

**RIVER PARISHES WORKFORCE
DEVELOPMENT BOARD
ST. CHARLES, ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST AND ST. JAMES PARISHES
LOCAL AREA #14**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The River Parishes Workforce Development Board (WDB) focuses its efforts on aligning the many facets of its workforce system to focus on improving the lives of the citizens by supporting our businesses and strengthening our economically diverse communities.

Technology, globalization and deregulation are the powerful forces driving economic change. The River Parishes Workforce Development Board (WDB) is committed to ensuring that its workforce is positioned to respond in this new economic reality and environment of constant change, with very much shortened product life-cycles, and intense time to performance pressures. The board realizes that the workforce must possess those broad skills that are valued in this economic world: flexibility, cross-training, multi-tasking, teaming, and project-based work. These changes all presume the ability for a worker to learn and re-skill continually throughout a career. New career structures and pathways have to be constructed outside individual employment organizations and across whole industrial sectors and regional labor markets to help meet these challenges.

The River Parishes Workforce Development Board concurs with and is fully committed to support the state's key workforce investment priorities, which are:

- To strengthen Louisiana's workforce system so that it is fully aligned with the state and regional economic development priorities.
- To develop a workforce system that consistently meets current and prospective Louisiana employers' needs for a trained workforce by being easily accessible and quick to respond.
- To develop an agile workforce system that can mobilize quickly to meet the needs of employers or industries who are experiencing rapid growth in employment.
- To develop a workforce system that is prepared to meet the needs of all business customers, including entrepreneurs, small businesses, and women and minority owned businesses.
- To continue to work towards a workforce system that offers easy to access, quality training programs to Louisiana citizens, including adult learning and basic skills upgrades, that will allow our people to acquire, retrain and succeed in careers that improve their standards of living.
- To embrace the concept that workforce development is a lifelong process by strengthening the links between our workforce system and our ongoing educational reforms including pre-K programs, school accountability, high school redesign, and adult

learning to more closely align the skills delivered by our educational systems and the skills needed by our industries.

The River Parishes Workforce Development Board has also developed strategies aligned with the identification of objectives and strategies to meet the workforce development needs of the various labor markets. As the Local Workforce Development Board seeks to meet the demographic and economic challenges they are confronting, improved access and expanded partnerships with the workforce system will be to actively encourage lifelong learning, re-skilling and upgrading of the workforce through a system of creative incentives for human capital investments by individuals and employers.

Design and implementation of these incentives in conjunction with the employment and training community in the region will be essential if we are to be successful in providing opportunities to the emerging and existing workforce. Continued regional investment in career mapping and career ladder strategies will help to ensure that the relevant players including education, workforce and business are part of the long-term solution.

Section II. Local Operational Plan

A. Overview of the Workforce System:

The LWDB 14 Workforce Development Board was formulated in correlation with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 inclusive of St. Charles, St. James, and St. John parishes. The Board designates and maintains the integrity of policies in conjunction with the Chief Elected Official.

St. James Parish President presides as the Chief Elected Official of our area. St. Charles Parish President Larry Cochran is our Administrative Entity/ Grant Recipient of all WIOA funds.

The River Parishes LWDB primarily focuses on the strategical alignment of the multi-faceted Workforce system to improve the livelihood of our residents by partnering with businesses to enhance the overall financial status of our economically diverse communities.

B. Operational Systems and Policies Supporting the State's Strategies:

It is imperative that intensification of the foundation of LWDB 14 occurs perpetually. By utilizing cohabitation with our Wagner-Peyser partners throughout our centers, we are strategically positioned to serve as a highly esteemed resource to our residents, organizations pinpointed for services under WIOA Title 1-B, and employers. The service delivery model of LWDB 14 is reinforced of theorems inclusive of:

The most pivotal fundamental of the strategically designed implementation by the LWDB allies is the exhibition of the fortitude of our broadening participation from outside associates to expand our value to residents and employers. The most vital components include accountability, inter-agency collaboration, and continuous improvement. In order to ensure a measurable value is provided, key components of the overall system are highlighted and utilized to the highest extent of their full benefit.

