidence may be corrected, or bids may be withdrawn if such correction or withdrawal does not prejudice other bidders.

i. Award - the contract shall be awarded with reasonable promptness by written notice to the lowest bidder whose bid meets the requirements and criteria set for in the invitation for bids. Awards shall be made by unconditional acceptance of a bid without alteration or correction except as authorized in this part.

j. Resident Business Preference - in contracts awarded by competitive sealed bidding, resident businesses shall be preferred to non-resident businesses where there is a tie bid and where there will be no sacrifice or loss in quantity.

k. Exemptions:

i. Purchases of goods manufactured by or service performed by severely handicapped individuals in state-operated and state-supported sheltered workshops as defined in R.S. 39:1595.4 shall be exempt from the provisions of this section.

ii. Purchases of testing and/or assessment instruments for \$5,000 and over may be procured through the competitive proposal process.

l. State Contracts

i. The Coordinating & Development Corporation shall procure from state contract if a competitive state contract exists and the amount is above the minimum order quantity.

ii. Subrecipients may purchase from state contracts if they qualify and are approved by the Office of State Purchasing within the Division of Administration.

iii. Procurement from state contracts shall be deemed to have satisfied requirements of competitive bidding.

m. Acquisition of Space - Every lease for the use of 5,000 sq ft or more of each building space shall be awarded pursuant to the sealed bid process of this section. No such lease shall extend beyond a ten (10) year period.

No competitive bidding or competitive proposals are required for the leasing of space under 5,000 square feet.

In the event alterations or modifications of space currently under lease are required to meet the changed operating requirements, a lease may be amended. Such lease amendment may provide an adjustment in the monthly lease payments not to exceed 25% of the original annual lease price per square foot, sufficient to reimburse the lessor for paying for the leasehold improvements.

4. Competitive Proposals - Competitive proposals are normally conducted with more than one source submitting an offer and either a fixed price or cost reimbursement type award is made. A documented methodology for technical evaluations and award to responsible offeror whose proposals are most advantageous to the program with the price, technical and other factors considered shall be established.

a. Requirements for Competitive Proposals:

- i. Consulting Service Contracts - contracts for consulting services which have a total maximum amount of compensation of \$50,000 or more shall be awarded through a request for proposal process.
- ii. Adequate public notice of the request for proposals shall be given by advertising in the official journal of the state and/or parish, as appropriate, and at least once a week for three different weeks.
- iii. The first advertisement shall appear at least 30 days before the last day that proposals will be accepted.
- iv. In addition, written notice shall be mailed to persons, firms or corporations who are known to be in a position to furnish such services, at least 30 days before the last day that proposals will be accepted.
- v. Personal Service Contracts - adequate public notice of the request for proposals shall be the same as for consulting service contracts which have a maximum amount of compensation less than \$50,000.
- vi. Professional Service Contracts - adequate public notice of the request for proposals shall be the same as for consulting service contracts which have a maximum amount of compensation less than \$50,000.
- vii. Social Service Contracts - adequate notice for request for proposal shall be given by advertising in the official journal of the state and/or parish, as appropriate, in which services are to be performed and such other newspapers, bulletins, or other media as appropriate in the circumstances. Such advertisement shall appear at least twice in the official journal of the state and/or parish as appropriate.

If the services are to be performed in or made available to a multi-parish area, advertising in the official journal of the state and/or parishes, as appropriate, and in one or more newspapers of general circulation in the state and/or parishes at least twice shall be sufficient to meet this requirement. In all cases, the first advertisement shall appear at least 14 days before the last day that the proposals will be accepted.

In addition, written notice shall be mailed to persons, firms or corporations who are known to be in the position to furnish such services, at least 14 days before the last day that the proposals will be accepted. This last requirement is subject to reasonable limitation at the discretion of the agency.

viii. Request for proposals shall indicate the relative importance of price and other evaluation factors. It shall clearly define the tasks to be performed under the contract, the criteria to be used in evaluating the proposals and the time frames within which the work must be completed.

b. Awards shall be made to the responsible offeror whose proposal is determined in writing to be the most advantageous to the company taking into consideration price and evaluation factors set forth in the request for proposals.

c. Written or oral discussions may be conducted with all responsible offerors who submit proposals determined in writing to be reasonably susceptible for being selected for the award. Discussions shall not disclose any information derived from proposals submitted by competing offerors.

Discussions need not be conducted:

- i. With respect to price, where such prices are fixed by law or regulation, except that consideration shall be given to competitive terms and conditions; or
- ii. Where terms of delivery or performance will not permit discussions; or
- iii. Where it can be clearly demonstrated and documented from the existence of adequate competition or accurate prior cost experience with that particular service that acceptance of an initial offer without discussion would result in fair and reasonable prices, and the request for proposals notify all offerors of the possibility that award may be made on the basis of the initial offer.

5. Noncompetitive Proposals (Sole Source) - Procurement is through solicitation of a proposal from only one source, the funding of an unsolicited proposal or after solicitation of a number of sources, when competition is determined to be inadequate.

The use of sole source should be minimized to the extent practical, but in every case, the use of sole source procurement shall be justified and documented. Procurement by noncompetitive proposals may only be used when the award of a contract is infeasible under small purchase procedures, sealed bids or competitive proposals and one of the following circumstances apply:

- a. The item or service is available only from a single source;
- b. The public exigency or emergency need for the item does not permit a delay resulting from competitive solicitation;
- c. After solicitation of a number of sources, competition is determined to be inadequate;
- d. On-the-Job training (OJT) contracts, except OJT brokering contracts which shall be selected competitively;
- e. Enrollment of individual participants in classroom training;
- f. Contracts for consulting services which have a total maximum amount of compensation less than \$50,000 may be awarded without the necessity of competitive bidding or competitive proposals;
- g. Contracts for personal services may be awarded without the necessity of competitive bidding or competitive proposals;
- h. Contracts for professional service contracts be awarded without the necessity of competitive bidding or competitive proposals;
- i. Contracts for social services may be awarded without the necessity of competitive bidding or competitive proposals only if the authorized person determines that one of the conditions listed below is present.
 - i. If none of the conditions above are determined to be present in a contract for social services, then the contract shall be awarded through a request for proposal, small purchases or sealed bid process.
 - ii. The services are available only from a single source. A contract shall also be considered a sole source if a request for proposals is issued and only one or no proposals are received.
 - iii. The state legislature has made an appropriation for that particular contractor or contractors is the appropriations bill or other statutes.
 - iv. A quasi-public or non-profit has been established in coordination with the state to provide the particular service involved in the contract.

- v. Local matching funds are greater than 10% of the contract amount are required to be contributed by the contractor. Such matching funds may be in the form of cash, certified expenditures, or in-kind contributions, where applicable to the funding source.
- vi. The nature of the services being provided necessitates that a continuity of contractors be maintained as is but not limited to therapeutic and crisis support to clients and employment and training programs.
- vii. An emergency exists which will not permit the delay in procurement, necessitated by the request for proposal procedures.
- viii. The total contract amount is less than \$150,000 per 12-month period. Service requirements should not be divided so as to exempt contracts from the request for proposal process.
- ix. The contract is with another government entity or government body.
- x. Funds are specifically designated by the federal government for a particular private or public contractor or political subdivision.

(8) EMERGENCY PURCHASES

Louisiana Revised Statute 38:2211(5)(a) defines an emergency as "an unforeseen mischance bringing with it destruction or injury of life or property or the imminent threat of such destruction or injury or as the result of an order from any judicial body to take immediate action which requires construction or repairs absent compliance with the formalities of this Part, where the mischance or court order will not admit the delay incident to advertising as provided in this Part."

Louisiana Revised Statute 38:2211(5)(a) defines an extreme emergency as a "catastrophic event which causes the loss of ability to obtain a quorum of the members necessary to certify the emergency prior to making the expenditure to acquire materials or supplies or to make repairs necessary for the protection of life, property or continued function of the public entity." Updates 7/23/19

Each of these certifications require that the Parish certify the emergency and publicize the notice of such emergency within 10 days of the emergency, or as soon as practical in the cases of extreme emergencies. Please consult the Accounting Division on the specific procedures to be followed for emergency purchases.

(9) COST OR PRICE ANALYSIS

Federal procurement guidelines require that grantees and subrecipients perform a cost analysis in conjunction with every procurement action including any contract modifications that exceed the Simplified Acquisition Threshold currently set at \$250,000. The purpose of the analysis is to ensure that the resulting price paid is reasonable. Cost analysis is the review of each element of cost, which aggregates to the overall price, in order to determine reasonableness. This is traditionally used in conjunction with sole source contracts or construction contracts that have labor, material, and profit components all of which should be considered for reasonableness. Price analysis is the preferred method of analysis due to its efficiency, fairness, and compliance with government and commercial practices. Price analysis includes the comparison of price quotations and is used in conjunction with purchases of materials, supplies, or other fixed price purchases, for federal grant purposes, cost or prices based on estimated cost should be allowed to the extent that the cost incurred or the cost estimates included in negotiated prices are consistent with federal cost principles.

For nonfederal purchase, each department is required to prepare a cost or price estimate prior to procurement whenever feasible. For construction contracts, a probable cost opinion is provided by the architect or engineer and can be used for procurement purposes. For commodities, a price estimate from the internet, catalog, a vendor, etc. may be utilized. In addition to the cost analysis for purchases in excess of the Simplified Acquisition Threshold, a formal cost or price analysis is required for the federal grant purposes after the procurement in all sole source procurements, with all contract modifications (i.e. change orders) and in any case where competition was lacking after a formal procurement process was undertaken (i.e. only one bid was received). As with pre-procurement cost or price estimate, each department is responsible for completing the analysis.

(10) FUNDING RESTRICTIONS FOR "HIGH RISK" SUBRECIPIENTS

(i) A subrecipient may be considered "high risk" if the awarding agency determines that the subrecipient is otherwise responsible but:

1. Has a history of unsatisfactory performance;
2. Is not financially stable;
3. Has a management system which does not meet the management standards set forth in this part; and/or
4. Has not conformed to terms and conditions of a previously awarded grant or subgrant.

(ii) If the awarding agency determines that an award will be made to a "high risk" subrecipient, then special funding restrictions that address the "high risk" status may be included in the award. Funding restrictions may include, but are not limited to:

1. Payment on a reimbursement basis;
2. Requiring additional and/or more detailed financial or performance reports;
3. Additional monitoring;
4. Requiring the subrecipient to obtain specific technical or management assistance; and/or
5. Establishing additional prior approvals.

(iii) If the awarding agency decides to impose such funding restrictions, the awarding official will notify the subrecipient as early as possible and in writing, of:

1. The nature of the funding restriction;
2. The reason(s) for imposing them;
3. The corrective action which must be taken before they will be removed and the time allowed for completing the corrective action; and
4. The method of requesting reconsideration of the restrictions imposed.

(11) AWARD PROVISIONS

Contracts should only be awarded to responsible contractors possessing the ability to perform successfully under the terms and conditions of a proposed procurement. Consideration should be given to such matters as contractor integrity, compliance with public policy, record of past performance and financial and technical resources. See also Prohibition of Subawards to Debarred and Suspended Parties.

Awards and agreements shall:

- (i) Clearly specify deliverables and the basis for payment;
- (ii) In case of award to subrecipients, contain clauses that provide for:

1. Compliance with WIOA regulations, and
2. Assurances of non-discrimination and equal opportunity.

(12) RECORDS

Records shall be maintained to document sufficient detail the significant history of procurement. These records shall include, but are not limited to, the following: rationale for the method of procurement, selection of agreement type, awardee selection or rejection, and the basis for the agreement price.

