

2020 – 2024
Workforce and Innovation Opportunity Act
(WIOA)

Region 2/ Northern Indiana Workforce Board (NIWB)

Comprehensive Regional Plan

August 31, 2022

Attachment A – Planning Template

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**Please update the Table of Contents prior to sending the plan to DWD.*

**Attachment A - WIOA Local/Regional Plan
Workforce Development Board (WDB) Approval**

WDB/Region #	2		
WDB Chair	Tom Craig		
WDB President/CEO	Krystal Levi		
One Stop Operator	Larry King, Job Works		
Adult Service Provider(s)	Pro Resources, Heather Eash	Phone	
		Cell	
		Email	heash@proresources.net
		Phone	
		Cell	
		Email	
		Phone	
		Cell	
		Email	
Youth Program Manager/Lead Staff	Darcey Mitschelen	Phone	
		Cell	
		Email	dmitschelen@gotoworkone.com
Youth Service Provider(s)	Goodwill, Savannah Quesada	Phone	
		Cell	
		Email	squesada@gotoworkone.com
	Goodwill, Heather Williams	Phone	
		Cell	
		Email	hwilliams@gotoworkone.com
		Phone	
		Cell	
		Email	
I certify that the information contained herein is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge and I submit this plan on behalf of the WDB listed above.			
This plan is approved for the Workforce Development Board by the Workforce Development Board Chair.			
Name:	Tom Craig		
Title:			
Signature:		Date:	Click here to enter a date.

Optional Executive Summary

ES. Each local area may submit an executive summary of their plan, if desired; not to exceed 2 pages in length.

The Northern Indiana Workforce Board oversees workforce development activities in a five county region in Northern Indiana, delivered in the American Job Centers branded in Indiana as “WorkOne”. The region encompasses both metropolitan and rural areas. The two largest workforce areas are centered in South Bend and Elkhart. There are many educational partners (especially higher education) in the region that have a strong and growing focus on solving workforce/employer needs in the region. As a result of the Governor’s Regional Cities Initiative which established a Regional Development Authority for the St Joseph, Elkhart, and Marshall Counties resulting in the formation of the South-Bend Elkhart Regional Partnership (SBERP), significant unifying measure have brought the board into a more collaborative partnership with our regional workforce partners. The NIWB determined that job placement was the most impactful metric for our communities that we could pursue for Adults, Dislocated workers and Youth. Consequently our mission has been and continues to be focused on the needs of our regional employers. With the addition of the Governor’s Next Level Jobs program, our Business Services Team is working with Department of Workforce Development (DWD), and partner Business Service Representative to offer a greater array of services to meet the needs of employers. This fully functioning team integrates our internal job placement activities, veteran services, external business consultants, youth programs, programs for disabled individuals, senior services, returning citizen programs, adult education programs, Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) partners, Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA) partners, local IMPACT and HUD partners, Native American partners, and our vast educational partners in our local secondary and post-secondary systems. This group of partners meets monthly to review the workforce needs of our five county region. This integrated work is being done in collaboration with SBERB and includes Kosciusko and Fulton Counties to ensure regional needs are met, in spite of these counties being incorporated in different Regional Development Authorities. As a result of the trust and cooperation built through our WIOA Partners Consortium and the work with SBERP, partners are sharing business services information and activities allowing the regions resources to be maximized. This was seen in the collaborative work as a result of the CARES Act funding of over eight (8) million dollars received for rapid recovery from the COVID-9 Pandemic. Partner agencies came together to provide training for employers to quickly skill up individuals from outside their industry sectors to stimulate the regional economy. A portion of this funding was designated to train individuals prior to employment to meet the growing healthcare needs and to ensure the flow of goods outside the region. Region 2 has returned to post-Pandemic unemployment rates. While DWD has added additional Business Consultant staff to strengthen our strategy and allow us to cover a larger cross section of our many employers in the region. A clear example of this comes with the local work being done with work-based learning, State Earn and Learn programs, and apprenticeship opportunities. NIWB has developed an Intermediary role through the Department of Labor to assist employers with a smoother development and execution of the apprenticeship models in their companies. The collaboration locally with the Horizon Education Alliance (HEA), Goodwill Industries, some of our local Career and Tech Education (CTE) programs, Ivy Tech, Purdue and other post-secondary partners has been strengthened as a result of local efforts. The NIWB Intermediary is able to work nimbly in the region to develop Apprenticeship programs funded by the employer or through the use of Employer Training Grants. If these Apprenticeships match the requirements of Manufacturing 4.0, there is potential for the employer to receive funding through Notre Dame’s LIFT program, funded through a Lilly grant.

While our team continues to focus on filling employer needs as quickly as possible with the best possible candidates, our board recognizes the need to serve the most difficult clients. This doesn't always provide the most attractive performance metrics, but the board has resolved that we should address this segment of the population. According to the Labor Market information received from DWD to prepare this plan, as a result of this focus and the collaborative work with our Adult Ed providers and regional partners, the number of individuals has dropped from over 87,000 to 55,243, which is a huge win for the region! Potential concerns over funding and a reliance on Federal WIOA funding caused the board to look at funding alternatives to serve special groups of individuals and employers. The regional WorkOne offices have adopted a strategy of finding providers who have received funding and filling their classes when possible. During the enormous CARES Act funding distributions to the regions and to Ivy Tech, we assisted Ivy Tech in locating committed and reengaging students. The continued utilization of other funding options, and the braiding of funding increases one of the WIOA goals of co-enrollment across agencies. Several years ago, NIWB received a federally-funded grant through the Center for Workforce Inclusion to provide Senior Community Service Employment Program services to individuals 55 and older who have left the workforce or been forced from the workforce due to varying reasons, but have found themselves in dire financial need. This program allows us to train these individuals for up to four years preparing them to return to the workforce. While in this program, individuals receive minimum wage for 20-29 hours of work for a community service agency in our 8 county region. Having a Program Director focused locally has allowed the Board to secure additional "slots" or program openings for individuals in our area, causing our grant dollars to grow in this area of service. NIWB received dollars from the Pokagon Band of the Potawatomi to stimulate our work with local Youth. The Northern Indiana Workforce Board is committed to increased collaboration with our workforce partners and educational institutions to ensure the opportunities for individuals to have access to the training needed to be gainfully employed, which has become the catalyst behind and has led to a movement called **Employ Northern Indiana**. This "movement" is being utilized as a call to action for our staff, our partners, employers, and any other agency within our region whose predominant focus is getting our regional neighbors placed into sustainable employment, raising their skills and abilities to enter into a true career pathway versus only securing a job. NIWB is here to serve the region, looking for all opportunities to say "Yes" to the challenges we are facing, by being part of the solution!

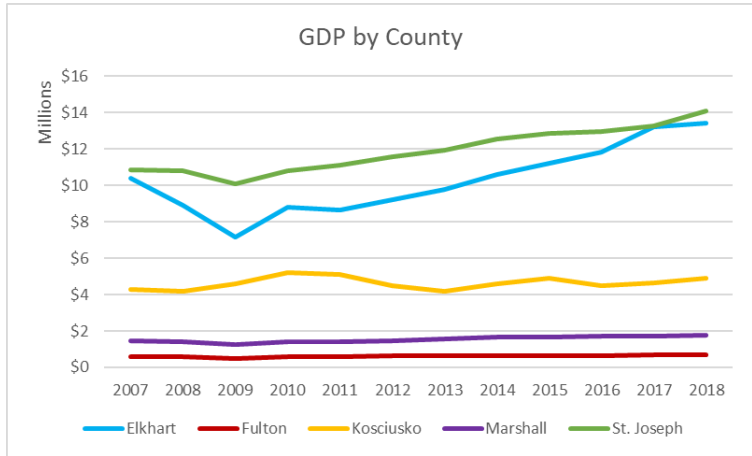
Section 1: Workforce and Economic Analysis

Please answer the following questions in 8 pages or less. The Department of Workforce Development has regional labor market analysts assigned for each of the Regions. These experts can assist in developing responses to the questions 1.1 through 1.3 below. **Questions that require collaborative answers for regions 5 & 12 are designated with an *.**

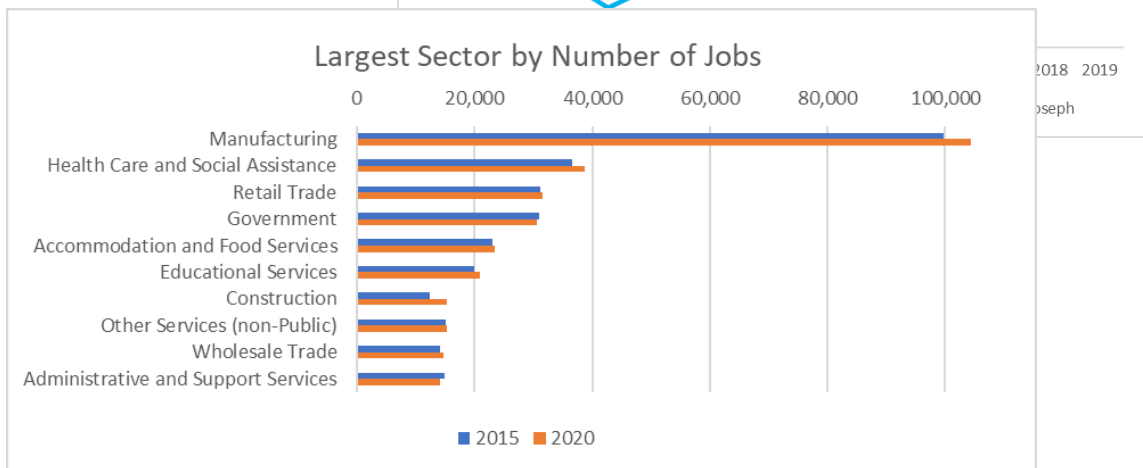
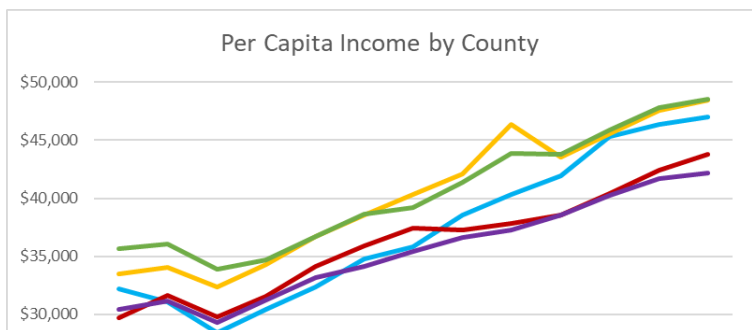
1.1* An analysis of the economic conditions including existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations; and the employment needs of employers in those industry sectors and occupations. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(A)]

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Economic Growth Region 2 (EGR2) is in a strong condition with a trajectory of sustained growth in gross domestic product (GDP) and income per capita across all five counties. For the region as a whole, as reported by the Bureau of Economic Analysis, GDP has increased by 16.0% between 2014 and 2018, the last year data is available, with the fastest annualized growth occurring in Elkhart (6.7%) and St. Joseph (3.1%) counties and the slowest in Kosciusko (1.6%) and Marshall (1.5%).



The region's per capita personal income in 2019 is \$47,383, a 12.0% increase since 2015. Elkhart (16.6%), Fulton (15.8%), and Marshall (13.1%) all demonstrated strong growth in per capita personal income, while St. Joseph (10.7%) and Kosciusko (4.5%) maintained growth, but at a slower rate.



The largest sector within EGR2 is manufacturing, making up 29.7% of the total number of jobs in the region as recorded by the Department of Workforce Development. Manufacturing is by far the most important sector in the region, often acting as a leading indicator for the growth or downturn in output for other sectors. Much of the growth in the region can be attributed to this sector as it makes up ~36.1% of the regions total GDP. The health care and social assistance (11.0%), retail trade (9.0%), government (8.7%), accommodation and food service (6.7%), and educational services (6.0%) sectors were the next largest by percent of the labor force employed. The largest increase in the number of jobs within a sector was in manufacturing, with 4,671 more jobs than were present in 2015, followed by construction (2,935), health

care and social assistance (2,189), educational services (1,049), and arts, entertainment, and recreation (924). The largest reduction in jobs occurred in the Information sector (-21%), followed by agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting (-6%) and administrative and supportive services (-5%).

Over the last two years, an average of 4,031 new employees were sought out each month by businesses in the region according to research by Burning Glass Technologies. The greatest average monthly demand was for healthcare practitioners (722), in part due to the pandemic, with non-pandemic focused sectors such as sales (499), office and administrative support (387), transportation (384), management (362), and production (251) following. This monthly demand for labor greatly exceeds the average annual increase in jobs – 2,787 per year – indicating a shortfall in the size of the labor force, a mismatch between labor force skill and sector need, or high levels of turnover requiring many jobs to be filled multiple times within the timeframe. Most likely it is a mixture of these factors. Further analysis of the labor force will occur in section 1.3.



Casting a shadow over the strength of the economy in the region is the impact of the Coronavirus. While regional GDP is likely to shrink over 2020, the predominance of the manufacturing industry in the region led to a reemployment rate above the rest of the state – excluding St. Joseph County, where manufacturing is less predominant, where employment remains above the state level. While the pandemic will have a measured effect on output in 2020, and many individuals still are in need of employment assistance, EGR2 is in position to return to the previous growth trend in 2021. Further analysis of the pandemic and its effect on unemployment can be found in section 1.3.

1.2 An analysis of the knowledge and skills required to meet the employment needs of the employers in the local area, including employment requirements for in-demand industry sectors and occupations. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(B)]

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Of all the job-specific skills requested in job postings within the Burning Glass dataset, the most demanded skills are ones which facilitate successful interactions between persons. Customer service (14,483) leads the list of most requested skills, followed by scheduling (11,467), sales (10,654), patient care (7,418), and retail industry knowledge (7,251). Other highly transferable and in demand skills are CPR certification (6,987), budgeting (4,345), and data entry (2,793). While some skills related to the manufacturing and

logistics sectors do appear on this list – repair (6,273), forklift operation (3,456), quality assurance and control (2,900), and manufacturing processes (2,486) – they are likely underrepresented due to the diverse skills required for different occupations within the sector. As there are many specific and unique skills being requested by the sector, none appear to be requested in as large a number as key skills for other sectors.

Looking more broadly at 'soft skills' and personal abilities, communication skills (26,595) are by far the most requested. Physical abilities (18,254) as a broad category are next, followed by organizational skills (13,115), teamwork/collaboration (11,794), and computer literacy (10,519). Many of the skills included in this list – which also includes traits such as detail oriented (9,424), research (4,376), and verbal/oral communication (3,627) – are abilities which are not currently included in the set of workshops and trainings offered by the workforce development system. Engagement with this kind of skill list, as well as working with clients to be aware of how to be confident and 'sell' the soft skills they do have, would be beneficial for agents of the workforce development sector.