1. LWDB #14 has fully implemented the Service Delivery model designated by the State. The model embodies dual concentration that appeases both business and career solutions. Through the application of an extensive commitment of assurance that services and products are not merely available, but designed to be demand driven specifically fulfilling the requirements of high-demand industries along with the needs of jobseekers. Wagner-Peyser and WIOA staff are working in conjunction in all of our centers to provide an environment where impeccable service is evident and available around the clock. Individuals that enter our centers are initially interviewed briefly to determine which levels of services are necessary. If it is evident that an individual will need more intensive services, such services will be provided in order to produce the most valuable benefit possible. In the midst of each center there is a general Resource Area that is readily accessible to all clients. The Resource Area provides a multitude of workforce information, job readiness directives, and technical literature all relative to possessing gainful employment. In addition, highly trained staff is positioned to provide assistance

with resume development, computer navigation, as well as various software programs. All staff is certified to decipher the true workforce needs of our clients and redirect them when necessary. If required, assessment tests, counseling sessions, and career interest surveys are available for anyone in need of more intensive services. Jobseekers are allotted the opportunity to view a listing of jobs updated weekly in addition to information regarding online vacancies. Our Service model enables us to maintain universal access to all jobseekers. The driving focal point is the assurance of training, hiring, and employment retention of our clients. LWDB 14 also strives to maintain an ongoing relationship with employers and relay information to potential applicants to increase successful outcomes amongst them. We pride ourselves in eliminating duplication of services by perpetually dissecting our Service model and making improvements as needed.

2. LWDB 14 aggressively utilizes local policies in order to coincide with the strategies set forth by the State. The staff of the LWDB constantly provides support to promote training activities and employment related initiatives. The LWDB staff and center leadership are in constant communication to encourage persistent alignment of resources for optimal results. If necessary, LWDB staff will not hesitate to contact LWC for any matter where strategical support or counsel is warranted.
3. The main goal of LWDB 14 is to increase efficiency and overall effectiveness of all services. We plan to bring this theory into fruition by decreasing the initial amount of time between individuals being assessed and assisted. We also strive to have our processes clearly defined and resources available for full implementation as needed. LWDB 14 also has specific procedures tailored for training and skill building readily available. Based upon situational analysis, customers are provided with what is derived as the most beneficial course of action. The chosen course of action, in addition with customer choice and realistical expectations, allows us to satisfy employers and jobseekers while simultaneously linking the two together. By utilizing re-employment initiatives introduced by LWC we are able to create truly viable candidates that possess the skill sets that employers deem valuable. Customers that may not require staff assistance may access our services through our virtual one-stop, HIRE. The new H.I.R.E. software will allow customers to choose a desired career path while receiving an accurate account of their skills set with attainable career expectations. Our Skills Development specialists assist customers with job readiness skills inclusive of, but not limited to computer navigation, resume development, and proper interviewing techniques. It is mandated by the State that all unemployment Insurance claimants register and receive re-employment services from local centers. Our services are geared to focus more on claimants close to exhausting benefits in order to reduce their unemployment period. LWDB 14 will also utilize TABE assessments in order to successfully match jobseekers with ideal employers. In the event that there is a gap between actual and desired skills sets, additional assistance is available through our partner agencies as well as our centers. LWDB 14 further enhances our talent development tactics by highlighting the great potential of successful outcomes affiliated with Apprenticeship programs. LWDB 14 staff frequently participates in Career Fairs that promote our services as well as local Apprenticeship Programs. The theory is that if we can provide a step-by-step model as to how successful outcomes are attained, employers and jobseekers will be more enthusiastic about taking advantage of what our centers have to offer while collaborating with our local Apprenticeship system. Our concentration pertaining to the Business

Solutions aspect of our operation emulates that of jobseekers. We aim to reduce the time between initial assessment and complete satisfaction of employer needs. We constantly work to train all staff members on the full aspects of that intent to ensure a well rounded Service model. We also frequently re-evaluate the model and improve in order to gradually produce a flawless, yet equally beneficial system. LWDB 14 works in collaboration with our regional LWDB's in order to leverage all available resources and develop a fully functional strategy that will maximize availability of services available throughout LWDB 14. Collectively, we are striving to reduce the skills gap between qualified applicants and employment opportunities to gain favor with employers, whom are our primary customers. By meeting monthly, we discuss ways to reduce the monotony of Service models and deliver innovative, interesting ways to appeal to our target market while proving the value of our services and programs. LWDB 14 has partnered with local service organizations such as Economic Development, Business Associations, and Chambers to ensure we meet the demands of businesses and industries that are truly valuable to our specific area. The theory behind this tactic is that despite the economic climate, our region will remain proactive and prepared for any obstacle that may present itself.