(13) PROHIBITION OF SUBAWARDS TO DEBARRED AND SUSPENDED PARTIES

Awards shall not be made or permitted at any tier to any party which is debarred, suspended, or is otherwise excluded from or ineligible for participation in Federal assistance programs in accordance with 29 CFR part 98.

(14) CONTRACTOR RESPONSIBILITY

Subcontractors should submit with each proposal one set of each of the following documents:

1. IRS Employment Identification Number
2. Certification of accountability by an independent accountant or, latest audited financial statement prepared by an independent accountant with applicable footnotes.

(15) NONDISCRIMINATION ASSURANCE

As a condition of the award of financial assistance assurances should be made to fully comply with the nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions of the following laws: Section 188 of the WIOA as amended, which prohibits discrimination against all individuals in the United States on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, political affiliation or belief, and against beneficiaries on the basis of either citizenship status as a lawfully admitted immigrant authorized to work in the United States or participation in any WIOA Title I financially assisted program or activity, including Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; the Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1972, as amended; the Nontraditional Employment for Women Act of 1991, as amended; Federal Executive Order 11246; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended the Vietnam Veteran's Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974, as amended; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended; the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended; Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended; the Fair Housing Act of 1968, as amended and all applicable requirements imposed by or pursuant to regulations implementing those laws, including but not limited to 29 CFR Part 37.

Further, in accordance with the Civil Rights Statutes for the State of Louisiana, the award recipient should assure that it will not discriminate in employment practices and will render services under the agreement without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, veteran status, political affiliation, or disabilities.

Any discrimination by award recipients or failure to comply with these statutory obligations when applicable, shall be grounds for termination of the agreement.

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Passed and Approved on this 4 Day of December, 2020.



The Seventh Planning District Consortium Workforce Development Board
Title: Matt Wheeler, Chairperson



Date

STATE OF LOUISIANA**COOPERATIVE ENDEAVOR AGREEMENT**

THIS COOPERATIVE ENDEAVOR AGREEMENT (CEA) is made and entered into by the State of Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services, hereinafter referred to as "DCFS" or the "Department", and Coordinating & Development Corporation- Bossier/Caddo, hereinafter referred to as the "Community Partner", under Federal Tax Identification Number 72-0651120, a Silver Level Partner, officially domiciled at 4000 Viking Drive, Suite B-1, Bossier City, LA 71111. The Community Partner Identification Number (CPIN) is 082218.

WITNESSETH:

WHEREAS, Article VII, Section 14(C) of the Constitution of the State of Louisiana provides that Cooperative Endeavors "for a public purpose, the state and its political subdivisions or political corporations may engage in cooperative endeavors with each other, with the United States or its agencies, or with any public or private association, corporation, or individual" AND

WHEREAS, the agency desires to cooperate with the Community Partner in the implementation of the Project as hereinafter provided; AND

WHEREAS, the public purpose described as follows:

Assisting the citizens of the State to obtain benefits from Department of Children and Family Services programs, including, but not limited to, the:

- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly Food Stamps
- Family Independence Temporary Assistance Program (FITAP)
- Kinship Care Subsidy Program (KCSP)

NOW THEREFORE, in consideration of the mutual covenants herein contained, the parties hereto agree as follows:

SCOPE OF SERVICES

In an effort to provide more effective and efficient services to more citizens, the Department of Children and Family Services will enter into agreements with partners whom are made up of Federal, State, and local political subdivisions, private non-profit organizations, and for-profit businesses who will assist in the application for services by participants in areas more readily available to them.

Any partner that works with members of the low-income population can make a major contribution to the success of DCFS and federal eligibility and social service programs by increasing awareness of program availability and rules. The Community Partner is a DCFS point-of-access for applicants of public assistance benefits.

The Community Partner hereby agrees to furnish the following services to **internal clients and the general public by appointment or walk-in: M, T, W 8:00 am to 4:30 pm Th 8:30 am to 2:30 pm; F 8:00am-3:30pm**.

Silver Level - Partner makes informational material available to the public, offers a computer for applicants to complete the online application, and provides applicants with a place that affords sufficient privacy to enter their own information into the online application without compromising confidential information. Partner offers a paper application if the applicant is adamant about completing a paper application and has staff available to answer questions during the process. DCFS staff will subsequently interview the applicant and determine eligibility for services/benefits.

STANDARDS FOR PARTICIPATION

Standards for participation are the guidelines, agreements, and required training procedures established by the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) to assure compliance with Federal and State regulations governing the application assistance efforts of facilities, agencies and organizations interested in serving as Community Partners for DCFS.

In order to participate as a DCFS Community Partner, the provider must not have been suspended or excluded from participating in any DCFS administered program.

The Community Partner certifies that their facility qualifies as the type of facility listed below and will maintain the following Standards for Participation throughout the term of this agreement.

1. A state program that provides health or social services to the local population (i.e. parish health units, mental health units)
2. A federal program that provides health or social services to the local population, authorized under Section 329, 330 and 340 of the Public Health Services Act (FQHC)
3. A parish, state, or federally-sponsored program providing services to the community (i.e. Headstart) that has:
 1. designated business offices with established hours of operation; **OR**
 2. a full-time staff who works with the general public in performing the duties of the program;
 3. registered with the Louisiana Department of State and in good standing
4. A private program providing health or social services to an identifiable segment of the local community (i.e. elderly, non-English speaking populations, under employed, etc.) that has:
 1. designated business offices with established hours of operation; **OR**
 2. a full-time staff who works with the general public in performing the duties of the program;
 3. registered with the Louisiana Department of State and in good standing
5. A library, courthouse, or other governmental facility with established hours of operation
6. For-profit business providing commercial services to patrons with established hours of operation (NOTE: Commercial businesses should comply with all appropriate city, state, and federal codes and regulations.)

Community Partner Agreements and Responsibilities

- A. The Community Partner understands that their facility must qualify based on the Standards for Participation. The duly authorized representative (CEO/Director/Administrator) must sign the Cooperative Endeavor Agreement along with two (2) witnesses.
- B. The Community Partner agrees to adhere to the published policies and regulations of the Department of Children and Family Services, and all State and Federal laws governing the services provided herein.
- C. **The Community Partner understands/agrees that participation in the community partnership does not give a Community Partner the authority to determine eligibility for DCFS program benefits.** DCFS will continue to assume its authority and responsibility to process all applications completed at a community partner site, determine eligibility for benefits and notify applicants of the eligibility decision.
- D. The Community Partner understands that, as a condition of participation, it is responsible for assuring and monitoring that staff persons entering application information is prohibited under the following rules of confidentiality from sharing any information with, but not limited to, any other unit of the provider entity about the applicant/recipient received during the application process:
 - 1. The Community Partner shall abide by the Federal and State laws and regulations concerning confidentiality which safeguard information in the participant's confidentiality (42 U.S.C. 602, 7 CFR 273.1(c), and La R.S. 46:56). In safeguarding applicant information, you must comply with the following:
 - i. **Do not** discuss applicant information with unauthorized personnel.
 - ii. **Do not** sell or release information to third parties.
 - iii. **Do not** allow unauthorized personnel to review applicant information.
 - iv. **Do** provide applicants a place that affords sufficient privacy to complete the application without compromising confidential information.
 - v. **Do** communicate community partner questions or concerns to the DCFS contact person.
 - 2. The Community Partner shall abide by all Federal and State laws and regulations as they relate to data sharing of pertinent information for performance accountability and program evaluation purposes.
 - 3. The Community Partner understands that all applicant information, active, denied, or inactive, is confidential and is not subject to the Freedom of Information Act.
 - 4. The Community Partner agrees to restrict the use or disclosure of confidential information to activities related to the performance of the services provided through the agreement.
 - 5. Community Partner agrees to notify the DCFS contact person within 48 hours of a verbal or written request for information concerning an applicant in accordance with Louisiana's Public Records Act, Chapter 119, and Louisiana Statutes (4). La. R.S. 44:1. La. Const. Art. XII, §3.
 - 6. The Community Partner understands that all staff members who assist applicants in completing DCFS applications or otherwise handle confidential information for DCFS processing must read, agree to, sign and date the Community Partner Staff Confidentiality Agreement.
- E. The Community Partner agrees to periodic monitoring by State officials or their designees and will allow access to the premises to evaluate work being performed. The DCFS Community Partner understands that decertification may result if, according to the determination of the State or Federal agency, they do not conform to policies. The department reserves the right to institute a 30-day period of corrective action in coordination with the Community Partner.
- F. An electronic copy of the DCFS Community Partner Manual will be provided to the Community Partner by the designated Community Outreach Consultant upon approval of the Cooperative Endeavor Agreement (CEA) and/or upon request of the manual by the Authorized Representative or partner staff.
- G. The Community Partner agrees to comply with the policies, regulations, and provisions stated in the Community Partner Manual and made a part of this agreement. The Community Partner will be responsible for reading, understanding, and adhering to the partner manual, as well as maintaining an updated copy of the manual as the Department issues revisions and ensures all staff are notified of such revisions.
- H. The Community Partner understands that participation is required in initial orientation and periodic trainings provided by DCFS or its designee.

1. The Community Outreach Unit, DCFS Training Section, and/or state/federal partners will provide training as necessary.
 2. Community partner staff who will assist applicants in completing DCFS applications must receive training within 30 days of the effective date of the Cooperative Endeavor Agreement.
 3. The Community Partner will train new staff before they assist applicants in completing DCFS applications in the Community Partner Program. The Department will review requests for further training and meet the need when possible.
 4. Certification of Completion certificates will be provided to Community Partner staff upon completion of training.
- I. The Community Partner shall not keep copies of application forms or any other documents that contain applicant information obtained during the process of assisting applicants.
 - J. If assisting in completion of applications or providing interpretation services, the Community Partner shall abide by the restrictions and requirements in regards to:
 1. Confidentiality requirements as stated in this agreement.
 2. Fraud prevention and reporting as stated in the DCFS Community Partner Manual.
 3. Prohibitions against coaching applicants to make themselves eligible for benefits.
 - K. The Community Partner agrees/understands that DCFS cannot advocate for any particular clientele or cause and that this relationship with DCFS is only to provide greater access to the public who wish to apply for DCFS services. DCFS is a public entity.
 - L. The Community Partner agrees/understands that the Department will provide a Community Partner Identification Number (CPIN) and that this number must appear on all documents, transmissions, and notifications associated with services provided in this agreement.

Department's Responsibilities

- A. The Department will provide the Community Partner with one (1) copy of the DCFS Community Partner Manual along with initial orientation within 30 days of the effective date of the Cooperative Endeavor Agreement. The Department will also provide ongoing training as determined necessary and will notify the partner of any revisions to the manual as well as furnish updated copies.
- B. The Department will provide the Community Partner with a welcome packet that may include, but is not limited to, applications, program brochures and flyers, required posters, and window clings.
- C. The Department will provide the Community Partner with hard copies of the Application for Assistance (OFS 4APP).
- D. The Department will provide the Community Partner with self-addressed, prepaid Document Processing Center (DPC) envelopes.
- E. The Department will provide a single point of contact for ongoing communication and issue resolution.

Indemnification

Community Partner agrees to protect, defend, indemnify, save and hold harmless the State of Louisiana, all State Departments, Agencies, Boards and Commissions, its officers, agents, servants and employees, including volunteers, from and against any and all claims, demands, expense and liability arising out of injury or death to any person or the damage, loss or destruction of any property, which may occur or in any way grow out of any act or omission of the Community Partner, its agents, servants, and employees or any and all costs, expenses and/or attorney fees incurred by the Community Partner as a result of any claim, demands, and/or causes of action except for those claims, demands, and/or causes of action arising out of the negligence of the State of Louisiana, all State Departments, Agencies, Boards, Commissions, its agents, representatives, and/or employees. Community Partner agrees to investigate, handle, respond to, provide defense for, defend any such claims, demand, or suit at its sole expenses, and agrees to bear all other costs and expenses related thereto, even if it (claims, etc.) is groundless, false or fraudulent.