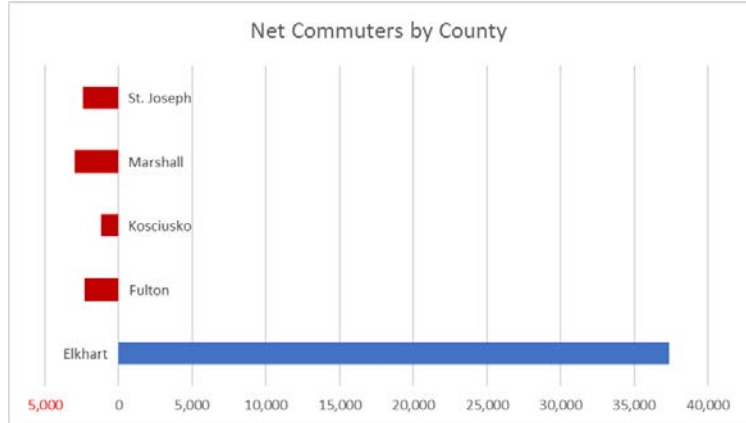
The last grouping of skills being demanded are related to technology. By far the most demanded computer related skill is fluency in Microsoft Office – Excel (7,023), Word (3,113), PowerPoint (2,113). There are specific program and database skills being requested – SAP (1,000), enterprise resource planning (998), SQL (729), Microsoft Access (459) – as well as postings seeking a variety of coding language skills, but the predominant technical skills are Microsoft Office based. Within WorkOne, clients have demonstrated high levels of functionality and mastery of smartphone related computer, but a common lack of familiarity with computers. While coronavirus challenges limit the ability of in-person workshops, intentional programming should seek to increase the basic computer skills of the out of work population.

In partnership with the South Bend-Elkhart Regional Partnership and Burning Glass Technologies, research has been conducted on lifeboat jobs, skillsets and source occupations which can be easily upskilled into higher paying destination occupations with demonstrated demand. For example, a radiologic technician could shift to being a registered nurse (salary premium of \$14,947 and destination demand of 2,864), ultrasound technologist (\$12,264 and 106), or an MRI/CT technologist (\$4,340 and 19). Among these lifeboat job source occupations, which have varying but similar potential salary premiums and demand, are nursing assistants, insurance sales, customer service representatives, welders, and quantity inspection technicians, among others. By focusing on providing trainings and assisting with the skill development and placement for these jobs, the workforce development system can create a pipeline of long term improvement for clients while supplying employers with workers who are ready to join in-demand occupations.

1.3 An analysis of the local workforce, including current labor force employment (and unemployment) data, and information on labor market trends, and the educational and skill levels of the workforce in the region, including individuals with barriers to employment and youth. WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(C)]

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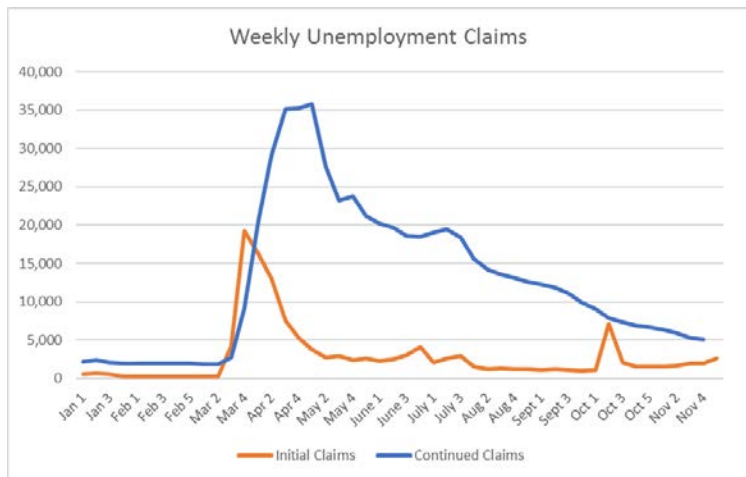
As a whole, STATS Indiana reports the region's population has increased 1.4% in the last five years, with an additional 1.1% growth projected for the next five years. Population has grown in three counties – Elkhart (1.7%), Kosciusko (1.2%), and St. Joseph (1.3%) – and shrunk in two – Fulton (-1.8%) and Marshall (-1.0%). Over the same timeframe, the labor force in the region has grown 0.67%. Most of this growth occurred in Elkhart county, 2.7%



between 2015 and 2020, with slight growth occurring in Kosciusko (0.6%) and a shrinking labor force in Fulton (-2.3%), Marshall (-0.6%), and St. Joseph (-0.4%). The strength of Elkhart's economy, and its potential to continue labor force expansion despite an otherwise stagnant trend, can be seen in the region's commuter trends, within which Elkhart is the only county to be a net receiver of commuters.

The Indiana Business Research Center reports statewide labor force growth is slowing and forecasts a period of near stagnant growth for several decades. Within EGR2, STATS Indiana projects a 2.3% reduction in the size of the labor force over the next ten years with only Elkhart (1.5%) expected to have growth. All other counties – Fulton (-6.1%), Kosciusko (-3.3%), Marshall (-5.3%), and St. Joseph (-4.1%) – are expected to have a smaller labor force in 2030. The labor force participation rate began falling in 2018, a reduction of 4.7 percentage points (p.p.) according to Department of Workforce Development data, with a 1.14 percentage point reduction occurring between July and September of this year. While the pandemic likely has caused some individuals to exit the labor force, this trend was already present in the year preceding the shift in economic conditions which began in March 2020.

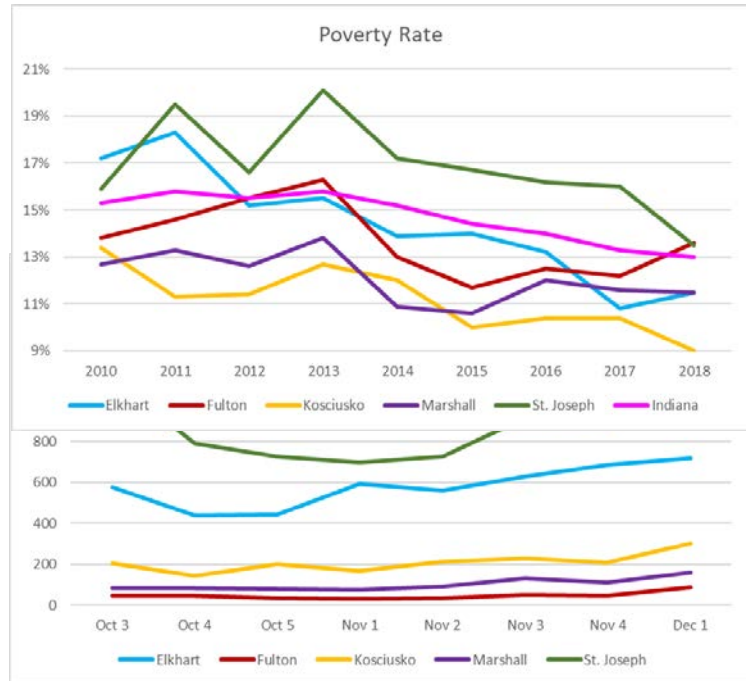
As is well known, the sudden onset of the pandemic led to a rapid increase in the number of initial unemployment claims across the country, including in Economic Growth Region 2. Department of Workforce Development records show the previously low region wide unemployment rate of 3.2% in February increased sharply to 23.2% in April. While it has fallen to 5% as of October, continued friction in the labor market related to changes in business plans, social distancing requirements, and the costs of job transfer continue to negatively affect those recently displaced or seeking employment.



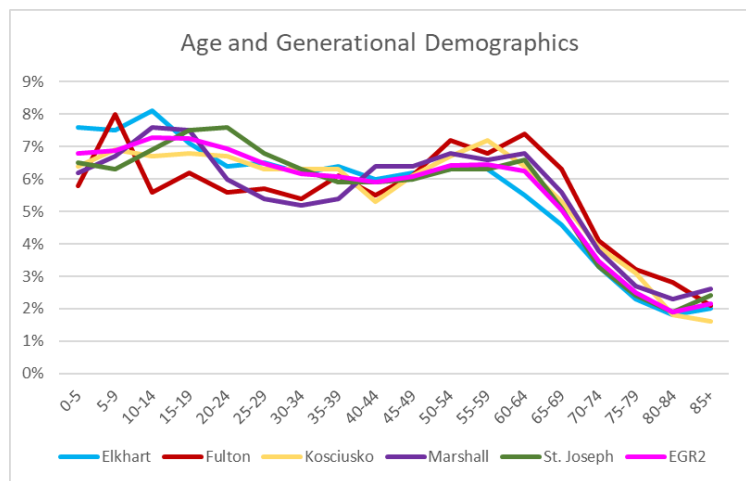
Within the region there typically is a small increase in the unemployment rate each fall, a cyclical pattern related to norms in the local manufacturing industry and reductions in some industries due to changes in weather, averaging 0.2 percentage points over the last five years. This year, the number of initial unemployment

claims during the same time period increased by 79.5%. This is likely due to the continued, and increasing, prevalence of COVID-19 in the region, which has led to new business closures, reductions in staffing, supply chain shortages, and reduced demand for some manufactured goods. Between the beginning of October and the first week of December, the last week of available Department of Workforce Development data, new claims in have increased in all five counties; Elkhart by 94.9%, Fulton by 214.3%, Marshall by 287.5%, Kosciusko by 261.5%, and St. Joseph by 133.2%.

The pandemic is likely to increase the prevalence of poverty in the region due to prolonged periods of heightened unemployment. Fortunately, the region has a demonstrated track record of reducing the poverty rate. The prevalence of poverty has fallen over the last five years in all five counties with three exceeding the Indiana state rate (-2.8 p.p.) – Elkhart (-4.0 p.p.), Kosciusko (-3.7 p.p.), and St. Joseph (-6.6 p.p.) – with Fulton (-2.7 p.p.) and Marshall (-2.3 p.p.) following close behind according to the Census Bureau's SAIPE program. The strong trend of falling poverty rates following the great recession of 2008-2009 shows that once employment returns to its pre-pandemic level, the regions business and resource endowment is capable reducing any short term increase in poverty which may have occurred in 2020.

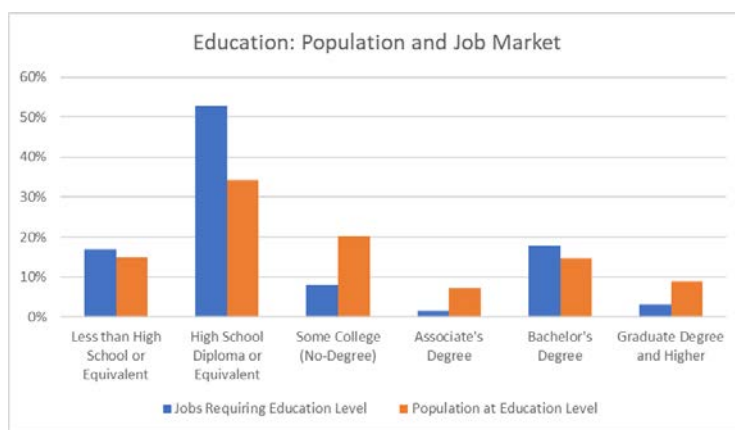


The age and demographic trend of the population is generally well distributed between demographic brackets with a slight depression in the prevalence of 30-50 year olds. This is likely the result of young professionals who have relocated to other areas for specialized or high skill employment. There are some differences between the counties when comparing the age distributions reported in the American Community Survey. A few notable examples; a) Marshall county sees a steep drop in the frequency of 20-24 year olds which persists until the 40-44 bracket, demonstrating an issue with the retention of recent graduates or the supply of occupations desirable to this demographic, b) St. Joseph county sees an increase in the prevalence of college educated population, likely due to the presence of Notre Dame, but demonstrates a 'sticky' effect on the young adult



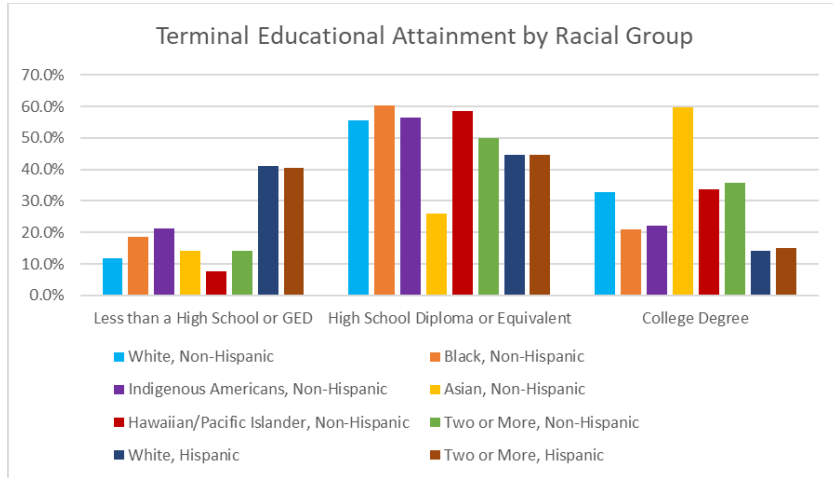
population, as seen by the gradual decline from the highest density concentration at the 20-24 year old bracket, c) Elkhart county has the highest prevalence of children under age 15, and while there is a drop following age 19, it is a smaller reduction than some of the other counties, implying retention potential and an increased likelihood of a sustainable labor force.

Reporting from the Department of Workforce Development finds 85% of the region's population has at least a high school diploma and 24% have at least a bachelor's degree. There is a mismatch between the population's education level and the amount of education required for the job market, with more education present than employers are seeking. Three times as many residents of EGR2 have graduate degrees as there are jobs that require them. While there is a slight shortage of labor force with a bachelor's degree, if all community members with a graduate degree get a job that requires a graduate or bachelor degree, a number of individuals with bachelor degrees (3% of the population) would need to seek a job which requires an associate's degree or less. There already are seven times more holders of associate's degrees than there are jobs seeking to employ at that education level, as holders of bachelor's seek associate's level positions in greater numbers than there are jobs, then the entire population of associate's degree holders would need to seek jobs that do not require an associate's degree. In addition, the population has 2.5 times as many 'some-college' educated persons as there are jobs seeking that level of qualification. As higher educated individuals take jobs below their qualification level, they displace people who would otherwise be qualified for those jobs. Within the region as a whole, this displacement leads to 24% of the population displaced from jobs that are appropriate for their education level (6% from graduate, 3% from bachelors, 7% from associates, and 8% from 'some college'). This kind of market failure, the inability of labor supply and demand to properly match skill levels, leads to opportunity costs in reduced growth and increased income related challenges. The workforce development system can respond to this problem by working with employers to expand high-skill career offerings and utilizing targeted skills and certification trainings to make non-degree educated individuals specialized and competitive in fields which will provide them job and financial security.



The uneven distribution of education is negatively correlated with a number of factors such as race, language or origin, and ability. Individuals who are Hispanic are less likely to have a college or high school degree while other groups, such as Asian or White persons, are more likely to have finished high school or completed college. This inequality extends to other groups as well. While the region's high school graduation rate for those who are deemed 'general education' is 91.4%, students who are considered 'special education' only have a graduation rate of 69.9% and 'English language learners' graduate at a 77.2% rate. This disparity is also seen among students of different affluences, students who are 'paid meals' have a graduation rate of 93.4% compared to only 85.4% for students whose families are classified 'free/reduced meals'. The reduced prevalence of educational attainment for some groups and individuals

limits their occupational opportunities, and thus they would likely benefit from preferential workforce development programming.



Section 2: Strategic Vision and Goals

Please answer the following questions of Section 2 in 10 pages or less. Section 2 responses should reflect input from members of the local workforce development board and other community stakeholders.

Questions that require collaborative answers for regions 5 & 12 are designated with an *.

2.1 Provide the board’s vision and goals for its local workforce system in preparing an educated and skilled workforce in the local area, including goals for youth and individuals with barriers to employment. As to youth, describe unique goals for in-school youth and out-of-school youth. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(E)]

The overarching goal of the NIWB is that **all** individuals residing in Region 2, especially the at-risk youth population, be afforded the opportunity to achieve their highest goals through a seamless, intentionally focused workforce development plan and infrastructure. The region has developed “Desk Aids” to ensure that all WIOA partners are fully aware of how to refer individuals to the WorkOne programs, how to determine who will best benefit, when in their process, it is best to make that referral, and funding opportunities along with eligibility criteria. This includes all WIOA partner agency offerings. This roadmap meets people right where they are, no matter the circumstance, pointing them in the direction of their highest goals, ensuring all needs are met, hope and encouragement are provided along the way, and success is celebrated. By building such an inclusive workforce infrastructure, employers not only have easy access to the skilled workforce they need, but also have a voice in the development of the model which provides the human capital needed for strong economic growth for the region.

In Region 2 in the past, the focus has been predominantly on the use of JAG programming to effectively create an environment that helps youth not exposed to opportunities for growth and education become not only acquainted with these opportunities, but have hands on workforce learning experiences that are related to their goals, values, and interests. The JAG classrooms have decreased over the past couple of years and interest in the programs have also decreased. This has created an opportunity to re-evaluate the work being done with In-School Youth. With funding provided by the Pokagons, the Youth Service Provider (Goodwill) has reached out to the South Bend Community School Corporation to develop a referral system directly to an In-School Youth Specialist who meets with the students one-on-one for services centered around the strongest piece of the JAG programs – adult mentoring and coaching. This referral program is based in the CTE programs and has allowed us to work with students in the “At Risk” populations more closely than ever before. The goal of the Board, when working with our youth population, is to first and foremost obtain their high school diploma by assist them in overcoming the life circumstances that make doing so difficult. When this becomes impossible for the youth, the next most important goal is to have such strong working relationships with area agencies, DOC/DOJ, partner WIOA agencies, Adult Ed programs, the Youth Services Bureau, area houses of worship, and schools. Youth are able to locate the WorkOne resources to achieve the high school equivalency and job skills classes which lead to a robust work experience network between WorkOne and local employers. The partnerships with Out-of-School Youth staff and local agencies and resources are so vast that this has been one of our strongest source of services during the COVID Pandemic.

The five predominant areas that are covered with Youth are financial literacy, entrepreneurial skills training, the availability of local labor market and employment information about in-demand industry sectors and/or

occupations available in our area, activities available to assist youth in preparing and transitioning into post-secondary education and training, and education offered concurrently with and in the context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster. The WIOA work experience is one of the most critical aspects when working with Youth.

Additionally, strong relationships have been developed with our local jails and work release facilities throughout Region 2 which has resulted in our ability to offer on-site training opportunities. Such training opportunities have afforded our returning citizens meaningful credentials that have enhanced their employment opportunities and increased their wage potential.

The NIWB was selected to participate in a DOL supported SNAP employment and training consortium with the purpose of increasing ties between SNAP Employment and Training programs and America's Job Centers thus increasing access for the SNAP participants to WorkOne resources, and to potentially braid funding.

2.2 Describe how the board's vision aligns with and/or supports the strategic vision of Governor's Workforce Cabinet (GWC) as set out in the WIOA State Plan.

<https://www.in.gov/gwc/files/Indiana%20Strategic%20Workforce%20Plan.pdf>

Indiana's strategic vision is to create a talent system that affords all Hoosiers equitable opportunities for lifelong learning and increased personal economic mobility and provides employers the talent to grow and diversify their workforce.

We will endeavor to increase intergenerational social and economic mobility by:

- Ensuring quality pathways that provide opportunities for career advancement, personal prosperity, and well-being for all Hoosiers;
- Partnering with Indiana employers and education and training providers to identify and close the skills gap while meeting emerging talent needs; and
- Strengthening Indiana's economy by aligning programs and funding to meet current and future workforce needs.

In Region 2, the NIWB and its WIOA partners began meeting in November of 2014 to ensure alignment with one another and with the new legislation. This partnership has met almost every month since then. This brings together all WorkOne programs, Vocational Rehabilitation Services, FSSA, HUD, Native American WIOA programs, Adult Education providers, Career Tech Ed Directors, the community college and other post-secondary providers, programs devoted to returning citizens, the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP), and others in the community who either send individuals into our programs or can serve as an additional resource in meeting the needs of the individual for stabilization prior to entry into one of our programs. This has allowed the region to seek and obtain grants that are used to develop quality pathways and programs to provide opportunities for career advancement, increase personal wealth, or meet other needs for the residents of Region 2. The partners will continue to use MicroSoft Teams for

warm introductions between agencies and individuals seeking services. This allows for a greater number of co-enrollments between agencies and a greater number of individuals being served. Also included in this group are local Chambers, employers, and others working directly with employers to further inform the work that is being done within our agencies. This has led to Career Pathway development, the development of effective IETs and other Adult training options, when the region did not have much WIOA money for training opportunities. Our general philosophy is that whomever has the money, determines the path our customers take through co-enrollment and the sharing of information/resources. This has served all of our programs well at various times of funding dips to ensure the continuity of quality programs being available.

Another strength of the monthly meetings of this group, is our ability to bridge skills gaps for all populations and demographics. We frequently say that our duplication of services, especially when it meets the very specific needs of a certain demographic such as seniors, allows us to reach a far greater number of individuals in our region. The diverse nature of our partners and those they serve helps inform our employer base and the work done with employers in our collective, regional business services team of the individuals coming out of training opportunities and in reverse, helps us know the skills needed today and those coming in the future. This information from the employers aids in the development of training programs to meet the emerging needs and allows us to work together to secure additional funding to support this training. All training which leads to better employment for our residents, helps strengthen the economy in our region.

2.3 Describe how the board's goals contribute to each of the five GWC goals.

https://www.in.gov/gwc/files/Indiana%20Strategic%20Workforce%20Plan_Draft_2.6.2020.pdf

The GWC's strategic plan includes a number of strategies under each goal. While Local boards are required to respond to each goal, they are not expected to address how each strategy under each goal will be implemented. It is up to the discretion of the local board to determine what strategies best fit the local needs.

Goal 1. Focus on meeting the individual needs of Hoosiers. Indiana has created a talent development system comprised of wide-ranging workforce training and education programs. Hoosiers need to be able to find and navigate this often complex system to find the best option that meets their current and often immediate needs, fulfills their aspirations, and equips them with the skills and knowledge for socioeconomic mobility. Career pathways that help diversify the skills and talent within Indiana must be designed and delivered with the individual's economic sustainability and mobility as the focal point. These career pathways will help diversify the skills and talent within Indiana to promote economic opportunities for Hoosiers. We need to ensure that we do not focus merely on programmatic requirements and funding streams, but rather what an individual needs and aspires to in order to be successful. We must include an intergenerational approach to communicating, offering, and delivering services in order to meet an individual's ambitions and current and future economic needs. This system may not look the same for each person, and it may not provide the same resources for each person. It will be customizable to an individual's goals and aspirations in order to achieve social and economic mobility.

The breadth of programs and their availability in Region 2 are no less than amazing. That individual agencies are willing to work so closely together is what allows the region to provide so many services and training opportunities. Together, the partners have come together to attack the high number of residents who do not have a high school equivalency. We have seen the number decrease, not as significantly as we would like, but the joining forces with other agencies has allowed us to look at the problem with a broader lens. This allows us to create opportunities of outreach into the Hispanic communities, the opportunity zones, our more rural areas, and into the senior communities. The outreach is done through mobile case managements, field staff working together to help individuals between agencies, through Facebook and other social media outlets, our website, phone calls, posters, and any other community communication tool we can locate. Again, when the resources of all agencies are thrown into the middle of the table for the use of whomever needs it, our reach is far greater and has far greater impact.

Goal 2. Integrate state systems to facilitate greater access to information, resources, and services for constituents, businesses, state personnel, career coaches or navigators, and case managers. In addition to acquiring skills, education, and jobs that put them on the path to social and economic mobility, constituents also must understand that they have continuous access to the talent development system throughout their working lives. For sustained economic success and personal growth, Hoosiers will need to continually engage with, and pursue, lifelong learning opportunities, which could exacerbate the complexities of this multifaceted system. Indiana must integrate our state and federal resources to help simplify navigation of this system for constituents. Our current program-by-program approach to serving constituents and businesses has resulted in a profusion of program-specific solutions. If the talent development system is to better serve our Hoosiers and improve their lives, we must align and simplify access to this array of resources and services. Strategic coordination of systems and collaboration across state agencies will begin breaking down to better empower our Workforce Development Boards, outreach personnel, and local partners.

While the systems for case management remain unavailable to all agencies, the Partners have developed a referral form that is used on the NIWB/WorkOne website, the social media pages, and had been used between agencies. Our website along with the MicroSoft Teams platform will allow the sharing of

information in a secure manner, conversation between case managers/coaches, and to help make a hand-off from one agency to the other much less scary for the customer.

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Goal 3. Align programs towards creating a healthy, engaged, and talented citizen. Often, our programs deal with the aftermath of either situational or systematic difficulties. Some government programs perform triage on crises occurring in Hoosiers' lives, rather than curbing the systemic inequities through early intervention strategies. We envision a realignment of our programs to include an emphasis on prevention and early intervention that will elevate opportunities for success. The most vital and entrenched strategy we have for early intervention is our early education and K-12 education systems. By expanding access to early education, we can begin providing advantageous programs to Hoosier children. As our students progress through our educational system, better integration of academic and technical skills and knowledge will provide Hoosiers with more opportunities for future mobility. Our education and workforce programs for adults will focus on finding the right fit for the individual person and equipping Hoosiers with the skills needed for career advancement and longevity. By assisting multiple generations in advancement towards quality health, societal engagement, and preparation for the jobs of today and tomorrow, we can foster an environment where economic mobility is attainable for more Hoosiers.

In Region 2, the NIWB staff and our partners are always looking for opportunities to get ahead of a crisis should one develop whether regional in nature or larger in scale. This is seen in our jail programs, our work with our Rapid Response activities, the phone calls made during the COVID office shut down to individuals who had come into the offices looking for assistance prior to the shutdown, ensuring they were okay. This simple act of concern and trying to stabilize before they felt the full impact of the crisis, allowed us to serve our neighbors by triaging them to much needed services.

As mentioned before, the strength of the Region 2 WIOA Partners Consortium is the ability to align the agencies for a common mission. This is best exemplified in the work done a couple of years ago, when FSSA announced to the partners an influx of hundreds of individuals who would need Work Ready Skills training in order to meet their workforce development criteria for maintaining their Healthy Indiana Plan benefits if they were Able-bodied, without Children (ABWD's). At that time, we were informed that over 26,000 individuals would be impacted by this in our region. Because we do provide duplicative services, we were able to be prepared for the onslaught by ensuring our workshops, our one-on-one counseling, and our job-to-job services matched Goodwill's, IMPACT's, Voc Rehab's, etc. All the agencies came together and created a matching workforce development skills delivery program for our most-in-need, individuals caught in generational poverty. The region came together with Job Lead packets, worked with employers to ensure our training was on-track with their needs, and that it was easily delivered by each agency. This included sharing staffing between agencies. This was a fantastic exercise which followed closely after staff from all agencies had received training from Dr. Beverly Ford on case managing individuals in generational poverty. Unfortunately or fortunately, depending on how one might view what happened, this plan began and lasted about 7-8 months, before this requirement for healthcare benefits was shut down. The strength of the program was seeing that it could be done, it could be done quickly and efficiently, and that all partners were willing and able to join forces when there was a significant need. This is when we learned that duplication is not as bad as some might think.

It was also through this model that the NIWB and the regional partners began looking at ways to provide services intentionally and thoughtfully, as opposed to only reactionary. As we began to move into Program Year 2019, prior to the Pandemic, the NIWB had begun focusing heavily on meeting customers outside of the WorkOne Offices. How could we share staff with other agencies who were being impacted by reduced funding as well? This included Voc Rehab, the YWCA/YMCA, and other agencies dedicated to working with specific populations. How could we get our services to them and simultaneously assist them in their provision of services? This was just about to take off, when the offices closed. We had also been working to find virtual ways of providing service, improving the functionality of our website and social media to increase our reach into the community. With the RESEA program, we knew that there were many people who simply would not come to the office just to get their unemployment benefits. They would go without, rather than come in. This was a conundrum! We were just set to put these plans into a trial format as the pandemic struck. As a result of this forward thinking, we were able to request a change in use of funds through DWD to purchase laptops, hotspots, and cell phones for staff to be able to continue to work from home, while the offices were shut down. Staff went back to the VOS greeter system and pulled the names of every individual who had entered a WorkOne office to be sure they had been able to access their unemployment, locate a job (we have had many job openings available all through the pandemic!), receive any and all of our career services, as well as locating those individuals newly separated from their employment to enter the Personal Care Assistant (PCA) to meet a local employers need. This call from the employer is not a new situation in Region 2. They call us when they are laying off, seeking Rapid Response activities to assist, and, because of past performance in these service areas, if other companies hear that another company is going out of business or having a large lay-off, they will call us for access to those employees. These are the very conversations that happen at the Partners meetings.

Goal 4. Maximize state and federal resources through impact-driven programs for Hoosiers. In Indiana, there is a great deal of overlap between the populations served through our various state and federal programs focusing on either social services and/or workforce training. An interdependence of social, medical, and other support services can help Hoosiers overcome employment obstacles. To capitalize on Indiana's investments into these programs, we must include impact data in our evaluation of successful services. In addition to considering inputs (e.g., attendance and participation rates) and outputs (e.g., program completers and graduates) of these programs, we will also examine the outcomes (e.g., wages and improvement in socioeconomic status). We need to understand the return on investment we earn from each of our programs in order to ensure it is truly impacting the lives of Hoosiers.

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Region 2 has maintained performance in all program areas for the past 9 years under the current leadership. In spite of funding allocations diminishing and funds being provided to other agencies to increase the levels of service provided within the region, WorkOne Northern Indiana has been in the midst of ensuring program performance and dollars are spent in other agencies. The most recent example of this was this past fall when Ivy Tech South Bend was awarded a significant amount of CARES Act dollars. When they could not get individuals to return their calls or bring in documents, the NIWB provided staff to Ivy Tech to make over 500 calls. Of those calls, 25-30 individuals who had gotten lost in the system and in the pandemic frustration were able to access training that they had given up on. In addition, the NIWB in partnership with SBERP received \$3.15 M in CARES Act funding for Employer Training Grants (ETG) and

Workforce Ready Grants (WRG) for Rapid Recovery within the Region. \$1.5 M was allocated for ETG and \$1M was allocated for WRG with \$500,000 was allocated for Supportive Services. We had over \$4 M requested and allotted for Region 2 employers. As a result of the virus and its impact on training providers, only \$2.8 M was invoiced for the ETG. For the WRG funding, over \$800,000 was provided to training providers for individuals seeking to gain the skills necessary to meet local employment needs. However, due to the amazing strength of our partner agencies providing additional assistance and helping the region locate individuals in need of training, we were only able to spend approximately \$100,000 in supportive services. Region 2 served nearly 25% of all Hoosiers trained during the Pandemic, served over 10,000 unique visitors, not UI customers, and made over an \$11M impact through job placement to our local economy. The NIWB continues to explore funding opportunities and currently has two pilot projects in support of our small businesses and to expand health care training and flexibility.

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Goal 5. Foster impactful relationships between businesses, community partners, and government agencies. In order to create a more robust talent development system and advance our populous towards economic mobility, the private sector must be a partner to drive training. We need to deepen our current partnerships with engaged businesses and expand our outreach to involve more businesses. Simultaneously, Indiana must increasingly diversify its economy to ensure we keep up with the rapid pace of the global change. The first step is promoting coordinated communication of the state's programs to all Indiana employers so no matter the size or type of business all are empowered to engage. This involves synchronization from state agencies to local regions to ensure our employers know and understand the multitude of state opportunities to engage with the talent development system. Successful business engagement must deliver value to employers, which will require our talent development programs to be more accessible and user-friendly for employers. We must also start to engage with businesses holistically, rather than focusing solely on their current needs. Our ultimate goal is to change the culture of how employers play a role and invest in their own workforce development as opposed to the government steering and telling employers what to do. Our engagement practices will shift employers from simply being the customers of the workforce

Region 2 and the NIWB have many partners that call together agencies and employers to solve workforce needs, by pulling together service agencies, training providers, and employers to ensure the system is aligned. This happens through various industry partnerships, HEA partnerships, SBERP partnerships, the Kosciusko Economic Development efforts, Fulton County Economic Development efforts, the Marshall County Partnership and Life-Long Learning agency, the South Bend Mayor's Office, Bendable – through the Drucker Institute, IUSB, Notre Dame, and many others. Region 2 is not at a loss for pulling industry, training, and agencies together. The issue is in ensuring a cohesive system that runs together, not separately. Ivy Tech is putting together opportunities for the community to be able to come together for these types of conversations as well. SBERP and the NIWB are working on possible systems of referral, an interactive resource map, and detailed workforce data to further cause these conversations to happen.

As the Region continues to develop the SEAL programs, the Apprenticeship programs, and other work-based learning opportunities within the region, employers, educators, and workforce professionals from various agencies are all coming together to ensure we are getting our services to the right people, while meeting the needs of the employers – both present and future.

2.4* Describe how the board's goals relate to the achievement of federal performance accountability measures. [WIOA Sec. 108 (b) (1) (E)] See WIOA Section 116 (b) (2) (A) for more information on the federal performance accountability measures.

[Click here to enter text.](#)

The Board's goals are very similar to those of the Governor's Workforce Cabinet. We are to align partner agencies, training providers, and employers to ensure the work we are doing is intentional and impactful. Through this alignment, the Board goes after funding to support this alignment, which is centered on the current and future skill needs of the employers. The NIWB staff is tasked to provide and watch the local Rapid Response activities. We have been able to assist them in diminishing the negative impact on the employees, help those affected employees transition directly into a similar job at a higher wage or with better benefits. We are able to effectively provide and make available short training program that would allow for an easy transition into new employment at a better wage – like Six Sigma. Were we able to bring a training providers into a facility to train up the staff being laid off for transition into new employment. We have had varying reports over the years that take a look back over the years to determine the success of our work. The Board likes to look at the number served, the number of individuals currently unemployed compared to the entire labor force, and of course, the number that have obtained employment. When we provide training, the Board reviews the number who completed the training, the number who achieved their certification, and the number who were placed into employment in this new area. The Board is concerned about the level of customer service that is provided. All of the areas they watch feed directly into our federal performance accountability numbers.

[Click here to enter text.](#)

2.5* Describe any additional indicators used by the local board to measure performance and effectiveness of the local fiscal agent (where appropriate), contracted service providers and the one-stop delivery system in the local area. [WIOA Sec. 108 (b) (17)]

By agreement with the Chief Elected Official, the NIWB has been appointed fiscal agent. The CFO fulfills the responsibilities of the fiscal agent for the board. The CFO is monitored by DWD fiscal monitoring, outside third party auditors, and the finance committee of the board and the Treasurer. These are all thorough reviews of the means of accounting, the contracts signed, and how the funds are handled.

Region 2's service provision structure was put into place in July 2011. At the outset of this structure, the Board saw an approximate \$350,000 savings. This structure has all field work monitored by NIWB staff members on daily/hourly basis. All programs are managed by a team of Indiana Department of Workforce Development Local Office Managers and a NIWB Regional Manager. This team provides direct operational and process guidance to frontline staff who are procured through a staffing vendor. The work is monitored daily and is watched for programmatic success. This team of managers provides direct input back to the Board on the quality of service provided to the customer – both job seeker and employer. A close eye is kept on the expenditure of funds and the return on investment of these funds as they are provided for various training programs available within the region. While the staffing vendor provides HR functions for the staff, the local Management Team does yearly evaluations until such time as more close monitoring is

required to ensure compliance with all regional policies and procedures has been deemed necessary and all follow up disciplinary actions (as needed) are followed in accordance with the law. This has allowed the region to maintain a low budget for staffing, increased budget for training and direct services to the customer. The efficiency in this model has met the Board's expectations for the Region.

On an annual basis, the Board does a thorough review of each office location to determine maximum efficiency of space, partner usage, and cost. As distribution of WIOA funding has been reduced, this has become an even greater issue for all Indiana regions. The NIWB is aligning with reduced funding and increased customer service standards. The Board has recently reviewed and re-issued the Service Provider Contract and maintains that having Vendor Staff is far more economically efficient for our Region. The One-Stop Operator has been re-procured to ensure maximum efficiency of all levels of engagement, accurate reporting, and increased community awareness. The One-Stop Operator is a separate contract for one individual to provide the support and responsibilities as outlined in the WIOA Legislation. This has allowed the Board to develop new reports, a new website, virtual methods of service, and are in the process of developing a solid referral/tracking system/process through the use of Microsoft Teams. Customer service to both jobseekers and employers remains the NIWB's laser focus.

These are all the means of review established by the Board. Because our region is staffed a little differently than other regions, our situation may look a little different. Every year, the Adult/DW service provider is subject to a fiscal audit by an outside agency to ensure appropriate usage of funds. This also occurs with Goodwill and the outside audit. In addition, both of these entities and the agency providing the One-stop Operator go through a detailed monitoring with the Fiscal Agent of the Board – Jeff Balogh and his Fiscal Assistant. This ensures all parties working within our system are following all appropriate accounting procedures, all operations procedures, and maintaining the terms of their contracts.

Section 3: Local Area Partnerships and Investment Strategies

Please answer the following questions of Section 3 in 15 pages or less. Many of the responses below, such as targeted sector strategies, should be based on strategic discussions with the local board and partners. The local board is not required to complete the questions shaded in gray at this time.

Questions that require collaborative answers for regions 5 & 12 are designated with an *.

3.1 Taking into account the analysis in Section 1, describe the local board's strategy to work with the organizations that carry out core programs (*Core programs include: Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth Services, Title II Adult Education and Literacy, Title III Wagner-Peyser, and Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation*) to align resources in the local area, in support of the vision and goals described in Question 2.1. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(F)]

[Click here to enter text.](#)

In Region 2 since 2014, the WIOA Partners have met consistently. These meetings allow us to plan collaboratively. The biggest challenge has been divisive funding patterns that have set the agencies in competition with one another, rather than bring them together. Some agencies have disrupted the Adult

Education Partnership in an effort to promote their agendas. This has had a negative impact on the agencies, but more importantly, it has wasted several years of work that could have been far more expansive had it been done in collaboration. The goal of the Board in these next years working very closely with the South Bend-Elkhart Regional Partnership is to rebuild these close relationships and establish a process and flow between agencies that works to build and support rather than tear apart and break down. This has been and will continue to be a heavy lift until momentum is achieved. The general philosophy at this point is "How can we say yes more quickly than we say no?" and the most important question is "How can I help you meet your goals?" This philosophy is already beginning to take hold, as Adult Ed programs, Wagner-Peyser programs, WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs, Trade Act programs, and Rapid Response Activities, have come together to spend \$3.15 M dollars awarded to the Board to rebuild our communities through the CARES Act Rapid Recovery funding and to help Ivy Tech spend the CARES Act funding they received. Everyone joined forces in spending Supportive Services dollars to assist individuals returning to work. As we use the data in Section 1 as our guide, there will be greater activity between the partners to locate funding and develop strategies to meet the skill gaps to bridge our residents to employment opportunities that put them on the path to economic strength.

3.2* Identify the programs/partners that are included in the local workforce development system. Include, at a minimum, organizations that provide services for relevant secondary and post-secondary education programs, provision of transportation, Adult Education and Literacy, Wagner-Peyser, Trade Adjustment Assistance, Jobs for Veterans State Grant, Senior Community Service and Employment Program, Vocational Rehabilitation, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program, and programs of study authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006. [WIOA Sec. 108 (b) (2), (10), (11), (12) & (13)]

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Partners Housed Inside WorkOne:	Partners Housed Outside WorkOne:
- Wagner-Peyser Career Services	- Vocational Rehabilitation Services
- Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA)	Adult Ed Programs
- Jobs for Veterans Services	- Elkhart Community Schools
- Re-Employment Services	- South Bend Schools
- Jobs for Hoosiers	- Warsaw Schools
- Next Level Jobs	- Plymouth Schools
- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Adult	- Goodwill Excel Center
- WIOA Dislocated Worker	- Horizon Education Alliance (HEA)
- WIOA In-School and Out-of-School Youth	Family and Social Services Administration
- Rapid Response Services	- SNAP ETA Programs
- Ticket-to-Work Program	- TANF ETA Programs
- Senior Community Service Employment Program	- IMPACT
- Unemployment Services Assistance	Career Tech Ed Programs (Regional)
- Employment Services	HUD Training Programs
- Business Services	Native American Training Programs
- Apprenticeship Intermediary	IN*Source

- Migrant, Seasonal Farmworker Programs	Goodwill Industries of Michiana
- Corvillia – Job Coaching Services	Youth Services Bureau
-	Purdue MEP/PolyTech
- Jobs for America’s Graduates	Ivy Tech Community College
- Returning Citizen Programs	IUSB
	Bethel College
	Goshen College
	Grace College
	University of Notre Dame
	South Bend-Elkhart Regional Partnership
	St Mary’s College
	Job Corps

Various members of this list of Partners have been meeting on a monthly basis for six years to determine the best way to share staffing, resources, funding, and programs to best meet the needs of our community – jobseekers and employers. This puts the region in a great position to receive grants across all agencies. Together, we ensure the success of each agency in our region.

This list does not include those agencies closely connected to our workforce system that provide their clientele with referrals into the workforce system seamlessly. These agencies include our local food banks, homeless shelters, church coalitions, United Ways, Community Foundations, Systems of Care, libraries, immigrant assistance programs, Council on Aging, mental healthcare providers

3.3* Describe efforts to work with each partner identified in 3.2 to support alignment of service provision and avoid duplication of services to contribute to the achievement of the GWC’s goals and strategies. [WIOA Sec. 108 (b) (2), (10), (11), (12) & (13)]

The following charts are a collaborative effort between the partners to develop flow charts for all partners to fully understand how to refer individuals between agencies. It is linked to a new referral mechanism using the MicroSoft TEAMS application to serve as a storehouse of eligibility guidelines for each partner, the flow charts, and any other resources needed to create fluid referral process. TEAMS was chosen, since it is the accepted virtual communication tool for all State agencies. All partners were in agreement to use this platform to house our joint referral form to share customer information between agencies, while maintaining all necessary confidentiality measures to ensure data safety. This will allow the case managers from partnering agencies to confer when necessary on a customer’s progress. As we proceed in the development of our seamless regional services, we look at duplication of service as a strength, not a detriment. Individuals with specific needs require focused case management or career services to meet those barriers head-on, with resolution coming from the understanding only an agency focused on those specific needs can offer. For example, an individual with disabilities, while they can be assisted in many ways by WorkOne Career Services or Ivy Tech Career Services, neither agency can offer the same depth of care the customer would receive from Vocational Rehab Career Services. The strength comes when all partners are fully aware that no one agency has the ability to offer everything to everyone. If we all stay in the strength of our own lanes, we can cast a much broader net on the individuals in our communities

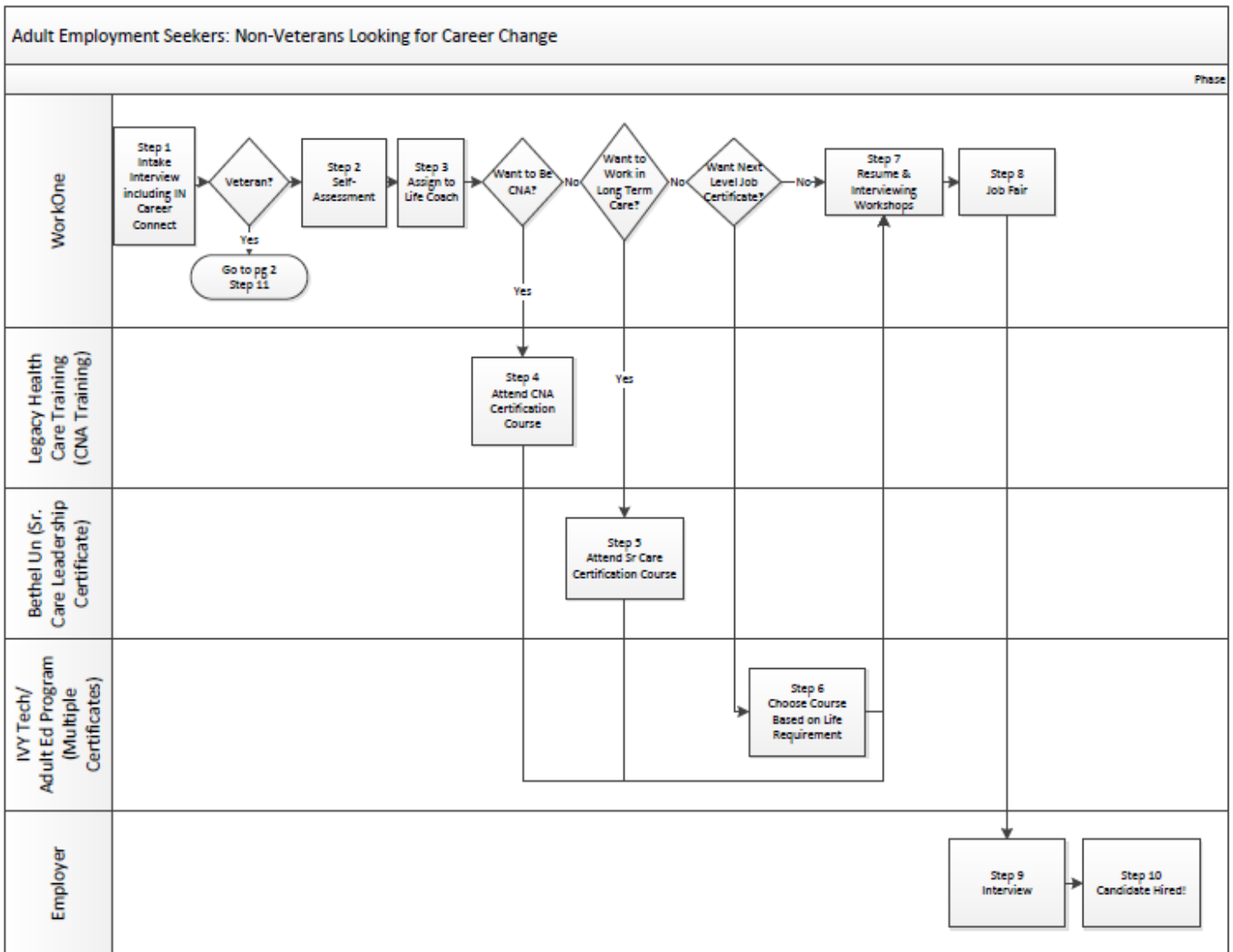
needing the most help. At the root of WIOA legislation is the requirement to serve those most in need. In each of our agencies, while the broad categories of case management or career coaching may sound like the same services being offered, they take on very specialized, focused, targeted meanings for individuals needing them.

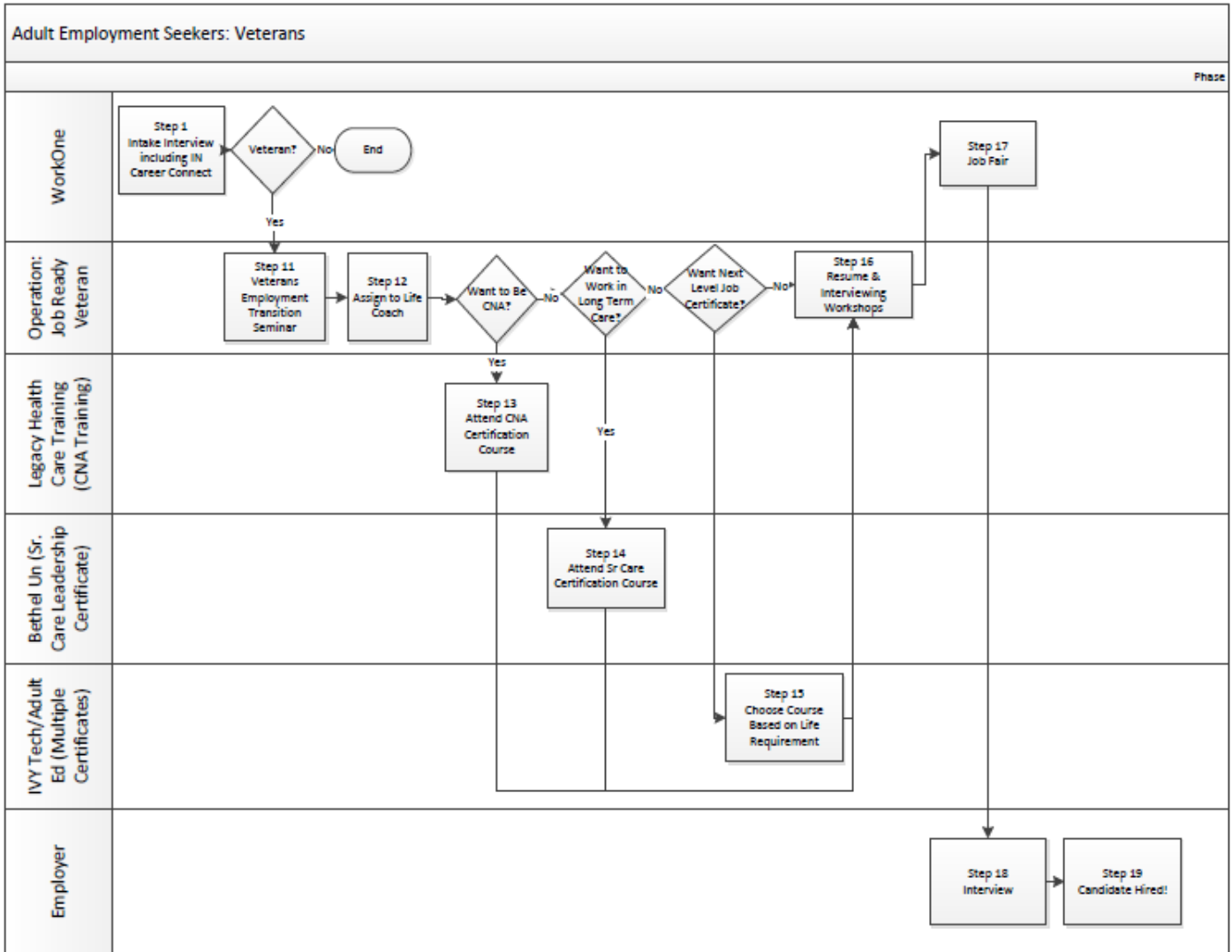
One of our Regional Partners has begun to put together this Process and Flow chart. It will be incorporated in a virtual product being developed by SBERP. Each Partner Program will have an information and flow chart similar to this working document:

WorkOne WIOA Programs for Adults

- *How participants get engaged with WorkOne/WIOA partners:*
 - *Anyone applying for unemployment insurance*
 - *Adult education programs*
 - *IVY Tech counselors, professors*
 - *Coalition of Churches, Elkhart*
 - *Systems of Care*
 - *HUD housing centers*
 - *Homeless shelters*
 - *Employers who are facing lay-offs or closures*
- *Eligibility:*
 - *People 18+ years*
 - *Documentation of legal residency*
 - *If male and born after 12/31/59, must have selective service registration*
 - *Priority is given to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who lack basic skills.*
- *Program outline:*
 - *Case management*
 - *Resume and interviewing workshops*
 - *Networking groups including HOPE, Job Link and VetLink.*
 - *Program for ex-offenders seeking jobs*
 - *Job fairs*
 - *Referrals to job training/certification*
- *Measurements:*
 - *Employment rate during the 2nd quarter after exit*
 - *Employment rate during the 4th quarter after exit*
 - *Median earnings during the 2nd quarter after exit*
 - *Credential attainment rate*
 - *Measurable skill gains*
 - *Effectiveness in serving employers:*
 - *Retention with the same employer*
 - *Repeat business from employers using the service in the previous 3 years*

- Percentage of employers using services out of all the employers in the state
- Perceived gaps in serving people who have left. These gaps are not just services provided by your organization, rather what you've noticed that this client cohort is missing as they work to achieve independence.
 - Language barriers
 - Lack of high school equivalency
 - Transportation
 - Portable skills/certifications
 - Work ethics





3.4 Identify how the local board will carry out a review of local applications submitted under WIOA Title II Adult Education and Literacy, consistent with the local plan and state provided criteria. See the [Multi-Year Adult Education Competitive Grant Application \(Request for Application\)](#). [WIOA Sec. 108 (b) (13)].

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Every year, the President/CEO, the VP of Operations, and the Training Grant Director review the Adult Ed proposals to see the areas that can be supported by the efforts of the Partnership and the WorkOne offices. This has led to programs being filled or developed to meet community needs, such as the Jail Programs in Marshall and Fulton Counties. Through the Adult Ed collaboration, working with Grace College and Horizon Education Alliance, multiple programs have assisted Returning Citizens in re-entering the job market with skills that allow them to be competitive contenders for area jobs. The Adult Ed programs are working closely with the Board's Apprenticeship Intermediary and Coordinator to develop Registered Apprenticeships to fill the needs of area employers. Having insight on the proposals presented to DWD creates an atmosphere of open discussion and productive, effective collaboration which allows the residents of Region 2 to be upskilled in the areas our employers need most. This allows us to develop Life Boat jobs that easily develop into a Career Lattice enabling life-long learning opportunities to be easily developed, showing very clearly where a person is able to grow starting right where they are.

3.5* Describe how the local boards are partnering with economic development and promoting entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services. [WIOA Sec. 108 (b) (5)]

[Click here to enter text.](#)

The NIWB is partnering closely with the Indiana Economic Development Corporation, local economic developers, HEA, Adult Ed programs, SCORE programs, the Sibley Center, and many others to develop opportunities for individuals to not only receive training in entrepreneurship, but to have opportunities to start micro businesses with mentorship through the Sibley Center. The NIWB also works closely with our local SCORE Chapter to assist individuals in determining their Business Strategy and Plan for opening a successful business. The local Adult Education programs are also exploring training opportunities to offer additional services to individuals looking to begin a new career outside traditional employment. Many new businesses have started within the past few years by individuals seeking to solve specific issues within the community. One of these, Cultivate, saw an enormous amount of food waste occurring at Notre Dame tail gate parties. They began collecting the food and are now feeding many individuals with food that has been "rescued". They provide meals for the homeless shelters and make them available to others who are food insecure.

3.6 Describe how the local area is partnering with adult education and with out of school youth regarding business services.

[Click here to enter text.](#)

In Region 2, Goodwill Industries of Michiana is the contracted Youth Service Provider, providing both In-School Youth (ISY) and Out-of-School Youth (OSY) Services. Goodwill also provides the staff for the Jobs for America's Graduate (JAG) programs within area schools. This contracted relationship is also a strong

collaborative partnership spanning many, many years. The JAG Coordinators serve on the Business Services Team through WorkOne. As OSY participants are ready for employment, the OSY staff present the Business Services Team the resumes or information regarding the skills the participant has received. This information is utilized to match the participant to the best job opportunities available for someone with their skills. The best match is not only skills-based, but is also determined by searching the potential growth opportunities, the company's work environment, the wages, and potential for future training for advancement. The Business Services Team walks the participant's resume into the employer to set up a job interview. The employers are also available for internships and work experiences for youth. In return, these same employers are willing to sit on employer group meetings to determine the skills training needed in the region that best promote economic growth and their company needs. They also participate in the Career Development Competition held by the JAG programs, in which they serve as judges and mentors for the events.

Our regional Adult Education programs had been meeting in Consortia style prior to changes in the DWD Local Adult Ed Management of the programs. During that time, we met monthly with the Business Services Team Lead at the table providing Labor Market Information to the programs, discussing employment trends and opportunities with the Adult Ed Directors for the South Bend, Elkhart, HEA, Warsaw, and Plymouth programs. These meetings were invaluable, as they allowed the Adult Ed providers to develop trainings that best suited their communities. Many job fairs, targeted hiring events, customized trainings, and other opportunities were developed and carried out jointly. Due to many factors, these meetings disbanded and great opportunity was lost. In an effort to pull these partners back together, the VP of Operations has begun meeting with the providers individually. In so doing, a Resource HUB was developed for Elkhart County, much work is now being done with the Marshall County LIFT grant recipients, and the South Bend Schools program and WP worked on a national IET program. These small efforts have begun to blossom and hopefully will return to a more organized effort.

Another interesting situation occurred when the Horizon Education Alliance (HEA) received a substantial Skill Up grant from the Department of Workforce Development. This led HEA away from the other partners in order to focus their efforts on serving the community with this grant. Here is a report on these efforts which did not include other WIOA Partners, as provided by HEA:

- In Elkhart County, partnerships between Horizon Education Alliance, area businesses, Ivy Tech, Goshen College, Grace College, the Elkhart County jail and other community partners have enabled the launch of programs to support the needs of our adult learners, while at the same time responding to the needs of our employers. HEA launched the Industrial Manufacturing Technician (IMT) training program with support from Elkhart County's Advanced Manufacturing Sector Partnership (AMSP). The business leaders represented in the AMSP identified IMT the best strategy to create the skilled workforce that industries need immediately, and to serve as a foundation to move incumbent workers into higher level careers. Tools and resources have been developed for an adult apprenticeship program, including a recruitment video, an implementation manual for businesses, and a collaborative accountability structure between partners. A process for recruiting and engaging businesses has also been developed, with businesses already engaged in registration and contract development with the U.S. Department of Labor.
- The Certified Production Technician (CPT) and Certified Logistics Technician (CLT) certifications, the first component of the apprenticeships, are being taught through partnerships with Goshen College and Ivy Tech, as well as in partnership with Grace College and the Elkhart County jail. The partnership with the

Elkhart County jail has been particularly successful, and we are starting new classes in mid-November. Last year, 90 incarcerated adults earned a CLT certification, helping prepare them for re-entry with relevant job skills that are desired in the county. Through these partnerships, diverse populations in Elkhart County are able to receive access to workforce training programs leading to a certification that was named by businesses as highly desirable.