4. Due to the ever changing economic climate, it is imperative that LWDB 14 is prepared for the potential unfortunate occurrence of a massive company layoff. In order to always be available in the wake of such a tragic event, LWDB 14 collaborates with the LWC Rapid Response Unit when necessary. All staff members in every corridor of the River Parishes have been acclimated to the Rapid Response system. Upon notification of a massive layoff from LWC, our staff immediately begins to organize intervention services to satisfy the initial needs of the employer. Beginning with a brief situational analysis, our team then coordinates a strategically designed plan that will service the greatest number of individuals in the most efficient fashion. We strive to eliminate or reduce the total time of unemployment by remaining flexible in our plan in order to accommodate the schedules of workers and potential employers to make the transition flow as smoothly as possible. Our most successful effort includes setting up an Employee transition center at a convenient location to the job site experiencing a layoff. We then invite employers that are able to potentially recruit the employees based on their transferable skills and utilize their talents in a similar capacity as they were being used in their previous occupation. Our Business Services team works closely with the Rapid Response Unit in order to expedite the filing of U.I. claims, assist with job search, and organize transitional career fairs. These events are heavily promoted within the organization experiencing a layoff, as well as to employers seeking new talent. Our promotion efforts include email blasts, radio/television commercials, and newspaper ads. This system has proven to be extremely valuable and beneficial in matching affected workers with employers seeking new talent.
5. LWDB 14 regularly uses the management information system implemented by LWC. The internet-based system incorporates methods for our local centers to meet the reporting criteria set forth by LWC. The system is highly universal and allows us to utilize the necessary resources vital to providing LWC with data tracking components regarding our complete catalog of programs and services. The system provides a platform that greatly enhances the exchange of information throughout our agencies Statewide.
6. LWDB 14 acquires information detrimental to operate and coordinate programs locally by utilization of the H.I.R.E. data collection and management operating system. The H.I.R.E. system grants us the opportunity to enter everything from general participant and employer data to activities and case notes. The system allows us to input performance

data for comparisons against regulated benchmarks, and make corrective implementations where necessary.

A. Operating Systems and Policies Supporting the State's Strategies:

The LWIOAs in LWDB 14 all share the same vision that incorporates a regional workforce investment system where every person who wants to work should be able to find and keep a quality job. The Region's LWIOAs work together to strategically invest in high growth/high wage industries, leverage funds beyond WIOA dollars, develop systems and not "stand alone" programs, work closely with all One Stop partners and other entities that can contribute to the development of the workforce, and be proactive, not reactive

The regional economic development goals are to coordinate efforts to train workers, create jobs, grow existing industry, attract new industry and shape public policy to encourage growth. When addressing these goals for attracting, retaining and growing business and industry in our Region, filling these vacancies, especially those in the high growth/high wage sectors, is one of the primary goals. During the past 5 years, from 2010 to 2015, the population of the United States grew by 5.4% and the population in our region declined by only -1.9%. The obvious conclusion to be drawn from this data is that if we are going to fill these vacancies, they will be primarily filled by the citizens currently residing in this area. The LWDBs in Region 1, therefore, will play an important role in the development of the workforce to fill the vacancies that exist with current employers and industries, while being closely involved in efforts to develop the workforce for new employers and industries, and working with those affected by downsizing to ensure a smooth transition to other employment opportunities.

Working closely with Regional economic development agencies and Chambers of Commerce, we must address the needs of the oil and gas industry with their impending shortages due to the aging of their workforce, and we must also continue preparations to meet the challenges that may be faced with possible downsizing at military facilities and the Avondale plant due to changes in the ship yard industry.

The River Parishes Workforce Investment Area 14 Board, in collaboration with the other Workforce Investment Boards in Region 1, is committed to pursuing a regional workforce development strategy in order to maximize and leverage the broad array of resources available in the Greater New Orleans region to ensure a skilled workforce for business and industry. Our focus is on employers as the primary customer. The Region 1 LWDBs partnership has established strategies to bridge the gap between job opportunities and the pool of qualified workers. This regional approach to workforce development is very effective in addressing workforce issues and shared goals. Together, we are minimizing redundancies and gathering more clout and resources. The partnership action agenda includes a focus on industry sector strategies, targeting of high demand, high growth and high

pay occupations, integration of services and resources within a single point of contact for employers with seamless processes, forms and requirements, etc.

Many employers are having a hard time attracting qualified workers. A skills deficit has become apparent, exacerbated by deficiencies in adult literacy. Workers with few or no skills either are trapped in jobs leading nowhere or continue to experience difficulties in securing employment leading to self-sufficiency. Yet, critical worker shortages exist in many industries. The River Parishes Workforce Development Board, in partnership with the regional LWDBs, is working closely with various other regional organizations, such as Economic Development entities, post-secondary institutions, trade and industry associations, organized labor and businesses to provide a reliable supply of qualified workers for critical skill shortage occupations. The Workforce Boards in Region 1 are working together to leverage resources available to successfully provide services, such as on-the-job training, classroom and customized training as well as other assets to ensure a continuum of education and training opportunities that support a skilled workforce. We continue to work closely with the post-secondary institutions to assist them in making available technical training programs that will meet industry needs. Through these projects and others, the Region 1 LWDBs hope to improve the continuum of education and training opportunities in the region.

The LWDBs will put major emphasis on out-of-school youth who have a high school diploma or HISET and who are unemployed, underemployed, or basic skills deficient. The LWDBs will focus on assisting those youth with obtaining training in high growth/high demand occupations to meet the needs of the local labor market. Our goal is to ensure that all local Community and Technical Colleges and the public school system are aware of the WIOA services offered to youth. LWDBs will outreach to youth enrolling in a Community or Technical College and graduating high school seniors, who qualify as an out-of-school youth and need additional assistance to obtain their career goals.

The LWDBs are dedicated to developing stronger partnerships with the local public school systems' HISET programs. It is important that we work with the school system to develop innovative strategies to educate youth. Youth who drop out of the school leave for a reason and many choose not to return to the same type of environment. Therefore, it is important that youth have knowledge of where to go to obtain their HISET. It is our goal to work with the school system and research best practices for educating youth who have dropped out of school.

LWDB 14 is dedicated to serving all special needs population groups.

Region 1 WDBs will develop service strategies designed to meet the specific needs of these groups as defined in the State Plan.

Region 1 recognizes the value of our aging workforce. Historically, older workers possess basic workplace competencies; have no difficulty in finding and keeping the job and moving up the career ladder.

Older workers that are not engaged in HISET in the workforce will need various levels of service as they transition into the job market ready to work and cope as they face retention in the job market, deal with keeping a job and staying employed and advance in the job market through performance and skill development.

LWDB 14 will develop uniform policies and procedures that address the problems older workers have in getting a job, keeping the job, and moving up the career ladder as well as developing best practices for delivering services to the older worker population.

LWDB 14 supports maximum integration of service delivery through the One-Stop delivery system through total integration of staff and services. The Business and Career Solutions Centers' principles streamline services in a one-stop environment that offers universal access to multiple workforce development services to job seekers and businesses in one location. The system empowers job seekers to seek the means to fulfill training, education and employment needs and offers businesses the opportunity to acquire skilled workers trained in response to industry demands.

LWDB 14 ensures a strong leadership role for businesses and is committed to meet their needs for skilled workers as well as the training, educational and employment needs of job seekers. The LWDB is dedicated to planning workforce development activities that effectively respond to industry demand, maximize clients' career and earning potential and receive a return investment in these programs in the form of a skilled workforce that contributes to workforce growth and economic returns for Louisiana.

The LWDB has designated St. Charles as the operator of the One-Stop system of Business and Career Solutions Centers, established through the cooperation of mandated partners under WIOA legislation in accordance with a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that are updated as needed. There are three (3) Business and Career Solutions Center locations in LWDB 14's service area:

St. Charles Parish Business and Career Solutions Center, 737 Paul Maillard Road,
Luling, LA 70070

St. John the Baptist Parish Business and Career Solutions Center, 975 Cambridge
Drive, Laplace, LA 70060

St. James Business and Career Solutions Center, 2631 Hwy 20 West, Vacherie, LA
70090

The process by which the LWDB and Chief Elected Official made this designation involved mutual agreement by the partners, the Chief Elected Official and the LWDB, who subsequently approved the designations of the centers for LWDB 14.