Payment Terms

No consideration will be exchanged for the services provided. This agreement is a Cooperative Endeavor that it is voluntarily entered into between the State of Louisiana, Department of Children and Family Services and the

Community Partner **Coordinating & Development Corporation- Bossier/Caddo**, to better assist in the delivery of services to citizens across the State of Louisiana and is a collaborative effort between the parties to make social services more readily available.

Termination for Cause

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This agreement shall commence on 8/15/2024 and shall terminate on 8/14/2029. This agreement shall not exceed a term of five (5) years.

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 The Fair Housing Act of 1968 as amended
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Food Stamp Act of 1977, as amended

The Community Partner agrees to provide a work environment without regard to age in addition to the other protected classes listed in the Contract.

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All persons, including management and volunteers, must receive civil rights training in each twelve month period. Training should be completed upon hire and again on an annual basis.

Specific subject matter must include, but not be limited to:

1. Collection and use of data,
2. Effective public notification systems,
3. Complaint procedures,
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Please contact the Community Partner liaison for the steps to obtaining the required civil rights training as well as the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 (NVRA) Training via email. This training can be used for newly hired employees in addition for annual civil rights training. Documentation of completed training for all staff should be able to be reviewed upon request.

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The current USDA nondiscrimination poster "And Justice for All" is prominently displayed in a public area. If you need copies of the poster, please contact the Community Partner liaison.

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Where applicable, if SNAP paper applications are available for clients to obtain without Community Partner staff assistance, paper applications in English, Spanish and Vietnamese must all be available. This requirement must be met regardless of how many Spanish or Vietnamese clients your office assists even if the number is zero.

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The primary points of contact for matters concerning this Cooperative Endeavor Agreement are as follows:

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Benjamin Williams Lacy, BSW, RSW
Community Outreach Consultant
Department of Children and Family Services
24 Accent Drive, Suite 106
Monroe, LA 71202
Phone (O): 318-362-3327
Phone (C): 225-846-1715
Email: benjamin.williams-lacy.dcf@la.gov

For Community Partner:

Candle Sattler
Director of Workforce Development
Coordinating and Development Cooperation
4000 Viking Drive, Suite A-1
Bossier, LA 71111
318-632-2022, ext 109
Fax: 318-632-2099
Email: csattler@cdconline.org

Notices

Any notice or demand or other communication required or permitted to be given under this agreement or applicable law shall be effective only if in writing, properly addressed and deposited with the United States Postal Service (USPS) as first-class certified mail, postage prepaid, return receipt requested to the parties at the addresses provided in this section.

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For Community Partner:

Latoya Maiden
AJC Staff Member
Louisiana Workforce Commission
4000 Viking Drive, Suite B-1
Bossier, LA 71111
Phone: (318) 741-2746
Fax:
Email: lm Maiden@lwc.la.gov

THUS DONE AND SIGNED AT Monroe, Louisiana

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have executed this Agreement as of this 15 day of 08/24

Month/Year

CONSULTANT'S SIGNATURE:

Benjamin Williams Lacy

Signature of Consultant / DCFS Liaison

Benjamin Williams Lacy

Printed Name of Consultant / DCFS Liaison

Program Consultant

Title of Consultant / DCFS Liaison

PARTNER'S SIGNATURE:

By:

Candle Sattler

Signature of Partner / Duly Authorized Representative

Candle Sattler

Printed Name of Partner / Duly Authorized Representative

Title:

Director of Workforce Development

Title of Partner / Duly Authorized Representative

Nicholas Olsen

Printed Name of Witness 1

Nicholas Olsen

Signature of Witness 1

Julie Moore

Printed Name of Witness 2

Julie Moore

Signature of Witness 2

Department of Children and Family Services
David N. Matlock, Secretary

SIGNATORY AUTHORITY

By:



Rebecca Harris

Title:

Undersecretary

STATE OF LOUISIANA**COOPERATIVE ENDEAVOR AGREEMENT**

THIS COOPERATIVE ENDEAVOR AGREEMENT (CEA) is made and entered into by the State of Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services, hereinafter referred to as "DCFS" or the "Department", and Coordinating & Development Corporation- DeSoto/Red River, hereinafter referred to as the "Community Partner", under Federal Tax Identification Number 72-0651120, a Silver Level Partner, officially domiciled at 142 Lake Road, Mansfield, LA 71052. The Community Partner Identification Number (CPIN) is 162204.

WITNESSETH:

WHEREAS, Article VII, Section 14(C) of the Constitution of the State of Louisiana provides that Cooperative Endeavors "for a public purpose, the state and its political subdivisions or political corporations may engage in cooperative endeavors with each other, with the United States or its agencies, or with any public or private association, corporation, or individual" AND

WHEREAS, the agency desires to cooperate with the Community Partner in the implementation of the Project as hereinafter provided; AND

WHEREAS, the public purpose described as follows:

Assisting the citizens of the State to obtain benefits from Department of Children and Family Services programs, including, but not limited to, the:

- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly Food Stamps
- Family Independence Temporary Assistance Program (FITAP)
- Kinship Care Subsidy Program (KCSP)

NOW THEREFORE, in consideration of the mutual covenants herein contained, the parties hereto agree as follows:

SCOPE OF SERVICES

In an effort to provide more effective and efficient services to more citizens, the Department of Children and Family Services will enter into agreements with partners whom are made up of Federal, State, and local political subdivisions, private non-profit organizations, and for-profit businesses who will assist in the application for services by participants in areas more readily available to them.

Any partner that works with members of the low-income population can make a major contribution to the success of DCFS and federal eligibility and social service programs by increasing awareness of program availability and rules. The Community Partner is a DCFS point-of-access for applicants of public assistance benefits.

The Community Partner hereby agrees to furnish the following services to **internal clients and the general public by appointment or walk-in: M, T, W 8:00 am to 4:30 pm Th 8:30 am to 2:30 pm; F 8:00am-3:30pm**.

Silver Level - Partner makes informational material available to the public, offers a computer for applicants to complete the online application, and provides applicants with a place that affords sufficient privacy to enter their own information into the online application without compromising confidential information. Partner offers a paper application if the applicant is adamant about completing a paper application and has staff available to answer questions during the process. DCFS staff will subsequently interview the applicant and determine eligibility for services/benefits.

STANDARDS FOR PARTICIPATION

Standards for participation are the guidelines, agreements, and required training procedures established by the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) to assure compliance with Federal and State regulations governing the application assistance efforts of facilities, agencies and organizations interested in serving as Community Partners for DCFS.

In order to participate as a DCFS Community Partner, the provider must not have been suspended or excluded from participating in any DCFS administered program.

The Community Partner certifies that their facility qualifies as the type of facility listed below and will maintain the following Standards for Participation throughout the term of this agreement.

1. A state program that provides health or social services to the local population (i.e. parish health units, mental health units)
2. A federal program that provides health or social services to the local population, authorized under Section 329, 330 and 340 of the Public Health Services Act (FQHC)
3. A parish, state, or federally-sponsored program providing services to the community (i.e. Headstart) that has:
 1. designated business offices with established hours of operation; ***OR***
 2. a full-time staff who works with the general public in performing the duties of the program;
 3. registered with the Louisiana Department of State and in good standing
4. A private program providing health or social services to an identifiable segment of the local community (i.e. elderly, non-English speaking populations, under employed, etc.) that has:
 1. designated business offices with established hours of operation; ***OR***
 2. a full-time staff who works with the general public in performing the duties of the program;
 3. registered with the Louisiana Department of State and in good standing
5. A library, courthouse, or other governmental facility with established hours of operation
6. For-profit business providing commercial services to patrons with established hours of operation (NOTE: Commercial businesses should comply with all appropriate city, state, and federal codes and regulations.)

Community Partner Agreements and Responsibilities

- A. The Community Partner understands that their facility must qualify based on the Standards for Participation. The duly authorized representative (CEO/Director/Administrator) must sign the Cooperative Endeavor Agreement along with two (2) witnesses.
- B. The Community Partner agrees to adhere to the published policies and regulations of the Department of Children and Family Services, and all State and Federal laws governing the services provided herein.
- C. **The Community Partner understands/agrees that participation in the community partnership does not give a Community Partner the authority to determine eligibility for DCFS program benefits.** DCFS will continue to assume its authority and responsibility to process all applications completed at a community partner site, determine eligibility for benefits and notify applicants of the eligibility decision.
- D. The Community Partner understands that, as a condition of participation, it is responsible for assuring and monitoring that staff persons entering application information is prohibited under the following rules of confidentiality from sharing any information with, but not limited to, any other unit of the provider entity about the applicant/recipient received during the application process:
 1. The Community Partner shall abide by the Federal and State laws and regulations concerning confidentiality which safeguard information in the participant's confidentiality (42 U.S.C. 602, 7 CFR 273.1(c), and La R.S. 46:56). In safeguarding applicant information, you must comply with the following:
 - i. **Do not** discuss applicant information with unauthorized personnel.
 - ii. **Do not** sell or release information to third parties.
 - iii. **Do not** allow unauthorized personnel to review applicant information.
 - iv. **Do** provide applicants a place that affords sufficient privacy to complete the application without compromising confidential information.
 - v. **Do** communicate community partner questions or concerns to the DCFS contact person.
 2. The Community Partner shall abide by all Federal and State laws and regulations as they relate to data sharing of pertinent information for performance accountability and program evaluation purposes.
 3. The Community Partner understands that all applicant information, active, denied, or inactive, is confidential and is not subject to the Freedom of Information Act.
 4. The Community Partner agrees to restrict the use or disclosure of confidential information to activities related to the performance of the services provided through the agreement.
 5. Community Partner agrees to notify the DCFS contact person within 48 hours of a verbal or written request for information concerning an applicant in accordance with Louisiana's Public Records Act, Chapter 119, and Louisiana Statutes (4). La. R.S. 44:1. La. Const. Art. XII, §3.
 6. The Community Partner understands that all staff members who assist applicants in completing DCFS applications or otherwise handle confidential information for DCFS processing must read, agree to, sign and date the Community Partner Staff Confidentiality Agreement.
- E. The Community Partner agrees to periodic monitoring by State officials or their designees and will allow access to the premises to evaluate work being performed. The DCFS Community Partner understands that decertification may result if, according to the determination of the State or Federal agency, they do not conform to policies. The department reserves the right to institute a 30-day period of corrective action in coordination with the Community Partner.
- F. An electronic copy of the DCFS Community Partner Manual will be provided to the Community Partner by the designated Community Outreach Consultant upon approval of the Cooperative Endeavor Agreement (CEA) and/or upon request of the manual by the Authorized Representative or partner staff.
- G. The Community Partner agrees to comply with the policies, regulations, and provisions stated in the Community Partner Manual and made a part of this agreement. The Community Partner will be responsible for reading, understanding, and adhering to the partner manual, as well as maintaining an updated copy of the manual as the Department issues revisions and ensures all staff are notified of such revisions.
- H. The Community Partner understands that participation is required in initial orientation and periodic trainings provided by DCFS or its designee.

1. The Community Outreach Unit, DCFS Training Section, and/or state/federal partners will provide training as necessary.
 2. Community partner staff who will assist applicants in completing DCFS applications must receive training within 30 days of the effective date of the Cooperative Endeavor Agreement.
 3. The Community Partner will train new staff before they assist applicants in completing DCFS applications in the Community Partner Program. The Department will review requests for further training and meet the need when possible.
 4. Certification of Completion certificates will be provided to Community Partner staff upon completion of training.
- I. The Community Partner shall not keep copies of application forms or any other documents that contain applicant information obtained during the process of assisting applicants.
 - J. If assisting in completion of applications or providing interpretation services, the Community Partner shall abide by the restrictions and requirements in regards to:
 1. Confidentiality requirements as stated in this agreement.
 2. Fraud prevention and reporting as stated in the DCFS Community Partner Manual.
 3. Prohibitions against coaching applicants to make themselves eligible for benefits.
 - K. The Community Partner agrees/understands that DCFS cannot advocate for any particular clientele or cause and that this relationship with DCFS is only to provide greater access to the public who wish to apply for DCFS services. DCFS is a public entity.
 - L. The Community Partner agrees/understands that the Department will provide a Community Partner Identification Number (CPIN) and that this number must appear on all documents, transmissions, and notifications associated with services provided in this agreement.

Department's Responsibilities

- A. The Department will provide the Community Partner with one (1) copy of the DCFS Community Partner Manual along with initial orientation within 30 days of the effective date of the Cooperative Endeavor Agreement. The Department will also provide ongoing training as determined necessary and will notify the partner of any revisions to the manual as well as furnish updated copies.
- B. The Department will provide the Community Partner with a welcome packet that may include, but is not limited to, applications, program brochures and flyers, required posters, and window clings.
- C. The Department will provide the Community Partner with hard copies of the Application for Assistance (OFS 4APP).
- D. The Department will provide the Community Partner with self-addressed, prepaid Document Processing Center (DPC) envelopes.
- E. The Department will provide a single point of contact for ongoing communication and issue resolution.

Indemnification

Community Partner agrees to protect, defend, indemnify, save and hold harmless the State of Louisiana, all State Departments, Agencies, Boards and Commissions, its officers, agents, servants and employees, including volunteers, from and against any and all claims, demands, expense and liability arising out of injury or death to any person or the damage, loss or destruction of any property, which may occur or in any way grow out of any act or omission of the Community Partner, its agents, servants, and employees or any and all costs, expenses and/or attorney fees incurred by the Community Partner as a result of any claim, demands, and/or causes of action except for those claims, demands, and/or causes of action arising out of the negligence of the State of Louisiana, all State Departments, Agencies, Boards, Commissions, its agents, representatives, and/or employees. Community Partner agrees to investigate, handle, respond to, provide defense for, defend any such claims, demand, or suit at its sole expenses, and agrees to bear all other costs and expenses related thereto, even if it (claims, etc.) is groundless, false or fraudulent.

Payment Terms

No consideration will be exchanged for the services provided. This agreement is a Cooperative Endeavor that it is voluntarily entered into between the State of Louisiana, Department of Children and Family Services and the

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For Community Partner:

Chaquana Harper-Wells
CDC Staff Member
Coordinating and Development Cooperation
142 Lake Road,
Mansfield, LA 71052
Phone: (318) 871-2391
Fax:
Email: charperwells@cdconline.org

THUS DONE AND SIGNED AT Monroe, Louisiana

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have executed this Agreement as of this 15 day of 08/24
Month/Year

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Signature of Consultant / DCFS Liaison

Benjamin Williams Lacy

Printed Name of Consultant / DCFS Liaison

Program Consultant

Title of Consultant / DCFS Liaison

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By:

Candle Sattler

Signature of Partner / Duly Authorized Representative

Candle Sattler

Printed Name of Partner / Duly Authorized Representative

Title:

Director of Workforce Development

Title of Partner / Duly Authorized Representative

Nicholas Olsen

Printed Name of Witness 1

Nicholas Olsen

Signature of Witness 1

Julie Moore

Printed Name of Witness 2

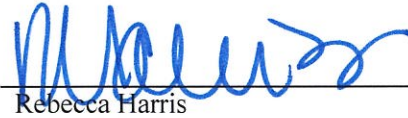
Julie Moore

Signature of Witness 2

Department of Children and Family Services
David N. Matlock, Secretary

SIGNATORY AUTHORITY

By:


Rebecca Harris

Title:

Undersecretary

STATE OF LOUISIANA**COOPERATIVE ENDEAVOR AGREEMENT**

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WITNESSETH:

WHEREAS, Article VII, Section 14(C) of the Constitution of the State of Louisiana provides that Cooperative Endeavors "for a public purpose, the state and its political subdivisions or political corporations may engage in cooperative endeavors with each other, with the United States or its agencies, or with any public or private association, corporation, or individual" AND

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Any partner that works with members of the low-income population can make a major contribution to the success of DCFS and federal eligibility and social service programs by increasing awareness of program availability and rules. The Community Partner is a DCFS point-of-access for applicants of public assistance benefits.

The Community Partner hereby agrees to furnish the following services to **internal clients and the general public by appointment or walk-in: M, T, W 8:00 am to 4:30 pm Th 8:30 am to 2:30 pm; F 8:00am-3:30pm.**

Silver Level - Partner makes informational material available to the public, offers a computer for applicants to complete the online application, and provides applicants with a place that affords sufficient privacy to enter their own information into the online application without compromising confidential information. Partner offers a paper application if the applicant is adamant about completing a paper application and has staff available to answer questions during the process. DCFS staff will subsequently interview the applicant and determine eligibility for services/benefits.

STANDARDS FOR PARTICIPATION

Standards for participation are the guidelines, agreements, and required training procedures established by the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) to assure compliance with Federal and State regulations governing the application assistance efforts of facilities, agencies and organizations interested in serving as Community Partners for DCFS.

In order to participate as a DCFS Community Partner, the provider must not have been suspended or excluded from participating in any DCFS administered program.

The Community Partner certifies that their facility qualifies as the type of facility listed below and will maintain the following Standards for Participation throughout the term of this agreement.

1. A state program that provides health or social services to the local population (i.e. parish health units, mental health units)
2. A federal program that provides health or social services to the local population, authorized under Section 329, 330 and 340 of the Public Health Services Act (FQHC)
3. A parish, state, or federally-sponsored program providing services to the community (i.e. Headstart) that has:
 1. designated business offices with established hours of operation; **OR**
 2. a full-time staff who works with the general public in performing the duties of the program;
 3. registered with the Louisiana Department of State and in good standing
4. A private program providing health or social services to an identifiable segment of the local community (i.e. elderly, non-English speaking populations, under employed, etc.) that has:
 1. designated business offices with established hours of operation; **OR**
 2. a full-time staff who works with the general public in performing the duties of the program;
 3. registered with the Louisiana Department of State and in good standing
5. A library, courthouse, or other governmental facility with established hours of operation
6. For-profit business providing commercial services to patrons with established hours of operation (NOTE: Commercial businesses should comply with all appropriate city, state, and federal codes and regulations.)

Community Partner Agreements and Responsibilities

- A. The Community Partner understands that their facility must qualify based on the Standards for Participation. The duly authorized representative (CEO/Director/Administrator) must sign the Cooperative Endeavor Agreement along with two (2) witnesses.
- B. The Community Partner agrees to adhere to the published policies and regulations of the Department of Children and Family Services, and all State and Federal laws governing the services provided herein.
- C. **The Community Partner understands/agrees that participation in the community partnership does not give a Community Partner the authority to determine eligibility for DCFS program benefits.** DCFS will continue to assume its authority and responsibility to process all applications completed at a community partner site, determine eligibility for benefits and notify applicants of the eligibility decision.
- D. The Community Partner understands that, as a condition of participation, it is responsible for assuring and monitoring that staff persons entering application information is prohibited under the following rules of confidentiality from sharing any information with, but not limited to, any other unit of the provider entity about the applicant/recipient received during the application process:
 - 1. The Community Partner shall abide by the Federal and State laws and regulations concerning confidentiality which safeguard information in the participant's confidentiality (42 U.S.C. 602, 7 CFR 273.1(c), and La R.S. 46:56). In safeguarding applicant information, you must comply with the following:
 - i. **Do not** discuss applicant information with unauthorized personnel.
 - ii. **Do not** sell or release information to third parties.
 - iii. **Do not** allow unauthorized personnel to review applicant information.
 - iv. **Do** provide applicants a place that affords sufficient privacy to complete the application without compromising confidential information.
 - v. **Do** communicate community partner questions or concerns to the DCFS contact person.
 - 2. The Community Partner shall abide by all Federal and State laws and regulations as they relate to data sharing of pertinent information for performance accountability and program evaluation purposes.
 - 3. The Community Partner understands that all applicant information, active, denied, or inactive, is confidential and is not subject to the Freedom of Information Act.
 - 4. The Community Partner agrees to restrict the use or disclosure of confidential information to activities related to the performance of the services provided through the agreement.
 - 5. Community Partner agrees to notify the DCFS contact person within 48 hours of a verbal or written request for information concerning an applicant in accordance with Louisiana's Public Records Act, Chapter 119, and Louisiana Statutes (4). La. R.S. 44:1. La. Const. Art. XII, §3.
 - 6. The Community Partner understands that all staff members who assist applicants in completing DCFS applications or otherwise handle confidential information for DCFS processing must read, agree to, sign and date the Community Partner Staff Confidentiality Agreement.
- E. The Community Partner agrees to periodic monitoring by State officials or their designees and will allow access to the premises to evaluate work being performed. The DCFS Community Partner understands that decertification may result if, according to the determination of the State or Federal agency, they do not conform to policies. The department reserves the right to institute a 30-day period of corrective action in coordination with the Community Partner.
- F. An electronic copy of the DCFS Community Partner Manual will be provided to the Community Partner by the designated Community Outreach Consultant upon approval of the Cooperative Endeavor Agreement (CEA) and/or upon request of the manual by the Authorized Representative or partner staff.
- G. The Community Partner agrees to comply with the policies, regulations, and provisions stated in the Community Partner Manual and made a part of this agreement. The Community Partner will be responsible for reading, understanding, and adhering to the partner manual, as well as maintaining an updated copy of the manual as the Department issues revisions and ensures all staff are notified of such revisions.
- H. The Community Partner understands that participation is required in initial orientation and periodic trainings provided by DCFS or its designee.

1. The Community Outreach Unit, DCFS Training Section, and/or state/federal partners will provide training as necessary.
 2. Community partner staff who will assist applicants in completing DCFS applications must receive training within 30 days of the effective date of the Cooperative Endeavor Agreement.
 3. The Community Partner will train new staff before they assist applicants in completing DCFS applications in the Community Partner Program. The Department will review requests for further training and meet the need when possible.
 4. Certification of Completion certificates will be provided to Community Partner staff upon completion of training.
- I. The Community Partner shall not keep copies of application forms or any other documents that contain applicant information obtained during the process of assisting applicants.
 - J. If assisting in completion of applications or providing interpretation services, the Community Partner shall abide by the restrictions and requirements in regards to:
 1. Confidentiality requirements as stated in this agreement.
 2. Fraud prevention and reporting as stated in the DCFS Community Partner Manual.
 3. Prohibitions against coaching applicants to make themselves eligible for benefits.
 - K. The Community Partner agrees/understands that DCFS cannot advocate for any particular clientele or cause and that this relationship with DCFS is only to provide greater access to the public who wish to apply for DCFS services. DCFS is a public entity.
 - L. The Community Partner agrees/understands that the Department will provide a Community Partner Identification Number (CPIN) and that this number must appear on all documents, transmissions, and notifications associated with services provided in this agreement.

Department's Responsibilities

- A. The Department will provide the Community Partner with one (1) copy of the DCFS Community Partner Manual along with initial orientation within 30 days of the effective date of the Cooperative Endeavor Agreement. The Department will also provide ongoing training as determined necessary and will notify the partner of any revisions to the manual as well as furnish updated copies.
- B. The Department will provide the Community Partner with a welcome packet that may include, but is not limited to, applications, program brochures and flyers, required posters, and window clings.
- C. The Department will provide the Community Partner with hard copies of the Application for Assistance (OFS 4APP).
- D. The Department will provide the Community Partner with self-addressed, prepaid Document Processing Center (DPC) envelopes.
- E. The Department will provide a single point of contact for ongoing communication and issue resolution.

Indemnification

Community Partner agrees to protect, defend, indemnify, save and hold harmless the State of Louisiana, all State Departments, Agencies, Boards and Commissions, its officers, agents, servants and employees, including volunteers, from and against any and all claims, demands, expense and liability arising out of injury or death to any person or the damage, loss or destruction of any property, which may occur or in any way grow out of any act or omission of the Community Partner, its agents, servants, and employees or any and all costs, expenses and/or attorney fees incurred by the Community Partner as a result of any claim, demands, and/or causes of action except for those claims, demands, and/or causes of action arising out of the negligence of the State of Louisiana, all State Departments, Agencies, Boards, Commissions, its agents, representatives, and/or employees. Community Partner agrees to investigate, handle, respond to, provide defense for, defend any such claims, demand, or suit at its sole expenses, and agrees to bear all other costs and expenses related thereto, even if it (claims, etc.) is groundless, false or fraudulent.

Payment Terms

No consideration will be exchanged for the services provided. This agreement is a Cooperative Endeavor that it is voluntarily entered into between the State of Louisiana, Department of Children and Family Services and the

Community Partner **Coordinating & Development Corporation- Lincoln**, to better assist in the delivery of services to citizens across the State of Louisiana and is a collaborative effort between the parties to make social services more readily available.

Termination for Cause

The Department may terminate this Agreement for cause based upon the failure of the Community Partner to comply with the terms and/or conditions of the Agreement, if the Department shall give the Community Partner written notice specifying the Community Partner's failure. If within thirty (30) days after receipt of such notice, the Community Partner shall not have either corrected such failure or, in the case of failure, which cannot be corrected in thirty (30) days, begun in good faith and thereafter proceeded diligently to complete such correction, then the Department may, at its option, place the Community Partner in default and the Agreement shall terminate on the date specified in such notice.

The Department may terminate this agreement, in writing with ten (10) days notice, if the Department has evidence of fraud or violations of confidentiality regulations. The Community Partner may exercise any rights available to it under Louisiana law to terminate for cause upon the failure of the Department to comply with the terms and conditions of this agreement, provided that the Community Partner shall give the Department 30 (thirty) days written notice specifying the Department's failure and a reasonable opportunity for the Department to cure the defect.

Termination for Convenience

Either party may terminate this agreement for convenience upon giving 30-day advance written notice to the other party, but in no case shall it continue beyond the specified termination date.

Ownership

All reports, documents and other material delivered or transmitted to Community Partner by the Department shall remain the property of the Department, and shall be returned by Community Partner to the Department, at Community Partner's expense, at termination or expiration of this agreement. All reports, documents, or other material related to this agreement and/or obtained or prepared by Community Partner in connection with the performance of the services agreed for herein shall become the property of the Department, and shall (upon request) be returned by Community Partner to the Department, at Community Partners expense, at termination or expiration of this agreement. All records, reports, documents, and other material should be maintained as stated in this agreement herein, and in accordance with all federal and state regulations.

Terms of Agreement

This agreement shall commence on 8/15/2024 and shall terminate on 8/14/2029. This agreement shall not exceed a term of five (5) years.

Civil Rights Compliance

Title VI of the Civil Right Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination based on race, color and national origin in federally funded programs. This applies to intentional discrimination and policies and practice or procedures that have a disparate impact on any portion of the population. Individuals will not be discriminated against on any basis when requesting or receiving services from DCFS.

Prohibition against Discrimination

The Community Partner agrees to abide by the requirements of the following as applicable:

5 U.S.C. 301, Authority to Prescribe Departmental Regulations;
 Equal Credit Opportunity Act of 1974;
 C.F.R. Part 2, Subpart C, Section 2.25 – Delegation of Authority by the Secretary of Agriculture to the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights;
 7 C.F.R. Part 15d, Nondiscrimination in Programs and Activities conducted by the United States Department of Agriculture;
 7 C.F.R. Part 15e, Enforcement of Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Handicap in Programs or Activities conducted by the United States Department of Agriculture;
 12 C.F.R. Part 1002, Equal Credit Opportunity Regulation B
 Executive Order 13160, Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Race, Sex, Color, National Origin, disability, Religion, Age, Sexual Orientation, and Status as a Parent in Federally Conducted Education and Training Programs, June 23, 2000.
 Executive Order 13166, Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency, August 11, 2000.
 Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987
 USDA Instruction 113-1
 Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act
 The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996
 7 C.F.R. Parts 15, 15a and 15b
 SNAP Specific (7 C.F. R. 271-285)
 Food Stamp Act of 1998 as amended by Food and Nutrition Act of 2008
 SNAP Guidance on Non-Citizen Eligibility (June 2011)
 7 C.F.R. Part 16, Equal Opportunity for Religious Organizations
 USDA Departmental Regulation 4300-2
 USDA Departmental Regulation 4300-005 Agency Civil Rights Programs, dated January 14, 1998.
 USDA Departmental Regulation 4300-003, Equal Opportunity Public Notification Policy, dated June 2, 2015.
 USDA DR 4300-006, Civil Rights Policy for the U.S. Department of Agriculture, dated June 30, 2000.
 USDA DR 5600-002, Environmental Justice, dated December 15, 1997
 USDA DR 4710-001 Alternative Dispute Resolution, dated April 5, 2006
 USDA DR 4330-05 Prohibition against National Origin Discrimination Affecting Persons with Limited English Proficiency in Programs and Activities Conducted by USDA, dated June 4, 2013
 Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964
 Title II of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended by the Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1972
 Federal Executive Order 11246 as amended
 The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended
 The Vietnam Era Veteran's Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974
 Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972,
 The Age Discrimination Act of 1975
 The Fair Housing Act of 1968 as amended
 The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990

Food Stamp Act of 1977, as amended

The Community Partner agrees to provide a work environment without regard to age in addition to the other protected classes listed in the Contract.

Civil Rights Training

All persons, including management and volunteers, must receive civil rights training in each twelve month period. Training should be completed upon hire and again on an annual basis.

Specific subject matter must include, but not be limited to:

1. Collection and use of data,
2. Effective public notification systems,
3. Complaint procedures,
4. Compliance review techniques,
5. Resolution of noncompliance,
6. Requirements for reasonable accommodation of persons with disabilities,
7. Requirements for language assistance,
8. Conflict resolution, and
9. Customer service.

Please contact the Community Partner liaison for the steps to obtaining the required civil rights training as well as the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 (NVRA) Training via email. This training can be used for newly hired employees in addition for annual civil rights training. Documentation of completed training for all staff should be able to be reviewed upon request.

Public Notifications

The current USDA nondiscrimination poster “And Justice for All” is prominently displayed in a public area. If you need copies of the poster, please contact the Community Partner liaison.

Limited English Proficiency

Where applicable, if SNAP paper applications are available for clients to obtain without Community Partner staff assistance, paper applications in English, Spanish and Vietnamese must all be available. This requirement must be met regardless of how many Spanish or Vietnamese clients your office assists even if the number is zero.

Liaison Officials

The primary points of contact for matters concerning this Cooperative Endeavor Agreement are as follows:

For State/DCFS:

Benjamin Williams Lacy, BSW, RSW
Community Outreach Consultant
Department of Children and Family Services
24 Accent Drive, Suite 106
Monroe, LA 71202
Phone (O): 318-362-3327
Phone (C): 225-846-1715
Email: benjamin.williamslacy.dcfcs@la.gov

For Community Partner:

Candle Sattler
Director of Workforce Development
Coordinating and Development Cooperation
4000 Viking Drive, Suite A-1
Bossier, LA 71111
318-632-2022, ext 109
Fax: 318-632-2099
Email: csattler@cdconline.org

Notices

Any notice or demand or other communication required or permitted to be given under this agreement or applicable law shall be effective only if in writing, properly addressed and deposited with the United States Postal Service (USPS) as first-class certified mail, postage prepaid, return receipt requested to the parties at the addresses provided in this section.

For State/DCFS:

Benjamin Williams Lacy, BSW, RSW
Community Outreach Consultant
Department of Children and Family Services
24 Accent Drive, Suite 106
Monroe, LA 71202
Phone (O): 318-362-3327
Phone (C): 225-846-1715
Email: benjamin.williams@dcfs.la.gov

For Community Partner:

Sonya Lewis
AJC Staff Member
Louisiana Workforce Commission
307 North Homer Street Suite 307
Ruston, LA 71270
Phone: (318) 251-5023
Fax:
Email: slewis@lwc.la.gov

THUS DONE AND SIGNED AT Monroe, Louisiana

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have executed this Agreement as of this 15 day of 08/24
Month/Year

CONSULTANT'S SIGNATURE:

Benjamin Williams Lacy
Signature of Consultant / DCFS Liaison

Benjamin Williams Lacy
Printed Name of Consultant / DCFS Liaison

Program Consultant
Title of Consultant / DCFS Liaison

PARTNER'S SIGNATURE:

By: Candle Sattler
Signature of Partner / Duly Authorized Representative

Candle Sattler
Printed Name of Partner / Duly Authorized Representative

Title: Director of Workforce Development
Title of Partner / Duly Authorized Representative

Nicholas Olsen
Printed Name of Witness 1

Nicholas Olsen
Signature of Witness 1

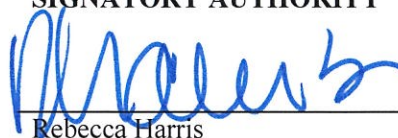
Julie Moore
Printed Name of Witness 2

Julie Moore
Signature of Witness 2

Department of Children and Family Services
David N. Matlock, Secretary

SIGNATORY AUTHORITY

By:



Rebecca Harris

Title:

Undersecretary

STATE OF LOUISIANA

COOPERATIVE ENDEAVOR AGREEMENT

THIS COOPERATIVE ENDEAVOR AGREEMENT (CEA) is made and entered into by the State of Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services, hereinafter referred to as “DCFS” or the “Department”, and Coordinating & Development Corporation- Natchitoches, hereinafter referred to as the “Community Partner”, under Federal Tax Identification Number 72-0651120, a Silver Level Partner, officially domiciled at 303 Bienville Street, Natchitoches, LA 71457. The Community Partner Identification Number (CPIN) is 352207.

WITNESSETH:

WHEREAS, Article VII, Section 14(C) of the Constitution of the State of Louisiana provides that Cooperative Endeavors “for a public purpose, the state and its political subdivisions or political corporations may engage in cooperative endeavors with each other, with the United States or its agencies, or with any public or private association, corporation, or individual” AND

WHEREAS, the agency desires to cooperate with the Community Partner in the implementation of the Project as hereinafter provided; AND

WHEREAS, the public purpose described as follows:

Assisting the citizens of the State to obtain benefits from Department of Children and Family Services programs, including, but not limited to, the:

- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly Food Stamps
- Family Independence Temporary Assistance Program (FITAP)
- Kinship Care Subsidy Program (KCSP)

NOW THEREFORE, in consideration of the mutual covenants herein contained, the parties hereto agree as follows:

SCOPE OF SERVICES

In an effort to provide more effective and efficient services to more citizens, the Department of Children and Family Services will enter into agreements with partners whom are made up of Federal, State, and local political subdivisions, private non-profit organizations, and for-profit businesses who will assist in the application for services by participants in areas more readily available to them.

Any partner that works with members of the low-income population can make a major contribution to the success of DCFS and federal eligibility and social service programs by increasing awareness of program availability and rules. The Community Partner is a DCFS point-of-access for applicants of public assistance benefits.

The Community Partner hereby agrees to furnish the following services to internal clients and the general public by appointment or walk-in: M, T, W, Th 8:00 am to 4:30 pm ; F 8:00am-3:30pm

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Standards for participation are the guidelines, agreements, and required training procedures established by the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) to assure compliance with Federal and State regulations governing the application assistance efforts of facilities, agencies and organizations interested in serving as Community Partners for DCFS.

In order to participate as a DCFS Community Partner, the provider must not have been suspended or excluded from participating in any DCFS administered program.

The Community Partner certifies that their facility qualifies as the type of facility listed below and will maintain the following Standards for Participation throughout the term of this agreement.

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2. A federal program that provides health or social services to the local population, authorized under Section 329, 330 and 340 of the Public Health Services Act (FQHC)
3. A parish, state, or federally-sponsored program providing services to the community (i.e. Headstart) that has:
 1. designated business offices with established hours of operation; ***OR***
 2. a full-time staff who works with the general public in performing the duties of the program;
 3. registered with the Louisiana Department of State and in good standing
4. A private program providing health or social services to an identifiable segment of the local community (i.e. elderly, non-English speaking populations, under employed, etc.) that has:
 1. designated business offices with established hours of operation; ***OR***
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5. A library, courthouse, or other governmental facility with established hours of operation
6. For-profit business providing commercial services to patrons with established hours of operation (NOTE: Commercial businesses should comply with all appropriate city, state, and federal codes and regulations.)

Community Partner Agreements and Responsibilities

- A. The Community Partner understands that their facility must qualify based on the Standards for Participation. The duly authorized representative (CEO/Director/Administrator) must sign the Cooperative Endeavor Agreement along with two (2) witnesses.
- B. The Community Partner agrees to adhere to the published policies and regulations of the Department of Children and Family Services, and all State and Federal laws governing the services provided herein.
- C. **The Community Partner understands/agrees that participation in the community partnership does not give a Community Partner the authority to determine eligibility for DCFS program benefits.** DCFS will continue to assume its authority and responsibility to process all applications completed at a community partner site, determine eligibility for benefits and notify applicants of the eligibility decision.
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- F. An electronic copy of the DCFS Community Partner Manual will be provided to the Community Partner by the designated Community Outreach Consultant upon approval of the Cooperative Endeavor Agreement (CEA) and/or upon request of the manual by the Authorized Representative or partner staff.
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Terms of Agreement

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 The Fair Housing Act of 1968 as amended
 The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990

Food Stamp Act of 1977, as amended

The Community Partner agrees to provide a work environment without regard to age in addition to the other protected classes listed in the Contract.

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All persons, including management and volunteers, must receive civil rights training in each twelve month period. Training should be completed upon hire and again on an annual basis.

Specific subject matter must include, but not be limited to:

1. Collection and use of data,
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3. Complaint procedures,
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6. Requirements for reasonable accommodation of persons with disabilities,
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Please contact the Community Partner liaison for the steps to obtaining the required civil rights training as well as the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 (NVRA) Training via email. This training can be used for newly hired employees in addition for annual civil rights training. Documentation of completed training for all staff should be able to be reviewed upon request.

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Where applicable, if SNAP paper applications are available for clients to obtain without Community Partner staff assistance, paper applications in English, Spanish and Vietnamese must all be available. This requirement must be met regardless of how many Spanish or Vietnamese clients your office assists even if the number is zero.

Liaison Officials

The primary points of contact for matters concerning this Cooperative Endeavor Agreement are as follows:

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Benjamin Williams Lacy, BSW, RSW
Community Outreach Consultant
Department of Children and Family Services
24 Accent Drive, Suite 106
Monroe, LA 71202
Phone (O): 318-362-3327
Phone (C): 225-846-1715
Email: benjamin.williams-lacy.dcf@la.gov

For Community Partner:

Candle Sattler
Director of Workforce Development
Coordinating and Development Cooperation
4000 Viking Drive, Suite A-1
Bossier, LA 71111
318-632-2022, ext 109
Fax: 318-632-2099
Email: csattler@cdconline.org

Notices

Any notice or demand or other communication required or permitted to be given under this agreement or applicable law shall be effective only if in writing, properly addressed and deposited with the United States Postal Service (USPS) as first-class certified mail, postage prepaid, return receipt requested to the parties at the addresses provided in this section.

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Email: benjamin.williams@dcfs.la.gov

For Community Partner:

Barbara Leach
AJC Staff Member
Louisiana Workforce Commission
303 Bienville Street,
Natchitoches, LA 71457
Phone: (318) 375-3145
Fax:
Email: bleach@lwc.la.gov

THUS DONE AND SIGNED AT Monroe, Louisiana

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have executed this Agreement as of this 15 day of 08/24
Month/Year

CONSULTANT'S SIGNATURE:

Benjamin Williams Lacy
Signature of Consultant / DCFS Liaison

Benjamin Williams Lacy
Printed Name of Consultant / DCFS Liaison

Program Consultant
Title of Consultant / DCFS Liaison

PARTNER'S SIGNATURE:

By: Candle Sattler
Signature of Partner / Duly Authorized Representative

Candle Sattler
Printed Name of Partner / Duly Authorized Representative

Title: Director of Workforce Development
Title of Partner / Duly Authorized Representative

Nicholas Olsen
Printed Name of Witness 1

Nicholas Olsen
Signature of Witness 1

Julie Moore
Printed Name of Witness 2

Julie Moore
Signature of Witness 2

Department of Children and Family Services
David N. Matlock, Secretary

SIGNATORY AUTHORITY

By: 
Rebecca Harris

Title: Undersecretary

STATE OF LOUISIANA**COOPERATIVE ENDEAVOR AGREEMENT**

THIS COOPERATIVE ENDEAVOR AGREEMENT (CEA) is made and entered into by the State of Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services, hereinafter referred to as "DCFS" or the "Department", and Coordinating & Development Corporation- Sabine, hereinafter referred to as the "Community Partner", under Federal Tax Identification Number 72-0651120, a Silver Level Partner, officially domiciled at 1125 W. Mississippi Ave., Suite A, Many, LA 71449. The Community Partner Identification Number (CPIN) is 432201.

WITNESSETH:

WHEREAS, Article VII, Section 14(C) of the Constitution of the State of Louisiana provides that Cooperative Endeavors "for a public purpose, the state and its political subdivisions or political corporations may engage in cooperative endeavors with each other, with the United States or its agencies, or with any public or private association, corporation, or individual" AND

WHEREAS, the agency desires to cooperate with the Community Partner in the implementation of the Project as hereinafter provided; AND

WHEREAS, the public purpose described as follows:

Assisting the citizens of the State to obtain benefits from Department of Children and Family Services programs, including, but not limited to, the:

- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly Food Stamps
- Family Independence Temporary Assistance Program (FITAP)
- Kinship Care Subsidy Program (KCSP)

NOW THEREFORE, in consideration of the mutual covenants herein contained, the parties hereto agree as follows:

SCOPE OF SERVICES

In an effort to provide more effective and efficient services to more citizens, the Department of Children and Family Services will enter into agreements with partners whom are made up of Federal, State, and local political subdivisions, private non-profit organizations, and for-profit businesses who will assist in the application for services by participants in areas more readily available to them.

Any partner that works with members of the low-income population can make a major contribution to the success of DCFS and federal eligibility and social service programs by increasing awareness of program availability and rules. The Community Partner is a DCFS point-of-access for applicants of public assistance benefits.

The Community Partner hereby agrees to furnish the following services to **internal clients and the general public by appointment or walk-in: M, T, W 8:30 am to 4:30 pm ;Th 8:30 am to 2:30 pm; F 8:30 am-3:00pm**

Silver Level - Partner makes informational material available to the public, offers a computer for applicants to complete the online application, and provides applicants with a place that affords sufficient privacy to enter their own information into the online application without compromising confidential information. Partner offers a paper application if the applicant is adamant about completing a paper application and has staff available to answer questions during the process. DCFS staff will subsequently interview the applicant and determine eligibility for services/benefits.

STANDARDS FOR PARTICIPATION

Standards for participation are the guidelines, agreements, and required training procedures established by the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) to assure compliance with Federal and State regulations governing the application assistance efforts of facilities, agencies and organizations interested in serving as Community Partners for DCFS.

In order to participate as a DCFS Community Partner, the provider must not have been suspended or excluded from participating in any DCFS administered program.

The Community Partner certifies that their facility qualifies as the type of facility listed below and will maintain the following Standards for Participation throughout the term of this agreement.

1. A state program that provides health or social services to the local population (i.e. parish health units, mental health units)
2. A federal program that provides health or social services to the local population, authorized under Section 329, 330 and 340 of the Public Health Services Act (FQHC)
3. A parish, state, or federally-sponsored program providing services to the community (i.e. Headstart) that has:
 1. designated business offices with established hours of operation; **OR**
 2. a full-time staff who works with the general public in performing the duties of the program;
 3. registered with the Louisiana Department of State and in good standing
4. A private program providing health or social services to an identifiable segment of the local community (i.e. elderly, non-English speaking populations, under employed, etc.) that has:
 1. designated business offices with established hours of operation; **OR**
 2. a full-time staff who works with the general public in performing the duties of the program;
 3. registered with the Louisiana Department of State and in good standing
5. A library, courthouse, or other governmental facility with established hours of operation
6. For-profit business providing commercial services to patrons with established hours of operation (NOTE: Commercial businesses should comply with all appropriate city, state, and federal codes and regulations.)

Community Partner Agreements and Responsibilities

- A. The Community Partner understands that their facility must qualify based on the Standards for Participation. The duly authorized representative (CEO/Director/Administrator) must sign the Cooperative Endeavor Agreement along with two (2) witnesses.
- B. The Community Partner agrees to adhere to the published policies and regulations of the Department of Children and Family Services, and all State and Federal laws governing the services provided herein.
- C. **The Community Partner understands/agrees that participation in the community partnership does not give a Community Partner the authority to determine eligibility for DCFS program benefits.** DCFS will continue to assume its authority and responsibility to process all applications completed at a community partner site, determine eligibility for benefits and notify applicants of the eligibility decision.
- D. The Community Partner understands that, as a condition of participation, it is responsible for assuring and monitoring that staff persons entering application information is prohibited under the following rules of confidentiality from sharing any information with, but not limited to, any other unit of the provider entity about the applicant/recipient received during the application process:
 - 1. The Community Partner shall abide by the Federal and State laws and regulations concerning confidentiality which safeguard information in the participant's confidentiality (42 U.S.C. 602, 7 CFR 273.1(c), and La R.S. 46:56). In safeguarding applicant information, you must comply with the following:
 - i. **Do not** discuss applicant information with unauthorized personnel.
 - ii. **Do not** sell or release information to third parties.
 - iii. **Do not** allow unauthorized personnel to review applicant information.
 - iv. **Do** provide applicants a place that affords sufficient privacy to complete the application without compromising confidential information.
 - v. **Do** communicate community partner questions or concerns to the DCFS contact person.
 - 2. The Community Partner shall abide by all Federal and State laws and regulations as they relate to data sharing of pertinent information for performance accountability and program evaluation purposes.
 - 3. The Community Partner understands that all applicant information, active, denied, or inactive, is confidential and is not subject to the Freedom of Information Act.
 - 4. The Community Partner agrees to restrict the use or disclosure of confidential information to activities related to the performance of the services provided through the agreement.
 - 5. Community Partner agrees to notify the DCFS contact person within 48 hours of a verbal or written request for information concerning an applicant in accordance with Louisiana's Public Records Act, Chapter 119, and Louisiana Statutes (4). La. R.S. 44:1. La. Const. Art. XII, §3.
 - 6. The Community Partner understands that all staff members who assist applicants in completing DCFS applications or otherwise handle confidential information for DCFS processing must read, agree to, sign and date the Community Partner Staff Confidentiality Agreement.
- E. The Community Partner agrees to periodic monitoring by State officials or their designees and will allow access to the premises to evaluate work being performed. The DCFS Community Partner understands that decertification may result if, according to the determination of the State or Federal agency, they do not conform to policies. The department reserves the right to institute a 30-day period of corrective action in coordination with the Community Partner.
- F. An electronic copy of the DCFS Community Partner Manual will be provided to the Community Partner by the designated Community Outreach Consultant upon approval of the Cooperative Endeavor Agreement (CEA) and/or upon request of the manual by the Authorized Representative or partner staff.
- G. The Community Partner agrees to comply with the policies, regulations, and provisions stated in the Community Partner Manual and made a part of this agreement. The Community Partner will be responsible for reading, understanding, and adhering to the partner manual, as well as maintaining an updated copy of the manual as the Department issues revisions and ensures all staff are notified of such revisions.
- H. The Community Partner understands that participation is required in initial orientation and periodic trainings provided by DCFS or its designee.

1. The Community Outreach Unit, DCFS Training Section, and/or state/federal partners will provide training as necessary.
 2. Community partner staff who will assist applicants in completing DCFS applications must receive training within 30 days of the effective date of the Cooperative Endeavor Agreement.
 3. The Community Partner will train new staff before they assist applicants in completing DCFS applications in the Community Partner Program. The Department will review requests for further training and meet the need when possible.
 4. Certification of Completion certificates will be provided to Community Partner staff upon completion of training.
- I. The Community Partner shall not keep copies of application forms or any other documents that contain applicant information obtained during the process of assisting applicants.
 - J. If assisting in completion of applications or providing interpretation services, the Community Partner shall abide by the restrictions and requirements in regards to:
 1. Confidentiality requirements as stated in this agreement.
 2. Fraud prevention and reporting as stated in the DCFS Community Partner Manual.
 3. Prohibitions against coaching applicants to make themselves eligible for benefits.
 - K. The Community Partner agrees/understands that DCFS cannot advocate for any particular clientele or cause and that this relationship with DCFS is only to provide greater access to the public who wish to apply for DCFS services. DCFS is a public entity.
 - L. The Community Partner agrees/understands that the Department will provide a Community Partner Identification Number (CPIN) and that this number must appear on all documents, transmissions, and notifications associated with services provided in this agreement.

Department's Responsibilities

- A. The Department will provide the Community Partner with one (1) copy of the DCFS Community Partner Manual along with initial orientation within 30 days of the effective date of the Cooperative Endeavor Agreement. The Department will also provide ongoing training as determined necessary and will notify the partner of any revisions to the manual as well as furnish updated copies.
- B. The Department will provide the Community Partner with a welcome packet that may include, but is not limited to, applications, program brochures and flyers, required posters, and window clings.
- C. The Department will provide the Community Partner with hard copies of the Application for Assistance (OFS 4APP).
- D. The Department will provide the Community Partner with self-addressed, prepaid Document Processing Center (DPC) envelopes.
- E. The Department will provide a single point of contact for ongoing communication and issue resolution.

Indemnification

Community Partner agrees to protect, defend, indemnify, save and hold harmless the State of Louisiana, all State Departments, Agencies, Boards and Commissions, its officers, agents, servants and employees, including volunteers, from and against any and all claims, demands, expense and liability arising out of injury or death to any person or the damage, loss or destruction of any property, which may occur or in any way grow out of any act or omission of the Community Partner, its agents, servants, and employees or any and all costs, expenses and/or attorney fees incurred by the Community Partner as a result of any claim, demands, and/or causes of action except for those claims, demands, and/or causes of action arising out of the negligence of the State of Louisiana, all State Departments, Agencies, Boards, Commissions, its agents, representatives, and/or employees. Community Partner agrees to investigate, handle, respond to, provide defense for, defend any such claims, demand, or suit at its sole expenses, and agrees to bear all other costs and expenses related thereto, even if it (claims, etc.) is groundless, false or fraudulent.

Payment Terms

No consideration will be exchanged for the services provided. This agreement is a Cooperative Endeavor that it is voluntarily entered into between the State of Louisiana, Department of Children and Family Services and the

Community Partner **Coordinating & Development Corporation- Sabine**, to better assist in the delivery of services to citizens across the State of Louisiana and is a collaborative effort between the parties to make social services more readily available.

Termination for Cause

The Department may terminate this Agreement for cause based upon the failure of the Community Partner to comply with the terms and/or conditions of the Agreement, if the Department shall give the Community Partner written notice specifying the Community Partner's failure. If within thirty (30) days after receipt of such notice, the Community Partner shall not have either corrected such failure or, in the case of failure, which cannot be corrected in thirty (30) days, begun in good faith and thereafter proceeded diligently to complete such correction, then the Department may, at its option, place the Community Partner in default and the Agreement shall terminate on the date specified in such notice.

The Department may terminate this agreement, in writing with ten (10) days notice, if the Department has evidence of fraud or violations of confidentiality regulations. The Community Partner may exercise any rights available to it under Louisiana law to terminate for cause upon the failure of the Department to comply with the terms and conditions of this agreement, provided that the Community Partner shall give the Department 30 (thirty) days written notice specifying the Department's failure and a reasonable opportunity for the Department to cure the defect.

Termination for Convenience

Either party may terminate this agreement for convenience upon giving 30-day advance written notice to the other party, but in no case shall it continue beyond the specified termination date.

Ownership

All reports, documents and other material delivered or transmitted to Community Partner by the Department shall remain the property of the Department, and shall be returned by Community Partner to the Department, at Community Partner's expense, at termination or expiration of this agreement. All reports, documents, or other material related to this agreement and/or obtained or prepared by Community Partner in connection with the performance of the services agreed for herein shall become the property of the Department, and shall (upon request) be returned by Community Partner to the Department, at Community Partners expense, at termination or expiration of this agreement. All records, reports, documents, and other material should be maintained as stated in this agreement herein, and in accordance with all federal and state regulations.

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For Community Partner:

Terri Remedies
CDC Staff Member
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Many, LA 71449
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Fax:
Email: tremedies@cdconline.org

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Month/Year

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Benjamin Williams Lacy

Signature of Consultant / DCFS Liaison

Benjamin Williams Lacy

Printed Name of Consultant / DCFS Liaison

Program Consultant

Title of Consultant / DCFS Liaison

PARTNER'S SIGNATURE:

Candle Sattler

By:

Signature of Partner / Duly Authorized Representative

Candle Sattler

Printed Name of Partner / Duly Authorized Representative

Title:

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Title of Partner / Duly Authorized Representative

Nicholas Olsen

Printed Name of Witness 1

Nicholas Olsen

Signature of Witness 1

Julie Moore

Printed Name of Witness 2

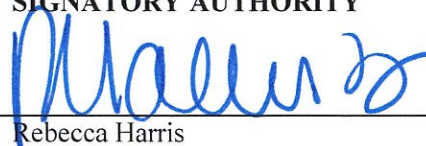
Julie Moore

Signature of Witness 2

Department of Children and Family Services
David N. Matlock, Secretary

SIGNATORY AUTHORITY

By:



Rebecca Harris

Title:

Undersecretary

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 3. registered with the Louisiana Department of State and in good standing
5. A library, courthouse, or other governmental facility with established hours of operation
6. For-profit business providing commercial services to patrons with established hours of operation (NOTE: Commercial businesses should comply with all appropriate city, state, and federal codes and regulations.)

Community Partner Agreements and Responsibilities

- A. The Community Partner understands that their facility must qualify based on the Standards for Participation. The duly authorized representative (CEO/Director/Administrator) must sign the Cooperative Endeavor Agreement along with two (2) witnesses.
- B. The Community Partner agrees to adhere to the published policies and regulations of the Department of Children and Family Services, and all State and Federal laws governing the services provided herein.
- C. **The Community Partner understands/agrees that participation in the community partnership does not give a Community Partner the authority to determine eligibility for DCFS program benefits.** DCFS will continue to assume its authority and responsibility to process all applications completed at a community partner site, determine eligibility for benefits and notify applicants of the eligibility decision.
- D. The Community Partner understands that, as a condition of participation, it is responsible for assuring and monitoring that staff persons entering application information is prohibited under the following rules of confidentiality from sharing any information with, but not limited to, any other unit of the provider entity about the applicant/recipient received during the application process:
 1. The Community Partner shall abide by the Federal and State laws and regulations concerning confidentiality which safeguard information in the participant's confidentiality (42 U.S.C. 602, 7 CFR 273.1(c), and La R.S. 46:56). In safeguarding applicant information, you must comply with the following:
 - i. **Do not** discuss applicant information with unauthorized personnel.
 - ii. **Do not** sell or release information to third parties.
 - iii. **Do not** allow unauthorized personnel to review applicant information.
 - iv. **Do** provide applicants a place that affords sufficient privacy to complete the application without compromising confidential information.
 - v. **Do** communicate community partner questions or concerns to the DCFS contact person.
 2. The Community Partner shall abide by all Federal and State laws and regulations as they relate to data sharing of pertinent information for performance accountability and program evaluation purposes.
 3. The Community Partner understands that all applicant information, active, denied, or inactive, is confidential and is not subject to the Freedom of Information Act.
 4. The Community Partner agrees to restrict the use or disclosure of confidential information to activities related to the performance of the services provided through the agreement.
 5. Community Partner agrees to notify the DCFS contact person within 48 hours of a verbal or written request for information concerning an applicant in accordance with Louisiana's Public Records Act, Chapter 119, and Louisiana Statutes (4). La. R.S. 44:1. La. Const. Art. XII, §3.
 6. The Community Partner understands that all staff members who assist applicants in completing DCFS applications or otherwise handle confidential information for DCFS processing must read, agree to, sign and date the Community Partner Staff Confidentiality Agreement.
- E. The Community Partner agrees to periodic monitoring by State officials or their designees and will allow access to the premises to evaluate work being performed. The DCFS Community Partner understands that decertification may result if, according to the determination of the State or Federal agency, they do not conform to policies. The department reserves the right to institute a 30-day period of corrective action in coordination with the Community Partner.
- F. An electronic copy of the DCFS Community Partner Manual will be provided to the Community Partner by the designated Community Outreach Consultant upon approval of the Cooperative Endeavor Agreement (CEA) and/or upon request of the manual by the Authorized Representative or partner staff.
- G. The Community Partner agrees to comply with the policies, regulations, and provisions stated in the Community Partner Manual and made a part of this agreement. The Community Partner will be responsible for reading, understanding, and adhering to the partner manual, as well as maintaining an updated copy of the manual as the Department issues revisions and ensures all staff are notified of such revisions.
- H. The Community Partner understands that participation is required in initial orientation and periodic trainings provided by DCFS or its designee.

1. The Community Outreach Unit, DCFS Training Section, and/or state/federal partners will provide training as necessary.
 2. Community partner staff who will assist applicants in completing DCFS applications must receive training within 30 days of the effective date of the Cooperative Endeavor Agreement.
 3. The Community Partner will train new staff before they assist applicants in completing DCFS applications in the Community Partner Program. The Department will review requests for further training and meet the need when possible.
 4. Certification of Completion certificates will be provided to Community Partner staff upon completion of training.
- I. The Community Partner shall not keep copies of application forms or any other documents that contain applicant information obtained during the process of assisting applicants.
 - J. If assisting in completion of applications or providing interpretation services, the Community Partner shall abide by the restrictions and requirements in regards to:
 1. Confidentiality requirements as stated in this agreement.
 2. Fraud prevention and reporting as stated in the DCFS Community Partner Manual.
 3. Prohibitions against coaching applicants to make themselves eligible for benefits.
 - K. The Community Partner agrees/understands that DCFS cannot advocate for any particular clientele or cause and that this relationship with DCFS is only to provide greater access to the public who wish to apply for DCFS services. DCFS is a public entity.
 - L. The Community Partner agrees/understands that the Department will provide a Community Partner Identification Number (CPIN) and that this number must appear on all documents, transmissions, and notifications associated with services provided in this agreement.

Department's Responsibilities

- A. The Department will provide the Community Partner with one (1) copy of the DCFS Community Partner Manual along with initial orientation within 30 days of the effective date of the Cooperative Endeavor Agreement. The Department will also provide ongoing training as determined necessary and will notify the partner of any revisions to the manual as well as furnish updated copies.
- B. The Department will provide the Community Partner with a welcome packet that may include, but is not limited to, applications, program brochures and flyers, required posters, and window clings.
- C. The Department will provide the Community Partner with hard copies of the Application for Assistance (OFS 4APP).
- D. The Department will provide the Community Partner with self-addressed, prepaid Document Processing Center (DPC) envelopes.
- E. The Department will provide a single point of contact for ongoing communication and issue resolution.

Indemnification

Community Partner agrees to protect, defend, indemnify, save and hold harmless the State of Louisiana, all State Departments, Agencies, Boards and Commissions, its officers, agents, servants and employees, including volunteers, from and against any and all claims, demands, expense and liability arising out of injury or death to any person or the damage, loss or destruction of any property, which may occur or in any way grow out of any act or omission of the Community Partner, its agents, servants, and employees or any and all costs, expenses and/or attorney fees incurred by the Community Partner as a result of any claim, demands, and/or causes of action except for those claims, demands, and/or causes of action arising out of the negligence of the State of Louisiana, all State Departments, Agencies, Boards, Commissions, its agents, representatives, and/or employees. Community Partner agrees to investigate, handle, respond to, provide defense for, defend any such claims, demand, or suit at its sole expenses, and agrees to bear all other costs and expenses related thereto, even if it (claims, etc.) is groundless, false or fraudulent.

Payment Terms

No consideration will be exchanged for the services provided. This agreement is a Cooperative Endeavor that it is voluntarily entered into between the State of Louisiana, Department of Children and Family Services and the

Community Partner **Coordinating & Development Corporation- Webster/Claiborne**, to better assist in the delivery of services to citizens across the State of Louisiana and is a collaborative effort between the parties to make social services more readily available.

Termination for Cause

The Department may terminate this Agreement for cause based upon the failure of the Community Partner to comply with the terms and/or conditions of the Agreement, if the Department shall give the Community Partner written notice specifying the Community Partner's failure. If within thirty (30) days after receipt of such notice, the Community Partner shall not have either corrected such failure or, in the case of failure, which cannot be corrected in thirty (30) days, begun in good faith and thereafter proceeded diligently to complete such correction, then the Department may, at its option, place the Community Partner in default and the Agreement shall terminate on the date specified in such notice.

The Department may terminate this agreement, in writing with ten (10) days notice, if the Department has evidence of fraud or violations of confidentiality regulations. The Community Partner may exercise any rights available to it under Louisiana law to terminate for cause upon the failure of the Department to comply with the terms and conditions of this agreement, provided that the Community Partner shall give the Department 30 (thirty) days written notice specifying the Department's failure and a reasonable opportunity for the Department to cure the defect.

Termination for Convenience

Either party may terminate this agreement for convenience upon giving 30-day advance written notice to the other party, but in no case shall it continue beyond the specified termination date.

Ownership

All reports, documents and other material delivered or transmitted to Community Partner by the Department shall remain the property of the Department, and shall be returned by Community Partner to the Department, at Community Partner's expense, at termination or expiration of this agreement. All reports, documents, or other material related to this agreement and/or obtained or prepared by Community Partner in connection with the performance of the services agreed for herein shall become the property of the Department, and shall (upon request) be returned by Community Partner to the Department, at Community Partners expense, at termination or expiration of this agreement. All records, reports, documents, and other material should be maintained as stated in this agreement herein, and in accordance with all federal and state regulations.

Terms of Agreement

This agreement shall commence on 8/15/2024 and shall terminate on 8/14/2029. This agreement shall not exceed a term of five (5) years.

Civil Rights Compliance

Title VI of the Civil Right Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination based on race, color and national origin in federally funded programs. This applies to intentional discrimination and policies and practice or procedures that have a disparate impact on any portion of the population. Individuals will not be discriminated against on any basis when requesting or receiving services from DCFS.

Prohibition against Discrimination

The Community Partner agrees to abide by the requirements of the following as applicable:

5 U.S.C. 301, Authority to Prescribe Departmental Regulations;
 Equal Credit Opportunity Act of 1974;
 C.F.R. Part 2, Subpart C, Section 2.25 – Delegation of Authority by the Secretary of Agriculture to the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights;
 7 C.F.R. Part 15d, Nondiscrimination in Programs and Activities conducted by the United States Department of Agriculture;
 7 C.F.R. Part 15e, Enforcement of Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Handicap in Programs or Activities conducted by the United States Department of Agriculture;
 12 C.F.R. Part 1002, Equal Credit Opportunity Regulation B
 Executive Order 13160, Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Race, Sex, Color, National Origin, disability, Religion, Age, Sexual Orientation, and Status as a Parent in Federally Conducted Education and Training Programs, June 23, 2000.
 Executive Order 13166, Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency, August 11, 2000.
 Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987
 USDA Instruction 113-1
 Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act
 The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996
 7 C.F.R. Parts 15, 15a and 15b
 SNAP Specific (7 C.F. R. 271-285)
 Food Stamp Act of 1998 as amended by Food and Nutrition Act of 2008
 SNAP Guidance on Non-Citizen Eligibility (June 2011)
 7 C.F.R. Part 16, Equal Opportunity for Religious Organizations
 USDA Departmental Regulation 4300-2
 USDA Departmental Regulation 4300-005 Agency Civil Rights Programs, dated January 14, 1998.
 USDA Departmental Regulation 4300-003, Equal Opportunity Public Notification Policy, dated June 2, 2015.
 USDA DR 4300-006, Civil Rights Policy for the U.S. Department of Agriculture, dated June 30, 2000.
 USDA DR 5600-002, Environmental Justice, dated December 15, 1997
 USDA DR 4710-001 Alternative Dispute Resolution, dated April 5, 2006
 USDA DR 4330-05 Prohibition against National Origin Discrimination Affecting Persons with Limited English Proficiency in Programs and Activities Conducted by USDA, dated June 4, 2013
 Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964
 Title II of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended by the Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1972
 Federal Executive Order 11246 as amended
 The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended
 The Vietnam Era Veteran's Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974
 Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972,
 The Age Discrimination Act of 1975
 The Fair Housing Act of 1968 as amended
 The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990

Food Stamp Act of 1977, as amended

The Community Partner agrees to provide a work environment without regard to age in addition to the other protected classes listed in the Contract.

Civil Rights Training

All persons, including management and volunteers, must receive civil rights training in each twelve month period. Training should be completed upon hire and again on an annual basis.

Specific subject matter must include, but not be limited to:

1. Collection and use of data,
2. Effective public notification systems,
3. Complaint procedures,
4. Compliance review techniques,
5. Resolution of noncompliance,
6. Requirements for reasonable accommodation of persons with disabilities,
7. Requirements for language assistance,
8. Conflict resolution, and
9. Customer service.

Please contact the Community Partner liaison for the steps to obtaining the required civil rights training as well as the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 (NVRA) Training via email. This training can be used for newly hired employees in addition for annual civil rights training. Documentation of completed training for all staff should be able to be reviewed upon request.

Public Notifications

The current USDA nondiscrimination poster “And Justice for All” is prominently displayed in a public area. If you need copies of the poster, please contact the Community Partner liaison.

Limited English Proficiency

Where applicable, if SNAP paper applications are available for clients to obtain without Community Partner staff assistance, paper applications in English, Spanish and Vietnamese must all be available. This requirement must be met regardless of how many Spanish or Vietnamese clients your office assists even if the number is zero.

Liaison Officials

The primary points of contact for matters concerning this Cooperative Endeavor Agreement are as follows:

For State/DCFS:

Benjamin Williams Lacy, BSW, RSW
Community Outreach Consultant
Department of Children and Family Services
24 Accent Drive, Suite 106
Monroe, LA 71202
Phone (O): 318-362-3327
Phone (C): 225-846-1715
Email: benjamin.williamsacy.dcms@la.gov

For Community Partner:

Candle Sattler
Director of Workforce Development
Coordinating and Development Cooperation
4000 Viking Drive, Suite A-1
Bossier, LA 71111
318-632-2022, ext 109
Fax: 318-632-2099
Email: csattler@cdconline.org

Notices

Any notice or demand or other communication required or permitted to be given under this agreement or applicable law shall be effective only if in writing, properly addressed and deposited with the United States Postal Service (USPS) as first-class certified mail, postage prepaid, return receipt requested to the parties at the addresses provided in this section.

For State/DCFS:

Benjamin Williams Lacy, BSW, RSW
Community Outreach Consultant
Department of Children and Family Services
24 Accent Drive, Suite 106
Monroe, LA 71202
Phone (O): 318-362-3327
Phone (C): 225-846-1715
Email: benjamin.williams@dcfs.la.gov

For Community Partner:

Janitra Strother
AJC Staff Member
Louisiana Workforce Commission
902 Lee St.,
Minden, LA 71055
Phone: (318) 371-3024
Fax:
Email: jstrother@lwc.la.gov

THUS DONE AND SIGNED AT Monroe, LouisianaIN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have executed this Agreement as of this 15 day of 08/24
Month/Year**CONSULTANT'S SIGNATURE:**Benjamin Williams Lacy

Signature of Consultant / DCFS Liaison

Benjamin Williams Lacy

Printed Name of Consultant / DCFS Liaison

Program Consultant

Title of Consultant / DCFS Liaison

PARTNER'S SIGNATURE:Candle Sattler

By:

Signature of Partner / Duly Authorized Representative

Candle Sattler

Printed Name of Partner / Duly Authorized Representative

Title:

Director of Workforce Development

Title of Partner / Duly Authorized Representative

Nicholas Olsen

Printed Name of Witness 1

Nicholas Olsen

Signature of Witness 1

Julie Moore

Printed Name of Witness 2

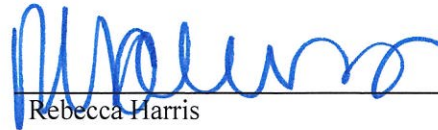
Julie Moore

Signature of Witness 2

Department of Children and Family Services
David N. Matlock, Secretary

SIGNATORY AUTHORITY

By:



Rebecca Harris

Title:

Undersecretary