- The Skill UP! Indiana grant that was awarded to the region from the Department of Workforce Development, for which HEA served as fiscal agent, allowed Elkhart County to expand our number of certifications. Since the launch of the CPT and CLT certification, a total of 285 certifications have been earned. Through the Skill UP Indiana grant, HEA Adult Education was able to create a computer lending library to make sure adults can access our online education and training programs, removing a significant barrier for many adults. HEA Adult Education also helps provide remediation, HSE and literacy programs to support adults in entering into these training programs. HEA has partnerships throughout the county including with schools and libraries that have served as sites for adults to access these education opportunities. Through these partnerships, we are able to bring services and programs to adults and meet them where they are at, rather than only serving those who are able to come to us. This allows us to maintain a strong, county-level reach.
- In Elkhart County, we have also been particularly focused on developing strategies to serve the needs of our Latinx adults in Elkhart County, given that the data demonstrates the need to support the increased educational attainment of this population. Through a partnership with the Lumina Foundation, Elkhart County was recognized with the designation as a "Talent Hub" given our efforts to work collaboratively to increase educational attainment for adults with a focus on equity. HEA, Goshen College and Ivy Tech collaborate to lead Elkhart County's work as a Talent Hub. HEA and Goshen College are partnering to provide the English Language Learning (ELL) program and the bilingual Certified Production Technician (CPT) certification program. The ELL program is for adults at multiple levels of English language skills and provides a pathway into other educational programs, such as the bilingual CPT program. In the last program year, HEA and partners served over 330 Latinx adults in our ELL and bilingual certification programs. Labor Institute for Training (LIFT), a Southern Indiana-based non-profit focused on workforce development, has partnered with HEA to provide financial support for the bilingual CPT program as well. The bilingual CPT program provides an important, and unique, opportunity for immigrant Latinx adults to further their workforce training in their native language, while also enrolling in an ELL program to improve English Language skills. This year, HEA and Ivy Tech are partnering to support a bilingual career coach to help provide additional support for our bilingual adult population in successfully pursuing new career pathway opportunities. There are also efforts underway to offer additional bilingual certification programs in I.T. and healthcare to expand the opportunities for Spanish-speaking adults.
- Elkhart County organizations also partner to advance the career pathway opportunities for K-12 students, with a focus on middle and high school. Youth apprenticeships emerged as a priority for Elkhart County in 2018 following learning trips to Colorado and Switzerland that include local, regional and state leaders. HEA, schools, Ivy Tech, and local businesses collaborated to launch apprenticeships in advanced manufacturing, I.T. and business in Fall 2019. During the first pilot year, there were 12 apprentices in the program, representing four school districts. The employer partners represented the industries of manufacturing, healthcare, supply chain/logistics, information technology and not-for-profit/community-based organizations. Even with the complications of COVID-19, 9 of the 12 apprentices were retained in year two and an additional 8 apprentices began this fall. Elkhart County organizations have also partnered to support a cohesive pipeline of career awareness and exploration activities in middle school and early high school, leading into hands-on work-based learning experiences, including apprenticeships, in the junior and senior year. The Comprehensive Counseling Collaborative of Elkhart County (CCCEC) has helped support this work, particularly through the Career Readiness Work Team, through the development of core lessons

for k-12 in college and career readiness. Manufacturing Days and Career Quest have been incorporated into these core lessons. Manufacturing Days and Career Quest engage students in hand-on learning about local career pathways through partnerships with local businesses. Manufacturing Days focuses on careers in the Manufacturing sector for 8th grade students, while Career Quest includes careers in Advanced Manufacturing, Construction, Health Sciences and Information Technology and is targeted to 7th grade students. Each of these have also provided opportunities for students to learn about the educational pathways into careers in these sectors, including opportunities in high school and post-secondary. HEA is working with all seven school districts this year to implement plans for virtual Manufacturing Days and Career Quest according to the needs and interests of schools during this time.

Many agencies have assisted in these programs together. All are centered on the needs of our local employers, while developing solutions for jobseekers. The goal of the Adult Ed Partners and the Business Services Team has been to develop a robust communication pipeline of the employer needs for the building of appropriate training opportunities to fill the needs. The programs for Returning Youth from incarceration has to include employment opportunities or they return to jail. The Registered Apprenticeships in Region 2 go through the NIWB Apprenticeship and Work-based Learning Intermediary. This now includes the Apprenticeships mentioned in the HEA portion of this section. The NIWB Business Services Team works closely with the South Bend Regional Partnership and their Manufacturing Days, which has now gone virtual, providing the students with opportunities to expand their career research virtually.

3.7 Based on the analysis described in Section 1.1-1.3, describe plans to focus efforts and resources on serving priority of service populations in the local area, including how this will be managed. Include any other priority populations the local area will focus on.

[Click here to enter text.](#)

The region follows the Veterans Priority of Service guidelines, ensuring Veterans receive all services first. With our SCSEP program, the region keeps track of the number of barriers that the individuals come into the system with and works hard to address them all – this is a program requirement for the funder. Our youth must exhibit no less than one barrier to employment. And, according to WIOA legislation, the majority of the individuals being served in the American Job Center should be those meeting the legislation's Priority of Service guidelines. At one point the state had set 50% as our target. This has not been in place for a couple of years, but will be back in place in the next couple of years.

3.8* Based on the analysis described Section 1, identify up to three industries where a sector partnership is currently being convened in the local area or where there will be an attempt to convene a sector partnership and the timeframe. Describe how you will be partnering to achieve defined goals.

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Currently in Region 2, there are manufacturing partnerships, plastics partnerships, IT sector partnerships, healthcare partnerships, and others. Employers are willing to come together to seek the assistance of legislators, state workforce development leaders, lobbyists, and other people of influence within the community. They are willing to commit dollars to develop programs to build a skilled workforce. These

partnerships are convened by a multitude of agencies, WorkOne, SBERP, HEA, Ivy Tech, Notre Dame, IUSB, and others. What makes this work in Region 2 is the amazing efforts being put into place by SBERP and the Notre Dame LIFT grants. They have developed strong working groups within the region that bring all the partners and employers to the table to ensure the direction we are headed is in fact producing the outcomes we need to see to meet the regions workforce and education goals.

3.9 A-D

Responses may include the implementation of incumbent worker training programs, on-the-job training programs, work-based learning programs, apprenticeship models, customized training programs, industry and sector strategies, career pathways or utilization of effective business intermediaries and other business services and strategies that support the local board’s strategy in 3.1. [WIOA Sec. 108 (b) (4) (A) & (B)]

Identify and describe the strategies and services that are and/or will be used to:

A. Facilitate engagement of employers, including small employers with in-demand industry sectors and occupations, workforce development programs, in addition to targeted sector strategies.

[Click here to enter text.](#)

In the fall of 2019, Region 2 became the Apprenticeship Intermediary for the Region. As a result seven Apprenticeships have been DOL Registered. In the spring of 2020, the NIWB hired an individual to drive this work. The Director of Apprenticeship and Work-based Learning has pulled together multiple employers to have the necessary Subject Matter Experts (SME’s) to ensure all Apprenticeships were vetted for the region. These are now being put into place. This work brought the HEA Youth Apprenticeships to the NIWB to be appropriately aligned with DOL standards. Currently, there are 8 Youth Apprenticeships in place. The Mishawaka Fire Department has a SEAL program that will begin in January 2021, for their dispatch system. An Industrial Sewing Apprenticeship will begin in March or April. The employers are providing funding, machinery, and space to ensure the success of this program. The Elkhart Adult Ed program was approached by an employer, a FACs teacher for the high school, and Goodwill Industries who had the opportunity to acquire industrial sewing machines to continue their production of PPE for Beacon Hospital. The collaboration led to the development of this Apprenticeship.

B. Support a local workforce development system described in 3.2 that meets the needs of businesses.

[Click here to enter text.](#)

The NIWB and WorkOne offices serve as regional collaborators who pull together the appropriate agencies, individuals, and resources to create the opportunities for individuals to receive the assistance they need to meet the employers’ workforce needs. It is interesting that many people do not realize the work that happens at the field staff level to meet the needs of our constituents in a well-managed, well-developed means of communication, simply by knowing their counterparts in the other workforce agencies.

The current One-Stop Operator is developing a process using MicroSoft Teams to enable staff to track their referrals and work more efficiently. This communication method will significantly increase better service to our jobseekers. In so doing, we are able to meet the needs of our local employers. This was seen when three days after shutting the offices due to COVID-19, the WorkOne office received a call from a local healthcare facility who desperately needed individuals trained to perform COVID testing. The Rapid Response Team had just completed work with a large group of individuals who had just lost their retail and their restaurant jobs. Training was put into place to begin and be completed before the end of the following week. There were 261 individuals trained and placed.

C. Better coordinate workforce development programs with economic development partners and programs.

Click here to enter text.

Our IEDC representative calls the NIWB Business Consultants in every time a new company reviews the opportunities available for their company within the region. These meetings bring together all partners to offer the best the region has to offer in terms of training, resources, and other services to make available a skilled workforce to potential employers. This was seen with Amazon moving their distribution center into South Bend. The agencies came together and provided computer training, skills evaluation, and presented individuals to Amazon for hire. This resulted in 685 hires.

D. Strengthen linkages between the one-stop delivery system and unemployment insurance programs.

Click here to enter text.

Our staff members have been trained by DWD to provide the highest levels of over-the-shoulder assistance to our UI customers. While we are no longer allowed to provide direct service to these individuals, we are able to help individuals navigate the process. The NIWB is willing to do whatever it takes to assist with UI programs.

3.10 Including WIOA and non-WIOA funding, what percentage of total funds would you project will be used for training annually?

Click here to enter text.

Prior to 2019, the Board spent 50% of the total funding received, from outside agencies and DWD, on training. In 2019, the Board spent approximately 20% of its total funding on training. And, in PY 2020, the Board has spent well over 50% on training.

3.11 If the local board is currently leveraging funding outside of WIOA Title I funding and state general funds to support the local workforce development system, briefly describe the funding and how it will impact the local system. Break down the description by adult, dislocated worker and youth. If the local board does not currently have oversight of additional funding, describe any plans to pursue it.

[Click here to enter text.](#)

The Board is continually looking for additional funding from any and every resource available for additional ways to serve our current jobseekers while seeking the means to expand the jobseekers we are able to serve. This happened with a Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP). These funds (\$637,000) are received from the Center of Workforce Inclusion in Silver Springs, Maryland, who handle Federal funds across the nation. This expanded our service to seniors in two additional counties outside our region. 126 individuals are served with income training and experience in this work-based learning program. The R2 WDB was the first workforce board to be a direct recipient of these funds. In the nine years that we have run the program \$6.2 million has been utilized to serve seniors in regions 2 & 3. The Board received additional Lilly Foundation grant funds (\$171,000) to ensure the Region 2 Youth programs were able to provide Work Experience opportunities during COVID shutdowns. The Board has also received funding from our local Native American programs (\$50,000/yr. totaling \$250,000) which has allowed us to pilot a new In-School Youth program, serving the most at-risk Youth through mentoring and coaching. The Board also handles a highly functioning Ticket-to-Work program, which serves individuals with disabilities transitioning back into the workforce. The Board also has \$100,000 in case management salary share to serve individuals with disabilities seeking training and other resources. Through the LIFT network the R2 board has commitments of \$225,000 for staffing and training associated with apprenticeships. To summarize, the R2 WDB has \$1.2 million in non-federal or state related funding against a WIOA allocation of \$2.28 million or 51.8%.

3.12 Optional: Describe any collaboration with organizations or groups outside of your local area, interstate or intrastate, and what outcomes you plan to achieve as a result of the collaboration.

[Click here to enter text.](#)

The Board maintains a close relationship with the Center of Workforce Inclusion in Silver Springs, MD. This agency funds our SCSEP program, provides professional development for staff members, and is always talking about partnering in new ways. The next steps for this agency remain to be seen. The region partners with the South Bend-Michiana Chamber which serves those individuals who cross the Indiana-Michigan border for work, education, and play opportunities. The Board is closely aligned with Notre Dame and many of their workforce programs, which sometimes serve outside our five-county region. There are other collaborations with other workforce agencies across the country, the National Career Pathway Network, Career Thought Leaders, National Association of Workforce Development Professionals, the National Association of Workforce Professionals, Michigan Works, and others. It is always nice to hear from other workforce development professionals about their successful and not so successful programs. They are a great resource.

Section 4: Program Design and Evaluation

Please answer the following questions of Section 4 in 15 pages or less. Many of the responses below, such as career pathways and individual training accounts, should be based on strategic discussions with the local board and partners. **Questions that require collaborative answers for regions 5 & 12 are designated with an *.**

4.1 Describe how the local board, working with the entities carrying out core programs (*Core programs include: Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth Services, Title II Adult Education and Literacy, Title III Wagner-Peyser, and Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation*), will expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals with barriers to employment and out of school youth. Include referral processes with one stop partners. [WIOA Sec. 108 (b) (3)]

[Click here to enter text.](#)

As the WIOA Partnership continues to meet monthly for eight (8) years, process and flow charts, eligibility information, and contact information have been developed and has been shared across agencies to ensure the appropriate referrals are made for individuals to receive the services they need from the correct agency. The following is an example of the document being developed. This document will be turned into a digital resource when an appropriate system has been found that can handle the referral tracking needed.

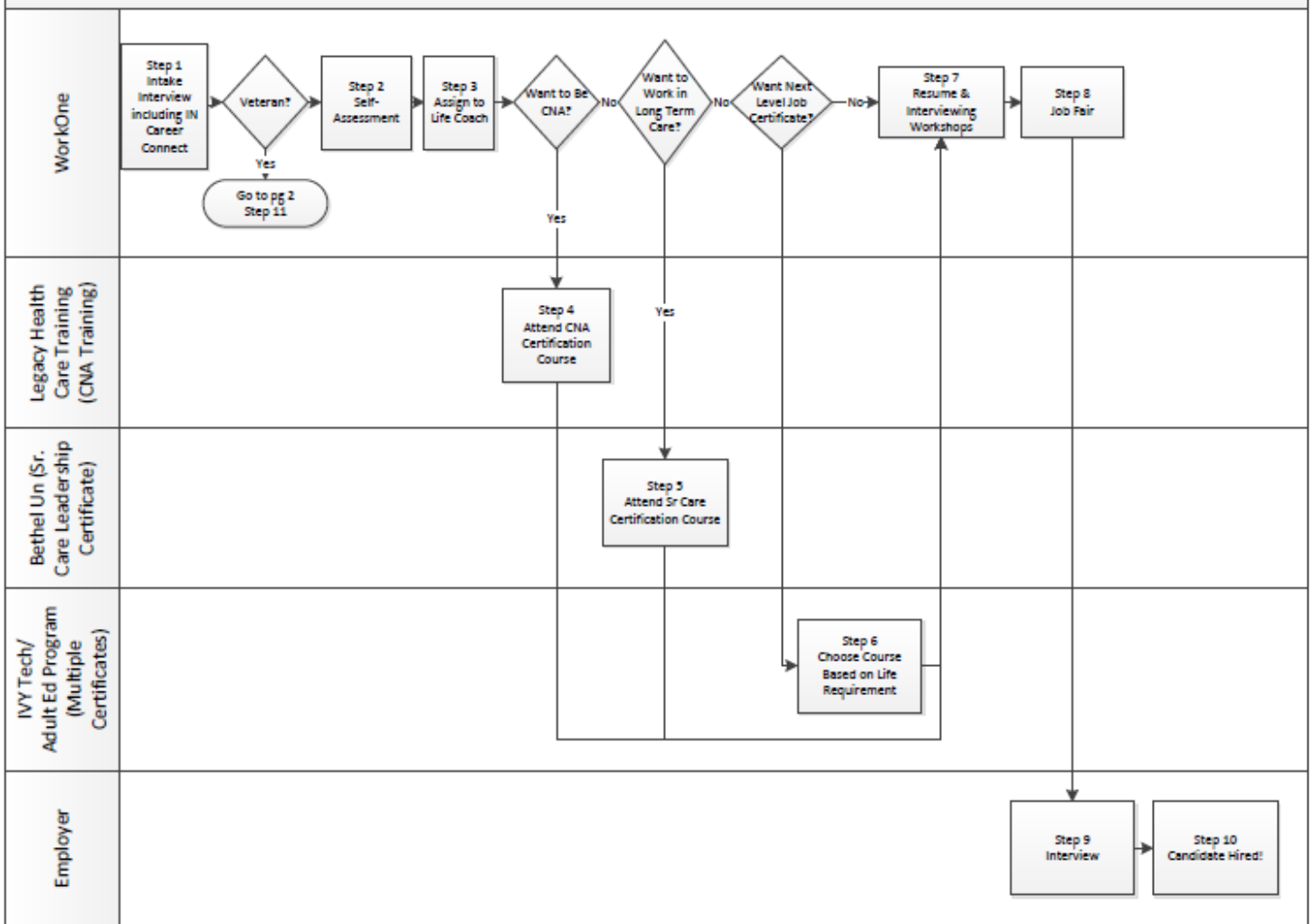
WorkOne WIOA Programs for Adults

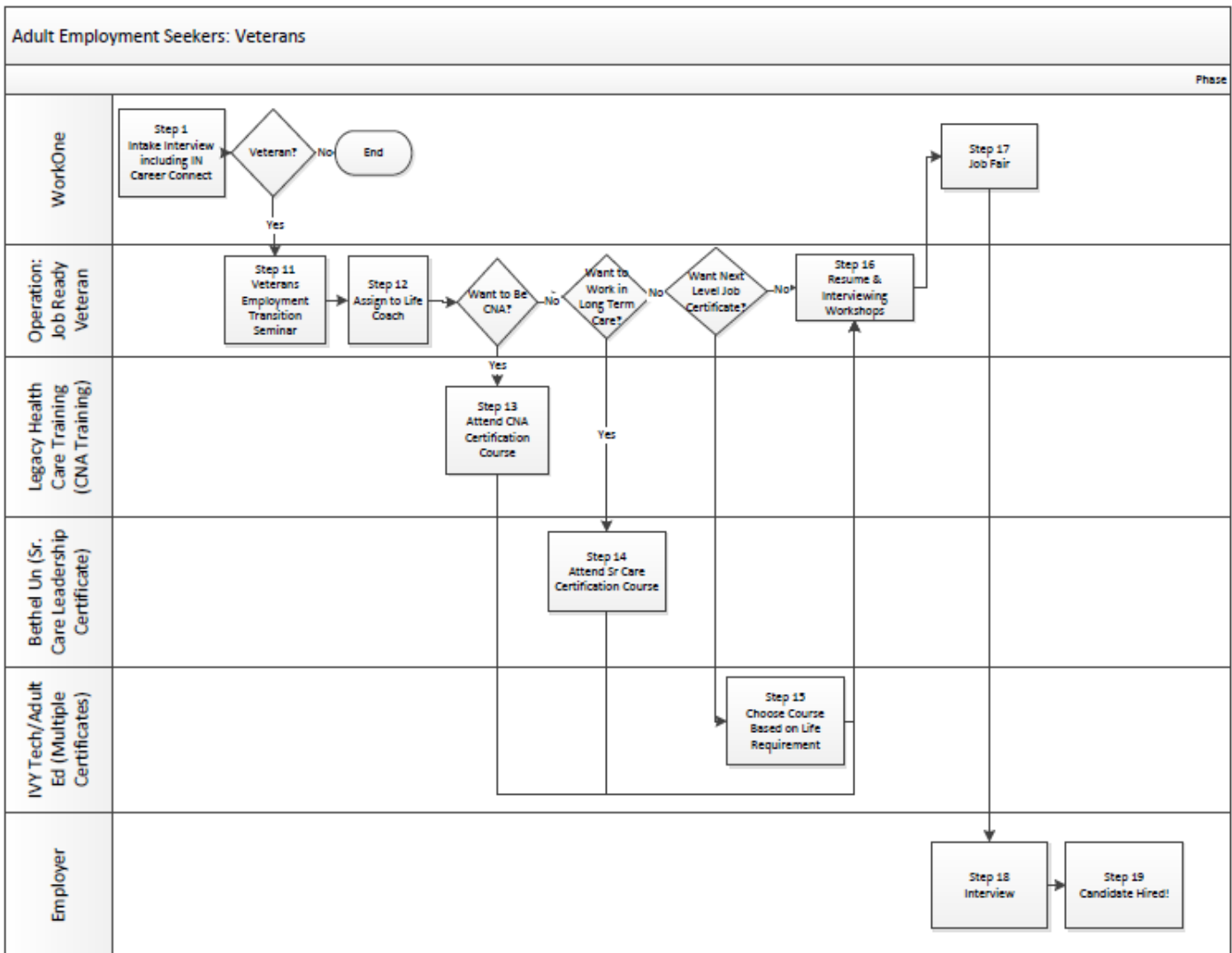
- *How participants get engaged with WorkOne/WIOA partners:*
 - *Anyone applying for unemployment insurance*
 - *Adult education programs*
 - *IVY Tech counselors, professors*
 - *Coalition of Churches, Elkhart*
 - *Systems of Care*
 - *HUD housing centers*
 - *Homeless shelters*
 - *Employers who are facing lay-offs or closures*
- *Eligibility:*
 - *People 18+ years*
 - *Documentation of legal residency*
 - *If male and born after 12/31/59, must have selective service registration*
 - *Priority is given to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who lack basic skills.*
- *Program outline:*
 - *Case management*
 - *Resume and interviewing workshops*
 - *Networking groups including HOPE, JobLink and VetLink.*
 - *Program for ex-offenders seeking jobs*
 - *Job fairs*
 - *Referrals to job training/certification*

- *Measurements:*
 - *Employment rate during the 2nd quarter after exit*
 - *Employment rate during the 4th quarter after exit*
 - *Median earnings during the 2nd quarter after exit*
 - *Credential attainment rate*
 - *Measurable skill gains*
 - *Effectiveness in serving employers:*
 - *Retention with the same employer*
 - *Repeat business from employers using the service in the previous 3 years*
 - *Percentage of employers using services out of all the employers in the state*
- *Perceived gaps in serving people who have left. These gaps are not just services provided by your organization, rather what you've noticed that this client cohort is missing as they work to achieve independence.*
 - *Language barriers*
 - *Lack of high school equivalency*
 - *Transportation*
 - *Portable skills/certifications*
 - *Work ethics*

Adult Employment Seekers: Non-Veterans Looking for Career Change

Phase





4.2 Describe how the local board will facilitate and develop career pathways and utilize co-enrollment, as appropriate, in core programs, and improve access to activities leading to a recognized post-secondary credential, including a credential that is an industry-recognized certificate. <https://www.in.gov/gwc/2445.htm> [WIOA Sec. 108 (b) (3)]

The NIWB and the local partners continue to work together with employers, educators, and other area resources to develop the appropriate career pathways for each of the industries recognized as key target industries for EGR2. This includes Manufacturing, Logistics, Healthcare, Information Technology, and Construction. A simple chart was developed to show how these pathways flow to better paying jobs as skills are obtained. Now, as the region has been working on these for several years and new challenges come to our local workforce with the inclusion of Afghan and Ukrainian citizens who have

been relocated to our region, trailing spouses of Notre Dame faculty coming from other countries, and our continued work with Migrant, Seasonal Farmworkers, NIWB is working with Welcoming Michiana to develop Career Pathways for individuals with Advanced Degrees from other countries.

[Click here to enter text.](#)

4.3 A-E Describe the one-stop delivery system in the local area as required by WIOA Sec. 121(e). See below subparts for specific areas that must be addressed. [WIOA Sec. 108 (b) (6) (A-D)] (4.3 D is a collaborative answer for Regions 5 & 12).

A. Describe the local board's efforts to ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers of services, including contracted services providers and ensure that such providers meet the employment needs of local employers, and workers and jobseekers. [WIOA Sec. 108 (b) (6) (A)]

As our Business Services Team and our partners in the Economic Development Corporations, Chambers, Ivy Tech and Purdue employer focused training staff meet with area Human Resource groups, Plant Managers, and others focused on the training staff need, this information is shared and programs are evaluated for how they meet these needs. Much of this work has become the focus of the NIWB Apprenticeship Intermediary and Work-based Learning Director. As the Apprenticeships are developed and training plans for Employment Training grants are submitted, they are evaluated against DOL standards for rigor and certification requirements. Above all, we rely heavily on the word of our regional employers on the value of the training provided within the region to meet their needs.

B. Describe how the local board will facilitate access to services provided through the one-stop delivery system in remote areas, through the use of technology, and through other means. [WIOA Sec. 108 (b) (6) (B)]

NIWB made a decision to maintain a presence in all of our counties. In Kosciusko, this is done in partnership with Goodwill in their Career Center and with the Warsaw Public Library for workshops and job fairs. The Kosciusko WorkOne also provides services in the Syracuse Library one day per week. The Youth staff work in the Juvenile Justice Center and have scheduled times for service delivery in the Warsaw Adult Ed center. In Marshall County, the WorkOne was moved to the County Service Building where many of our partners also occupy space. This has been a fantastic move for us and has allowed us to offer workshops and job fairs for all of our neighbors in the facility. Services are also taken to the Jesse Center and job fairs have been co-hosted with Goodwill. Several staff sit on the Marshall County Lifelong Learning Network Board. In Fulton County, WorkOne has participated in a Resource Coalition, had a JAG student who conceived the idea of a Youth Center, which is open and running. Through COVID, we have learned how to use technology in our favor and host many online events – RESEA, workshops, and case managements groups.

C. Describe how entities within the one-stop delivery system, including one-stop operators and the one-stop partners, will comply with WIOA section 188, and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities, including providing staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities. [See WIOA Sec. 108 (b) (6) (C), 29 CFR 38 and DWD Policy 2016-09]

All contracts and documents contain the EO language, the availability of services is mentioned in staff signatures, on the website, and on social media. EO training has resumed now that staff are back in the offices full-time. All individuals who are housed within the WorkOne offices or who meet with customers in our offices are subject to all guidance and training.

[Click here to enter text.](#)

D.* Describe the roles and resource contributions of the one-stop partners agreed to per DWD Policy 2018-04 Memoranda of Understanding and Infrastructure/Additional Costs Funding Guidance. [WIOA Sec. 108 (b) (6) (D)]

In Program Year 2022, the partners are coming together under a new mission statement: Employ Northern Indiana. This collaboration of agencies and services is uniting through co-enrollments and joint public-facing work to ensure Northern Indiana residents and employers are connected effectively, strategically, and with a common goal to raise the skills levels of jobseekers, while increasing the capacity of our employers through a more skilled workforce. The IFA agreement serves as a document showing the collaborative work as it occurs within our centers and in conjunction with our outreach into the communities. Each partner signs an MOU stating their willingness to collaborate to the highest levels possible and to participate in infrastructure costs through a lease agreement, through a small monetary amount to off-set costs per their specific use of our resources, or in-kind costs. These will be completed by September 9, 2022.

E. Describe how one-stop centers are implementing and transitioning to an integrated technology enabled intake and case management information system for core programs and programs carried out by one-stop partners. [WIOA Sec. 108 (b) (21)]

EGR2 fully embraced technology several years ago, when files were all housed on line in the case management system provided by the state. During COVID, all staff learned how to utilize additional online tools for case management, contact with participants, workshops and trainings, as a means of networking and attending meetings all over our region. This allowed us to enroll individuals within days of the COVID shutdowns and have them in training by Friday within that same week. The individuals worked with staff through Zoom calls, electronic signatures, email, texts, and anything else we could quickly stand up to meet the needs of our region's employers, predominately healthcare at that time.

4.4 An analysis and description of adult and dislocated worker workforce development activities, including type and availability of education, training and employment activities. Include analysis of the strengths and opportunities of such services, as well as the capacity to provide such services, in order to address the needs identified in 1.2. [WIOA Sec. 108 (b) (1) (D) & 108 (b) (7)]

During the pandemic, EGR 2 was granted a sizable pot of CARES Act funded dollars to help with the Rapid Recovery of our economy. EGR 2 is unusual in that it lost a significant amount of nurses to travel contracts and at the same time, pulled in a significant amount of travel nurses to cover those losses. As we monitored the situation, it became glaringly apparent that the healthcare system needed individuals with rudimentary base skills to assist in the loss of nurses. Utilizing employer data and information, training provider opportunities, and doing significant outreach into the retail and hospitality industries who were hit hardest in our region, we were able to shift quickly and create training for a “Super CNA” who is able to not only provide basic care, but also draw blood, hand out medication, work with dementia patients, and have a higher quality of service standards. This training remains as we continue to work with our local long-term care facilities through their nursing shortage. The result of this work in addition to the higher skill level was sizable sign-on bonuses and a higher entry rate of pay. Some of these CNA’s had a starting wage of \$22 per hour. In addition to the healthcare industry needs, it became very apparent that Americans were not going to stay home during the lockdowns, when they could camp in nature. This led to a significant increase in motor home sales for Elkhart County! However, as is the case when there is a boom for these kinds of items, there were not enough available truck drivers to mobilize and move the number of units they were moving. Additional truck driver schools opened during the Pandemic to meet the needs of the RV industry, but also assisted in the logistics need for other supplies across the country. Our system is able to see a need, define it, build it, and act on it within a very short window of time. This same model has been used in Rapid Response events when LEAN Manufacturing training has been provided and individuals re-entered the workforce at a sizable wage gain. Region 1 asked for assistance in spending one of their private grants and EGR2 was able to stand it up with 9 apprentices for an Equus healthcare grant. With the additional grants received, the region needs to continue to build robust trainings that match employer needs that aren’t Employment Training Grant or Apprenticeship in nature.

4.5 Describe how the local board will coordinate workforce investment activities carried out in the local area with statewide rapid response activities, as described in section 134 (a) (2) (A). [WIOA Sec. 108 (b) (8)].

In EGR2, we use a model that appears to be different than in other parts of the state. All staff are trained to listen for anything that sounds like a potential shut-down or lay-off. This information is then submitted to our Administrative Assistant and her team. Contact is made with the employer and a meeting is set to discuss all the resources that are available to the employer at no charge through the state. At the meeting, the Rapid Response Coordinator and the company representative determine all the resources that will best serve the employees. This includes UI information and how/when to file their claim (all of which can be found on the UpLink homepage), workshops to assist with resumes, interviewing, skills transferability, and TAA opportunities should the company become trade approved. DOL and other local resources join u to round out the services. This happens very quickly with our team

supporting through the final day of work and even after with job fairs, job development services, and any training needs that may be identified during the Rapid Response orientations.

[Click here to enter text.](#)

4.6 An analysis and description of the type and availability of youth workforce activities for in school youth, including youth with disabilities. If the same services are offered to out-of-school youth, describe how the programs are modified to fit the unique needs of in-school youth. For each program, include the following: length of program and availability/schedule (i.e. 2 weeks in July); % of youth budget allocation; WIOA program elements addressed by the program, with specific focus on how the 5 new elements have been incorporated; desired outputs and outcomes; and details on how the program is evaluated. Include analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of such services, and the capacity to provide such services, in order to address the needs identified in 1.2. [WIOA Sec. 108 (b) (9)]

[Click here to enter text.](#)

4.7 Identify how successful the above programs have been and any other best practices for youth workforce activities relevant to the local area. [WIOA Sec. 108 (b) (9)]

4.8 Describe process utilized by the local board to ensure that training provided is linked to in-demand industry sectors or occupations in the local area, or in another area to which a participant is willing to relocate. Include a description of the process and criteria used for issuing individual training accounts. If training contracts are used, describe processes utilized by the local board to ensure customer choice in the selection of training programs, regardless of how the training services are to be provided [WIOA Sec. 108 (b) (19)]

As customers come into the office, all staff working to assist them in job search are trained to watch for indicators that additional training is needed. This could be in basic computer skills or basic math. At this point, the staff begins the assessment process which could potentially develop into an ITA. The region has a close relationship with INTraining and works closely to identify additional training providers who could perhaps be added to this list, especially when it meets a very niche area needed for the region. The jobseeker is provided all options available for their training and assisted in researching to determine the provider of their choice. When evaluating who should receive training funds, the staff watch closely for individuals who meet the Priority of Service qualifications (Veterans, highly barriered individuals, dislocated workers, or youth) and who are ready to take on the task of training.

4.9 Describe how Jobs for Hoosiers and RESEA activities are coordinated and carried out in the local area and how these activities will be incorporated into WIOA programming.

Our RESEA program has designated Business Services staff for the two comprehensive offices. The RESEA orientation is provided in one of two ways – virtual or in-person. When the claimants are in the offices, they meet with staff one-on-one and develop a plan (IRP – Individual Re-employment Plan) to help them return to work more quickly. These activities are inter-mingled with other activities going on in the offices – on-sight hiring events, pop-up workshops. RESEA claimants are quickly folded into the center’s work to ensure the claimant truly understand our desire to assist them in their return to work. This frequently leads to individuals being trained through WIOA funding.

4.10 Describe strategies to engage workers and employers impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and how services will be provided.

At the onset of the Pandemic and office shutdowns, EGR2 pulled records from the VOS Greeter system to locate individuals who had come into the office within the prior quarter. These individuals received a phone call to check their status. This led to zoom calls, phone calls, some entering training, Rapid Response events being provided, and many other virtual services. We continue to educate staff on the very real post-Pandemic mental issues going on in the workforce. The staff are also going out into the community more and more to locate individuals who may have gotten lost in the shutdowns.

Section 5: Compliance

Please answer the following questions of Section 5 in 12 pages or less. Most of the response should be staff driven responses as each are focused on the organization's compliance with federal or state requirements. **Questions that require collaborative answers for regions 5 & 12 are designated with an *.**

5.1 Describe any competitive process planned to be used to award the sub-grants and contracts in the local area for activities carried out under WIOA Title I. State the names of current contracted organizations and the duration of each contract for adult, dislocated worker and youth services. Attach contracts as Exhibit 1. [WIOA Sec. 108 (b) (16)]

[Click here to enter text.](#)

NIWB Structure must be understood in relation to this question. The NIWB does not have "grant sub-recipient" service providers as used in several other regions. Since 2011 the board has operated with a "vendor" relationship youth services provider. As previously documented in this plan the adult/DW clients have been served by a combination of state employees and contracted individuals from a vendor.

The Youth RFP resulted in a contract being extended to Goodwill Industries of Michiana for In-school and out-of-school youth programming for Region 2.

A contract was released to Rick Lindsey for the One Stop Operator role and he performed well for the region under that contract. DWD Monitoring and Policy felt that the position had to be a sub recipient and required the board to undergo a procurement for a new Operator (Mr. Lindsey was not interested in operating as a sub recipient rather than a vendor. Proposals were made by organizations on August 30th and September 4th. The board will select a new OSO at the September board meeting.

At the Board Meeting on September 18, 2020, Pro Resources was approved as the Vendor for contracted service staff, which has proven to be a cost-effective, efficient service delivery model within our region. Also approved is the new One-Stop Operator, awarded to enFocus. This opportunity with a community leader focused on developing a stronger region has proven extremely beneficial to all.

5.2 Provide an organization chart as Exhibit 2 that depicts a clear separation of duties between the board and service provision.

[Click here to enter text.](#)

See attached Organization Chart.

5.3 Describe any standing committees or taskforces of your Local Board, including the role and scope of work of your youth committee (or youth representatives on the WDB if you do not have a committee).

[Click here to enter text.](#)

The NIWB currently has the following committees:

Youth Coalition

Employer Outreach Committee

Finance Committee

WIOA Partners Consortium Guidance Committee

Training Program and Performance Metrics Development Committee

Legislative Outreach

The Youth Coalition is tasked with overall program strategy development for NIWB. Additionally they establish performance metrics for youth programs in conjunction with the Training Program and Performance Metrics Development Committee. The Youth Coalition also has responsibility for Service Provider RFP development and Procurement.

5.4 Provide the name, organization, and contact information of the designated equal opportunity officer for WIOA within the local area.

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Melissa Gard, Pro Resources – mgard@gotoworkone.com

5.5 Identify the entity responsible for the disbursement of grant funds as described in WIOA Sec. 107 (d) (12) (B) (i) (III). [WIOA Sec. 108 (b) (15)]

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Currently this entity is the Workforce Development Board under agreement with the local elected officials. The contact person is Mr. Jeff Balogh, CFO NIWB. 851 S. Marietta ST. South Bend. IN 46601

5.6 Indicate the negotiated local levels of performance for the federal measures. [WIOA Sec. 108 (b) (17)]

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Please see the attached document on negotiated local levels for performance.

5.7 Provide a description of the replicated cooperative agreements, as defined by WIOA 107(d)(11), in place between the local board and the Department of Human Services' Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services with respect to efforts that will enhance the provision of services to individuals with disabilities and to other individuals, such as cross training of staff, technical assistance, use and sharing of information, cooperative efforts with employers, and other efforts at cooperation, collaboration, and coordination. See Local Plan References and Resources. [WIOA Sec. 108 (b) (14)]

[Click here to enter text.](#)

At the outset of the R2 WIOA Partners Consortium, an MOU was developed between all agencies, VR being a strong member of this Consortium. This MOU and original Region 2 Local Plan submitted in June of 2015 discusses in detail the ways in which all partners will work together on a shared referral/assessment process to determine which entity meets the needs of each individual client. It specifically looks at individuals with disabilities and how they will be managed between agencies. Staff members from all partners have been receiving cross training in case management, assessment tools, and basic sharing between staff members to ensure that all staff are aware of the services available and when to refer someone to Vocational Rehab. Many times Vocational Rehab is coming in and doing assessments of customers at the beginning of programs, such as Adult Education, to determine if a disability is present. These processes are serving as a means of increasing the services customers are able to obtain within the system..

5.8 Describe the process for getting input into the development of the local plan in compliance with WIOA section 108(d) and providing public comment opportunity prior to submission. Be sure to address how members of the public, including representatives of business, labor organizations, and education were given an opportunity to provide comments on the local plans. If any comments received that represent disagreement with the plan were received, please include those comments in Exhibit 3 attached to this Local Plan. [WIOA Sec. 108 (b) (20)]

[Click here to enter text.](#)

As the Regional Plan was developed between the members of the R2 WIOA Partners Consortium, the plan was posted for public comment and specific individuals in the employment community, labor organizations, and other interested parties were notified. The Partners had come together to discuss gaps in their programs and to work together to fill those gaps based on their programs' eligibility and focus. This has ensured that all the needs of an individual can be and are being met in a manner better leveraging funding.

As the plan has been reviewed through each update, any suggestions or questions that arise are discussed with Board members and other key partner agencies to ensure the appropriate response has been given for the issue being discussed. The WIOA law and key program directors within the DWD are contacted for advice and information.

5.9 Describe the board’s process, frequency and schedule for monitoring adult, dislocated worker and youth services, including who conducts monitoring visits for your agency, training these staff receive on monitoring or site evaluation, and a listing of all upcoming planned or scheduled monitoring visits, all forms used during the review process and in Exhibit 4 attached to this Local Plan. [WIOA Sec. 108 (b) (22)]

This is covered in the updated NIWB Sub-Recipient Monitoring Policy on file at DWD. The staffing vendor for Adult and Dislocated worker Services, EO Officer, Business Services members, and RESEA staff is monitored on a quarterly basis for policy adherence and weekly through an audit of timesheets, charges for mileage, and other costs incurred is completed against invoices submitted for work performed. On a regional level, all files are reviewed for accuracy and compliance through monthly random file reviews. The region has a Data Validation/MIS Manager that utilizes stringent review methods. Attached are the forms used for file review. The Youth Service Provider is monitored quarterly for its fiscal procedures and its adherence to WIOA law, DWD policies, JAG programmatic guidance, and the regional policies and procedures. The policy guiding this work is being rewritten currently to bring this section into compliance following the DWD Region 2 Monitoring.

5.10 Describe your professional development plan for all youth staff, including the frequency, type (in-person, self-guided, web-based, etc.), and topics addressed.

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Staff Training:

Workforce 180- Youth Workforce Certification- Combination of in person and Webinar (New Staff Training); Adverse Childhood Experiences Interface Training- In Person Training -All Youth Staff- Yearly; Social Emotional Learning- Staff Training (RUMER Process)- in person training- building upon the fundamentals provided

In House Staff Training:

Regional Staff Refresher Training - YouthForce/Indiana Career Connect/Policy and Procedure- All Staff- Quarterly; Building effective lesson plans- In Person- New In School Youth- Yearly; Effective Case Management- on-going staff development building upon the fundamentals of Beverly Ford Training- All Staff.

Department of Workforce Development Training:

New Case Management System Training planned in partnership with DWD- In Person; JAG Training hosted by the Indiana Department of Workforce Development (Youth Program Director, JAG Manager, JAG Coordinator, New JAG Staff Training, All Staff Training)- In Person.

National Training:

JAG National Training Seminar- In School Youth Staff- Yearly

5.11 Provide a list of all local policies. Copies of documents are not required at this time but may be requested later.

Click here to enter text.

2007-46 - Confidentiality.pdf
Absence Procedures Policy.doc
ACP TAB DRAFT.docx
Adult and Dislocated Worker Eligibility Policy.doc
After Hours Activities in the WorkOne.doc
Assessment and ACP Policy.doc
BUS PASSES FUEL AND (VISA) INCENTIVE CARDS POLICY REVISED 06 19 13.doc
Business Services Division Process.doc
Career Coaching Flow.docx
Case Management System Policy.doc
Case Note Policy.doc
Childcare Policy 2013.doc
Communication Chain Narrative.doc
Computer-IT-and-SOCIAL-MEDIA-POLICY-with Email policy added.doc
Copy of Copy of ACP_Excel_FINAL.xlsx
Core - OJT Flowchart.docx
COVID-19 Re-opening Procedures
Customer Placement Form.doc
Dress Code Policy - P9.doc
DWD_Policy_2009-01 Priority of Service.pdf
DWD_Policy_2009-07 OJT's.pdf
DWD_Policy_2010-22_01 Drug Screen.pdf
DWD_Policy_2011_01 Dress Code.pdf
DWD_Policy_2012-10 - AE.pdf
Emergency Unemployment Compensation EUC Flow Policy.doc
Facilities Management Policy.doc
Functional Supervisory Authority Policy.doc
Gold Card Services Process.doc
Grievance Procedures Policy.doc
IN-AND-OUT Job Orders in ICC Process.doc
Individual Training Account Policy Revised AUG 2011.doc
Informational Handouts TAB DRAFT.docx
Job-to-Job Flow.docx
MISSION STATEMENT.pptx
NIWB Procurement Policy.docx
Nondiscrimination Policy.doc

On The Job Training Policy.doc
P11 - Youth Eligibility Policy - 092611corrected version.doc
P15 - Youth Incentives Policy 092611 UPDATE.doc
Priority of Services Policy - P20.doc
R2 Morale Policy.doc
Rapid Response Policy - Converted.docx
Repeating Classes or Tests with WorkOne Funding TECHNICAL GUIDANCE 2009 1.doc
Selective Services Registration Requirements.doc
Smoke and Tobacco Free Policy.doc
Sub-recipient Monitoring Policy.doc
TAA Training Plan 06 2011.docx
TAB_2010-04 DW Eligibility.pdf
Workkeys Process - Converted.docx
Workplace Violence Prevention Policy - Converted.docx

Basic Skills Deficiency
 SOP - Youth Enrollment/Data Policy
 Dislocated Worker Policy
 Northern Indiana Workforce Board, Inc. – Audit Plan
 Accounts Payable
 Cash Disbursements
 Cash Receipts
 Corporate Credit Card Policy
 Cost Allocation Policy
 Procurement Policy
 Equipment Purchase/Repair
 Property Procedures
 Grants and Contracts
 Payroll
 Purchase Policy
 Travel Policy
 Employee Mileage Expense Report Attachment
 Record Retention Policy
 Balance Sheet Reconciliation
 Bus Passes, Fuel and prepaid Cards, Supportive Services
 General Ledger Policy
 Month End Accounting Closing Accruals
 Sub Recipient Monitoring Policy
 NIWB Employee Manual

DWD Memo 2020-05
Attachment B - Program Participants for PY20

	Program Participants	Program Funding (WIOA)	Additional Funding (State)	Additional Funding (Federal)	Total Budget	Budget per Participant	Explanation (Optional)
WIOA Adult							
Dislocated Worker							
Youth (In School)							
Youth (Out of School)							
ABE							
WorkINdiana							
Wagner-Peyser							
Veterans (Overall)							

Each program should reflect all participants enrolled, regardless if they are co-enrolled in another program. Explanations of projections are encouraged.