B. Services to Employers:

The Local Workforce Development Board #14 is to advance its demand driven Workforce Innovation system and the development and dissemination of web-based regional/local market profile.

The River Parishes Workforce Innovation Area 14 Board along with the other regional partners is identifying and targeting high growth/high demand industries and occupations that are vital to the economy by the following:

1. Analyzing economic indicators, labor market information, census and education data and discussions with businesses, and;
2. Developing strategic partnerships that provide a strong foundation for identifying workforce challenges and developing innovative solutions.

LWDB 14 partnership is specifically targeting industries that:

1. Will have a significant impact and will add a substantial number of new jobs to the economy;
2. Will impact the growth of other industries;
3. Are being transformed by technology and innovation which require new skills sets for workers; and
4. Are new and emerging and expected to grow.

The Local Workforce Development Board #14 aim is to produce a comprehensive inventory of information and services for employers, increase business customer satisfaction, enhance efficiency among workforce service providers and align education service organizations to promote overall economic development. The following is a list of the strategies that are currently being utilized:

- Implements a supplied connection point for employers to access all available resources.
- Develop and coordinate a comprehensive range of employer services.
- Create new cross-organizational services that address market place service gap.

The LWDB #14 is working towards strengthening the coordination among our local business connections to enhance the workforce systems understanding of business needs.

The LWDB has transformed our regional meetings to integrate the issues facing economic development, workforce development and education. These meetings are necessary to plan and stimulate the type of cross institutional thinking that occurs to advance the common mission of improving economic opportunity. Local Workforce Investment Area 14 is offered the opportunity to attend the annual Occupational Forecasting Conference, which identifies demand occupations in three tiers. The first tier consists of high growth demand occupations: The Workforce Investment Board has established an ITA policy, which allows individuals to attend training only in demand industries. The River Parishes revises their local policies to expedite and process participants in training that leads to employment in high growth/demand occupations. Also, no Title I-B WIOA resources may be spent on training providers who are not part of the state ETPL. Certification as ETPL is limited to programs whose graduate achieves a minimum level of employment and wages in the labor market. Although this initiative does not limit

participants to employment in given industries, the ETPL does direct training towards programs with demonstrated outcomes.

Currently, the River Parishes are receiving information in the Incumbent Worker Training Program, which allows the area opportunities to develop EBT contracts/customized training.

The River Parishes in conjunction with the LDOL and the regional economic development entity's will continue to evaluate available economic and workforce data to identify high growth/high demand industries in order to target available resources accordingly.

The Local Workforce Investment Area 14 serves, as a mechanism to encourage this guidance and group effort to support the creation, sustainability, growth and support for the workforce needs of small businesses. The Workforce Investment Board has significant representation from small businesses, which emphasize guidance and encouragement of efforts to identify the best training and workforce development practices to address these issues. Labor market information, ONET and TABE may be used to supply up-to-date information on job requirements, skill shortages, training needs and other services needed and may be coupled with endeavors of private sector and training institutions to adapt training objectives suitable to answer the workforce needs of customers.

- Prioritize services to youth who are most in need and develop a mix of services based on assessment of each youth. Different populations of youth have different needs. Language and cultural issues are considered in the local design of youth service strategies. Foster parents/homes are informed of all services available to youth.
- Includes representatives from the community and technical colleges in their membership. School districts and alternative schools refer youth to the WIOA program.
- Provide opportunities for youth to be involved in the community and in decision-making. Youth are partnered with adults in cooperation with mentoring services available in our local areas. The Youth Council discusses multiple ways to get input from youth and youth who are council mentors to take on leadership roles and carry out these strategies.
 - Sponsor life skills/soft skills transition workshops.
 - Include representatives from local Chambers of Commerce, which strengthens business/education partnerships. Youth services are promoted through chamber business members.

Additionally, the regional economic profiles help identify short and long term skills needed by youth to secure jobs in the region.

The River Parishes is working toward consolidation and true integration of its One-Stop system. The WIOA and Wagner-Peyser staff work side-by-side in an integrated setting to provide service delivery to job seeking and business customers. We recognize the importance of ensuring the integrity and quality of our One-Stop Service delivery to not only serve our customers well, but also as a necessary element in attracting new partnerships and leveraging/additional resources. The WIOA has always allowed for local flexibility in many areas of our One-Stop System development; we have also been consistent in communicating expectations of quality services and high performance. Also, input is being sought through

focus groups, facilitated front line staff sessions, online services and research of nationwide best practices.

The Business Service Representatives build business relationships with local business decisions makers, assess business needs, and identify business solutions. Business services representatives work with their regional manager and Regional I Partnership to identify and target key industries. Business service representatives are engaging HISET in regional economic development, workforce development, and education issues. With universal access, one-stop centers are able to serve all individuals from all of the dislocated workers. These funds can be used for both cores, intensive and training. Dislocated Worker funds can also be used to serve displaced homemakers without restriction for intensive training services through the One-Stop delivery system.

Low income individuals, such as public assistance recipients and Migrant and seasonal Farm workers are continuing to experience a greater availability of streamlined services through the local One-Stop delivery systems, due to the coordinator efforts of partner agencies that provide services to these populations. Partner agencies have access to information about the services already provided to a customer by other partners, so that duplication can be avoided.

The LWDB's are able to offer services that are more efficient as well as better tailored to the needs of the customers. Individuals, who are interested in training for non-traditional employment, are funding the full range of partner services available to assist them in reaching their goals. They are able to access Labor Market Information, career information, educational and training grant applications, and post training assistance in funding employment all under one seamless system of partner agencies.

Through collaborative training events and web-based resources the state contributes to provide information to ensure enhanced access to One-Stop Services for person with disabilities.

At present, LWDB 14 has moved in the direction of full integration of staff within all three centers to eliminate the duplication of services, thus reducing Administration overhead costs.

Throughout development of our local plan, LWDB's are required to describe how they are working collaboratively with partners to address their workforce goals, ultimately moving through a more integrated system. The state's utilization of HIRE as its case management, tracking and reporting system is one example of policy that drives integration. The availability of HIRE to local areas and partners in the One-Stop system has increased each year, as we move toward common measures. We anticipate most of our partner agencies converting to HIRE. Increasing the availability of the HIRE systems will help to identify trends and potential issues and enable local areas to begin collecting data related to the common measures. The Region I partnership of LWDB Directors/Program Directors, partner programs and WIOA staff are in the process of identifying system indicators to begin collecting data that promote an integrated systems approach to measuring performance.

La. Department of Labor has hosted numerous meetings/trainings that addressed the new policies which give full direction of the redesign/integration of services concept for both WIOA Title I/Wagner-Peyser personnel.

The development of these measures requires partners to begin sharing customer information, which in turn promotes integration.

Recently, the LWIOA program advisors were asked to assess and develop a list of each area's infrastructure cost, as an exercise to bring to light the relative burdens of each LWDB's infrastructure cost relative to their total cost. The State has begun to gather detailed cost information from the LWDB's that would allow for more in-depth analysis of each of the LWDB's infrastructure cost and how these relate to services provided.

Core activities that is primarily self-service or informational in nature, such as:

- WIOA eligibility determination; outreach, intake, and orientation to the Louisiana Workforce Investment Act Program services; and assistance in establishing eligibility for non-WIOA financial aid programs including public assistance
- Rudimentary assessment of skill levels, aptitudes, abilities, and supportive service needs; and information on programs that might assist individuals in upgrading skills and in filling needs
- Information services including HIRE and other job listing services, job skills information, jobs-in-demand, local area performance, supportive services, information on how to file for UI and performance and program cost on WIOA-eligible and non-eligible training providers
- Group services such as program orientation and job search activities, assessment activities, employability planning, career planning, resume writing workshops, job search workshops, etc.

Core activities that are more staff-assisted (defined as one-to-one staff involvement in a significant activity with a cumulative service time of two hours or more), such as:

- Job search and placement assistance, and, where appropriate, career counseling, job referrals, job development, assessment of skill levels, aptitudes, and supportive service needs with a view towards determining the need for intensive services; and out-of-area job search activities
- Counseling services regarding the workplace for participants in WIOA Title 1 Adult and Dislocated Worker activities who are placed in unsubsidized employment, for not less than 12 months after the first day of employment, as appropriate

Intensive activities that require some prior core service participation and registration, such as:

- Comprehensive and specialized assessment of skill levels and service needs
- Development of individual employment plans - Service Strategy ISS
- Group counseling, individual counseling, and career planning
- Case management, work experience, internships
- Short-term pre-vocational services, including the development of learning skills, communication skills, interviewing skills, punctuality, personal maintenance skills,

and professional conduct skills to prepare individuals for unsubsidized employment or training

- Short-term courses not designed to provide immediate employment but to provide the skills necessary to enable the individual to become more employable (included in this category are one-course work seminars that provide instruction in specific computer software packages)
- Adult Basic Education (ABE)

Training activities, such as:

- Occupational skills training, including training for non-traditional employment, skill upgrading and retraining, academic skills training, entrepreneurial training;
- On-the-job training, programs that combine workplace training with related instruction, which may include cooperative education programs, training programs operated by the private sector;
- Adult education and literacy provided in combination with services described by the above bullets;
- Customized training, including apprenticeships, conducted with a commitment by an employer or group of employers to employ an individual upon successful completion of the training.

All core services are accessible to the “universal customer” at all of the Workforce Centers throughout the State. Affiliate partners also provide some of the core services through resource areas and/or electronic access to the nearest One Stop Center. The other services are generally available to individuals based on need and available funding. Each of the One Stop Centers has a priority of service policy, which gives preference to certain groups of individuals such as veterans, public assistance recipients, individuals having multiple barriers to employment, etc. Where appropriate and where WIOA funding is not available, referrals are made to other sources where support might be available.

In the region there are over 35,000 individuals age 16-19 in the labor force and of those, about 18,000 do not have a high school diploma or HISET. These individuals typically have multiple barriers to employment. It is estimated that the number of the expected pool of work registrants in the Food Stamp Employment Program is anticipated to be around 6,000. The characteristics of the expected pool are anticipated to be primarily individuals with multiple barriers to employment, such as lack of adequate reading and comprehension skills, lack of high school diploma/HISET, lack of skills development, little or no work history and single parent household, etc.

The educational and training needs of public housing residents and other families receiving housing assistance is very similar to other groups such as food stamp recipients, criminal offenders, individuals with limited English proficiency, low income and individuals with multiple barriers. Many are in need of a HISET, employability training and skills training in order to attain and retain jobs.

The regional economic make-up by industries is in the order of Food Services, Professional and Technical Services, Ambulatory Health Care Services, Professional, Scientific and Technical Services, and Pro-chemical manufacturing.

The following occupations are projected to have the most total openings: Waiters and Waitresses; Cashiers; Combined food preparation and serving workers, including fast food, Retail salesperson; Registered Nurses; Food preparation workers; Laborers and freight, Stock, and Material movers; General and operations managers; Security guards; and General Office clerks.

The following occupations are projected to have the most growth: Waiters and waitresses; Combined food preparation and serving workers, including fast food; Registered Nurses; Food preparation workers; Security guards, General and operations managers; cashiers; Receptionist and information clerks; Nursing aides, orderlies, and attendants; and janitors and cleaners, except maids and housekeeping.

The following occupations are projected to have the most declines in employment: Secretaries, except legal, medical, and executive; Stock clerks and order fillers; Captains, Mates, and Pilots of water vessels; Bookkeeping, Accounting and Auditing clerks, Fisher's and related fishing workers, Word Processors and typists; Shipping, receiving, and traffic clerks; Order clerks, and Computer operators.

The analysis for Region I indicates that individuals with most skills from an educational viewpoint, i.e., college graduates, are leaving the area, and the least skilled individuals are those that are available to fill current demands. We project that this trend will continue unless the economy is able to increase employment opportunities for those currently leaving the area.

The LWDBs within the region will analyze industry, employer and labor market data, and research the best policies, procedures and programs with assistance from the Regional Business Services team, in order to provide the best information to our communities and to determine specific recommendations and actions to be proactive rather than reactive to the needs of the regions employers.

C. Services to Local Target Populations:

Adult and Dislocated Workers

Core services

LWDB 14, in conjunction with Wagner-Peyser, is coordinating and integrating services to all customers, thereby avoiding duplication, streamlining costs and providing all job seekers in the One-stop system with a clearer path toward training in high growth/high demand occupations. Through this integrated system, adults and dislocated workers are ensured universal access to core services.

Centers and services are designed so that customers can easily identify, select and access resources delivered in a variety of methodologies including on-line internet-based, facilitated self-help groups and/or one-on-one. