



Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board  
Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act Regional Plan  
2016 – 2019

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## Strategic Elements, Governance and Structure:

### 1. **WIOA Sub Grant Administrator and Fiscal Agent**

The City of Colquitt

Cory Thomas, City Manager

154 West Street

Colquitt, GA 39837

229-758-1000

<http://www.colquittga.org>



### **WIOA Grant Recipient**

The Southwest Georgia Local Elected Officials Consortium

Chief Local Elected Official (CLEO) – Chairman Roger Lane

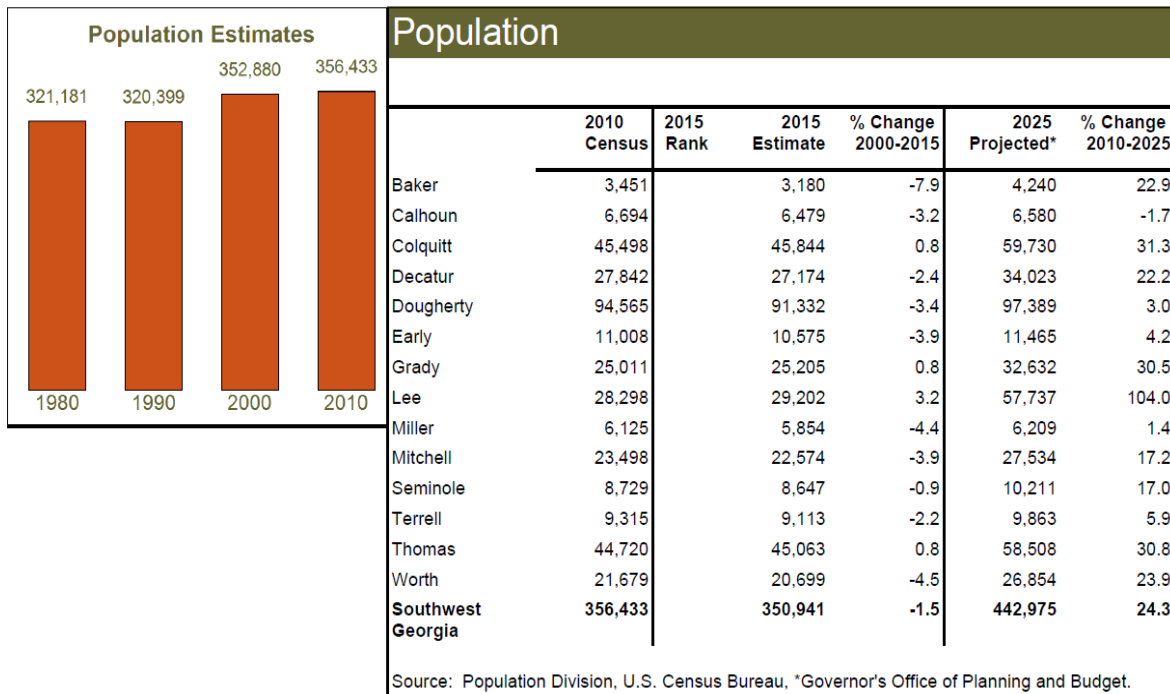
County Commission Chairpersons from:

Baker, Calhoun, Colquitt, Decatur, Dougherty, Early, Grady, Lee, Miller, Mitchell, Seminole, Thomas, and Worth Counties.

**2. Description of Strategic Planning Elements** – Provide a description of the strategic planning elements listed below. A complete answer will rely on a variety of data sources and employer input. Also describe how the information was gathered and what partners and employers were consulted.

a. Provide an analysis of the regional economic conditions including existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations; and the employment needs of employers in those industry sectors and occupations. Include the listing of occupations in demand within the region and describe how the list was developed citing source data.

### Regional Economic Conditions – Supply and Demand



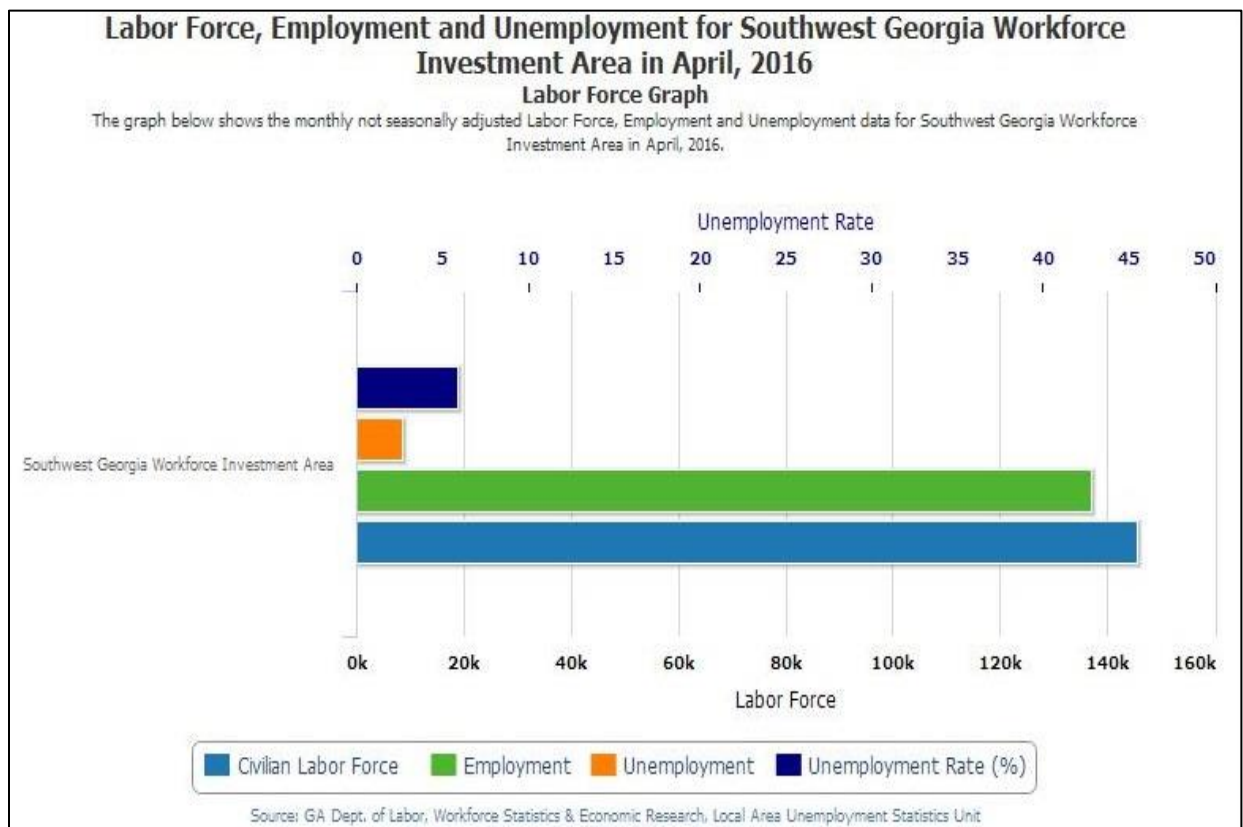
The U.S. Census data used in this plan indicates that the Southwest Georgia region has experienced aggregate decline in population during the last five years but will experience positive population growth of over 24 percent by 2015. With the projected growth of 24.3 percent in population suggest a sufficient supply of potential talent for business needs.

On the demand side, based on the USDOL, Bureau of Labor Statistics the Albany Metropolitan Statistics Area (MSA) for the Southwest Georgia Workforce Development region, which consist of Baker, Dougherty, Lee, Terrell and Worth counties within the local area, the job growth rate was at 0.2 percent, compared to the April 2015 benchmark, which matched the State of Georgia job

growth rate. This illustrates that Southwest Georgia region has struggled trying to stay up with the job growth rate of the State and the rest of the nation.

Many companies are downsizing, closing and moving out of the area. In concert with economic development partners, and the Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board has targeted development of a workforce system for the region that will produce a pipeline of talented workforce that is able to perform and produce and to meet the needs of existing and future employer of the area. The same data mentioned above indicates that the industries that produces the aggregate 0.2 percent job growth rate were Retail Trade, Manufacturing and Service-providing.

Surveys data indicates that in order for our children to acquire a job or careers in which they can depend, often have and plan to leave the region. Additionally, employers often have to go through many applicants and workers to find one meeting their needs. These are conditions that the SWGA WDB is committed to breaking by offering much needed services to workforce stakeholders, jobseeker and employers.



As illustrated in the chart above, the total civilian preliminary labor force (not seasonally adjusted) for Southwest Georgia Workforce Development region in April, 2016 was 145,624, of which

137,052 were employed and 8,572 were unemployed. This equates to an unemployment rate was 5.9 percent.

The Preliminary average weekly wage for Southwest Georgia Workforce Development region in 3rd quarter, 2015 was \$702. This would be equivalent to \$17.55 per hour or \$36,504 per year, assuming a 40-hour week worked the year around.

## Education of the Labor Force

### Southwest Georgia

	PERCENT DISTRIBUTION BY AGE					
	PERCENT OF TOTAL	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-64	65+
Elementry	7.1%	4.0%	4.7%	4.1%	5.1%	18.5%
Some High School	17.1%	24.5%	15.1%	15.3%	15.1%	19.1%
High Scholl Grad/GED	34.7%	31.5%	33.3%	36.5%	36.5%	33.4%
Some College	21.9%	33.0%	26.1%	21.0%	20.1%	13.8%
Collgege Grad 2 Yr	6.0%	4.0%	7.8%	7.8%	6.2%	3.5%
Collgege Grad 4 Yr	8.1%	2.6%	8.7%	10.1%	9.6%	6.7%
Post Graduate Studie	5.1%	0.5%	4.3%	5.2%	7.3%	5.0%
Totals	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Note: Totals are based on the portion of the labor force between ages 18 - 65+. Some College category represents workers with some college with no degree less than two years.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau - 2010 Decennial Census.

Many businesses have hiring requirements for specific jobs, such as a high school diploma, that may not show a direct correlation to an individual's ability to perform in that job. Others have somewhat unrealistic labor market expectations about the rates for entry-level wages, especially in jobs requiring higher skills. In tight labor markets, these employers also need assistance in marketing their openings. Many workers in the Southwest Georgia Workforce Development region have been identified as having low basic skills, as well as no formal training.

## High School Graduates - 2015



	PUBLIC SCHOOLS	PRIVATE SCHOOLS*	TOTAL
Baker	20	--	20
Calhoun	32	--	32
Colquitt	551	--	551
Decatur	318	--	318
Dougherty	758	--	758
Early	136	--	136
Grady	245	--	245
Lee	418	--	418
Miller	61	--	61
Mitchell	202	--	202
Seminole	105	--	105
Terrell	90	--	90
Thomas	500	--	500
Worth	180	--	180
<b>Southwest Georgia</b>	<b>3,616</b>	<b>--</b>	<b>3,616</b>

Note: Public schools include city as well as county schools systems.

\* Private schools data is not available for 2015 from Georgia Independent School Association.

Source: The Governor's Office of Student Achievement of Georgia.

As the 2010 US Census data charts above illustrates, 21.9 percent is the portion of the local labor force between the ages of 18 and 65+ with some college with no degree less than two years, while 34.7 percent are High School graduated or have attained a GED. For 2015 there were 3,616 high school graduates in the Southwest Georgia Workforce Development region.

In order to offer the employer a quality workforce, the workforce system must provide customers the opportunity to gain needed skills upgrading and training required by local businesses. With the availability of GED and basic skills training offered at non-traditional hours by workforce system partners such as the Technical College System of Georgia and other Adult Basic Learning providers, the customer has access to an unlimited amount of skill enhancement opportunities.

### **Economic Conditions – Supply and Demand Strategic Needs Assessment**

The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board has an ongoing strategy of engaging local area businesses in dialog regarding their needs. The employer focus town hall style meetings are held in partnership with local Economic Development Authorities, Chambers of Commerce and other community stakeholders. Local area business leaders and workforce leadership have structured but open dialog about the successes and challenges faced in the Southwest Georgia region. This format is twofold in that employers are able to provide valuable feedback regarding talent needs, and other workforce discussions while the workforce system



offers existing workforce solutions and the Board as the source of designing programs that best fit the local area.

Likewise, in order to gauge the employment needs of employers in existing and in-demand industries in Georgia and the Southwest Georgia Area, Governor Nathan Deal launched the High Demand Career Initiative (HDCI) in April of 2014. Common trends throughout the State and Southwest Georgia Workforce Development region include the following:

- There is a growing problem with lack of work ethics in the workforce.
- Many employers have expressed disappointment in the areas of soft skills/workplace skills and feel there is a crucial need for development.
- Employers routinely discuss the importance of soft skills, such as communication, teamwork, problem solving, intellectual curiosity, critical thinking, attendance, punctuality, and integrity.
- Small business employers need assistance in accessing better human resource information.
- Some employers have hiring requirements for specific jobs that may not show a direct correlation to an individual's ability to perform in that job.
- Many workers have also been identified as having low basic skills, as well as no formal training.
- Another common trend in Southwest Georgia and the State is the shortage of local skilled trades' workers in the area.
- In order to offer the employer a quality work force, many employers express the need for more on-the-job (OJT) training, skills upgrading, and incumbent worker programs.

As solutions to many of the employer needs, the Southwest Georgia Workforce Development region has increased its focus on providing quality work-based programs such as OJT, Customized Training, Incumbent Worker Training, and Work Experience (Internship) Training into its service delivery model.

Employers that currently use the incumbent and work-based programs find these programs valuable in identifying, assessing, and training future and current employees. These employers also emphasized the importance of OJT in the employee development process. These programs help them fill positions that require years of specialized experience in addition to relevant training or educational background requirements.

The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board realizes that by training the people of Southwest Georgia in the identified demand occupations, not only can we help alleviate the lack of qualified workers, but we can also assure prospective employers that they will have a skilled, job-ready talented workforce available.

### **Economic Conditions - Occupations in demand within the region**

Information within this section was gathered in coordination with the Georgia Department of Labor, Labor Market Explorer, Workforce Information and Analysis, Occupational Information Services Unit and Labor Insight/Burning Glass.

<b>Super Sector Industries</b>									
	<b>Establishments</b>			<b>Employment</b>			<b>Weekly Wage</b>		
	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>% Change</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>% Change</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>% Change</b>
Construction	664	659	-0.8%	4,386	4,327	-1.3%	891	898	0.8%
Education and Health Services	837	845	1.0%	16,696	16,998	1.8%	945	990	4.8%
Financial Activities	792	790	-0.3%	5,057	4,990	-1.3%	919	920	0.1%
Information	95	78	-17.9%	1,139	1,046	-8.2%	780	787	0.9%
Leisure and Hospitality	655	682	4.1%	9,726	10,218	5.1%	292	309	5.8%
Manufacturing	339	349	2.9%	13,729	14,112	2.8%	915	960	4.9%
Natural Resources, Mining, and Agriculture	473	495	4.7%	6,409	6,146	-4.1%	622	656	5.5%
Other Services	695	703	1.2%	3,381	3,376	-0.1%	485	536	10.5%
Professional and Business Services	928	959	3.3%	12,661	13,132	3.7%	641	661	3.1%
Trade, Transportation and Utilities	2,256	2,254	-0.1%	24,111	24,754	2.7%	684	665	-2.8%
Unclassified	343	257	-25.1%	394	258	-34.5%	630	667	5.9%
Government	576	580	0.7%	27,703	27,464	-0.9%	730	701	-4.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,653</b>	<b>8,651</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>125,398</b>	<b>126,822</b>	<b>1.1%</b>	<b>728</b>	<b>735</b>	<b>1.0%</b>

**Note: All figures are 4th Quarter of 2014 and 2015.**

Using the Labor Market Information data above, an analysis of the Southwest Georgia Workforce Development region, shows it is a geographically large workforce area with diverse industry sectors and has experienced aggregate employment and wage growth in the following Super Sector Industries:

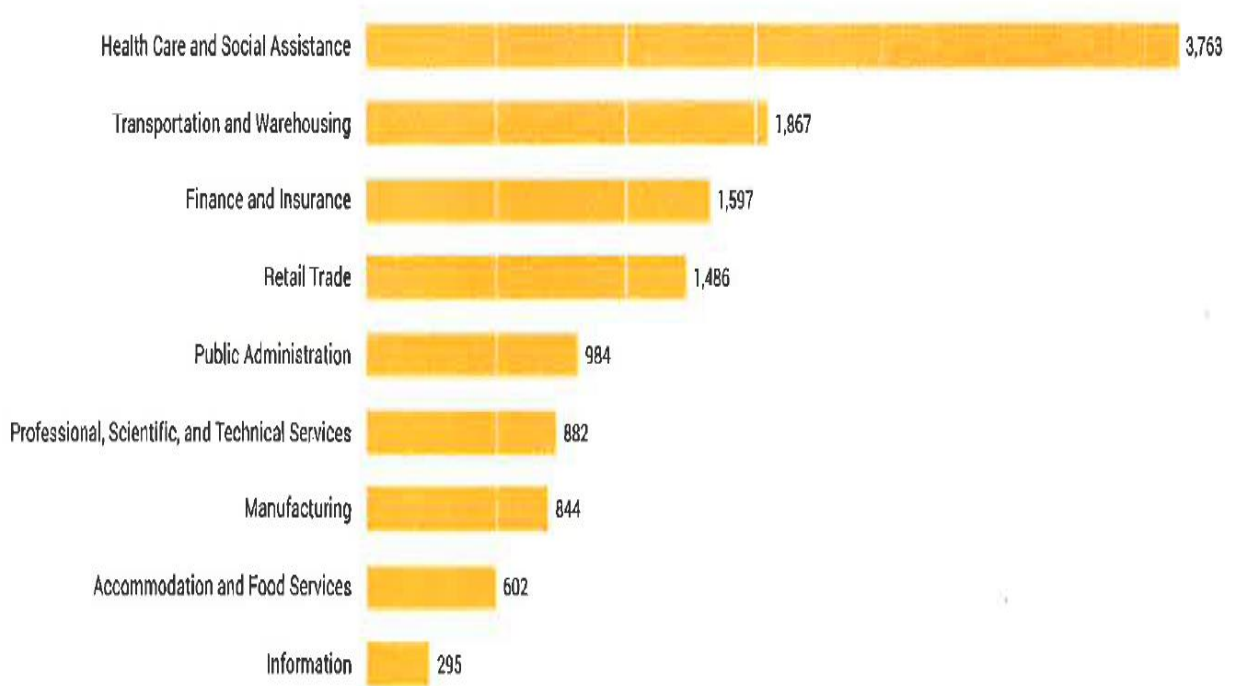
- Education and Health Services Industry,
- Leisure and Hospitality Industry,

- Manufacturing Industry,
- Professional and Business Services Industry, and
- Trade, Transportation and Utilities Industry.

The 2015 largest major growth industry sectors regarding employment are Leisure and Hospitality, (5.1% growth, or 10,218 employments), Professional and Business Services, (3.7% growth or 13,132 employments), and Manufacturing, (2.8% growth or 14,112 employments).

Hiring within those industries are attributed to employers such as Archbold Medical Center, Inc., Phoebe Putney Memorial Hospital, Inc., Ambassador Personnel, Inc., Equity Group Georgia Division, Inc., Phoebe Physician Group, Inc., Sanderson Farms Inc., Tele-performance USA, Walmart and Procter and Gamble.

Utilizing March 2015 – February 2016 data provided by Burning Glass – Labor Insight Jobs; of the 17,255 postings for the Southwest Georgia region that were specified by industry, Healthcare and Social Assistance, Transportation and Warehousing and Finance and Insurance are the top three industries.



Source: 2016 - Burning Glass – Labor Insight Jobs

Specific Industry Characteristics: Growing, High Demand, Average Weekly Wage: \$966

Industry Title	Number of Establishments	Number of Employees
Health Care and Social Assistance	854	19,614

Industry Title	2012 Estimated Employment	2022 Projected Employment	Total 2012 - 2022 Employment Change	Total Annual Average Employment Change	Total 2012 - 2022 Percent Change	Total Annual Percent Change
Health Care and Social Assistance	18,610	22,020	3,410	341	18.4%	1.7%

Georgia Department of Labor, Workforce Statistics & Economic Research, Projections Unit

The Health Care and Social Assistance sector comprises establishments providing health care and social assistance for individuals. The sector includes both health care and social assistance because it is sometimes difficult to distinguish between the boundaries of these two activities. The industries in this sector are arranged on a continuum starting with those establishments providing medical care exclusively, continuing with those providing health care and social assistance, and finally finishing with those providing only social assistance. The services provided by establishments in this sector are delivered by trained professionals. All industries in the sector share this commonality of process, namely, labor inputs of health practitioners or social workers with the requisite expertise. Many of the industries in the sector are defined based on the educational degree held by the practitioners included in the industry. Excluded from this sector are aerobic classes in Subsector 713, Amusement, Gambling and Recreation Industries and nonmedical diet and weight reducing centers in Subsector 812, Personal and Laundry Services. Although these can be viewed as health services, these services are not typically delivered by health practitioners.

Specific Industry Characteristics: High Demand, Average Weekly Wage: \$833

Industry Title	Number of Establishments	Number of Employees
Transportation and Warehousing	311	3,892

The Transportation and Warehousing sector includes industries providing transportation of passengers and cargo, warehousing and storage for goods, scenic and sightseeing transportation, and support activities related to modes of transportation. Establishments in these industries use transportation equipment or transportation related facilities as a productive asset. The type of equipment depends on the mode of transportation. The modes of transportation are air, rail, water, road, and pipeline. The Transportation and Warehousing sector distinguishes three basic types of activities: subsectors for each mode of transportation, a subsector for warehousing and storage, and a subsector for establishments providing support activities for transportation. In addition, there are subsectors for establishments that provide passenger transportation for scenic and sightseeing purposes, postal services, and courier services. A separate subsector for support activities is established in the sector because, first, support activities for transportation are inherently multimodal, such as freight transportation arrangement, or have multimodal aspects. Secondly, there are production process similarities among the support activity industries. One of the support activities identified in the support activity subsector is the routine repair and maintenance of transportation equipment (e.g., aircraft at an airport, railroad rolling stock at a railroad terminal, or ships at a harbor or port facility). Such establishments do not perform complete overhauling or rebuilding of transportation equipment (i.e., periodic restoration of transportation equipment to original design specifications) or transportation equipment conversion (i.e., major modification to systems). An establishment that primarily performs factory (or shipyard) overhauls, rebuilding, or conversions of aircraft, railroad rolling stock, or a ship is classified in Subsector 336, Transportation Equipment Manufacturing according to the type of equipment. Many of the establishments in this sector often operate on networks, with physical facilities, labor forces, and equipment spread over an extensive geographic area. Warehousing establishments in this sector are distinguished from merchant wholesaling in that the warehouse establishments do not sell the goods. Excluded from this sector are establishments primarily engaged in providing travel agent services that support transportation and other establishments, such as hotels, businesses, and government agencies. These establishments are classified in Sector 56, Administrative and Support, Waste Management, and Remediation Services. Also, establishments primarily engaged in providing rental and leasing of transportation equipment without operator are classified in Subsector 532, Rental and Leasing Services.

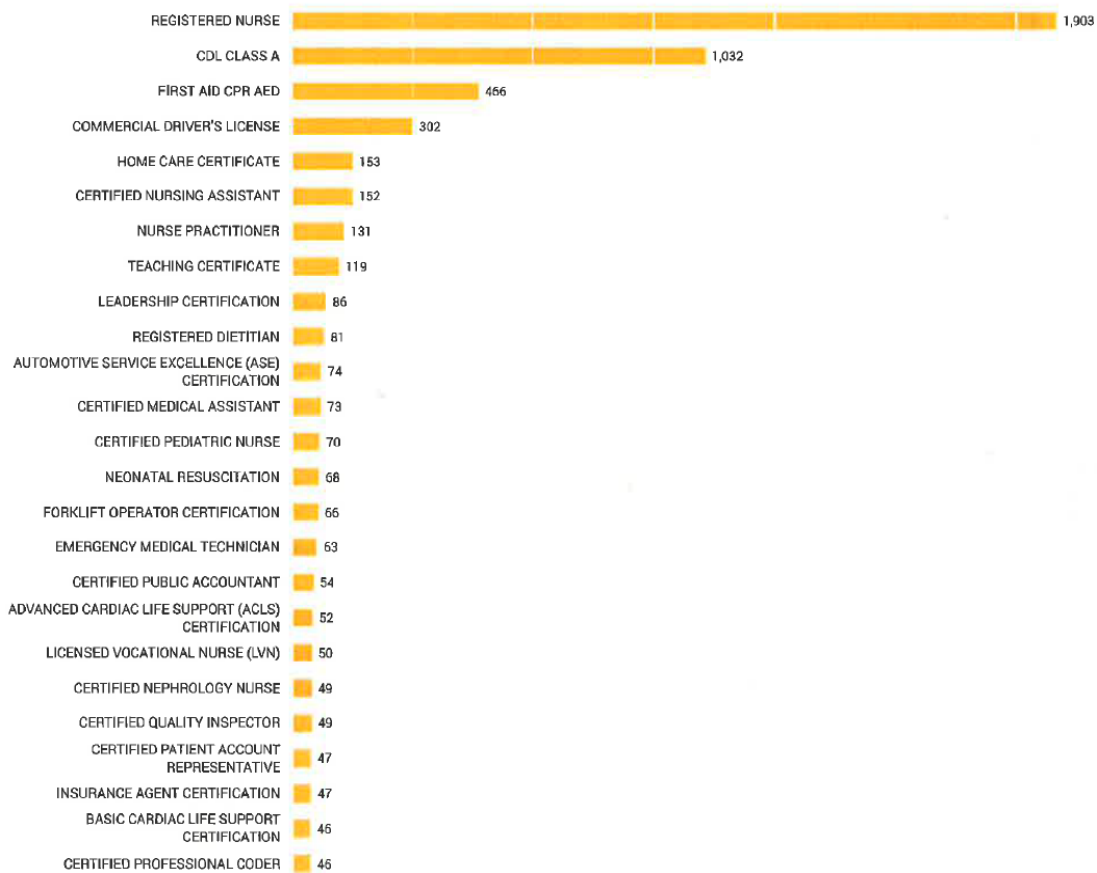
**Economic Conditions - Employment needs of employers in those industry sectors**

- b. Provide an analysis of the 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.

Labor Market Trends - Knowledge, Skills and Certification

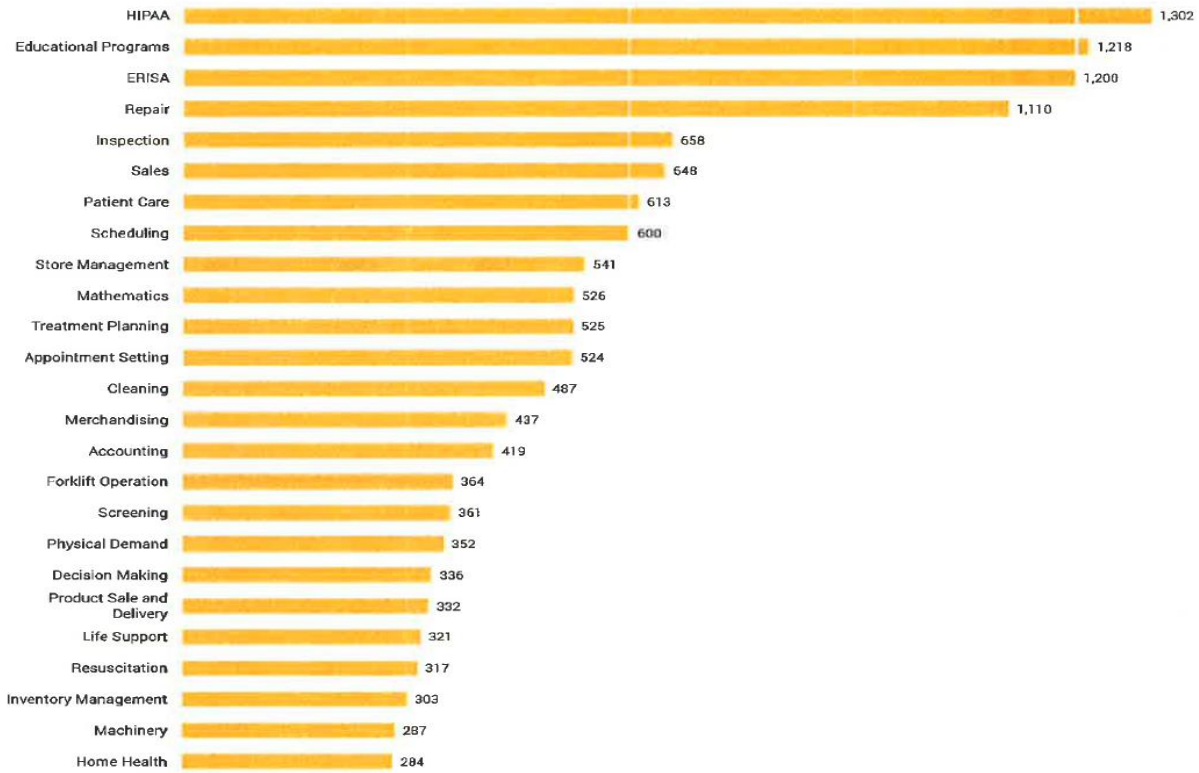
As illustrated below, a snapshot analysis of job postings in the area’s labor market, illustrates that from March 2015 through February 2016 of 11,736 job postings that included certifications, **Education and Health Services Industry** certifications represented (29%) or 3,366 of the total. Certifications such as Registered Nurse, (1,903), First Aid CPR, (466), Certified Nurse Assistant, (152), Teaching Certificate, (119), and Nurse Practitioner, (131) all indicate a demand in the triple digits. Likewise, certifications that support the **Trade, Transportation and Utilities** are supported by certifications such as CDL Class A, (1,032), Forklift Operator Certification, (66), and Certified Quality Inspector, (49).

*Source: 2016 - Burning Glass – Labor Insight Jobs*



### Labor Market Trends - Top Skills

As illustrated below, a snapshot analysis of job postings in the area’s labor market provided by Burning Glass generated data illustrates that from March 2015 through February 2016 of 11,736 job postings that included specified skills, **Education and Health Services Industry** certifications represented top skills of nearly 6,000. (5,779) of the total to skills of 9,165. The remaining skills are general skills and or support the **Transportation and Warehousing Industry**.

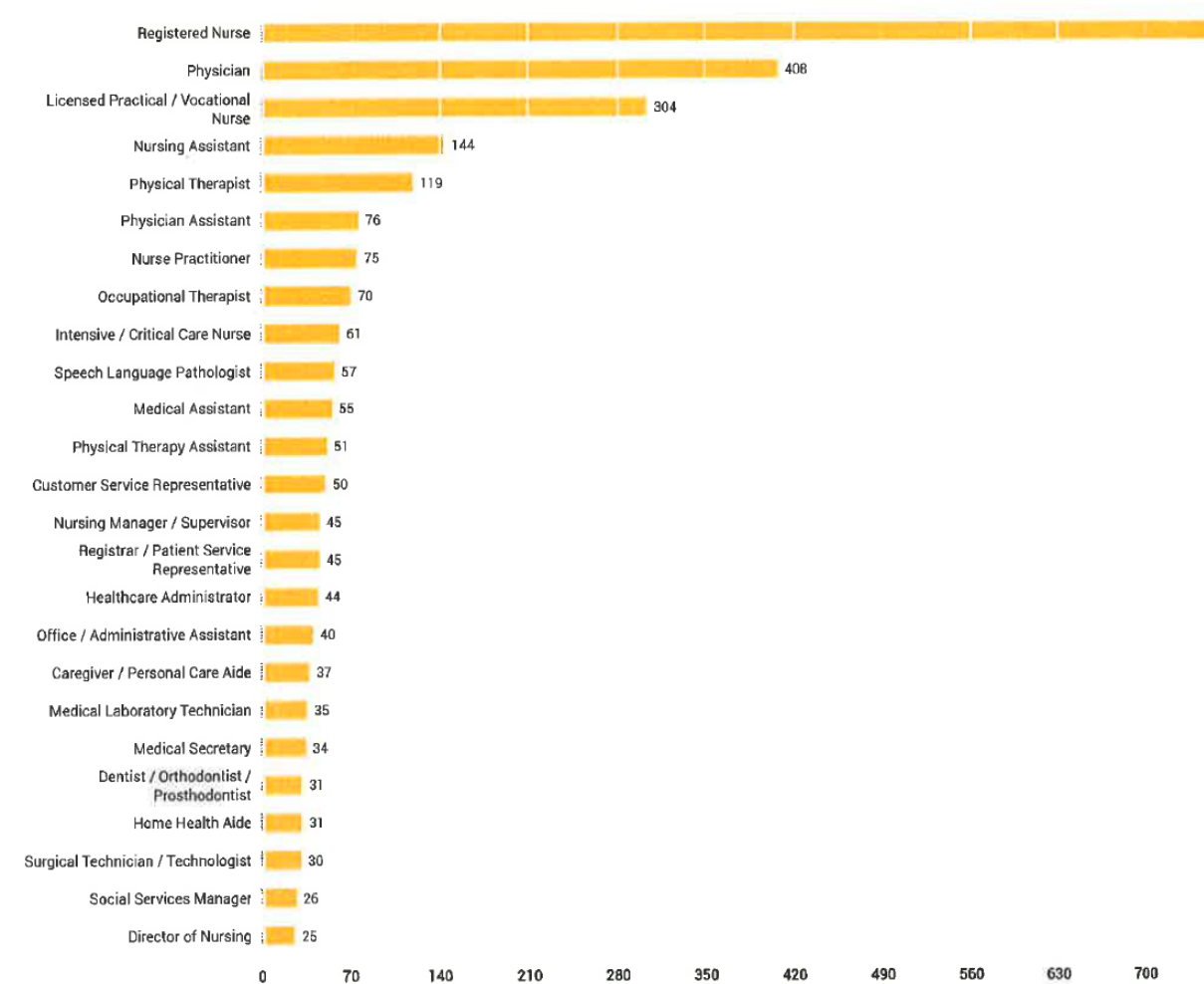


*Source: 2016 - Burning Glass – Labor Insight Jobs*

Utilizing the above noted Burning Glass generated data for the period of March 2015 – February 2016; of the data records that included both a degree level and experience requirement in the postings, 68 percent of the 1,805 postings required high school or vocational training with 3-5 years of experience. Eighty-three percent of the 2,152 postings required an Associate’s degree with 3-5 years’ experience, 45 percent of the 1,956 postings required a Bachelor’s degree with 3-5 years’ experience and 47 percent of the 572 jobs required a Graduate or professional degree.

## Labor Market Trends - Top Occupations within Health Care

Utilizing the above noted Burning Glass generated data for the period of March 2015 – February 2016; Registered Nurse leads the top occupations within the **Health Care Industry** with over 700 posting in the Southwest Georgia region.



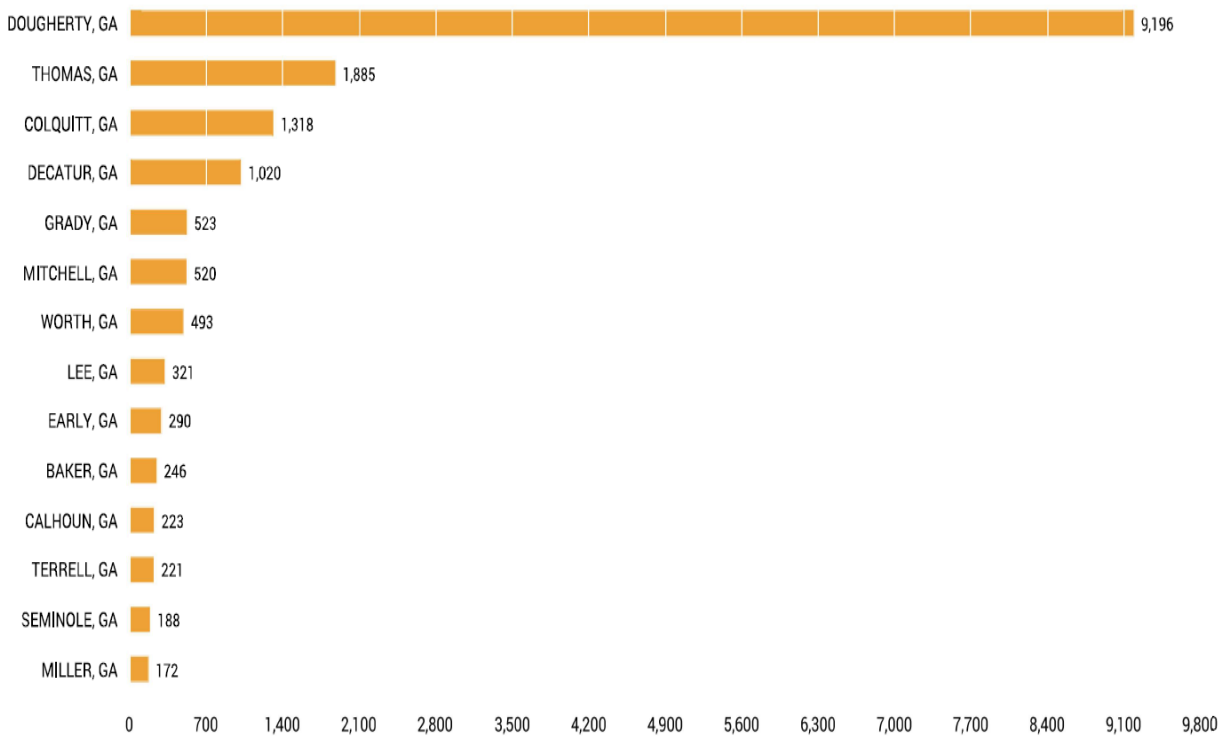
Source: 2016 - Burning Glass – Labor Insight Jobs

- c. Provide an analysis of the workforce in the region, including current labor force employment, unemployment data, information on labor market trends and the educational and skill levels of the workforce in the region, including individuals with barriers to employment. List all data sources used to gather this information.



### Labor Market Trends - Area

The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Region 10 is comprised of fourteen counties. A snapshot analysis of job postings in the area's labor market, illustrates that from February 2015 through January 2016 there were 16,616 job postings. As illustrated below, Dougherty County (Albany MSA) has the greatest share of postings, (9,196) followed by Thomas County and ending with Miller County with 172 postings.



*Source: Burning Glass – Labor Insight Jobs*

- d. Provide a description of the local board's strategic vision and goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce (including youth and individuals with barriers to employment), including goals relating to the performance accountability measures based on primary indicators of performance in order to support regional economic growth and economic self-sufficiency.

The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board provides workforce services to businesses and job seekers in the Southwest Georgia region, home to 14 (Baker, Calhoun, Colquitt, Decatur, Dougherty, Early, Grady, Lee, Miller, Mitchell, Seminole, Terrell, Thomas, Worth) counties and 44 incorporated cities within them. Our daily mission is to build for our region a world-class workforce system that sustains and encourages economic growth.

The Board knows that municipal and county lines do not create economies. People and businesses do. When community and business needs are aligned, regions are empowered. Businesses grow. Families prosper. Communities thrive. Futures are built.



The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board is where the needs of business, people and the community converge and create opportunities for more than 354,000 people and 901,105 businesses. There is power in numbers. Now is the time to seize the power of ONE region, build on the resilience of its communities—both people and businesses—and forge a brighter future.

The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board envisions the Southwest Georgia of tomorrow as home to a well-trained, dynamic workforce that promotes continuous economic development and businesses that create an unsurpassed quality of life fueled by talent. We envision being an access point to programs, services and activities

that help people achieve independence and self-sufficiency and a workforce system that collaborates to meet the needs of business customers.

The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board and staff will continue to evaluate policies and programs to assure effective stewardship of federal and state and local funding to the workforce system. In addition, the continuous development to and maintenance of the Balance Scorecard (BSC) performance accountability system. The BSC links multi levels of performance objectives and goals to strategic objectives.

The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board will appoint Committees to conduct in-depth analysis of provider and program performance, accounting for: external factors, causes for poor and good performance, comparisons of WIOA-funded versus like non-WIOA funded outcomes.

The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board intends to fulfill the goals of WIOA through the implementation of a set of innovative strategies driven by the strength of the partner programs. Proposed strategies includes:

- Evaluating and redefining measures and standards for business customer service to facilitate seamless access to tolls and services across programs.
- Coordinating business services across core programs.
- Continuing the focus on supporting and growing Region 10 healthcare and advanced manufacturing sectors.
- Providing intensives services and training to program participants in local workforce development boards.
- Continuing to pilot and refine the integrated education and training model such as the Industrial Operations Technician (IOT) program at Albany Technical College.
- Promoting the development of contextualized instruction with a specific career pathway focus, career development, and transition services to be integrated into adult basic education.
- Measuring local performance to inform policy discussions and decisions, align resources to shared goals, reward excellence and showcase improvement through a series of critical metrics.
- Continuing improvement and utilization of system design to better link employers to job seekers with disabilities.
- Enhancing collaboration of services to help people with disabilities gain employment and achieve self-sufficiency.
- Engaging across core programs through specialized expert workgroups focused on measurement, reporting, and strategy implementation.
- Coordinated leadership policy discussions and decision-making.

e. Taking into account the analyses described in sections “2. a-e” (above), provide a strategy to coordinate core programs to align resources available to the local area to achieve the strategic vision and goals.

The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board views business as the primary customer of workforce services, we are adept at supporting strong business partnerships and providing effective job matching and innovative employer services. We will deploy an Industry Sector Model which aligns One Stop services with Southwest Georgia's needs as identified by the Board. Our current industry sectors encompass the careers articulated in this plan as selected for focus by the Board, so that career seekers fully understand the opportunities available and qualifications needed to succeed in the emerging Southwest Georgia regional economy.

The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board will continue to establish linkage in the local workforce area and neighboring workforce area to nurture regional economies. Linkages have been established with adjoining South Georgia Local Workforce Development Board, Georgia Department of Labor, and CareerSource North Florida and CareerSource Capital Region of Florida. This expanded region concept allows for greater leveraging of knowledge and other non-financial resources and expands the opportunities for jobseekers, industries and employers.

Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board staff and board members attend and/or participate in Chamber of Commerce meetings, Rotary Club meetings, Regional Transportation Board meetings, Regional Advisory Council meetings, and Regional Commission meetings.

The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board has an ongoing strategy of engaging local area businesses in dialog regarding their needs. The employer focus town hall style meetings are held in partnership with local Economic Development Authorities, Chambers of Commerce and other community stakeholders. Local area business leaders and workforce leadership have structured but open dialog about the successes and challenges faced in the Southwest Georgia region. This format is twofold in that employers are able to provide valuable feedback regarding talent needs, and other workforce discussions while the workforce system offers existing workforce solutions and the Board as the source of designing programs that best fit the local area.

Through the Comprehensive One Stop Center located in the Georgia Department of Labor (GDOL) Career Center located in Albany and the workforce system affiliate sites, the Southwest Georgia will establish and certify the centers in accordance with the WIOA. The One Stop centers will be certified to have mandated co-located partner staff in accordance with WIOA. Some whom are not co-located on a fulltime basis rotate in and out of each other at published schedules times or are connected electronically through the Georgia Workforce System (GWS) and/or the Georgia Work Ready Online Participant Portal (GWROPP). Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board staff is located in the Comprehensive One Stops on a permanent basis.

Transportation is a serious barrier to employment that is identified within the Southwest Georgia Workforce Development region. Therefore, in addition to the One-Stop location in Albany, WIOA services are provided to applicants and customers on a scheduled basis at Southern Regional Technical College – Thomasville and Moultrie locations, Bainbridge State College, City of Colquitt and Camilla administrative office.

The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board will provide career and training services through a unified, seamless approach designed to produce the most and best possible matches between jobseekers and employers through placement and development services. A unified approach eliminates the barriers of traditional service silos, making the workforce development experience transparent, efficient and effective for all customers. This approach is in alignment with WIOPA which establishes unified strategic planning across core programs, including Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth programs; Adult Education and Literacy programs; the Wagner-Peyser Employment Service; and Title I of the Rehabilitation Act programs.

### Program Monitoring

The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board monitoring plan will assist in ensuring program compliance and accountability, and effective stewardship of federal, state and local funding to the workforce development system.

The Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act requires that each recipient and sub recipient conduct regular oversight and monitoring of its WIOA activities and those of its sub recipients and contractors. The SWGA WDB will ensure that regular oversight and monitoring of WIOA activities are performed on its providers of career services in accordance and compliance with WIOA requirements including:

- Compliance with the uniform administrative requirements described in WIOA Law Title IB Section 184 and USDOL uniform administrative requirements, including the appropriate administrative requirements and applicable cost principles.
- Compliance with applicable laws and regulations in accordance with local and state reporting and tracking system;
- Determining that expenditures have been made against the cost categories and within the cost limitations specified in the Act and Regulations;
- Ensuring that established policies are achieving the program quality and outcomes meet the objectives of the Act and the WIOA regulations;
- Compliance with the nondiscrimination and equal opportunity requirements of WIOA Section 188 et al;
- Compliance with data collection and reporting system policies and procedures;
- Determining whether or not there is compliance with other provisions of the Act and the WIOA regulations and other applicable laws and regulations; and

- Determining if service providers and contractors have demonstrated substantial compliance with WIOA requirements.

### Monitoring Plan

The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board has contracted with Taylor, Lombardi, Hall, Wydra, PA – Certified Public Accountants to perform yearly monitoring activities in accordance with “Agreed upon Procedures”.

### **3. Description of Strategies and Services** – Provide a description of the strategies and services that will be used in the local area in order to accomplish the items listed below.

- a. How will the area engage employers in workforce development programs, including small employers and employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations?

As previously mentioned, the Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board has an ongoing strategy of engaging local area businesses in dialog regarding their needs. The employer focus town hall style meetings are held in partnership with local Economic Development Authorities, Chambers of Commerce and other community stakeholders. Local area business leaders and workforce leadership have structured but open dialog about the successes and challenges faced in the Southwest Georgia region. This format is twofold in that employers are able to provide valuable feedback regarding talent needs, and other workforce discussions while the workforce system offers existing workforce solutions and the Board as the source of designing programs that best fit the local area.

The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board approach views business as the primary customer of the One Stop and Career Centers, and our services are designed to support the success of regional businesses as they compete in an increasingly global marketplace. The adoption of an industry-leading industry sector model that is tailored specifically to the needs of businesses and industries in the Southwest Georgia, with services designed around high-demand occupation sectors as defined by the Board, will be the key strategy.

In concert with this key strategy, the Board will work directly with our workforce stakeholders and partners to determine and implement long-term strategies for attracting and supporting the development of high-skill, high-wage employers in our service areas. Our approach focuses on the needs of employers, as we partner with businesses to project upcoming workforce needs and put programs in place that will ensure a rich pool of qualified applicant to meet the

expansion needs of existing employers, or the recruitment needs of new businesses opening or relocating in the Southwest Georgia service area. By having innovative and effective systems ready to support growth, the Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board is an important catalyst to the expansion of high-skill, high-wage jobs in the region.

By effectively integrating career seeker services to match the identified needs of employers in the region, and by providing career seeker services intentionally designed to support realistic but ambitious career paths, the Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Boards' approach contributes directly to the long-term outcome of higher incomes for residents.

- b. How will the area support a local workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses in the local area? Discuss the area's workforce services to businesses and how business and organized labor representatives on the Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) contributed to the development of these strategies. Provide a listing of business services available through the area(s) such as employer workshops and assessment and screening of potential employees.

The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board will deploy an innovative industry sector mode that is tailored to the needs of industries and businesses in the region. We will strive to develop the Talent Pipeline to meet the needs of our business customer. We see our One Stop Center staff as employment recruiters rather than just job matchers. Close coordination with the Business Engagement Liaison and Business Services staff is crucial in coordinating the needs of businesses with the talent within the pipeline and the development of future talent.

- c. How will the area better coordinate workforce development programs and economic development? Additionally, identify economic development partners and describe the involvement of the economic development community in developing strategies.

Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board staff and board members attend and/or participate in Chamber of Commerce meetings, Rotary Club meetings, Regional Transportation Board meetings, Regional Advisory Council meetings, and Regional Commission meetings. The Board has an ongoing strategy of engaging local area businesses in dialog regarding their needs. These employer focus town hall style meetings are held in partnership with local Economic Development Authorities, Chambers of Commerce and other community stakeholders. Local area business leaders and workforce leadership have structured but open dialog about the successes and challenges faced in the Southwest Georgia region. This format is twofold in that employers

are able to provide valuable feedback regarding talent needs, and other workforce discussions while the workforce system offers existing workforce solutions and the Board as the source of designing programs that best fit the local area.

- d. How will the area strengthen linkages between the one-stop delivery system and unemployment insurance programs?

The utilization of professional development activities and scheduled and structured partner's meetings for Employment Service staff will be a priority as a consistent and strategic investment in staff development lends to our commitment to integrated workforce services. Currently, Employment Services staff of Georgia Department of Labor (GDOL), are trained in both employment services and Unemployment Insurance (UI) programs, which enables customers to receive seamless services geared to facilitate their return to employment. The knowledge of all partner programs will greatly enhance the customer's workforce system engagement.

**4. Regional Service Delivery** – (Only applies to regions that encompass two or more local areas)

Describe how the region will address the items listed below.

- a. Describe the plans for the establishment of regional service delivery strategies, including the use of cooperative service delivery agreements (if applicable).

Southwest Georgia Workforce Development encompasses one Local Workforce Development Area.

- b. Describe the plans for coordination of administrative cost arrangements including the pooling of funds for administrative costs (if applicable).

Southwest Georgia Workforce Development encompasses one Local Workforce Development Area.



**5. Sector Strategy Development** – Provide a description of the current regional sector strategy development for in-demand industry sectors.

The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board’s Sector Strategy development will be a strategic engagement. The Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998 attempted to promote employer engagement by adopting a “demand-driven” focus, which led to important improvements such as offering business services at one-stop centers and appointing employers as members of state and local workforce investment boards. Additionally, many community colleges such as Albany Technical College and Southern Regional Technical College have appointed industry advisory boards to engage business and industry and to guide program development. The region is experiencing the establishment of Career Academies as mechanism for aligning K–12 and postsecondary curricula with industry skill needs. The strategy includes incorporating the intent of the WIOA regarding sector strategies and facilitating ways to convene and maintain ongoing dialogue with industry and the workforce development system to understand industry needs, and facilitate learning between related businesses, or formulate effective workforce solutions.

In this strategic design, the Board will be the convener for bringing the different systems and other key stakeholders together to address industry and worker needs. The Board realizes the difficulties in coordinating public systems, and distinct funding streams that focus on specific categories of individuals. Nonetheless the intent of the sector partnerships will bring together information and resources to maximize impacts and take projects to scale, taking programs from small victories to big wins for all partners.

The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board will to continue to expand on the strategic efforts of the sector designs by initiating the dialog with school districts to identify ways to connect with Career Academies to improve the talent pipeline in these critical industry sectors. With the goal of creating relevant curriculum opportunities for middle and high school students to earn industry certifications. Further, the Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board will explore strategies with local school districts to incorporate and coordinate work-based learning opportunities supported by WIOA and non-WIOA resources and the inclusion of in-school youth as defined under WIOA.

Manufacturing - The Albany Technical College, through its Center for Business Solutions, has partnered with the Albany/Dougherty Industry Roundtable along with the Chamber of Commerce and EDC to develop a new Technical Certificate of Credit (TCC). This new program, ***Industrial***



***Operations Technician***, was approved by the Albany Technical College Board and the Technical College System of Georgia.

In the design of this program, local manufactures collaborated with the Center for Business Solutions to create a program from which they will hire new employees into entry level positions in their organizations. The company partners include: **Procter &**

**Gamble, MillerCoors, Coats & Clark, Mars Chocolate, Tara Foods, Albany Green Energy, Maintenance Center Albany – MCLB, Pfizer & SASCO Chemical.** Potential employees will be enrolled in the new TCC and be exposed to a variety of manufacturing principles including: Lean Six Sigma, Operations Management, Industrial Mechanics and interpersonal skills. Once complete, they will be given preferred “ready to work” status by the participating companies. The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board supports this new and exciting concept in meeting the workforce needs of our manufacturing community. This concept supports the WIOA sector strategy philosophy and that of the Board as it will make a difference not only for jobseeker customers seeking employment in the community but also making a difference in the success of our manufacturing partners.

Healthcare - The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board will use the IOT template to design and implement a Sector Strategy Model that focuses on additional demand and targeted occupations of the workforce region; that recognizes the varied career pathways within each of the individual industry sectors; and meets each career seeker where they are in their career pathway. It is anticipated that when fully implemented, the model will provide live and online training for all levels of career seekers at every step of their career pathway to teach elementary soft skills, entry level career pathway competencies, basic workplace competencies, required industry sector competencies all the way to management competencies, and occupation specific competencies, either provided at the One Stop Center or with an education or employer partner. As an interim step toward a small victory, the Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board has focused on the Heath Care Industry as described below. This section will be updated and modified as appropriate.

- a. Describe the partners that are participating in the sector strategy development.

Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board – Workforce Development  
Archbold Medical Center – Active Industry Partner  
Phoebe Putney Hospital – Future Industry Partner  
Moultrie Regional Hospital – Future Industry Partner  
CareerSource Capital Region – Workforce Development  
Georgia Department of Labor – Outreach  
Department of Vocational Rehabilitation Services  
Cairo Housing Authority – Community Based Organization  
Albany Technical College – Adult Education  
Southern Regional Technical College – Career Academy, Adult Education  
Bainbridge State College – Adult Education

b. Describe the meetings that have taken place and the strategy by which partners will continue to be engaged.

- Meetings are ongoing

c. Describe the research and the data that was used to identify the sector that was chosen for the sectors strategies training.

Burning Glass – Labor Insight Jobs data, Georgia Department of Labor – Labor Market Information, Georgia Department of Labor – Labor Market Explorer, Manufacturing Advisory Council

d. Provide a completed outline of the sector strategy for the previously identified sector that includes the following details:

i. Participating employers;

Archbold Medical Center

ii. Target occupations;

Certified Nursing Assistants

License Practical Nurse

Registered Nurse

Emergency Medical Technician

iii. Training programs; and

Certified Nurse Assistant – Customized Training  
On the Job Training – Employer based customized training  
License Practical Nurse – Occupational Skills Training  
Registered Nurse – Occupational Skills Training

**iii. Target Populations.**

Archbold incumbent workers  
Housing authority ROSS participants  
Long term unemployed  
Career Academy students  
Out of School youth

- e. Describe the plans for future strategy development for future sectors. If applicable, discuss the next sectors to be targeted.

**6. Description of the One-Stop Delivery System** – Provide a description of the one-stop delivery system in the local area that includes the items detailed below.

- a. Provide a description of how the local board will ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers of services through the system and ensure that such providers meet the employment needs of local employers, workers and jobseekers.

All potential training providers must submit an application to a Local Workforce Development Board within the state of Georgia for each program of performance to become an eligible provider. The local Board will review the application including specific performance and cost data for each program. If the provider programs are approved and all requirements (such as accreditation) are met, the Board may approve the provider and submit the application to WFD for placement on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). Once on the eligible training provider list and, the performance of providers is shared with Board members at their regular meetings. Placement and performance information is reviewed by staff and reported regularly. Providers who are not meeting performance expectations, or not providing training in demand areas may be removed from the local area's list of training providers. Customer's will be informed of training provider's performance to ensure they are selecting providers who will train them in demand employment areas and that can provide successful placement into employment.

Eligible providers will be required to include these standards to maximize the effectiveness of curricula and instruction, and to prepare students for transition to the workforce.

- b. Provide a description of 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 through other means.

Southwest Georgia's One-Stop delivery system is focused on ensuring universal access across the fourteen county area which includes two Comprehensive One-Stops and seven affiliate sites. Local area staffs are able to connect employers, educators, WIOA customers and partners on a daily basis. The plans to increase services and access for these key stakeholders are utilization of technology through increased virtual access already in place in most One-Stop locations, and use of the Georgia Work Ready Online Participant Portal data interface to facilitate the sharing of key workforce data between core partners.

The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board will steer the workforce system toward program integration to reduce the silo-type delivery of services and increase transparency for the customer. The Board will continue to support the emerging Regional Partnership with the Florida workforce system as an innovative approach to collaboration that will benefit multiple communities.

The Board supports the deployment of an innovative approach to industry sector modeling as a proven driver of employment and re-employment that aligns with the real demands of local businesses, resulting in long-term career success.

In a geographically widespread rural area such as Southwest Georgia, electronic access to resources and services is crucial to providing relevant services to career seekers. WIOA pre-application forms, eligibility information, workshops, trainings, and customer satisfaction surveys will be available online and on demand. We anticipate live and recorded streaming workshops and programs including material that will allow career seekers to invest time in their professional development according to their own personal schedules.

The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board collaborates with the Cairo Housing Authority by supporting the Resident Opportunity and Self Sufficiency (ROSS) - Service Coordinators Grant from HUD.

With this grant award, the Housing Authority will expand education, health, job development, self-sufficiency opportunities and supportive services programs within its Federal public housing developments by hiring a full-time ROSS Service Coordinator who will connect public housing residents with needed community services.

The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board coordinates and provides services, accepts referrals of public housing residents who are adults or dislocated workers through the one-stop delivery system.

- c. Provide a description of how entities within the one-stop delivery system, including one-stop operators and the one-stop partners, will comply with WIOA § 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. This should include the provision of staff training and support and addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities.

Southwest Georgia's One-Stop delivery system is focused on ensuring universal access across its workforce system. The local partners, maintain compliance with the provisions of WIOA Section 188 which require programmatic and physical accessibility. Through monitoring performed at both the state and local level, the local area ensures that all One-Stops are in compliance with Section 188 of WIOA, the ADA, and other applicable regulations. Individuals who seek to utilize the Region's workforce system can expect facilities, whether physical or virtual, to meet federally-mandated accessibility standards. In addition, the local area maintains a Memorandum of Understanding for each One-Stop location which outlines how compliance with WIOA Section 188 will be maintained.

Per federal law, the LWDA has appointed a local Equal Opportunity Officer who is responsible for ensuring local WIOA Section 188 compliance. Local Equal Opportunity Officers are responsible for informing senior staff of applicable federal regulations and ensuring all programs and activities are implemented in compliance. Additionally, the local Equal Opportunity Officer collects and resolves local grievances and complaints as needed. The Local Equal Opportunity Officers actively trains with the State's Title I-B Equal Opportunity Officer and USDOL's Civil Rights Center to remain current on regulatory updates and guidance. They are then responsible for circulating new information locally and ensuring it is properly implemented.

The local area has also developed a regular monitoring system of on-site visits of One-Stops, use of the MOU's to outline requirements of the One-Stops and ensure adherence to all local, State and Federal policies.

- d. Provide a comprehensive description of the roles and resource contributions of the one-stop partners.

#### ONE-STOPS AND INFORMATION CENTERS

One-Stop and affiliate sites are located in nine counties to assist any citizen within the area's 14 county region with job search related services. One-Stop/Affiliate Sites have computers which customers can use to search for jobs. Many have staff to assist with resumes. Some One-Stop/Affiliate Sites have facilities which allow customers to fax resumes to employers and contact employers by phone. The region's website also has current job listings for the entire 14 county region.

With the Local Area's focus on providing business services work-based learning including OJT and customized/incumbent worker training will be expanded through further capacity building and increased collaboration with economic development partners and local area employers.

The SWGA's One-Stop system across the fourteen county area includes One Comprehensive One-Stops and affiliate sites. Local area staffs are able to connect employers, educators, WIOA customers and partners on a daily basis. The plans to increase services and access for these key stakeholders are utilization of technology through increased virtual access already in place in several One-Stop locations, and use of the Georgia Work Ready Online Participant Portal data interface to facilitate the sharing of key workforce data between core partners. Each core partner has a role in ensuring that the local area's workforce continues to meet the needs of the employers helping the LWDA remain one of the best regions in which to do business.



The Wagner-Peyser Act of 1933 established a nationwide system of public employment offices known as the U.S. Employment Service. This system was established to provide

high quality job seeker and employer labor exchange service and information. The Wagner-Peyser Act was amended by the Workforce Investment Act of 1998. The amendment made the Employment Service part of the One-Stop services delivery system.

The WIOA continues the concept that the One Stop delivery system provide universal access to an integrated array of labor exchange services so that workers, job seekers and businesses can find the services they need in one stop and often under one roof.

In Southwest Georgia, the GDOL will offer training, technical assistance and support to partner staff who serve local job seekers and employers to ensure that program partners are highly engaged in local and State workforce partnerships that allow for the constant exchange of information on core programs, UI legislation, new workforce training providers, and available programs.

The UI and RO Division of GDOL will provide subject matter expertise and technical assistance on UI policies, rules, procedures, and systems to all its staff. In the training modules, staff is educated on how to detect, address, and resolve issues that affect UI eligibility. While in-depth training is provided to career center staff managing the UI claims process, an overview and ad hoc training of the UI process will be made available to WIOA and other workforce partners.

In addition to providing UI training, the UI & RO Division provides a dedicated customer service line staffed by experienced benefits analysts who address UI issues, questions and concerns; specify the benefits of ES; and resolve WIOA inquiries. The robust training and partnerships encourage exemplary service delivery to jobseekers and employers, and create opportunities to identify and/or create new training opportunities as laws and regulations change.

Workforce partners have access to select data elements, such as customer contact information and work history from GDOL. Sharing data between organizations assists staff in providing comprehensive, unduplicated services while eliminating unnecessary trips or contacts for the customer. In Southwest Georgia, the GDOL will work with workforce partners toward more meaningful data sharing agreements to better serve common customers of the workforce system.

The ability to file a UI claim is available at each and every comprehensive one-stop center. Access and meaningful assistance is critical, as commonplace with customer in rural Southwest Georgia with minimum public transportation, access to the Internet. Assistance is assured through:

- UI orientation provided to every new claimant explaining the full range of workforce services available to help them return to work;



- Online access via [www.dol.georgia.gov](http://www.dol.georgia.gov) where customers can file electronically from career centers, home, libraries or any other Internet portal;
- Dedicated, experienced staff at every one-stop;
- Fully staffed resource centers at all career centers, including Internet access, copies, phones, fax and resource libraries;
- A dedicated toll-free number for customers filing for UI at one-stops;
- Access points at over 40 one-stops and career centers across the state;
- An opportunity for each claimant to access in-person reemployment services as they come to career centers and one-stops to complete the UI filing process;
- The use of state-of-the-art EG résumé and job matching service as a requirement for ES registration for claimants;
- The availability of staff, technology, and written materials in a variety of languages to meet the needs of all customers;
- Fully accessible services, online and in person, to serve any customer with a disability;
- Joint participation of UI staff with other workforce partners in large layoff events;
- Daily referrals of customers from workforce partners to UI specialists to ensure that customers have access to all benefits to which they are entitled.

Within the One Stop system, the Wagner Peyser serves as the gateway to providing a system of matching jobseekers with employers. The Southwest Georgia Workforce System utilizes the triage concept where regardless of the entry point into the system, customers are first provided career services as an initial step toward employment and self-sufficiency. These services are provided through Southwest Georgia's one-stop and three additional affiliate sites. As a continuum of services, after receipt of appropriate career services, the customer is provided job placement assistance by WP and partner agency staff. If the customer is assessed and deemed to need training services, supportive services, or other services not available with WP resources or wherewithal, then the WP staff refer the customer to the other core partners based on the needs of the customer.

The career and training services provided through the region's one-stop system are comprised of WIOA Title I and Title III Wagner-Peyser funded services that are provided for the universal population in all designated one-stop centers either on location or through the referral system. Through the established system of partner coordination that has been in place since 2000, flexibility of one-stop services ensures customers receive direct access to the services which best fit their identified needs. The local area has created a system which offers two levels of services for adults and dislocated workers: career services and training services. Wagner- Peyser staff

will also provide Reemployment assistance, assistance with Unemployment Insurance and assistance to other unemployed individuals.

More about the Georgia Department of Labor can be found at <http://dol.georgia.gov/>.



The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board's strategy is to work with the partners: Wagner-Peyser, Vocational Rehabilitation, Adult Education and Literacy and TANF to ensure that the services provided by the core programs are easily accessed through the One

stop and affiliate career centers. The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board believes that aligning these services and being aware of co-enrolling opportunities can lead to better and more comprehensive services to our common customers.

With the Local Area's focus on providing business services work-based learning including OJT and customized/incumbent worker training will be expanded through further capacity building and increased collaboration with economic development partners and local area employers.

WIOA staff-assisted services focus on providing the following: (1) comprehensive and specialized assessments of the skill levels and service needs of adults and dislocated workers, (2) individual employment plans to identify the employment goals, appropriate achievement objectives, and appropriate combination of services for the participants to achieve employment goals, (3) individual counseling, and career planning, (4) case management for participants seeking training services, (5) short-term prevocational services including development of learning skills, resume building, communication skills, interviewing skills, punctuality, personal maintenance skills, and professional conduct to prepare individuals for employment. Training is provided for those who lack occupational credential/certification and require short-term continuing education in order to acquire certification/credentialing required for success in growing industries.

On-the-Job Training (OJT) allows our customers to work, earning a full paycheck from their employer while entering the job without all of the *specific* skills and/or knowledge needed to do the work. WIOA funds reimburse the employers up to 50% for customers' wages to compensate the employer for the time and extraordinary effort it takes to train the unskilled worker to do the job. After completion of a detailed training plan, if the employee has successfully completed training and learned the skills needed, the employer retains the "OJT" worker and the subsidy ends. This allows the worker to earn a paycheck while learning new skills and provides the employer with an employee trained "their way" while being compensated for the time it takes to train the new employee. A Service Specialist is assigned to work with the employer and the customer, and will assist in explaining and completing all the necessary paperwork. The Service Specialist is there to assist both the employer and the OJT customer, should any problems arise.

Individual Training Accounts (ITA) allow individuals to receive training from eligible training providers such as local Technical Colleges. WIOA funds may pay for the remaining balance of tuition and books after the HOPE grant is exhausted. WIOA may also pay for tuition and books. Customers may also receive support payments for transportation and child care. A Service Specialist is assigned to work with the school and the customer, and assists in explaining and completing all the necessary paperwork. The Service Specialist is there to assist both the College and the ITA customer, should any problems arise.

The year-round youth program is designed to better equip youth with the ability to obtain and maintain employment. The youth program provides training, work experience, and tools to help youth to become successful in the work place or college. In-school youth are encouraged to remain in school and a Service Specialist monitors their academic progress. The youth may also be eligible to earn money through the work experience program. The youth program guides youth to ensure they complete an educational program, gain work-related skills and enter college or become successfully employed. A Service Specialist is assigned to work with the customer and the school (for in-school youth), and will assist in explaining and completing all the necessary paperwork.

More about the Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board can be found at [www.workforce44.org](http://www.workforce44.org).



The Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency (GVRA) was formed on July 1, 2012, by an act of the Georgia General Assembly. GVRA has five rehabilitation programs: [Business Enterprise Program](#), [Disability Adjudication Services](#), [Georgia Industries for the Blind](#), [Roosevelt Warm Springs Institute for Rehabilitation](#) (including a satellite location at [Cave Spring Rehabilitation Center](#)) and [Vocational Rehabilitation](#). The [State Rehabilitation Council](#) (SRC) and the [Statewide Independent Living Council \(SILC\)](#) are federally mandated councils composed of Georgia citizens from across the state appointed by the Governor to represent a broad range of individuals with disabilities and stakeholders. They collaborate with GVRA to develop plans for services and make recommendations to assist individuals with disabilities achieve employment and independence.

Education, employment, and training services provided by GVRA include a variety of individual services to persons with disabilities in preparation for employment in the competitive labor market and to employers seeking to retain valuable employees with disabilities or hire qualified individuals. Services provided to jobseekers include: counseling, assistive technology, job placement, vocational assessment, medical evaluations, work adjustments, and physical restoration services. Services focused on employer activities include: candidate identification, jobsite coaching, helping an employer identify the right solutions/ accommodations for employee to be effective on the job through onsite job assessments, and providing technical support and training on those accommodations to ensure long-term success.

Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services are provided by a skilled regional rehabilitation team with representatives from the appropriate disciplines and externally from community resources as needed. The VR Program believes that cooperation and collaboration is necessary to maximize resources and address all aspects impacting individuals with disabilities in gaining or maintaining employment in Georgia. The VR Program is strongly allied with partners of the regional workforce development system and maintains many other cooperative agreements and working partnerships with entities outside the core workforce development system. To ensure participants, employers and businesses are engaged, GVRA will continue to focus on delivering activities already occurring within the regional workforce system as well as expand current efforts in a more organized and integrated manner to better serve individuals with disabilities. Specific units serving the Southwest Georgia Local Workforce Development Area 17, Region 10 are:

ALBANY Unit serving: Baker, Calhoun, Dougherty, Early, Lee, Mitchell, Terrell and Worth Counties
1107-A West Broad Avenue, Albany 31701
(229) 430-4170
(229) 430-3931 FAX
THOMASVILLE Unit serving: Colquitt, Decatur, Grady, Miller, Seminole and Thomas Counties
403 North Broad Street, Thomasville 31792
(229) 225-4045
(229) 225-5264 FAX



The Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG) oversees the state's technical colleges, adult literacy programs, and a host of economic and workforce development programs.

The Technical College System of Georgia is organized around three functional units directly serving the public. These units are supported by the system's administrative staff.

Technical Education

TCSG's educational and training programs are available across Georgia through our 22 Technical Colleges and 85 campus locations. In addition, last year over 66,000 students took an online course. TCSG offers over 600 individual majors to choose from. These majors range from one semester Certificates to Diplomas and Associate Degrees that can take over two years to complete. In 2014, TCSG enrolled just over 140,000 students and had almost 30,000 graduates.

Adult Education

Adult Education provides basic literacy and GED training through a variety of training providers and at over 200 locations throughout the state. Improvement in collaboration with WIOA and the one-stop system should increase access to GED services.

The TCSG, OAE is the State's Eligible Agency for Adult Education. OAE is responsible for administering funds to eligible providers, and providing program/performance oversight to grantees. OAE will provide funding to eligible local entities for the provision of adult education

services through a competitive RFA process. The RFA is the mechanism through which OAE will identify, assess, and award multi-year grants to eligible providers throughout the state. An eligible provider is an organization that has demonstrated effectiveness in providing adult education activities to eligible individuals

Through its 31 providers, the Office of Adult Education promotes and provides adult education programs throughout the state of Georgia. Literacy programs are available to adults needing basic, general, or specialized skills instruction. The Office of Adult Education facilitates collaboration among state and local entities to improve adult education efforts.

#### Economic Development (Quick Start)

The Office of Economic Development is dedicated to providing the customized workforce training needed by Georgia's businesses to stay competitive in today's global economy. Quick Start, Georgia's internationally acclaimed workforce training program, provides customized training free-of-charge to qualified new, expanding and existing businesses. In addition, the economic development offices at each technical college work every day to make sure their local companies have the customized, contract training they need to keep their workforces' skill up-to-date and cutting edge.

As of July 2015, TCSG enrolled over 140,000 students. These students chose TCSG for quality training that leads to employment. According to our most recent graduate survey, 85% of recent TCSG graduates are working in their field of study or a closely related field. When students that continue their education or work in another area are included, the successful transition rate is 98%.

The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board has training provider contracts with all TCSG schools within Region 10 to available the TCSG's educational and training programs to eligible and suitable WIOA participants. Through a continuum of leveraged services, the Board will continue to integrate WIOA funds to support the initiatives of the Governor and the General Assembly to improve TCSG student outcomes and thereby strengthen Georgia's workforce. The integration of service will include initiatives such as:

Strategic Industries Workforce Development Grant (SIWDG) Expansion: SIWDG funds are designed to supplement HOPE Grant funds and fully fund the cost of tuition for students. Governor Deal recommended and the General Assembly added additional SIWDG program areas

beginning fall semester 2015: Certified Engineer Assistant, Movie Production/Set Design, Precision Manufacturing and additional computer technology majors. This year's additions bring the number of SIWDG program areas to 10 with over 130 individual TCSG majors to choose from. The goal of the SIWDG program is to incentivize more students to go into these viable careers, rather than ones with few job prospects and little hope of a meaningful career. In doing so, we will bolster Georgia's economy and continue to attract business.

HOPE Grant Funding: the HOPE Grant Award amount was increased by 3% thereby reducing the out-of-pocket cost for most of TCSG's students.

Zell Miller Grant: increased HOPE funding for the Zell Miller Grant Program that provides full tuition assistance for TCSG students in certificate and diploma programs that maintain a 3.5 or higher grade point average.

High School Dual Credit: the "Move on When Ready Act" simplifies and streamlines the process used by high school students to enroll in college as dual credit students.

Georgia Film Academy: For FY 2016, the Governor recommended additional funds to continue the establishment and development of the Georgia Film Academy through a cooperative partnership between the University System and the Technical College System. The initiative is designed to support the 5.1-billion-dollar film industry in Georgia. This new film academy will attract and train workers for the growing film industry to keep up with demand.



Albany Tech traces its roots back to 1961 when it was established as the Monroe Area Vocational-Technical School enrolling 175 students. Shortly thereafter, the Albany Area Vocational-Technical School was built, and in 1972 the two schools were merged in the current location.

In July 1988, the Georgia Department of Technical and Adult Education (DTAE), now A Unit of the Technical College System of Georgia, was formed and the newly named Albany Technical Institute came under its direction. Albany Tech was charged with providing technical education opportunities to the residents, businesses and industries within a seven-county service delivery

area. These counties include Baker, Calhoun, Clay, Dougherty, Lee, Randolph and Terrell.

With the passage of House Bill 1187, the Georgia Legislature approved the changing of DTAE technical institutes' names to "college," providing they offered associate degrees. Meeting the criterion, Albany Technical Institute became Albany Technical College with a grand ceremony on July 6, 2000.

Albany Tech has adult learning centers in all seven of its service delivery counties. Today, more than 3,000 full-time students are enrolled in credit programs per quarter. Another 2,500 are enrolled part-time and in seminars, continuing education courses, teleconferences and customized business training.

Albany Technical College, a public post-secondary institution of the Technical College System of Georgia, provides technical education and training support for evolving workforce development needs of Southwest Georgia. To accomplish this mission, the College utilizes traditional and distance learning methods. Albany Tech stated purpose are based on the concept that education benefits individuals, businesses and the community. Albany Technical College's goals are:

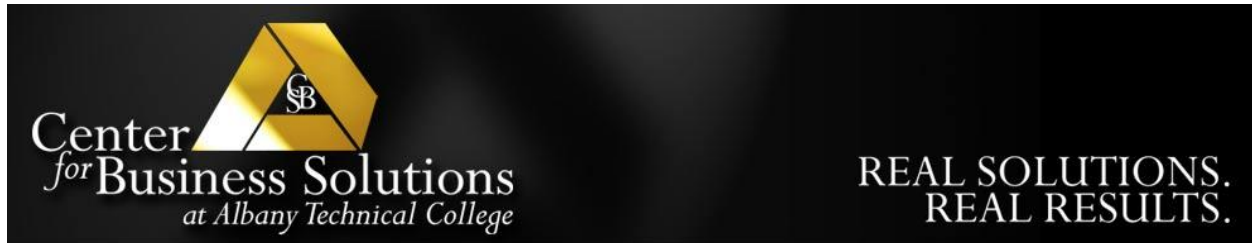
- To provide quality competency-based associate degree, diploma and technical certificates of credit programs that prepare students for employment in business, technical sciences, health care technology, personal services and industrial careers.
- To provide basic adult education and development programs to help adults improve life skills and prepare for continued education and training.
- To contribute to the technological advancement of area businesses and industry through education and training.
- To offer comprehensive continuing education courses and programs for the advancement of skills, knowledge and personal growth.

The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board collaborates with Albany Technical College to provide the talent needs of local business and industry. With membership on the Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board representing post-secondary education as well as Adult Basic Learning, the Board utilizes the resources provided by the institution to provide the skills and credentials that are identified by local businesses and industries.

The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board has a contractual relationship with Albany Technical College as a provider of training services to participants for the regional workforce



development system. More about Albany Technical College can be found at <http://www.albanytech.edu/>.



The Albany Technical College, through its Center for Business Solutions, has partnered with the Albany/Dougherty Industry Roundtable along with the Chamber of Commerce and EDC to develop a new Technical Certificate of Credit (TCC). This new program, **Industrial Operations**



**Technician**, was approved by the Albany Technical College Board and the Technical College System of Georgia.

In the design of this program, local manufactures collaborated with the Center for Business Solutions to create a program from which they will hire new employees into entry level positions in their organizations. The company partners include: **Procter &**

**Gamble, MillerCoors, Coats & Clark, Mars Chocolate, Tara Foods, Albany Green Energy, Maintenance Center Albany – MCLB, Pfizer & SASCO Chemical.** Potential employees will be enrolled in the new TCC and be exposed to a variety of manufacturing principles including: Lean Six Sigma, Operations Management, Industrial Mechanics and interpersonal skills. Once complete, they will be given preferred “ready to work” status by the participating companies. The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board supports this new and exciting concept in meeting the workforce needs of our manufacturing community. This concept supports the WIOA sector strategy philosophy and that of the Board as it will make a difference not only for jobseeker customers seeking employment in the community but also making a difference in the success of our manufacturing partners.

### **Lean Six Sigma**

The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board will coordinate and collaborate with the Albany Technical College- Center for Business Excellence as a provider for the Lean Six Sigma Technical Certifications. The Board realizes that every organization is a collection of processes that

are designed to facilitate operations and ensure the viability of the organization. When these processes become outdated or misapplied, if left alone, disaster or, at the very least, frustration can slow operations and reduce effectiveness.

Collaboration with Albany Technical College and the deployment of this methodology, at both the **Green (Quality Assurance Specialist), and Black Belt (Quality Assurance Professional)** levels is will equip individuals with the methodologies and tools that will enable them to make, at times, dramatic improvements to processes that can reduce waste, improve effectiveness, and raise profitability.

The Board feels that, as a possible layoff aversion strategy, this proven methodology that can help improve efficiency, and increase profits of local businesses, in addition to providing a credential that can improve individual capabilities.



**SOUTHERN REGIONAL**  
TECHNICAL COLLEGE

Southern Regional Technical College (SRTC) understand that life moves quickly - circumstances change, new

opportunities evolve, and career goals emerge. One of the most important decisions that one makes is which college to attend while continuing their education and creating a career. With expert faculty members, state-of-the-art equipment and technology, and hands-on training opportunities, SRTC offers a vast amount of resources toward career path success.

The College employs over 275 full-time personnel, 83 part-time staff members, and more than 190 adjunct instructors that will be tasked with providing the highest level of service and education possible to students in both credit and non-credit programs.

SRTC offers over 155 degree, diploma and certificate programs. SRTC's main campus is located in Thomasville, Georgia; with additional locations in Colquitt, Grady, Mitchell, Tift, Turner, and Worth counties for the convenience of its students. SRTC is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC).

The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board collaborates with Southern Regional Technical College to provide the talent needs of local business and industry. With membership on the Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board representing post-secondary education as

well as Adult Basic Learning, the Board utilizes the resources provided by the institution to provide the skills and credentials that are identified by local businesses and industries.

The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board has a contractual relationship with Southern Regional Technical College as a provider of training services to participants for the regional workforce development system. More about Southern Regional Technical College can be found at <http://southernregional.edu/>.

### Customized Training

The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board will coordinate and collaborate with the Economic Development Division. Like the Southern Regional Technical College, Customized training and workforce development programs are the core of our businesses. The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board and Southern Regional Technical College, believe that a highly trained workforce is vital to the success of any organization.

As a workforce development system training partner, the Board will work with Southern Regional Technical College, Economic Development as it provides: assessments to define business and industry training needs, and the development of customized training curricula and materials such as customized training topics to include: Health and Safety, Industrial and Mechanical, Supervisory and Leadership Development, Customer Service, Computer and Business Technology, Work Ethics, and Professional Certifications.

### Quick Start

For more than 40 years, Quick Start has provided customized workforce training free-of-charge to qualified businesses in Georgia. Both new businesses locating to Georgia and expanding industries in the state can greatly benefit from Quick Start's nationally acclaimed services. Quick Start delivers comprehensive workforce training services, from pre-employment assessment and training that helps companies "select the best," to customized, job-specific training that delivers exactly the right skills your business needs.

The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board will coordinate and coordinate with the Quick Start program as it has extensive experience delivering workforce training in a broad range of industry sectors; including: Biotech/Healthcare, Warehousing/Distribution, Automotive, Advanced Manufacturing, Food/Agribusiness, Service.

### Pre-Vocational Services

The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board will utilize Southern Regional Technical College to provide these pre-vocational training services. These services are intended for individuals who lack occupational credentials/certifications and require short-term services to enhance and upgrade skills for employment. Pre-vocational services may include services that:

- Prepare individuals for licensing or certification exams
- Enhance the employability of individuals who already possess occupational skills in demand but lack up-to-date skills required in most workplaces hiring for the occupation

As Examples, pre-vocational services include, but are not limited to, nursing license exam courses and computer skills training to enhance employability when individuals already possess a set of core occupational skills but do not have the technology skills required. Short term is defined as less than 120 clock hours.

#### Short Term Continuing Education

The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board can connect companies facing financial difficulties to resources that may prevent or reduce the need for layoffs.

The workplace has changed rapidly over the last three decades. Since the 1970s, global competition has been so strong that companies have had to dramatically adapt to survive. In some cases, that has meant modernizing facilities and processes to become more productive. Frequently, this modernization has also required developing new work systems to manage communication and work flow more efficiently. These changes in the workplace have increased employers' demand for an educated and skilled workforce. It has also placed additional pressure on the workforce development system to more effectively respond to that demand.

Workplace change models include practices from industrial modernization to "high performance" workplace models to the emerging concept of "stakeholder firms". By addressing the training needs and knowledge practices of workers, the workplace change approach does not just provide training on specific skills and techniques of the job or production. Rather, it seeks out strategies to promote greater cooperation between management and labor as firms attempt to upgrade their production methods and capabilities.

**American Heart Association**  **AUTHORIZED TRAINING CENTER** **American Heart Association Certification**  
*Learn and Live* | The Community Training Center at Southern Regional Technical College functions to broaden the outreach of the American Heart Association Emergency Cardiovascular Care Network

within our community. The number one goal of the American Heart Association and the Southern Regional Technical College Training center is saving lives.

The Community Training Center strives to promote the mission of the American Heart Association, fighting heart disease and stroke, by offering quality AHA training courses in basic life support, advanced life support and pediatric advanced life support to the community. The Community Training Center also serves to support affiliated instructors who require certification, the latest training information, materials and course completion cards.

Topics include, but are not limited to: Heartsaver AED Update for CPR Instructors, First Aid, CPR, CPR for Health Care Providers and Lay People, CPR Recertification for Healthcare Professionals, Pediatric CPR, CPR Instructor Course, Medical Records Coding, Ethics and Jurisprudence in Physical Therapy Practice.

### Computer Courses

Southern Regional Technical College offers a wide range of computer workshops including computer basics, net navigation, computer purchasing, to countless software classes such as Microsoft Office, Word, Excel, and Access.

Therefore, The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board will coordinate with the Southern Regional Technical College to provide short-term continuing education programs. The Board views deployment of these programs as a viable strategy to helping keeping businesses in business and competitive.

### Training Services Provided in lieu of an Individual Training Account (ITA)

In accordance with WIOA Section 134 and NPRM 680.320, training services may be provided in lieu of an ITA when one of more of the five following requirements are met:

- Services are OJT, customized training, incumbent worker training or transitional employment;
- The local board determines that there are an insufficient number of eligible providers of training services in the local area to accomplish the purposes of a system of individual training accounts. The Local Plan must describe the process to be used in selecting the providers under a contract or services. This process must include a public comment period for interested providers of at least 30 days; (see section "Provision of ITAs" and "Awarding Sub-grants and Contracts")

- The local board determines there is a training services program of demonstrated effectiveness offered in the local area by a community based organization or another private organization to serve individuals with barriers to employment. The local board must develop criteria to be used in determining demonstrated effectiveness, particularly as it applies to serving individuals with barriers to employment.
- The local board determines that it would be most appropriate to contract with an institution of higher education or other eligible provider of training services in order to facilitate the training of multiple individuals in in-demand industry sectors or occupations and such contract does not limit customer choice;
- The training contract is a pay-for-performance contract.



For more than 40 years, Bainbridge State has provided higher education to the residents of Southwest Georgia and Northwest Florida as one of the 29 institutions in the University System of Georgia.

Bainbridge State is the only institution in the University System of Georgia that can fulfill students' needs from both academic and technical perspectives by offering an array of programs from a Bachelor of Science in Business Management and associate's degrees to technical degrees and certificates. It prides itself in its integrated approach to learning by offering various course delivery methods for a bachelor's degree, associates' degrees in art, science, and applied science; certificates in business and technical fields; non-credit continuing education courses; adult education; and cooperative degree programs with Georgia Southwestern State University, Thomas University and the University of Georgia.

The main campus, located in Bainbridge, Georgia, sits on 173 acres of natural beauty, accentuated by stately pine and moss-draped oak trees. Bainbridge State College is a commuter institution with no on-campus housing. Students from nearby counties, such as Grady, Early, Mitchell, Seminole, and Miller, commute to the conveniently located main campus.

To make the Bainbridge State College experience even more convenient, a 26 acre site is offered in Early County. Located in Blakely, Georgia, the college continues to respond to the community's educational needs by offering a variety programs, non-credit courses and other learning

opportunities at the Bainbridge State College Early County Center. In 2016, Bainbridge State College branched out to its neighboring county, Seminole—and opened the Donalsonville Education Center, located in the heart of Downtown Donalsonville.

The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board has a contractual relationship with Bainbridge State College as a provider of training services to participants for the regional workforce development system. More about Bainbridge State College can be found at <http://www.bainbridge.edu/>.



Albany State University, a historically black institution in Southwest Georgia, has been a catalyst for change in the region since its inception as the Albany Bible and Manual Training Institute. Founded in 1903 to educate African-American youth, the University proudly continues to fulfill its historic mission while serving the educational needs of an increasingly diverse student population.

A progressive institution, Albany State University, seeks to foster the growth and development of the region, state, and nation through teaching, research, creative expression and public service. Through its collaborative efforts, the University responds to the needs of all its constituents and offers educational programs and services to improve the quality of life in Southwest Georgia.

The primary mission of Albany State University (ASU) is to educate students to become outstanding contributors to society. Offering Bachelor's, Master's, and Education Specialist degrees and a variety of non-degree educational programs, the University emphasizes the liberal arts as the foundation for all learning. Students are exposed to the humanities, fine arts, social sciences and the natural sciences. Global learning is fostered through a broad-based curriculum, diverse ASU activities, and extensive use of technology. A leader in teacher education, nursing, criminal justice, business, public administration and the sciences, Albany State provides a comprehensive educational experience with quality instruction as the hallmark of all its academic programs. The University embraces the concept of "students first" as a core institutional value. ASU is an advocate for the total development of students, especially the underserved. At this institution, a wholesome academic environment exists where students can study, learn, and

develop. Each student's skills and abilities are cultivated through their interaction with fellow students, faculty, staff, administrators, visiting scholars and community leaders.

The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board has a contractual relationship with Albany State University as a provider of training services to participants for the regional workforce development system. More about Bainbridge State College can be found at <https://www.asurams.edu/>.



Dartmouth State College is located on a 180-acre campus in Southwest Georgia, a region known for its year-round warm climate. The city has been ranked by *Money Magazine* as the best place to live in Georgia and among the top 115 places to live in the United States. With a population of 93,000, you will find a plethora of shopping areas and entertainment centers near the campus. Tallahassee (Fla.) and Columbus (Ga.) are a little over an hour away; Atlanta (Ga.) and Panama City (Fla.), three hours away; Orlando (Fla.) five hours away.

The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board has a contractual relationship with Dartmouth State College as a provider of training services to participants for the regional workforce development system. More about Bainbridge State College can be found at <http://www.darton.edu/>.



Abraham Baldwin

Agricultural College is a residential institution offering certificates, associate degrees in a broad array of disciplines, and baccalaureate degrees in targeted fields. With a state-wide mission in agriculture and strong programs in the liberal arts, nursing, business, the natural and physical sciences, the social sciences, and physical education, the College serves students with diverse educational career goals. Associate of Applied Science degrees prepare students for entry into a career field. Associate of Arts and Associate of Science degree programs provide the first two years of study toward a baccalaureate degree. Students may also pursue Baccalaureate degrees in selected fields.



Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College is a student – centered institution. As a point of access to higher education, the College provides a learning support program for under – prepared students. Evening, off – campus, and online courses furnish educational opportunities for individuals who are unable to attend classes in the traditional setting. Intercollegiate and intramural athletic programs and numerous student organizations offer students opportunities for physical and social development. Modern housing provides the convenience of on – campus residence life.

Vitaly involved with the educational and economic development of South Georgia, Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College continually strives to expand its service to the region. Public service programs include special – interest activities and courses, occupation – enhancing classes, youth enrichment camps, and performing and visual arts events. The College also provides administrative services and facilities that enable community and state organizations, as well as other units of the University System of Georgia, to bring seminars, meetings, and upper – level and graduate instruction to the region.

The College’s goal is to contribute to a better – educated Georgia. To that end, it engages in a comprehensive planning and assessment process, enabling it to build upon its strengths and correct weaknesses. The College’s faculty, staff, and administration are committed to excellence in preparing students to be informed, productive citizens in the Twenty – First century.

The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board has a contractual relationship with Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College as a provider of training services to participants for the regional workforce development system. More about Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College can be found at <http://www.abac.edu/>.

- e. Identify the current One-Stop Operator in the local area(s) and describe how the region/local area is preparing for the competitive process for operator selection. Describe how market research, requests for information and conducting a cost and price analysis are being conducted as part of that preparation.

The current One Stop Operator for the Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board is the Georgia Department of Labor. Pursuant to the Notice of Proposed Rule-Making, Section 678.635, Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) must have in place one-stop operators that are selected through a competitive procurement process no later than **June 30, 2017**. LWDBs must

be able to document by **June 30, 2016**, progress towards preparation for one-stop operator competitive procurement. This same NPRM citation defines progress as including, but not limited to, market research, requests for information, and conducting a cost and price analysis.

The Georgia Department of Economic Development – Workforce Division established a One-Stop Funding and Procurement Working Group that reviewed the relevant sections of the proposed rules and, ahead of the finalization of the proposed rule, identified several items that LWDBs must achieve prior to **June 30, 2016**, in order to meet the state’s requirement of documenting adequate progress towards competitive procurement of a one-stop operator. After the release of the final rule and any future federal guidance, there may be additional action that will need to be completed for compliance.

The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board have a current MOU in place until a competitively procured one-stop operator is in place, June 30, 2017.

Competitive procurement of the one-stop center operator. Several meetings between the LWDB and all required one-stop partners were conducted to determine any potential conflicts of interest that may exist with respect to the current operation of the LWDB and address the requirement for competitive procurement of the one-stop operator, and to ensure that all mandatory partners are engaged in the process. During the meetings, any mandatory partner, as well as the LWDA fiscal agent and/or administrative entity, announced their interest in responding to the competitive proposal request.

With this information documented by approved meeting minutes. The process of establishing a firewall to adequately separate any interested party from both the development and evaluation of the responses to the procurement is developed.

In the meetings with the Required Partners, it was unanimously agreed to the physical location of the One Stop Center, Georgia Department of Labor, Albany Career Center which is an existing location. Therefore, the LWDB did not complete an independent market research on available, other service providers, and costs of such services. Rather, the LWDB used an assessment tool to conduct an assessment of the existing location to determine, available space, parking, location, and other logistics.

Likewise, the LWDB did not conduct a cost-benefit analysis to determine whether to utilize or expand an existing location, since sufficient space is available. However, the LWDB conducted an assessment of the existing location to determine, available space, parking, location, and other logistics.

**7. Awarding Sub-grants and Contracts** – Provide a description of the competitive process to be used to award the sub-grants and contracts in the local area for activities carried out under this Title I.

The competitive bid process begins with planning and development. Once the Board or Committee reviews program design and planning requirements, including outcomes, a Request for Proposal (RFP) package solicitation is released.

The Board may procure equipment, supplies and services under the grant award agreement. Items expensed to the grant award must be reasonable and serve the primary objective of the agreement. All procurement transactions follow the federal regulations found at 2 C.F.R § 200.320

The purchase or construction of facilities or buildings is unallowable under the WIOA, except for certain circumstances requiring prior written approval from the federal awarding agency.

The Board is responsible for ensuring the vendors selected are not debarred or suspended by checking the information at <https://www.sam.gov/portal/SAM/##11>. The Board is authorized to make purchases of equipment, supplies and services as follows:

1. Micro-Purchases – \$3,000 and under. The Board is authorized to make purchases via micro-purchase. To the extent practicable, the Board must distribute micro-purchases equitably among all qualified suppliers. If the price is considered to be reasonable, then no competitive quotations are required.
2. Small Purchases – under \$150,000. The Board may purchase items with a value of less than \$150,000 (the Federal Simplified Acquisition Threshold.) If the Board's fiscal agent or administrative entity has established a lower threshold for procurement procedures, then the lower threshold shall prevail. Small purchase procurement may be achieved by obtaining price or rate quotations from an adequate number of qualified sources. Adequate documentation of all obtained quotations must be maintained and available for review by either State or the federal awarding agency. For all purchases that exceed the Board's simplified acquisition

threshold, cost-price analysis of similar goods or services must be conducted prior to solicitation.

3. The GDEcD-WFD requires the Board to submit for prior written approval all purchases where the unit price is \$5,000 or greater and the useful life of the proposed purchase is more than one calendar year. LWDA's should provide narrative explaining the need for the purchase, documentation to illustrate that all local, state, and federal procurement regulations were met, and copies of all quotes and supporting documentation considered in selecting a vendor. Additional information may be required if the unit price is \$50,000 or more. This information may be found in WIG GA-15-002. WFD will review all requests and provide a written determination within 30 days of receiving all documentation necessary to support the request for approval.
4. For all purchases that exceed the established simplified acquisition threshold, competitive procurement should be conducted, either through sealed bids for requests for proposal.
5. Noncompetitive Proposals: Sole source procurement may be awarded only if one of the following criteria are met:
  - a. The good/service is only available from one source
  - b. After solicitation from a number of sources, competition is determined inadequate. This is typically met through insufficient bid responses.
  - c. Through a formal request, WFD authorizes a noncompetitive proposal
  - d. Public emergency will not allow a delay resulting from the competitive procurement process. If an LWDA plans to use the public emergency criteria, WFD must be notified in advance. Responses to proposals are reviewed by staff and Board Members. The WDB Planning and Review Committee meets to complete the proposal review and grading process and makes recommendations to the Board regarding results of any competitive bid process. The WDB makes the final decision regarding awarding contracts.

**8. EEO and Grievance Procedures** – Briefly describe local procedures and staffing to address grievances and complaint resolution.

Contractors, employees or individuals applying for or receiving services through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act will be treated fairly. If any individual, group, or organization has a complaint, the problem should first be discussed informally between those involved before a grievance is filed.

Anyone who believes they have been harmed by a violation of any policies or regulations surrounding the Workforce Innovation and has the right to file a grievance. Grievances should be filed in accordance with the procedures established by the Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board.

The LWDA adheres to the following United States law: "No individual shall be excluded from participation, denied the benefits of, subjected to discrimination under, or denied employment in the administration of or in connection with any such program because of race, color, religion, gender, citizenship status, national origin, age, disability, or political affiliation or belief."

EEO Officer:

Cory Thomas, City Manager

Kesha Lavette, City Clerk

City of Colquitt, GA.

154 West St

Colquitt, GA 39837

229-758-1000

Hearings on any grievance filed shall be conducted within thirty (30) days of its filing with the City of Colquitt. Written decisions shall be rendered not later than sixty (60) days after the filing. Attempts at informal resolution may proceed during the 30-day period between the filing and hearing of the grievance and prior to the rendering of a decision on the grievance. If the complainant(s) does not receive a written decision within sixty (60) days of the filing of the grievance or the date of the hearing, or receives a decision unsatisfactory to the complainant(s), the complainant(s) then has/have the right to request a review of the grievance by the Governor.

No applicant, participant, service provider, or training provider will be intimidated, threatened, coerced or discriminated against because they have made a complaint, testified, assisted or participated in any manner in an investigation, proceeding or hearing.

## Local Boards and Plan Development:

1. **Local Boards** – Provide a description of the local board that includes the components listed below.
  - a Describe how local board members are identified and appointed. Include a description of how the nomination process occurs for adult education and labor representatives. (Proposed § 679.320(g))

The purpose for which this WDB is to provide policy guidance with respect to activities provided under the Workforce Investment Opportunity Act. The WDB's purpose is to:

- Provide strategic and operational oversight in collaboration with the required and additional partners and workforce stakeholders to help develop a comprehensive and high quality workforce development system in the local area and larger planning region;
- Assist in the achievement of the state's strategic and operational vision and goals as outlined in the Unified State Plan or Combined State Plan; and
- Maximize and continue to improve the quality of services, customer satisfaction, effectiveness of the services provided.

The WDB shall be responsible for providing policy guidance for and exercising oversight with respect to, the local workforce development system conducted under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act in partnership with the Chief Local Elected Official (CLEO) of the Southwest Georgia area.

As a result of the Southwest Georgia Local Workforce Area composition of multiple jurisdictions, the Chief Elected Officials Consortium or "Consortium" elects a Chairperson to serve as the Chief Local Elected Official, (CLEO). The CLEO is designated to act on behalf of the Consortium in accordance with its Consortium Agreement and Consortium bylaws.

The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board operates in the Local Workforce Area - 17 as designated by the Governor representing Baker, Calhoun, Colquitt, Decatur, Dougherty, Early, Grady, Lee, Miller, Mitchell, Seminole, Terrell, Thomas, and Worth Counties. The members of the Board must be selected by the CLEO consistent with criteria established under WIOA Sec. 107 (b) and criteria established by the Governor and must meet the requirements of WIOA Sec. 107 (b) (2).

The Board consists of a minimum of nineteen (19) members. An individual may be appointed as a representative of more than one entity if the individual meets all the criteria for representation, including the criteria described in paragraphs (C) through (G) of § 679.320.

The board composition shall meet the requirements stipulated in WIOA:

- A) minimum of 51% who are representatives of business in the local area and who shall be owners, chief operating officers, chief executive officers or other individuals with optimum policy making or hiring authority; and whose businesses provide employment opportunities in in-demand industry sectors or occupations. WIOA sec. (23) A minimum of two business representatives shall represent small business.
- B) at least 20% of the total board shall be:
  - a. minimum of two (2) representatives of organized labor or other representatives of employees, if existing in the area
  - b. representative of a joint labor-management or union-affiliated registered apprenticeship, if those programs exist or a representative of a registered apprenticeship program if one exists in the local area
  - c. may include one or more community-based organization qualifying for § 679.320 (c) 3
  - d. may be representatives of organizations with experience and expertise in addressing services to eligible youth per § 679.320 (c) 3
- C) at least one (1) representative of providers of adult education and literacy § 679.320 (d)(1)
- D) at least one (1) representative from institutions of higher education providing workforce activities § 679.320 (d)(2)
- E) at least one (1) representative each from:
  - a. economic and community development entities;
  - b. State Employment Service (Wagner-Peyser Act); and
  - c. programs under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 other than sec. 112 on Part C of that title.
- F) The memberships of the WDB may include other representatives per § 679.320 (e) (1) through (e) (4). All representatives will have optimum policy-making authority within the entities they represent. Nominations will be from designated organizations in accordance with § 679.320 (g) (1) through (3).

It shall be the duty of the Board's Executive Committee to recruit members to fill all vacancies. A position on the Board is considered vacant on the date the term expires, a member becomes ineligible, a member is removed, or a member resigns or dies.

Members of the WDB shall be appointed or replaced by the CLEO with nominations solicited for appropriate organizations:

- Business representatives shall be appointed from among individuals who are nominated by local business organizations and business trade associations.
- Labor representatives shall be appointed from among individuals who are nominated by local labor federations (or, for a local area in which no employees are represented by such organizations, other representatives of employees; and
- Institutions providing adult education and literacy activities under Title II and institutions of higher education providing workforce development activities as described in WIOA 107(b)(2)(C)(i) or (ii) shall provide nominations through solicitation from those particular entities (WIOA sec 107(b)(6)).
- Required WIOA partners and other organizations shall be requested to provide nominations for representatives.

b. Describe the area's new member orientation process for board members.



New Board members are provided with "New Member Orientation Packages" that include information such as the following:

- What is the Workforce Development Board?
  - What are the Board's Strategic Objectives?
  - Who is on the Workforce Development Board?
  - What is the connection between the Board and the City of Colquitt?
  - What is the connection between the Board and the Local Elected Officials Consortium?
- How does the Board Function?
  - What can I expect as a Board Member?

All board members are provided training opportunities that are provided by the Federal, State or associations such as the South Eastern Training Association (SETA), National Association of



Workforce Boards (NAWB), and Annual Board Retreats are scheduled to provide space for strategic planning for such activities as:

- Discussions regarding alignment of local policies to advise and influence decision makers.
- System integration driven by business needs and the synchronization of workforce and education with the ultimate goal of engaging jobseekers in needed occupations within targeted industries such as healthcare and manufacturing.
- Strategies to market workforce services to multiple groups and the business community.

c. Describe how the local board will coordinate workforce development activities carried out in the local area with regional economic development activities carried out in the region (in which the local area is located or planning region).

### Economic Development and Business Engagement

The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board will continue to increase its collaboration with local business with: the incorporation of Chambers of Commerce memberships and Chamber of Commerce executive leadership on the Workforce Development Board; the functions on the Business Engagement Liaison, (WDB staff position); collaboration with private and public Regional Economic Development Liaison and Coordinators. This coordination will assist the WDB to deliver better workforce development investment activities and strategically support the needs of new, existing, and expanding businesses. The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board will continue to have actively participation in advisory/work teams to align services such as recruitment, hiring, and training efforts. The Board will often serve as a convener of other resources provided by other community and educational partners.

In continued efforts to understand the needs of businesses, the Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board will continue with town hall type insight sessions with local area businesses, industries and economic development leaders to continue the learning and collaboration. Heretofore, the Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board has gained valuable industry knowledge through the sessions that has assisted core partners to support the needs of businesses by providing valuable talent.

d. Describe how local board members are kept engaged and informed.

Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board members receive electronic Agenda and Board Member Packages at least a week before the Board Meeting. Members are asked to review the materials prior to the meeting in order to fully engage in discussion and make informed decisions.

The website found at [www.workforce44.org](http://www.workforce44.org) serves as the central portal for information, meeting schedules, and newsletters of interest to Local Elected Officials, Board Members, Board Staff and other Stakeholders.

It is the intent that each member of the Board serves on at least one committee. Most of the work done by the Board happens at the committee level. Issues and projects surface at the committee level with staff support, and move to the Executive/Finance Committee for discussion and are proposed to the full Board for action.

2. **Local Board Committees** – Provide a description of board committees and their functions.

The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board shall have an Executive/Finance Committee which shall be composed of the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Secretary, and two members to be appointed from the Board. No county shall have more than one (1) private sector business representative (non-statutory representative) on the Executive/Finance Committee. The Executive/Finance Committee may have the authority to act on behalf of the full Board in emergency situations. The full Board will be apprised of such situations as soon as reasonably possible.

The Executive/Finance Committee shall be responsible for coordinating and overseeing the activities of the Board and Committees to ensure the satisfactory performance of functions stipulated by the Governor, the Bylaws and all pertinent statutes and regulations.

The Executive/Finance Committee shall also guide the administrative management of the Board. Additionally, the Executive/Finance Committee shall have general supervision of the affairs of the Board in the intervals between board meetings. The Executive/Finance Committee may meet as often as it deems necessary. The Executive/Finance Committee shall make recommendations to the Board and exercise such powers as may be delegated to it by the Board. The Executive/Finance Committee shall act on behalf of the board between regularly scheduled board meetings. Actions of the Executive/Finance Committee shall be the actions of the Board unless rejected by the board at its next meeting.

The Executive/Finance Committee shall act on behalf of the Board when quorums are not established at a board meeting. When the Executive/Finance Committee acts on behalf of the

board in the absence of a board quorum, the acts of the Executive/Finance Committee shall be the acts of the Board.

The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board shall have a standing Youth Committee to provide information, guidance and to assist with planning, operational, oversight and other issues relating to the provision of services to youth. The Youth Committee members shall include: a member of the Board who chairs the committee, members of community based organizations with a demonstrated record of success in serving eligible youth and other individuals with appropriate expertise and experience who may not be members of the Board. The Youth Committee shall reflect the needs of the local area. Members may represent agencies such as education, training, health, mental health, housing, public assistance, and justice or be representatives of philanthropic or economic and community development organizations and employers.

The Youth Committee may also include parents, participants and youth. (WIOA sec. 129 (c)(3)(C).

The Youth Committee members may be voting members of the committee but non-voting members of the Board. The Board may designate the existing Youth Council if it fulfills the requirements above until the Youth Committee is designated.

The Chairperson shall have the authority to appoint additional standing or special committees for any legitimate purpose, at his/her discretion. A legitimate purpose is defined as one needed to achieve the stated and approved objectives of the Board. The term of any standing committee will expire at the conclusion of its stated mission as determined by the Board. Likewise, the term of any special committee shall expire upon the completion of the task for which it was created.

3. **Plan Development** – Provide a description of the process by which the plan was developed including the participation of core partners, providers, board members and other community entities. Also describe the process used by the local board to provide a 30-day comment period prior to the submission of the plan including an opportunity for public comment, including comment by representatives of businesses and comment by representatives of labor organizations, representative of education and input into the development of the local plan.

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) provides for a new regional planning process designed to promote alignment with economic development and education, improved services to employers, workers and job seekers, improved performance in the delivery of workforce services and more efficient delivery of services through coordinated administrative arrangements. The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board and its partners have a unique opportunity to engage in regional planning in order to meet the goals of both WIOA and, the demand for talent development.

The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board Chairman, Chief Local Elected Official, and representatives from all required partners met on two occasions to discuss agenda items to include One Stop Operator procurement, workforce system design and regional planning.

The Board's ongoing strategy of engaging local area businesses in dialog regarding their needs provided industry and economic development feedback. These employer focus town hall style meetings are held in partnership with local Economic Development Authorities, Chambers of Commerce, Education, Vocational Rehabilitation and other community stakeholders.

The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board views this Regional Plan as a strategic instrument that will be revisited as WIOA implementation progresses and local systems, agencies, stakeholders and designs adapts to those changes. Therefore, modifications to this plan are essential to remain relevant to the local demands and the intent of WIOA.

On May 25, 2016, the plan was presented to the Executive/Finance Committee for Board approval. The Board approved plan was sent to stakeholders to include representatives of businesses, representatives of labor organizations, representative of education on August 1, 2016, advertised in local newspapers in the region, and posted to the website at: [www.workforce44.org](http://www.workforce44.org) for public comment as required by WIOA.

At the conclusion of the public comment period any public comments received and the final plan will be presented to the GDEcD-WFD for final approval.

## Service Delivery and Training:

1. **Expanding Service to Eligible Individuals** – Provide a description of how the local board, working with the entities carrying out core programs, will expand access to employment, training, education and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals with barriers to employment. Include how the local board will facilitate the development of career pathways and co-enrollment, as appropriate, in core programs, and how it will improve access to activities leading to a recognized postsecondary credential, academic or industry recognized.

The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board has a widespread network to provide eligible individuals access to employment, training, education and supportive services within the region. Our One Stop and affiliate centers are strategically located within the region to provide physical access to job seekers and employers. Services are facilitated through the [www.workforce44.org](http://www.workforce44.org) website and will include many online workshops for job seekers. Local WIOA priority services are in place to target and provide services to individuals with barriers to employment including veterans, eligible spouses, recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient. Individuals with disabilities are provided appropriate access at all locations.

The Board will revisit its list of demand occupations to align with its focus on Career Pathways as authorized under WIOA. The region will increase its focus on funding credential/certification based programs that are on the statewide or regional high skill/high wage occupations rather than just narrowing to a specific sector. The use of short-term on-line programs will also serve to better prepare job seekers with pre-vocational and/or work skills.

Assessments, individualized career plans, and supportive services to enable participation and completion of training are in place and reviewed for needed enhancements. Center staffs will be cross-trained to refer individuals across programs to benefit the customer. Individuals who are co-enrolled with core partners are provided unduplicated supports with unsubsidized employment as a common goal among partners.

The Board will engage in policy development and strategies that supports the funding of eligible WIOA participants for approved trainings that move them up their career path. The Board will develop policy that will align with Career Pathways such that will counter the WIA policy which individuals could train and complete only one program certification or credential unless an

exception was requested and approved. WIOA participants may now be funded for additional approved training(s) that move them up their career path. The policy will specify that all regionally funded programs must be in demand. Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) in the region will be focused on funding high skill/high wage programs that are on the statewide or regional demand list. The fact that employment is limited in our rural area, the board will continue to provide training and employment opportunities in health care and manufacturing, with sufficient training resources to these sectors.

Heretofore, the workforce system contact with the employer ends at placement or soon thereafter and the required follow-up with the participant. This cycle often resumes the next time workforce placement services are needed. The Career Pathway concept extends this relationship by incorporating activities, such as incumbent worker training, and customized training as value-added products for the employer. These products extend the space by no longer limiting training to a physical one-stop location, but may be offered at the worksite, at a training center, or over the internet. The foundation of this strategy is that all employment and training services are delivered within the framework of the skills needs of the business community or industry.

Within the context of Career Pathways and policy development, the Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board will explore a career development methodology that results in wage progression through initial attachment to the workforce, continual skill gains, stackable credentials, and personal development activities. As a strategic framework, this approach builds upon a program design of: placement, retention, advancement and/or rapid re-employment services. With this philosophy, job seekers are not necessarily terminated from career development services at job placement. Success is measured by the ongoing skill development and wage growth of the job seeker. The Board will also develop appropriate performance matrices to evaluate the design.

The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board intends to provide an innovative and progressive workforce system that provides qualified employees to employers. This will be accomplished by innovation, responsiveness, customizing services and targeted marketing along with collaborative partners. The LWDB meets with business and industry employers to better align training with employment needs and create a pipeline of qualified candidates. On-going needs and employment qualifications are communicated to center staffs. Strengthening efforts with business partners is currently being promoted by an aggressive initiative to facilitate worksite trainings and generate a more efficient referral system. Work Experience, and OJT provide additional opportunities for disabled individuals and those with barriers to employment.

The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board serves a rural area and as such staff are constantly meeting with key industry leaders. As these relationships foster it leads to a closer working relationship and coordination of services to meet the needs of both the job seeker and the employer. We continuously evaluate our partnership and are constantly looking for additional ways to partner; especially with the business community and our key industry sectors.

**2. Description of Service to Adults and Dislocated Workers** – Provide a description and assessment of the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the local area.

**OCCUPATIONAL SKILLS TRAINING, (OST)** - All training services provided by the Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board are provided in accordance with the WIOA and any State or locally developed policies.

Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) are established on behalf of the participant. WIOA Title IB Adult, Dislocated Worker and youth participants will use ITAs to purchase training services from eligible providers they select in consultation with the counselor or coordinator.

Individual Training Account services may be made available to employed and unemployed adults and dislocated workers who have met the eligibility requirements for career services, and have been determined to be unable to obtain or retain employment leading to self-sufficiency through such services.

The participant must have a completed Individual Employment Plan (IEP) that indicates, through interview, evaluation or assessment, the participant's employment goals, appropriate achievement objectives, and appropriate combination of services for the participant to achieve the employment goals have been identified.

Selection of a training program must include the identification that the training is directly linked to occupations that are in demand in Local Workforce Development Area 17, or in another area to which an adult or dislocated worker is willing to relocate.

Individual Training Accounts are limited to participants who (29 U.S.C. § 2864 (d)(4)(B); 20 C.F.R. § 663.320):

- Are unable to obtain grant assistance from other sources (including Federal Pell and other federal grants) to pay the cost of their training; or
- Require assistance beyond that available under grant assistance from other sources (including federal Pell, GI Bill and other federal grants) to pay the cost of their training.
- Service providers and training providers must coordinate funds available and make funding arrangements with partner agencies so that WIOA ITA funds supplement Pell and other grant sources to pay for the cost of training.
- Participants may enroll in ITA funded training while their application for a Pell Grant is pending provided that the service provider has made arrangements with the training provider and the participant regarding the allocation of the Pell Grant, if it is subsequently awarded. If a Pell Grant is awarded, the training provider must reimburse the service provider the ITA funds used to underwrite the tuition portion of the training costs from the PELL Grant.
- Program operators should consider all available sources of funds, excluding loans, in determining an individual's overall need for WIOA funds. Resources such as PELL, GI Bill and other federal grants should not be included in calculations of the level of WIOA assistance until the grant has been awarded.

Tuition is the sum charged for instruction and does not include fees, books, supplies, equipment and other training related expenses. Reimbursement is not required from the portion of Pell Grant assistance disbursed to the participant for education-related expense.

The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development has a monetary limit or cap on ITAs of \$10,000 per program of study per participant during the duration of training. WIOA customers may select training that costs more than the maximum ITA level when other sources of funding are available to supplement the ITA (e.g., HOPE, Pell grants, and scholarships).

ITAs are awarded per semester, quarter or for uninterrupted training coursework. Second and subsequent ITAs will be awarded only for continuing classes in the educational or training institution initially attended, unless there is mutual and justifiable agreement between the service provider and the participant that another training institution or training program is necessary.

An individual who has been determined eligible for an ITA may select a training institution/program from the Georgia Eligible Provider List (EPL) or from another state, provided that the training institution/program is listed on that state's Eligible Provider List, after consultation with a counselor or coordinator. Unless the program has exhausted funds for the



program year, the service provider must refer the individual to the selected training institution/program, and establish an ITA for the individual to pay for training.

Payments may not be made to a training provider until the service provider ensures that the training provider selected is on the EPL at time of payment for tuition and fees under WIOA ITAs.

The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board has developed a local policy that details how all other funds will be used prior to expending WIOA funds for coordinating WIOA funding. The local policy and procedure ensures that participants have applied for HOPE, Pell, GI Bill, and all other appropriate funding sources. WIOA participants may enroll in training while Pell, Hope, GI Bill, and other funding sources are pending as long as the appropriate arrangements have been made with the training institution regarding the allocation of all grants and funding sources.

Local policy requires the career counselors to conduct an analysis of the participant's financial needs (cost of attendance) to document a participant's total cost of attending training. The career counselor analyzes things such as the costs of tuition, fees, books, supplies, transportation, childcare, living expenses, and other appropriate personal and educational related expenses.

If it is determined through the analysis of the cost of attendance that the total cost of attending training exceeds the amount available through HOPE and WIOA funding, then Pell funds may be utilized by the participant for living and other appropriate personal expenses during the training period.

The documentation supporting this determination are included in the participant's case file, case notes, etc., for the purposes of auditing and/or monitoring.

Individual Training Accounts are designed to identify WIOA funded costs associated with the training cost of attendance. The cost of attendance may include tuition, fees, room and board, books, supplies, and other training related costs required for participation in a specific training program.

The ITA identifies the WIOA obligation for the participant and the participant will be able to access information about the account from the service provider.

Each of the Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board's contracted training service providers are responsible for maintaining an ITA payment system which ensures that payments

made are timely, for the agreed upon amount. The Board ensures that the provider is on the EPL at time of payment and that the payments are supported by appropriate documentation.

**ON THE JOB TRAINING, (OJT)-** The WIOA § 3 (44) defines On-the-Job Training (OJT) as training that is provided by an employer in the public, private non-profit, or private sector to a paid participant while engaged in productive work in a job that:

- Provides knowledge or skills essential to the full and adequate performance of the job;
- Provides reimbursement to the employer of up to 50% of the wage rate of the participant, except as provided for in WIOA § 134 (c)(3)(H), for the extraordinary costs of providing the training and additional supervision related to the training; and
- Is limited in duration as appropriate to the occupation for which the participant is being trained, taking into account the content of the training, the prior work experience of the participant, and the OJT training plan and/or service strategy of the participant.

OJT may be provided to eligible WIOA participants who, after assessment, are found to be in need of and suitable for training services in order to obtain or retain employment that leads to self-sufficiency.

The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board requires documentation of the decision to provide OJT in the participant's Individual Employment Plan or Individual Service Strategy. The decision should demonstrate that the training chosen is appropriate and necessary, that the participant does not already possess all of the skills necessary for the job, or that the participant needs to upgrade skills to effectively perform in another job. Until the OJT Agreement is fully initiated, no participant may begin OJT employment.

#### Eligibility for Employed Workers

The NPRM 680.710 provides that OJT contracts may be written for eligible employed workers when:

- The employee is not earning a self-sufficient wage as determined by Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board policy;
- The requirements in WIOA § 194 (4) that contracts may not be made with an employer that exhibits a pattern of failure to provide participants long-term employment as well as wages and benefits; and the contract must be limited to the period of time required for a participant to become proficient in the occupation for which the training is provided; and

The OJT relates to the introduction of new technologies, introduction to new production or service procedures, upgrading to new jobs that require additional skills, workplace literacy, or other appropriate purposes identified by the Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board.

#### OJT Contract Requirements

Any firm, employer or industry who has received payments under previous contracts and has exhibited a pattern of failure to provide OJT participants continued, long-term employment as regular employees with wages and working conditions at the same level and to the same extent as similarly situated employees are ineligible to enter into further WIOA OJT contracts. WIOA § 194 (4).

To verify that an establishment is expanding rather than/and not relocating employment from another area, the Board shall conduct a pre-award review to ensure that the establishment did not layoff or displace any workers at another location within the United States.

No WIOA funds shall be used to encourage or to induce the relocation of an establishment, or part thereof, which results in the loss of employment for any employee or such establishment at the original location. For 120 days after the commencement or the expansion of commercial operations of a relocating establishment, no WIOA funds shall be used for customized or skill training, on-the-job training, or company-specific assessments of job applicants or employees, for any relocating establishment or part thereof at a new or expanded location if the relocation of such establishment or part thereof results in a loss of employment for any employee of such establishment at the original location.

For the purposes of this section, relocating establishment means a business entity, including a successor-in-interest, which is moving any operations from a facility in one labor market area within the United States and its territories to a new or expanding facility in another labor market area. For the purposes of this section, a labor market area is an area within which individuals can readily change employment without changing their place of residence.

WIOA OJT training is provided based on a formal, written contract with the private or public sector that is signed prior to the initiation of training with a copy given to the employer.

An OJT contract must be limited to the period of time required for a participant to become proficient in the occupation for which the training is being provided. In determining the appropriate length of the OJT agreement, consideration should be given to the skill requirements

of the occupation, the academic and occupational skill level of the participant, prior work experience and the participant's individual employment plan. WIOA § 3 (44) (H).

An OJT contract may be for the term of the program year or it may be for the term of the skills training being provided.

In determining an employer's viability for OJT contracts, the Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board considers items such as the employer's past history with OJT or customized contracts, financial stability, layoffs, relocation and labor disputes, as well as the occupational and industry outlook.

The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board will not initiate OJT training contracts to provide skills for seasonal, temporary or intermittent employment.

WIOA funds shall not be provided to reimburse OJT training costs when the participant was referred and hired through a private employment agency and was required to pay a referral and placement fee; No placement may be made in agencies providing workers on a temporary basis to employers for which the agency receives compensation from the employer. There are many types of staffing agencies that provide a variety of services to employers including outplacement, managed services, and outsourcing. Outsourcing is a contractual agreement between an employer and an external third-party provider whereby the employer transfers responsibility and management for certain human resource services, benefit or training-related functions or services to the external provider. Outsourcing is different from these other types of staffing firm models because it is not a temporary situation for the employee. If all (or most) employees are hired by an outsourcing firm that an employer regularly uses as the employer of record, the use of OJT would be allowable. Excluded from this are firms that hire probationary employees through a traditional staffing agency and then transfer them to their own payroll after the probationary period has passed. Therefore, employer use of outsourcing firms or staffing agencies which are solely performing outsourcing functions, may allow for an OJT placement. The OJT contract should include a clause ensuring the following:

1. The OJT trainee is to be considered a regular employee, not a temporary one.
2. The reimbursement is to be paid to the employer, not the outsourcing firm, and it is to reimburse the employer for the extraordinary costs of training the employee.

OJT training contract will address:

1. The employer's commitment to hire the participant as a full-time employee with the same, wages, benefits, hours, and conditions as existing employees on the first day of the OJT;
2. The hourly wage of the participant. The minimum starting rate of OJT employees shall be the greater of the applicable federal and state minimum wage or the same rate as trainees or employees similarly situated in similar occupations by the same employer, and who have similar training, experience and skills, whichever is higher. WIOA funds shall not be used for overtime wages, holidays, sick leave, or vacations.
3. The length of training required. The minimum length of training is four weeks which is noted with an SVP code of 3. The maximum length of training is six months (1080 hours) which is noted with an SVP of 5 and above. OJT hours are based on USDOL-specific vocational preparation codes for occupations. OJT training shall be limited to a period not to exceed that which is generally required for the acquisition of the skills needed for the particular occupation
4. A description of the occupations involved, skill(s) and competencies to be provided and learned, assessment (examples include: TABE, Career Scope, Prove It, etc.) and identification of the participant's skills gap;
5. Performance outcome requirements;
6. A training plan (with a rating scale for skills at hire and at completion of the OJT) that defines successful completion of training;
7. A provision addressing termination for lack of funds or recapture of funds, lack of participant attendance or failure of employer to comply with initial or upgraded employment requirements; and
8. A provision for maintaining and providing records for local area, state, and federal monitoring and review.

### Employer Reimbursements

OJT training reimbursement to employers is deemed to be compensation for the extraordinary costs associated with training participants, including extra supervisory efforts, non-productive time, material waste and other incidentals, and the costs associated with the lower productivity of the participants. Employers are not required to document such extraordinary costs. (NPRM 680.720).

Employers that meet the qualifications are eligible to receive a wage reimbursement rate of 50%; however, some employers may be eligible to receive a wage reimbursement rate of up to 75%. WIOA § 134 (c)(3)(H)(ii)

In order for an employer to be eligible for a wage reimbursement rate of over 50% and up to 75%, that employer must meet one of the four following criteria:

1. The employer must be a small business as defined by the Small Business Administration. Small business size standards by industry can be found at [https://www.sba.gov/sites/default/files/files/Size\\_Standards\\_Table.pdf](https://www.sba.gov/sites/default/files/files/Size_Standards_Table.pdf).
2. The OJT must lead to the participant's attainment of an industry recognized credential.
3. The participant must be determined to be an individual "with barriers to employment," as listed in WIOA § 3 (24), to include individuals who are long-term unemployed.
4. The participant's job title must be on the state's in-demand occupations list.

OJT contracts are granted based upon availability of funding and may be limited or unavailable due to funding constraints.

If a collective bargaining agreement exists between the employer and the employees or their representatives, a written concurrence from the appropriate labor organization(s) is required prior to the OJT.

#### Employer Responsibilities

The employer agrees that OJT employees will not displace any currently employed workers (including partial displacement, such as by reducing hours or denying promotional opportunities, wages or other employment benefits).

- The employer agrees that no OJT employee can be employed when: (a) any other individual is on lay-off from the same or substantially equivalent job, or (b) the employer has terminated the employment of any regular employee or otherwise reduced its workforce with the intention of filling the vacancy created by hiring a OJT employee whose wages are subsidized under this agreement.
- The employer agrees that OJT employees may not be engaged in the construction, operation or maintenance of any facility used for religious instruction or worship.
- The employer agrees that no individual in a decision making capacity engages in any activity, including the administration of the OJT contract supported by WIOA funds, if a conflict of interest, real or apparent, is present. A conflict of interest may arise in the event that an employee under this OJT contract is an immediate family member (or partner) of

an individual engaged in a decision making capacity with the LWDA, the LWDB, or the employer.

*Immediate family is defined as husband, wife, son, son-in-law, daughter, daughter-in-law, mother, mother-in-law, father, father-in-law, brother, brother-in-law, sister, sister-in-law, aunt, uncle, niece, nephew, stepparent, stepchild, grandparents and grandchild, or an organization that has a financial or other interest in the firm or organization selected for the OJT contract.*

- In the event of a potential conflict of interest, the Employer must notify the Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board, in writing, of the potential conflict. No action regarding the individual may take place until approved by the Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board in writing.
- The employer agrees that there will be no preferential treatment of a person or group of people over other people or groups in the workplace.
- The employer agrees that no person shall – on the grounds of race, color, sex, age, disability or national origin– be subjected to illegal employment discrimination.
- The employer agrees to maintain appropriate standards for health and safety in work and training environments.
- The employer agrees to comply with Georgia law regarding workers' compensation insurance for all OJT employees. Information on how to comply with Georgia law is found at: <http://sbwc.georgia.gov>
- The employer agrees to retain the OJT employee upon completion of the training if the employee's performance meets the employer's standards.
- If the employer does not have an established employee grievance procedure, the employer agrees to abide by the procedure provided by the Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board.
- The employer shall only employ OJT employees who have been found eligible for WIOA services prior to placement on the employer's payroll.

- The employer understands that OJT employees shall be compensated at the same rates, including periodic increases, as all similarly employed workers. In no event shall the rate of pay be less than the applicable state or federal minimum wage, whichever is higher.
- The employer agrees that OJT employees must receive the same benefits and have the same working conditions as similarly situated employees.
- The employer shall maintain all records pertaining to the OJT, including application, notice of hire, time sheets, payroll records, invoices for wage reimbursement and other relevant financial records, and shall make them available to the Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board representative as requested. All said records, books, papers or documents shall be retained for a period of six years from the date of termination of this agreement and available for inspection by federal, state, and Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board representatives. In the case of an audit or litigation, said documents shall be retained until all such actions are settled; even if the period of retention exceeds six years.
- The employer agrees to participate in any follow-up efforts conducted by the Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board or its authorized representative to evaluate OJT effectiveness.
- Continuation of employer agreements for multiple years will be contingent on meeting established performance outcomes.
- The employer must not use funds provided for OJT to directly or indirectly assist, promote or deter union organizing.
- The employer must not use the OJT to impair existing contracts for services or collective bargaining agreements.
- The employer will meet the provisions of the Georgia Illegal Immigrant Enforcement Act of 2011 by signing and complying with the affidavit.

**CUSTOMIZED SKILLS TRAINING, (CST)** - Customized Skills Training is designed to meet the special requirements of an employer a group of employers by allowing them to tailor and design work based skills training. Customized training is conducted with a commitment by the employer



to employ, or in the case of incumbent workers, continue to employ, an individual on successful completion of the training.

Employers may be reimbursed by the WIOA program for not more than 50 percent of the costs incurred in providing the training including staff/instructor time or training materials.

Customized Skills Training can be provided after a WIOA participant is hired or if an employer makes a commitment to hire the participant upon successful completion of the training.

Customized training may be provided for an employer or group of employers when:

- The employee is not earning a self-sufficient wage;
- The employer, or group of employers, have made the commitment to employ or continue to employ, an individual that has successfully completed the program; and
- The customized training relates to the introduction of new technologies, introduction to new production or service procedures, upgrading to new jobs that require additional skills, workplace literacy, or other appropriate purposes.

For each participant, the employer develops the training plan and measurable goals and determines the method by which the training is provided. Proficiency levels should be based on local business or industry skill standards.

The training activity may take place at the worksite or in a classroom setting. The employer or an intermediary may provide the training.

Training should be for a specified length of time and may take place at the worksite or in a classroom.

**INCUMBENT WORKER TRAINING (IWT)** - IWT is designed to improve the skills of employees and the competitiveness of an employer. It is intended to retain skilled employees or avert a potential layoff. IWT may be offered to employers who, after assessment, are found to be in need of training for existing employees in order to remain competitive. IWT must be designed:

- To be between employees and employers with an established relationship in which all individuals receiving training have been employed by the company for at least six months at the time of the training;

- To improve the skills of the existing workforce (It is encouraged that this training lead to an industry recognized credential); and
- To mitigate the impact of a layoff if utilized as a part of a layoff aversion strategy.
- The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board may utilize up to 20% of its Adult and Dislocated funds for IWT. WIOA § 134 (d)(4)(A)(i)

In accordance with WIOA § 134 (d)(4)(A)(ii), Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board must determine the eligibility of an employer for IWT taking into consideration:

- The characteristics of the participants;
- The ability of the training to increase the competitiveness of the participant and the employer; and
- Such other factors as the local board may consider appropriate including, but not limited to:
  - the number of employees participating in the training;
  - the wages and benefit to the employee before the training and the wages and benefit to the employee after the training; and
  - the existence of other training opportunities provided by the employer.

Employers deemed eligible must also provide a portion of the training costs as a non-federal share. This contribution may be in the form of wages of a participant while attending a training program or a direct percentage of the costs of training. The employer share must be tracked and recorded for reporting purposes. The portion of the non-federal share that an employer must contribute is dependent upon the size of the employer as follows:

- For employers with fewer than 50 employees: 10% of the training costs;
- For employers with 51 to 100 employees: 25% of the training costs; or
- For employers with greater than 100 employees: 50% of the training costs.

Any firm, employer, or industry who has received payments under previous contracts and has exhibited a pattern of failure to provide IWT participants continued, long-term employment as regular employees with wages and working conditions at the same level and to the same extent as similarly situated employees are ineligible to enter into further WIOA IWT contracts.

IWT training is provided based on a formal, written contract with the employer or group of employers that is signed prior to the initiation of training with a copy given to the employer(s).

An IWT contract must be limited to the period of time required for a participant to become proficient in the skills for which the training is being provided. In determining the appropriate length of the IWT agreement, consideration should be given to the skill requirements of the occupation, and the academic and occupational skill level of the participant.

**WORK EXPERIENCE (WEX)** - Work Experience is a planned, structured learning experience that takes place in a workplace for a set period of time. Although the majority of Work Experience activities occur with youth participants, adults and dislocated worker participants may also take advantage of these services. Work Experience may be full-time or part-time depending upon the needs of the participant. It may be paid or unpaid, as appropriate. Public sector employers, private non-profit, and for-profit employers are all considered acceptable for Work Experience placements.

The intention of a Work Experience is to enable participants to explore career options and gain exposure to the working world and its requirements. A Work Experience shall be designed to enhance the employability of individuals through the development of good work habits and basic work skills. The purpose of a Work Experience is not to benefit the employer, although the employer may, to a limited extent, benefit from the activities performed by the participant. For example, individuals placed in a Work Experiences are generally considered trainees, and should not take on roles in which the employer depends on the trainee's productivity to maintain or advance the profit margin or performance of the company or agency.

Work Experience opportunities are offered to participants when the participant's individual employment plan (IEP) or individual service strategy (ISS) identifies that the participant would benefit from this activity. Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board requires that the justification for a Work Experience be outlined in the customer's employment plan or service strategy.

**REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIPS, (RA)** – Registered Apprenticeships generally involve both classroom and on-the-job instruction. While a RA does not have a unique funding mechanism, Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board may use an ITA to support classroom portions of a RA program, and OJT funds may be used to support the on-the-job elements of the RA program. If a participant is in a RA and employed as part of that arrangement, then the OJT must be treated as other OJTs provided for employers. ITAs and OJTs may be used simultaneously to fund the RA.

**3. Description of Rapid Response Services** – Provide a description of how the local board will coordinate workforce development activities carried out in the local area with statewide rapid response activities.

Rapid Response is a United States Department of Labor (USDOL) grant program established through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). Rapid Response enables each state to provide front-line assistance to employees who are laid off through no fault of their own, known as “dislocated workers.” The Program provides a pro-active response to company layoffs and plant/facility closures in which a state’s Dislocated Worker Unit or Rapid Response team coordinates services to aid dislocated workers and companies affected by closures/layoffs. Rapid Response enables states to provide on-site services, at no cost to the employer, to assist with minimizing the disruptions associated with job loss as well as assisting the dislocated worker in obtaining reemployment as soon as possible.

In Georgia, Rapid Response is provided through the Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDA) and is coordinated at the state level by Rapid Response Coordinators (RRC). These teams of local workforce representatives and RRC offer options, resources, and information to aid the employer and the workers as they go through this transition.

Rapid Response activities begin by contacting the company and arranging an initial meeting. These employer meetings help determine whether the layoff can be avoided and what services will be made available to the employees if it cannot. If the layoffs cannot be avoided, the RRC and LWDA staff will share with the dislocated workers the services and resources available to them including unemployment insurance, training opportunities through WIA, and other forms of hardship assistance.

The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board provides access to WIOA services such as labor market information, skill assessments, job search assistance, and resume advice and creation. The LWDA may determine there is a need, to also enroll the dislocated worker in career services to provide skill upgrading and certification in local demand occupations.

The Rapid Response Coordinator may coordinate all the necessary services, with the LWDA providing assistance in giving presentations, providing workshops, and assisting the dislocated workers in accessing other necessary services.

The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board staff are responsible for the following:

Notify WFD of layoff events for which WARN notice has not been filed:

- Respond to layoffs of 25+ workers
- Contact employer within 48 hours of notice of layoff when appointed as lead representative
- Make presentations to employers and employees
- Facilitating workshops on job search techniques, interviewing skills, resume building, salary negotiation, etc.
- Job development training
- Coordination with GDOL to provide Unemployment Insurance (UI) Claims assistance and Trade service assistance
- Provide referral for various services
- Individual and group counseling
- Perform skills assessment and career counseling
- Review Labor Market Information (LMI) and match to job openings
- Regional group meetings to work with local partners in assisting Dislocated Workers
- Interact at job fairs, expos and opportunities fairs

#### Coordination between WFD & LWDA

When a WARN notice is received by WFD, the assigned RRC will make contact with the designated representative in the LWDA. The RRC and the LWDA representative will determine the LWDA's capacity to manage the event. This determination will be made by discussing the size of the layoff, available resources of the LWDA (including both personnel and finances), and needs of the employer. The goal of this initial communication should be to determine who will be responsible as the lead representative to coordinate services.

In most instances, the LWDA representative should be the lead coordinator in providing Rapid Response services while the RRC should provide support and leverage additional resources. In the event of mass layoffs or layoffs beyond the LWDA capacity to respond, RRCs will be the lead coordinator. In either instance, RRCs should be in constant communication with the LWDA to follow up on the progress of the layoff events.

In addition to the Rapid Response Coordinator, LWDA, and GDOL staff, there are multiple community partners which may be able to support a layoff event. It is the job of both RRC's and LWDA's to develop relationships with many of these partners to strengthen the economic community. Business partners can assist in averting or minimizing the impact of a dislocation

event while community partners can help with financial or emotional support during the transition period.

Partners which can aide in responding to a layoff include:

Georgia Department of Community Affairs offers a variety of economic development incentives and tools designed to help promote growth and job creation throughout the state. (<http://www.dca.state.ga.us/index.asp>)

Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG) provides training opportunities through technical programs or certificates or adult education. All TCSG schools are eligible providers under WIA training services. (<http://www.tcsg.edu>)

Local Chambers of Commerce will have a strong network of businesses and business leaders that will be knowledgeable about economic conditions and opportunities.

Department of Economic Development is the state's leading economic development agency which can provide detail on economic outlook and potential business opportunities and workforce needs. (<http://www.georgia.org>)

Regional Commissions have strong networks in the workforce areas and can assist in connecting workforce needs to opportunities.

- 4. Description of Youth Services** – Provide a description and assessment of the type and availability of youth workforce development activities in the local area, including activities for youth with disabilities. This description and assessment shall include an identification of successful models of such youth workforce development activities.

WIOA youth funds are targeted at young people who are both in and out-of-school, to assist them in their career and educational development. These funds are allocated to states by the US Department of Labor using a formula based on a number of factors detailed in the WIOA legislation. At least 75% of funds must be used for out-of-school youth. The types of services funded include training and youth development programs for young people who have left school, as well as after-school services and employment supports for young people still in school.

Young people with disabilities are highly eligible for these services. All youth with disabilities, ages 16 -24 who are not attending school, are eligible for out-of-school services. Youth with disabilities up to age of 21 are eligible for in-school services if they are low-income or meet other eligibility criteria. Funds for youth services are primarily administered by local workforce boards, although states may reserve up to 15% of funds they receive from the US Department of Labor for statewide workforce investment activities. Workforce boards have some discretion regarding how funds are utilized, with funds often distributed via a competitive grant process to area youth service providers.

To be eligible for out-of school youth services, the youth must be age 16 to 24 and not attending school and fall within one or more of the following categories:

- Individual with a disability
- School dropout
- Not attended school for at least the most recent complete school year calendar quarter.
- A high school graduate who is: basic skills deficient; or an English language learner.
- Offender
- Homeless, runaway, or foster child
- Pregnant or parenting
- A low-income individual who requires additional assistance to enter or complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment

To be eligible for in-school youth services, the youth must be age 14 to 21 and attending school; (young people with disabilities can be under 14) B. Low-income individual

The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board has been successful in strategies for serving special populations of youth through the collaboration with the Albany State College High School/High Tech program. The program includes a summer transition component at Albany State University from the recruitment of 10-15 visually impaired youth to a summer camp that emphasizes independent living, navigation of college campuses, applying for colleges, exposure to new and tried assistive technologies, as well as learning from the experiences shared by accomplished individuals with vision impairments.

The summer transition program is the result of a collaborative partnership between Albany State University, Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board, Dougherty County School System, and Albany Technical College, Georgia Department of Labor Vocational Rehabilitation, Albany Advocacy Resource Center, and Albany Business Leadership to provide an educational

enrichment / technology-training program for high school students with disabilities. The program encourages and prepares students to explore career opportunities in the field of science, engineering, and technology through workshops, seminars, fieldtrips, and internships.



## 5. Implementation of Work-Based Learning Initiatives

WIOA places an increased emphasis on the development and use of career pathways and Work based Learning initiatives. Every Youth is required to have an objective assessment conducted in order to identify appropriate services and career pathways for the participant. Following the objective assessment, WIOA-eligible youth work in tandem with their career counselors to develop an Individual Service Strategy (ISS), which heavily stresses career pathways and the use of Work Experience, On the Job Training and other work based learning concepts. Youth are strongly encouraged to pursue credentials that will lead them into a sustainable, rewarding career.

Additionally, the local area and schools work closely to ensure that K-12 schools are connected with local industry representatives. The Board is committed to providing educational opportunities through career pathways that will ultimately optimize the progress and success of individuals with varying levels of abilities and needs. Through the development and use of career pathways and work based learning, the Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board's youth will be equipped to enter the working world with marketable credentials and valuable work skills.

## 6. Provision of ITAs – Provide a description of how training services in WIOA § 134 will be provided through the use of ITAs. If contracts for the training services will be used, describe how the use of such contracts will be coordinated with the use of ITAs 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.

All training services provided by the Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board are provided in accordance with the WIOA and any State or locally developed policies.

Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) are established on behalf of the participant. WIOA Title IB Adult, Dislocated Worker and youth participants will use ITAs to purchase training services from eligible providers they select in consultation with the counselor or coordinator.

Individual Training Account services may be made available to employed and unemployed adults and dislocated workers who have met the eligibility requirements for career services, and have been determined to be unable to obtain or retain employment leading to self-sufficiency through such services.

The participant must have a completed Individual Employment Plan (IEP) that indicates, through interview, evaluation or assessment, the participant's employment goals, appropriate achievement objectives, and appropriate combination of services for the participant to achieve the employment goals have been identified.

Selection of a training program must include the identification that the training is directly linked to occupations that are in demand in Local Workforce Development Area 17, or in another area to which an adult or dislocated worker is willing to relocate.

Individual Training Accounts are limited to participants who (29 U.S.C. § 2864 (d)(4)(B); 20 C.F.R. § 663.320):

- Are unable to obtain grant assistance from other sources (including Federal Pell and other federal grants) to pay the cost of their training; or
- Require assistance beyond that available under grant assistance from other sources (including federal Pell, GI Bill and other federal grants) to pay the cost of their training.
- Service providers and training providers must coordinate funds available and make funding arrangements with partner agencies so that WIOA ITA funds supplement Pell and other grant sources to pay for the cost of training.
- Participants may enroll in ITA funded training while their application for a Pell Grant is pending provided that the service provider has made arrangements with the training provider and the participant regarding the allocation of the Pell Grant, if it is subsequently awarded. If a Pell Grant is awarded, the training provider must reimburse the service provider the ITA funds used to underwrite the tuition portion of the training costs from the PELL Grant.
- Program operators should consider all available sources of funds, excluding loans, in determining an individual's overall need for WIOA funds. Resources such as PELL, GI Bill and other federal grants should not be included in calculations of the level of WIOA assistance until the grant has been awarded.

Tuition is the sum charged for instruction and does not include fees, books, supplies, equipment and other training related expenses. Reimbursement is not required from the portion of Pell Grant assistance disbursed to the participant for education-related expense.

The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development has a monetary limit or cap on ITAs of \$10,000 per program of study per participant during the duration of training. WIOA customers may select

training that costs more than the maximum ITA level when other sources of funding are available to supplement the ITA (e.g., HOPE, Pell grants, and scholarships).

ITAs are awarded per semester, quarter or for uninterrupted training coursework. Second and subsequent ITAs will be awarded only for continuing classes in the educational or training institution initially attended, unless there is mutual and justifiable agreement between the service provider and the participant that another training institution or training program is necessary.

An individual who has been determined eligible for an ITA may select a training institution/program from the Georgia Eligible Provider List (EPL) or from another state, provided that the training institution/program is listed on that state's Eligible Provider List, after consultation with a counselor or coordinator. Unless the program has exhausted funds for the program year, the service provider must refer the individual to the selected training institution/program, and establish an ITA for the individual to pay for training.

Payments may not be made to a training provider until the service provider ensures that the training provider selected is on the EPL at time of payment for tuition and fees under WIOA ITAs.

The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board has developed a local policy that details how all other funds will be used prior to expending WIOA funds for coordinating WIOA funding. The local policy and procedure ensures that participants have applied for HOPE, Pell, GI Bill, and all other appropriate funding sources. WIOA participants may enroll in training while Pell, Hope, GI Bill, and other funding sources are pending as long as the appropriate arrangements have been made with the training institution regarding the allocation of all grants and funding sources. Local policy requires the career counselors to conduct an analysis of the participant's financial needs (cost of attendance) to document a participant's total cost of attending training. The career counselor analyzes things such as the costs of tuition, fees, books, supplies, transportation, childcare, living expenses, and other appropriate personal and educational related expenses.

If it is determined through the analysis of the cost of attendance that the total cost of attending training exceeds the amount available through HOPE and WIOA funding, then Pell funds may be utilized by the participant for living and other appropriate personal expenses during the training period.

The documentation supporting this determination are included in the participant's case file, case notes, etc., for the purposes of auditing and/or monitoring.

Individual Training Accounts are designed to identify WIOA funded costs associated with the training cost of attendance. The cost of attendance may include tuition, fees, room and board, books, supplies, and other training related costs required for participation in a specific training program.

The ITA identifies the WIOA obligation for the participant and the participant will be able to access information about the account from the service provider.

Each of the Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board's contracted training service providers are responsible for maintaining an ITA payment system which ensures that payments made are timely, for the agreed upon amount. The Board ensures that the provider is on the EPL at time of payment and that the payments are supported by appropriate documentation.

**7. Entrepreneurial Skills Training and Microenterprise Services** – Provide a description of how the area will coordinate and promote entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services.

The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board has engaged in providing work-based solutions with the Microbusiness Enterprise Center/Albany Community Together, Inc. - a public-private economic action partnership established in 1997 and is an approved SBA micro-loan intermediary lender.

The utilization of the Work Experience and On the Job Training programs has allowed the center and its small business residents to leverage resources and thrive toward economic growth.

The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board will continue to reach out to coordinate and promote entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services.

**8. Coordination with Education Programs** – Provide a description of how the local board will coordinate education and workforce development activities carried out in the local area with relevant secondary and postsecondary education programs and activities to coordinate strategies, enhance services and avoid duplication of services.

The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board has a contractual relationship with all TCSG and University System of Georgia within the region to provide of training services to participants for the regional workforce development system. All training services contracted by the Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board are provided in accordance with the WIOA

and any State or locally developed policies.

The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board will continue to focus on developing and providing customers pathways to high skill /high wage occupations through secondary and post-secondary education programs. The contractual and working relationships established with eligible training providers includes the alignment of programs and services to deliver training for in-demand occupations that move customers to self-sufficiency.

Adult Education and Family Literacy partners are well-positioned to fill the gaps in academic knowledge needed by individuals who want to transition to careers to secure better paying jobs. The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board's service delivery model is poised to enhance this experience by having career counselor out stationed at several TCSG locations where basic skill building and career /technical skills are combined. By providing these resources to adult education programs, or proximity to adult education instructors, collaborative models can be developed to improve career knowledge, and work readiness skills.

Removing barriers to employment is the intent of the WIOA and is shared by Education. As mentioned later in this plan, the Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board intends to continuously work toward a seamless delivery of jobseeker and business services. The intent regarding Business Services is to re-engineer the services with a more intentional focus to delivering customized solutions, training, and qualified talent. This will encompass the need for broader customized solutions being offered to each business needs. The Board realizes that this can be accomplished through the integrated approach to delivering business services. The Board envisions a "Business Engagement Outreach Plan" that will coordinate the job openings and employment opportunities outreach efforts of education, workforce, employment services, vocational rehabilitation services, veteran services, older worker program services, and public assistance recipients – One Stop Partners, who share the common goal of employment that leads to self-sufficiency for its customers.

Other strategies to coordinate and enhance training services include the following:

- Board Committee review of all training services and supports to ensure quality/quantity is sufficient for the local demands with recommendations for any revisions subsequently presented to the full Board;
- Board dialog and implementation of coordinated regional career fairs targeting high school students jointly sponsored by the Board, training institutions, and school districts;

- Board and staff membership on business/industry advisory councils at area training institutions;
- Representation from educational providers on the Board and committees;
- Updating the Eligible Training Provider List to offer local programs related to skill gaps and industry needs;
- Coordination between training institutions, adult education programs and career center coaches for participant referrals and payment processes;
- Coordination of services and support benefits between programs, partners and community organizations to ensure non-duplication while maximizing training assistance;
- Periodic communication between adult education instructors and career center staffs to ensure out-of-school youth are engaged and program coordination;

9. **Description of Supportive Services** – Provide a description of how the local board will coordinate workforce development activities carried out under this title in the local area with the provision of transportation, including public transportation, and other appropriate supportive services in the local area. Describe the coordination of transportation and other supportive services regionally, if applicable. Please include the region/local area Supportive Service Policies.

The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development 14 county area has minimum public transportation services. Transportation expenses are provided through supportive service, based on days in attendance and mileage ranges approved by the Board.

Participants that may be dually enrolled in workforce programs benefit by having services coordinated between programs but may receive non-duplicated services.

Supportive Services are services, which are reasonable and necessary to enable a WIOA participant who cannot afford to pay for such services to participate in activities funded under WIOA. The provision of Supportive Services must be determined on an individual basis. Limited Supportive Services may be provided to individuals receiving Core Services, however, such individuals must be registered as a WIOA participant and are subject to performance outcomes.

A participant may waive WIOA payments (except for Work Experience) if accepting payment would mean the loss of the benefits. The participant may request the payment to start at a later date, but may not claim retroactive payments. Advances against future payments are not allowed.

To be eligible for any WIOA financial assistance payments, a participant must have been determined WIOA eligible and:

- Participating in core, or career services. Limited supportive services may be provided to eligible applicants (e.g., paying for a birth certificate), before they are enrolled as participants, to permit participation in assessment activities;
- are unable to obtain supportive services through other programs providing such services;
- and must have complied with program regulations and policies during the period of training and/or enrollment.

The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board will cease providing further payments to participants that fail to participate without good cause.

The use of supportive services is encouraged to enable the hard-to-serve population to participate in longer-term interventions. The provision of supportive services will be determined on an individual basis and require proof of expenditure in the participant's file.

#### Allowable supportive services

The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board's approved policy state the following type of specific supportive services that can be provide to participants, as well as which WIOA participant group qualifies for the stated services (this includes incentives provided to Youth participants). Allowable supportive services provided during training include, but are not limited to:

- Transportation;
- Childcare;
- Meals during the training day;
- Emergency auto repair that is necessary for the participants to attend training and the most economical option for the participant's transportation needs; and
- Emergency healthcare and medical services that are necessary for the participants to participate in training.

Allowable supportive services provided after training in order to obtain employment include, but are not limited to:

- Tools, work clothing, and boots/shoes required for employment;
- Bonding and liability insurance for employment;

- Drug testing required by employer;
- Financial counseling and assistance;
- Relocation assistance; and
- Auxiliary aides and services necessary for persons with disabilities to obtain and retain employment.



## Coordination with Core Partners:

1. **Description of the Workforce System** – Provide a description of the workforce development system in the local area that identifies all relevant programs and how the local board will work with the entities to carry out both core and other workforce development programs to deliver well aligned services in support of the strategies identified in the state plan. This should include programs of study authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.).

The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board one-stop delivery system includes all the required WIOA core program partners (WIOA Adult, Dislocated and Youth, Wagner-Peyser, Adult Education and Literacy and Vocational Rehabilitation). Partners co-located and contribute to infrastructure cost based on Memorandum of Understanding and Resource Sharing Agreements that are currently in place.

The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board will work collaboratively with the core partner's programs, Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth, Adult Basic Education, Vocational rehabilitation, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, and Wagner-Peyser – to effectively serve job seeker and employers, and leverage resources to meet successful outcomes. The alignment of core programs will include: collaborating to learn about each core partner's programs, processes, and goals; establishing career pathways aligned to high growth industries, and developing an outreach and awareness campaign to educate career seekers regarding career options; developing strategies for a common intake and dual enrollment process to include common assessment and streamlining access to necessary training; coordinating and combining career guidance, education and training, and support services through community resources; and preparing individuals for careers that are in demand.

The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board will revisit and/or create Memorandum of Understanding, (MOUs) with core partner agencies that will detail specific referral and assessment processes, strategies to leverage resources and avoid duplication. Additionally, opportunities for co-enrollment in Ged preparation courses and occupational skills training. The Southwest Georgia Workforce has piloted co-enrollment with Albany Technical College and will continue to expand this concept under WIOA. As processes are evaluated and re-engineered, the Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board will work with the MOUs to ensure support for specific WIOA activities with adult education and family literacy services, vocational

rehabilitation to increase coordination. The re-engineering process will address confidentiality issues, identify resource sharing opportunities, and avoid duplication of services. Each partner will be actively involved in the planning and sharing of resources to enable dual enrollment to assist customers to upgrade skills and/or achieve the high school or GED credentials.

In our holistic approach, the Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board will require the One Stop Operator to coordinate and provide training opportunities to One Stop Center staff on understanding WIOA core programs and how they operate. Quarterly presentations and updates will be required by partners. Other learning opportunities will be arranged to foster relationships that support co-enrollment and leveraging of services through referrals. Fostering these relationships will lead to improved services to customers who are connected to partners with specific expertise needed for greater successful outcomes.

The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board will seek and work with other community organizations in the region to better understand and coordinate resources that support readiness and training activities.

The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board intends to continuously improve the development of a one-stop delivery system that is (Employer) demand-driven – services are provided to connect talent to the business by referral or by providing training options where necessary to prepare those individuals skills building or skills upgrades to enter a targeted industry.

The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board intends to develop a one-stop delivery system that is coordinated – services are coordinated with core and community partners to develop holistic, effective and relevant solutions that meet high expectations.

The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board intends to develop a one-stop delivery system that is custom – services are customized to needs of the business or individual customer that meets high expectations.

- 2. Coordination with Wagner-Peyser** – Provide a description of plans and strategies for, and assurances concerning, maximizing coordination of services provided by the state employment service under the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 49 et seq.) and services provided in the local area through the one-stop delivery system, to improve service delivery and avoid duplication of services.

The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board will continue to strengthen coordination with the Georgia Department of Labor (GDOL), as it relates to the provision of Wagner-Peyser services. The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the GDOL and the Board establishes the organizational framework to integrate the delivery of programs and services into the one-stop delivery system. As the Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board competitively procure its One Stop Operator, we anticipate better integration into our career center operations thus allowing us to effectively coordinate service delivery between the various workforce development services in a manner that avoids duplication and is seamless for both employer and job seeker customer groups.

The utilization of professional development activities for Employment Service staff will be a priority as a consistent and strategic investment in staff development lends to our commitment to integrated workforce services. Currently, employment services staff of Georgia Department of Labor (GDOL), are trained in both employment services and Unemployment Insurance (UI) programs, which enables customers to receive seamless services geared to facilitate their return to employment.

It is anticipated that GDOL and Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA) staff complete structured One Stop Partners meetings and trainings with curriculum developed to better equip them to provide high-quality services to both jobseekers and business. This training may be comprised of intensive interviewing techniques, administering career assessments, accessing and interpreting labor market information, customized service strategies for employers and jobseekers, identifying the potential need for soft skills and skills gap training, developing workforce partnerships, identifying available supportive services, résumé writing expertise, and counseling to address barriers to employment and to assist with career selection.

In addition to local workforce system One Stop Partner meetings and trainings, some identified staff development activities include:

- Comprehensive online resources on GDOL's website at [www.dol.georgia.gov](http://www.dol.georgia.gov);
- Comprehensive internal online resources at [www.theSource.gdol.ga.gov](http://www.theSource.gdol.ga.gov);
- Job shadowing for new staff at local offices;
- Active participation in IAWP; hosting the international conference in 2015;
- Active participation in NASWA;

- Active participation in SETA;
- Departmental leadership training program through EXCEL, offered through the Carl Vinson Institute of Government at the University of Georgia;
- Ongoing assessment of GDOL and partner staff training needs by local GDOL career center managers;
- Participation on LWDBs to keep abreast of information on local, State, and national issues; and
- Regular reviews by the GDOL internal training teams, deliver on-site extensive technical assistance and staff training during site visits, and identify training needs based on policy changes, new initiatives, etc.

Within the One Stop system, the Wagner Peyser serves as the gateway to providing a system of matching jobseekers with employers. The Southwest Georgia Workforce System utilizes the triage concept where regardless of the entry point into the system, customers are first provided career services as an initial step toward employment and self-sufficiency. These services are provided through Southwest Georgia's one-stop and three additional affiliate sites. As a continuum of services, after receipt of appropriate career services, the customer is provided job placement assistance by WP and partner agency staff. If the customer is assessed and deemed to need training services, supportive services, or other services not available with WP resources or wherewithal, then the WP staff refer the customer to the other core partners based on the needs of the customer.

To comply with the intent of WIOA, the One Stop System partners will be challenged to evaluate, revisit and potentially, restructure areas of the career center customer flow to better direct customers to the most appropriate program core or partner- that will address their needs with a high level of customer service.

The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board will continuously work toward a seamless delivery of jobseeker and business services. The intent regarding Business Services is to re-engineer the services with a more intentional focus to delivering customized solutions, training, and qualified talent. This will encompass the need for broader customized solutions being offered to each business needs. The Board realizes that this can be accomplished through the integrated approach to delivering business services. The Board envisions a "Business Engagement Outreach Plan" that will coordinate the job openings and employment opportunities outreach efforts of education, workforce, employment services, vocational rehabilitation services, veteran services,

older worker program services, and public assistance recipients – One Stop Partners, who share the common goal of employment that leads to self-sufficiency for its customers.

### **3. Coordination with Education**

The Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG) oversees the state's technical colleges, adult literacy programs, and a host of economic and workforce development programs.

The Technical College System of Georgia is organized around three functional units directly serving the public. These units are supported by the system's administrative staff.

#### Technical Education

TCSG's educational and training programs are available across Georgia through our 22 Technical Colleges and 85 campus locations. In addition, last year over 66,000 students took an online course. TCSG offers over 600 individual majors to choose from. These majors range from one semester Certificates to Diplomas and Associate Degrees that can take over two years to complete. In 2014, TCSG enrolled just over 140,000 students and had almost 30,000 graduates.

#### Adult Education

Adult Education provides basic literacy and GED training through a variety of training providers and at over 200 locations throughout the state. Improvement in collaboration with WIOA and the one-stop system should increase access to GED services.

The Southwest Georgia will continue to work closely with the adult education providers in the region to coordinate services and where appropriate, co-enroll participants into partner programs to increase the range of the customer's experience.

**4. Coordination with Vocational Rehabilitation** – Provide a description of the cooperative agreement between the local Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation office and the local board which describes efforts made to enhance the provision of services to individuals with disabilities and to other individuals, cross-train staff, provide technical assistance, share information, cooperate in communicating with employers and other efforts at cooperation, collaboration and coordination.

Education, employment, and training services provided by Vocational and Rehabilitation Services include a variety of individual services to persons with disabilities in preparation for employment in the competitive labor market and to employers seeking to retain valuable employees with disabilities or hire qualified individuals.

Services provided to jobseekers include: counseling, assistive technology, job placement, vocational assessment, medical evaluations, work adjustments, and physical restoration services. Services focused on employer activities include: candidate identification, jobsite coaching, helping an employer identify the right solutions/ accommodations for employee to be effective on the job through onsite job assessments, and providing technical support and training on those accommodations to ensure long-term success.

Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services are provided by a skilled regional rehabilitation team with representatives from the appropriate disciplines and externally from community resources as needed. The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board supports the VR Program belief that cooperation and collaboration is necessary to maximize resources and address all aspects impacting individuals with disabilities in gaining or maintaining employment in Southwest Georgia. The VR Program is strongly allied with partners of the regional workforce development system and maintains many other Resource Sharing, Memorandum of Understanding, and other cooperative agreements and working partnerships with entities outside the core workforce development system.

To ensure participants, employers and businesses are engaged, GVRA will continue to focus on delivering activities already occurring within the regional workforce system as well as expand current efforts in a more organized and integrated manner to better serve individuals with disabilities.

## **5. Coordination with Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, (TANF) & Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP)**

The Department of Humans Services, (DHS) administers TANF and SNAP at the State level while services are delivered at the local level through the network of DFCS offices located in each of Georgia's 159 counties. DHS will incorporate employment and training aspects of the SNAP and TANF programs with the unified workforce system under WIOA through four primary mechanisms: integration across programs, a focus on youth, collaborative performance measures, and strengthened relationships with employers.

### Integration Across Regional Programs

TANF and SNAP program goals align closely with WIOA's goals and outcomes as evidenced by varying levels of coordination that already exist across State regions. Moving forward, TANF and SNAP will work to co-locate staff at one-stop centers for enhanced service delivery and streamlined communication between WIOA partner programs. TANF staff will be increased strategically, starting in the metro areas, then moving where needed, to further provide integrated employment services to Georgia's citizens.

TANF and SNAP will also coordinate with other core partner agencies in providing support services to assist participants with completing their activities as well as coordinating common services to reduce duplication of services. This includes providing shared assessments, use of integrated case management systems, cross-training of program staff, and family-oriented policies. Currently, with subsidized employment and work experience, TANF and SNAP already provide work-based training strategies for adults and youth with barriers to employment. Staff will continue to promote this through integration with existing WIOA partner programs.

Similar to WIOA, TANF and SNAP identify employment barriers and promote the development and maintenance of community connections and resources that address basic skill deficiencies. These local collaborations already include WIOA partner programs, and TANF and SNAP will continue to expand this collaboration through a streamlined referral process for customers eligible for WIOA services.

### Serving In-School/Out of School Youth and Those with the Most Significant Disabilities and Barriers

A focus on youth is a core principle of WIOA and continues to be a programmatic focus of DHS as well. TANF policy requires a work-eligible parent, who is less than 20 years of age and has neither a high school diploma nor a GED, to participate and achieve satisfactory attendance in one of the following activities: secondary school or its equivalent, and/or participate in education directly related to employment. Participation in these activities supersedes any requirement to participate in other work activities, though obtaining employment is always encouraged. In addition, one of the four key purposes of TANF is to engage youth in order to prevent and reduce the incidence of teen and out-of-wedlock pregnancies. As such, TANF will refer out-of-school youth to WIOA for services via a streamlined referral process.

SNAP provides services to adults ranging from ages 18-24 years. However, the program is also available to those up to age 49. The services are focused on training and assisting the SNAP

recipient with achieving life-long, self-sufficiency. To achieve this, SNAP activities focus on barrier reduction, education, and job search/work place skills training.

DHS programs will also integrate with WIOA and the workforce system through a focus on participants with significant disabilities. TANF has a large population of customers who claim a disability. This population is not exempt from work requirements and these customers will receive a VR assessment through WIOA as they are expected to find a work activity in which they can perform successfully.

### Strong, Collaborative Performance Measurements

In support of the unified workforce system, one of DHS's primary goals is to provide necessary assistance on a temporary basis to needy families with children, to assist parents with job preparation, and to provide work opportunities and support services. As such, performance measurements include: measuring increases in family income, the number of families that achieve employment, decreases in the out-of-wedlock pregnancy rate (particularly teens), and decreasing TANF recidivism rates.

To support the achievement of these performance measures a TFSP is developed for each recipient who has a work requirement. The TFSP specifies the recipient's personal responsibilities, employment goal, and the steps necessary for the achievement of the goal. Participants with a work requirement are assessed for potential barriers to employment. SNAP has a tool called a Personal Work Plan, which is similar to, and performs the same function as the TFSP.

DHS will work with core partner agencies to help integrate performance measures across programs. This will involve tracking those participants who have obtained a post-secondary credential, secondary school diploma, or GED during participation or within one year after program exit, and tracking the effectiveness in serving employers. Additionally, the federal performance indicator for TANF is the work participation rate and each state is required to have a participation rate of 50% for single parent households, and 90% for two-parent households. These outcome measures will help Georgia gain a holistic picture of its workforce system.

### Strengthened Relationships with Employers

Job-driven and employer-focused outcomes remain core tenants of the WIOA program and Georgia's workforce system. TANF and SNAP will leverage current program components to support the region's goal of increasing employer relationships and increasing positive outcomes. For example, all TANF participants are eligible to receive support services, but those who become



employed and exceed income limits for TANF services remain eligible to participate in the Work WSP. The WSP provides support services that allows participants to transition to employment while still providing a safety net for up to a year. Within this program, TANF will provide employment services but will rely on WIOA services to direct the customers to the area of need in the local employment sector, match employment and education activities with career pathway models, and to increase the participant's qualifications. All SNAP Works participants also receive support services. SNAP support services are issued to the vendor or directly to the participant in support of their participation in an allowable activity.

In addition, TANF and SNAP will utilize WIOA services to engage employers and ensure that participants can access emerging job opportunities. This will connect the employment and training services to the needs of local employers, and increase work activities that focus on career pathways for participants. Finally, when creating support plans with participants, TANF and SNAP will utilize information gleaned from WFD about the local employment needs and career pathways available.

## Performance, ETPL and Use of Technology:

1. **Description of Performance Measures** –Provide a description of the local levels of performance negotiated with the Governor and chief elected official pursuant to WIOA § 116(c), to be used to measure the performance of the local area and to be used by the local board for measuring the performance of the local fiscal agent (where appropriate), eligible providers under subtitle B and the one-stop delivery system, in the local area.

(WFD will issue instructions for the completion of local area performance negotiations upon receipt of federal guidance.)

2. **One-Stop System Performance and Assessment** – Provide a listing of locally/regionally developed one-stop performance standards and describe the criteria used to develop the performance standards. Describe how the one-stop system and regional service delivery is assessed by the local board.

Performance Standards are under development. This plan will be revisited and updated as applicable.

3. **ETPL System** – Describe the regional Eligible Training Provider System, including the elements listed below.

- a. Provide a description of the public notification to prospective providers.

Training providers who are not already listed on the States approved Eligible Training Provider List and are not currently debarred, or who are on the States approved Eligible Training Provider List but wish to submit new and/or additional programs, may submit their programs for approval to the Board at any time for consideration. Periodically, potential training providers may be notified about the application process through solicitations, television, and website and area wide newspaper announcements.

- b. Provide a description of how the board(s) evaluates providers and proposed training programs for initial eligibility, based on (at a minimum) criteria of proven effectiveness, local employer/industry demand, accreditation and customer accessibility.

A complete Board ITA Provider/Program application package – including the evaluation criteria used is provided to the potential provider. The application package, evaluation criteria includes (but is not limited to): proven effectiveness (i.e., past performance), local employer/industry demand, required accreditation(s), and capability of the training organization (including customer accessibility).

Board staff will conduct an on-site pre-operational review of the training institution and its programs if necessary. Staff may forgo an on-site pre-operational review if the training institution provided WIOA funded training within the last two (2) years and there is no change in the facility, program, equipment, etc. Exceptions to the one-site pre-operational review policy may be made for organizations that are not located within the Board area. To avoid duplication, staff will ascertain if on-site reviews or evaluations have been conducted for out-of-town or out-of-state providers by contacting the local Board and/or accrediting entities in the area, and will document the results accordingly.

The Board assigned committee may approve, not approve, or conditionally approve, or delay approval the decision and request additional information. The Board assigned committee decision will be taken to the Board for final approval or disapproval. The Board in turn will make recommendation to the GDEcD – WD for statewide review and approval. GDEcD – WD will notify the Board regarding eligibility and publish the state approved listing of eligible WIOA providers electronically.

New providers and/or programs may be limited to a specified enrollment of participants, if the application evaluation process so warrants. When a new provider has reached the specified participant enrollment limit, the Board staff will conduct a review of the provider's success in achieving local Board performance measures. No additional participants will be referred to a new provider until the review is completed.

If approved, a provider agreement will be executed between the Board and the training institution for the entire provider's currently approved programs on the State's ETPL unless otherwise stipulated. This agreement must be signed prior to the enrollment of any WIOA participant into training with that institution.

All applicants will be notified in writing of the decision of the committee, in accordance with established Board appeals procedure.

- c. Provide a description of the formal appeals process for aggrieved ITA customers and providers of unapproved training programs.

The Board ITA customers or training providers (or prospective ITA customers or training providers) may obtain the Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board Grievance Procedures, which offer informal and formal resolution process regarding any issues or complaints they may have.

- d. Provide a description of the ongoing process used to update the data on the eligible providers list (exclusive of the state-conducted continued eligibility process).

Performance will be monitored on a frequent basis by Board staff. If a provider's program fails to meet minimum established local Board performance levels, the Board may restrict funding of the program, although it remains eligible on the State ETPL.

Review and approval of additional training programs for approved providers and provider price increases will be reviewed on a regular basis. Providers seeking approval of additional programs or price increases should submit the following information to the Board staff:

- Training approval from an accrediting organization
- Training program description, curriculum, all training cost information, program length, stable employment availability, starting wage
- For training not identified in the SWGA WIB Plan as a demand occupation in the local area, providers should also submit at least three employer verifications of employment opportunities.

The Board staff review will include an evaluation of the provider's success in achieving performance outcomes, a comparison of the price, length of the training, anticipated wage at placement and location of similar approved providers. Upon

approval by the Board assigned committee, Board, an amendment to the existing provider agreement will be processed. Increased prices will not take effect until the amendment is executed.

- e. Provide a description of any regional policies or agreements for ITAs or training providers.

None

- f. Provide a description of the process to track and manage all ITA activity.

The Board will utilize data from actual performance in order to determine the success/deficiency of each provider. Data collection will be on-going and current, and will allow the Board to make these determinations accurately and in a timely manner. Should a provider appear to not be meeting the negotiated performance measure, steps will be taken to assist the provider with meaningful data results that will indicate what area(s) the provider should concentrate on in order to meet requirements.

All Providers will be held accountable for their outcomes. Actual data from the Provider will be compared to WIOA registrant data. Should a discrepancy be found between the two, steps will be outlined as to what procedures will take place to rectify the discrepancies. If a provider's program fails to meet minimum established local Board performance levels, the Board may restrict funding of the program, although it remains eligible on the State EPL.

The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board's ITA financial activity is tracked utilizing a procured tracking system, (Track Source). The tracking system tracks & analyzes obligations and actual expenditures.

By tracking expenditures at customer levels, the Board is in a position to conduct performance outcome and financial impact comparisons at demographic, training institution, program of study, county, cost item, etc. levels.

- g. Provide a description of local board policy on use of statewide eligible training provider list (including financial and duration limits, out-of-area training, service to out-of-area customers, etc.).

The maximum amount for an ITA per Board customer is: Up to \$ 10,000 in training costs per training program excluding support services.

- h. Provide a description of how registered apprenticeship programs are added to the ETPL.  
Guidance from WFD

- 4. **Implementation of Technology** – Provide a description of the technology used to enhance customer (participant and business) experience and any additional data analytics used to enhance planning and measure outcomes beyond mandated performance measures.

The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board will seek to introduce technology to enhance customer (participant and business) experience to include data analytics to enhance planning and measure outcomes beyond mandated performance measures. This plan will be revisited and revised as progress is made as appropriate.

## State Initiatives and Vision:

1. **State Branding** – Provide a description for how the area will adopt and utilize the state brand.

The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board is poised to support the State Branding initiative. Once official notice is received of the new branding, the area will begin the process of changing all signage, websites, printed materials and advertising.

2. **State Initiatives** – Describe how the area will coordinate with WFD state initiatives, including: Go Build Georgia, Operation: Workforce, WorkSmart Georgia and the High Demand Career Initiative.

The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board will support and coordinate with State initiatives by working with region-wide initiatives such as Go Build Georgia and HDCI to be responsive to the known market demands for careers in Georgia, as well as supporting employer efforts to more effectively engage Georgians with disabilities. Furthermore, the Board has implemented local initiatives that are akin to the State initiatives the further promotes these initiatives. The overall common goals are to increase the number of adult, displaced workers, and youth in achieving competitive, integrated employment through existing and customized workforce development strategies.

The Board also supports and promotes the use of the Fast Track program, which is an employer-driven training program unique to the State of Georgia. Fast Track leverages quantitative and qualitative data provided through available labor market information and HDCI to identify common workforce needs of multiple employers within a similar industry and region to develop a customized workforce training solution. Once the local area has worked with the employers to identify the specific staffing needs, the employers are able to provide feedback on the specific training elements that are needed or are generally lacking in traditional offerings. The Board then works with training providers to develop condensed training programs that meet the needs outlined by the employers and lead to industry-recognized credentials.

The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board will promote and coordinate programs offered through WFD aimed at connecting with and providing workforce solutions to employers. State initiatives such as Go Build Georgia, Georgia WorkSmart, HDCI, and Operation: Workforce

are designed to connect with employers, engage them in a dialogue concerning their future workforce needs, and deliver solutions appropriate to those specific needs.

With the primary goal to create a unified workforce system, the Governor relocated Title I programs to GDEcD to enhance collaboration, believing that strong workforce development leads to economic development successes. The relocation of Title I programs to GDEcD ensures that leaders of Georgia's Title I programs have frontline access and collaboration with the region's economic development initiatives. The collaborative relationship between local workforce development and economic development activities has resulted in highly successful programs like Georgia WorkSmart and HDCI.

Georgia WorkSmart is a work-based learning initiative operated by WFD. The initiative promotes apprenticeship programs as a workforce development tool and assists Georgia companies in developing and implementing customized programs to meet their specific hiring and training needs. Using the apprentice model can help businesses grow their own talent and build a motivated and qualified workforce. Employers use apprentice programs to recruit and train new employees and to upskill their current workforce. The local area plans to work with WFD to implement Georgia WorkSmart in Region 10.

Georgia WorkSmart can coordinate with the LWDA to enroll eligible apprentices in ITAs and OJTs, in order to leverage WIOA funding. By design, participants who complete these programs are exited with in-demand jobs, certificates and/or degrees from TCSG or other education providers, as well as the Registered Apprenticeship Certificate from USDOL. These credentials are transferable and can be built upon.

Georgia Pathways to Work will change how organizations support the independence, employment, and career advancement of Georgians with disabilities. This will be accomplished by working with region-wide initiatives such as Go Build Georgia and HDCI to be responsive to the known market demands for careers in Georgia, as well as supporting employer efforts to more effectively engage Georgians with disabilities. Furthermore, the overall goal of the Georgia Pathways to Work program is to increase the number of youth who achieve competitive, integrated employment through existing and customized pathways. Additionally, this demonstration project will be implemented to increase the average weekly wage and employer benefits of participants in each occupational cluster through successful completion of career pathways.



The State launched Georgia WorkSmart in partnership with the Office of Apprenticeship to provide more access to the Registered Apprenticeship program. Georgia WorkSmart is another tool to provide to employers looking to train in place. Another resource Georgia has developed is Fast Track training. The combination of a shortened timeline, employer engagement, and use of classroom and on-the-job training has created a successful model for providing entry into growing industries. The region is working to expand upon these services, providing added resources and technical assistance to aid local workforce partners and expand their offerings.

3. **Special Populations** – Describe how the area will provide services to the special populations specified in the state plan, to include ex-offenders, veterans, at-risk youth, long-term unemployed, adult learners and individuals with disabilities. If the region has identified additional target groups, please list.

The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board will continue to support the special populations specified in the State plan. We concur with many system stakeholders that in order to reach the broadest possible range of individuals, efforts must focus on developing a unified system. The Board will serve as a convener where necessary to strengthen the priorities of serving special populations such as enhancing services to veterans and individuals within the criminal justice system. The Board also will evaluate previously piloted ex offender re-entry programs regarding scalability and sustainability. This area is a work in progress and this plan will be updated as strategies are developed.

4. **Priority of Service** – Describe how the region will identify and administer the state's priority of service policy. Identify if the region will add target populations in addition to one's specified by state and federal policy.

The Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board will follow the State's priority of service policy as follows:

#### ADULT AND DISLOCATED WORKER ELIGIBILITY

A. To be eligible to receive WIOA services as an adult in the adult and dislocated worker programs, an individual must:

1. be 18 years of age or older;
2. be a citizen or noncitizen authorized to work in the United States; and

3. meet Military Selective Service registration requirements (males who are 18 or older and born on or after January 1, 1960, unless an exception is justified).

B. Additional Eligibility Requirements for Adults.

1. Adults must be either unemployed or underemployed and meet the priority of service requirements.
2. Individuals who are underemployed include persons who are employed less than fulltime and are seeking full-time employment; are employed in a position not commensurate with the individual's demonstrated level of educational attainment and skills; are working full time and meet the definition of low income, according to LWDB policies; or are employed, but whose current job earnings are not sufficient compared to their previous earnings.

C. Additional Eligibility Requirements for Dislocated Workers. A dislocated worker is an individual who meets one of the following five sets of criteria:

1. The individual: a. has been terminated or laid off, or has received a notice of termination or layoff from employment; b. is eligible for or has exhausted entitlement to unemployment compensation or has been employed for a duration sufficient to demonstrate attachment to the workforce but is not eligible for unemployment compensation due to insufficient earnings or having performed services for an employer that was not covered under a state's UI law; and c. is unlikely to return to a previous industry or occupation.
2. The individual: a. has been terminated or laid off or has received a notice of termination or layoff from employment as a result of any permanent closure of, or any substantial layoff at a plant, facility, or enterprise; b. is employed at a facility at which the employer has made a general announcement that such facility will close within 180 days; or c. for purposes of eligibility to receive services other than training services, career services, or support services, is employed at a facility at which the employer has made a general announcement that such facility will close.
3. The individual was self-employed (including employment as a farmer, a rancher, or a fisherman) but is unemployed as a result of general economic conditions in the community in which the individual resides or because of natural disasters. This includes individuals working as independent contractors or consultants but not technically employees of a firm.
4. The individual is a displaced homemaker, as defined in WIOA § 3 (16).

5. The individual is a separating service member from the Armed Services with a discharge other than dishonorable, the separating service member qualifies for dislocated worker activities based on the following criteria: a. The separating service member has received a notice of separation (DD214) from the Department of Defense or other documentation showing a separation or imminent separation from the Armed Forces to satisfy the termination or layoff eligibility criteria; b. The separating service member is eligible for or has exhausted of unemployment compensation; and c. As a separating service member, the individual meets the eligibility criteria that the individual is unlikely to return to a previous industry or occupation.
6. The individual is the spouse of a member of the Armed Forces on active duty who: a. has experienced a loss of employment as a direct result of relocation to accommodate a permanent change in duty station of such member; or b. is unemployed or underemployed and experiencing difficulty finding or upgrading employment.
7. The individual is underemployed, which is defined as:
  - a. A person who was laid off from a previous employer, but has found employment earning wages that are 85% or less of the salary that was paid at the employer of dislocation; and/or
  - b. A person who is in employment that uses significantly less skills or abilities than the job of dislocation and is not commensurate with the individual's demonstrated level of educational attainment.

SERVICE PRIORITY FOR INDIVIDUALIZED SERVICES AND TRAINING SERVICES Priority for adult services must be given to recipients of public assistance or other low income individuals, with added priority for individuals who are basic skills deficient. Priority applies regardless of funding levels. Individualized career services and training services must be given on a priority basis, regardless of funding levels, to:

- A. Public assistance recipients and other low-income adults; and
- B. Individuals who are basic skills deficient.
- C. Veterans under WIOA § 3 (63)(A) receive priority of service as described in the Jobs for Veterans Act (38 U.S.C. 4215 (2)). Veterans and eligible spouses of veterans who otherwise meet the eligibility requirements for adult programs must receive the highest priority for services. TEGL 3-15 references TEGL 10-09 regarding order of priority for veterans and eligible spouses. Priority must be provided in the following order:

- First, to veterans and eligible spouses who are also recipients of public assistance, are low income individuals, or who are basic skills deficient. Military earnings are not to be included as income for veterans and transitioning service members.
- Second, individuals who are not veterans or eligible spouses who meet WIOA priority criteria.
- Third, to veterans and eligible spouses who are not included in WIOA's priority groups.
- Last, to individuals outside the groups given priority under WIOA. While Veterans receive priority through WIOA services, LWDA's and applicable services providers must have a referral process in place for directing Veterans with Significant Barriers to Employment to the Disabled Veterans Outreach Program to ensure the most effect provision of services.

LOW INCOME INDIVIDUALS: An individual who meets any one of the following criteria satisfies the low-income requirement for WIOA adult services:

- A. Receives, or in the past six months has received, or is a member of a family that is receiving, or in the past six months has received, assistance through SNAP, TANF, or the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program, or state or local income-based public assistance;
- B. Receives an income or is a member of a family receiving an income that, in relation to family size, is not in excess of the current combined U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) 70 percent Lower Living Standard Income Level;
- C. Is a homeless individual, as defined in § 41403 (6) of the Violence Against Women Act of 1994, or a homeless child or youth as defined in § 725 (2) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act;
- D. Receives or is eligible to receive a free or reduced-price lunch under the NSLA
- E. Is a foster youth, on behalf of whom state or local government payments are made; or
- F. Is an individual with a disability whose own income meets WIOA's income requirements, even if the individual's family income does not meet the income requirements of the income eligibility criteria for payments under any federal, state, or local public assistance program.

BASIC SKILLS DEFICIENT: An individual who is unable to compute or solve problems, read, write, or speak English at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individual's family, or in society satisfies the basic skills deficient requirement for WIOA adult services. In assessing basic skills, Boards must use assessment instruments that are valid and appropriate for the target population

and must provide reasonable accommodation in the assessment process, if necessary, for individuals with disabilities.

**TRANSITIONING MILITARY SERVICE MEMBERS.** Still-active, transitioning military service members may qualify for Dislocated Worker services. While these individuals may be eligible to receive WIOA Dislocated Worker services and funds, they would not be considered 'veterans' for the purposes of DOL reporting or be eligible for Priority of Service. For the purposes of serving still-active transitioning service members under the "notice of termination or layoff" eligibility criterion, documentation must align with the DOL Data Element Validation (DEV) requirement for "Date of Actual Qualifying Dislocation." Military Personnel are eligible to begin receiving Dislocated Worker Program services upon receipt of discharge orders (Effective Termination of Service "ETS" Orders or DD-2648-ACAP Transition Checklist). Length of service to qualify an individual for such discharges or separations under WIA guidance may be as few as one day of service. Qualified individuals can receive services up to 18 months prior to retirement or 12 months before normal separation. If a transitioning service member successfully reenlists into active military duty, then that service member is no longer eligible for services.

**ELIGIBILITY FOR TRAINING SERVICES.** Under WIOA § 134 (c)(3)(A) training services may be made available to employed and unemployed adults who:

A. are determined (by the one-stop operator) after an interview, evaluation, or assessment and career planning to be:

1. unlikely or unable to obtain or retain employment that leads to economic self-sufficiency or wages comparable to or higher than wages from previous employment through career services,
2. in need of training services to obtain or retain employment leading to economic self-sufficiency or wages comparable to or higher than wages from previous employment, and
3. have the skills and qualifications to participate successfully in training services;

B. have selected a program of training services that is directly linked to employment opportunities in the planning region or in another area to which the individual is willing to commute or re-locate; and

C. are unable to obtain grant assistance from other sources to pay the costs of training, including HOPE, Pell, and TAA, or require WIOA assistance in addition to the other sources of grant assistance.

**Attachment 1: Local Workforce Development Board Listing**

Member Name	Title	Entity	Board Category
Brenda Broome	President	Donaldsonville/Seminole County Chamber of Commerce	Private
KaCee Holt	President	Colquitt/Miller County Chamber of Commerce	Private
Kyle Kornegay	President	Blakley/Early County Chamber of Commerce	Private
Karen Rackley	President	Sylvester/Worth County Chamber of Commerce	Private
Nathaniel Thomas	Owner/President	Thomas and Sons Home for Funerals	Private
Torey Wingate	Vice President IT Development	Affinity Apparel	Private
Gabriel Lord	Talent Strategist	Pheobe Putney Hospital	Private
Buddie Jordan	Owner/President	Jordan Corporation	Private
Tommy Hill	Owner/President	GIC, Inc.	Private
Renee Gee-Theophile	Owner/President	Hugan's DUI School	Private
LaTonja Dodson-Greene	Director Cardio. Services	Pheobe Sumter MedicalCenter	Private
Kenneth Deese	Owner	Rocky Bend Retreat	Private
Anthony Cooper	President	CooperHeating and A/r	Private
Joyce Barlow	CEO	Englewood Healthcare Inc.	Private
Werhner Washington	Plant Manager	Proctor and Gamble	Private
Charlie Sol	President	Blakley Baptist Association	CBO
Scott Easom	Manager	Organized Labor Union	Organized Labor
Allan York	Business Manager	Organized Labor Union	Organized Labor
Marilyn Mason	Unit Manager	Rehabilitation Services	Vocational Rehabilitation
Mrytis Ndawula	CEO	Southwest Georgia Community Action Council	CBO
Dr. John Marria	Executive Director	Cairo Housing Authority	HUD
Cory Thomas	City Manager	City of Colquitt	WIOA
Elizabeth Brown	Business and Community Liasion	Turner Job Corp	Job Corp
Dr. Anthony Parker	President	Albany State College	Adult Ed.
Dr. Rodney Carr	Vice President	Bainbridge State College	Adult Ed.
Joyce Halstead	Vice President	Southern Regional Technical College	Post-Sec. Ed.
Lynn Jones	Regional Coordinator	GDOL	Economic Development
Catherine Hogg	Career Center Manager	GDOL	Wagner Peyser
Jamie Rhodes	Administrator	Brantley County DFCS	TANF

**Attachment 2:** Local Negotiated Performance

<b>WIOA Performance Measure</b>	<b>PY16 Goal</b>	<b>PY17 Goal</b>
Adult Q2 Entered Employment	<b>Pending Guidance</b>	
Adult Q4 Entered Employment		
Adult Median Earnings		
Adult Credential Rate		
Adult In-Program Skills Gain		
DW Q2 Entered Employment		
DW Q4 Entered Employment		
DW Median Earnings		
DW Credential Rate		
DW In-Program Skills Gain		
Youth Q2 Placement in Employment or Education		
Youth Q4 Placement in Employment or Education		
Youth Median Earnings		
Youth Credential Rate		
Youth In-Program Skills Gain		
Employer Measure		

**Attachment 3:** Comments that Express Disagreement

Comment
Originating Entity:
Comment:

Comment
Originating Entity:
Comment:

Comment
Originating Entity:
Comment:



**Attachment 4:** Signature Page

The undersigned hereby agree to adhere to all applicable federal, State, and local laws, regulations, and policies in performing any duty associated with the funds made available to under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

Charles Williams

Local Workforce Area Director

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Roger Lane, Commissioner

Chief Local Elected Official

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Tommy Hill

Chairman, Southwest Georgia Workforce Development Board

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_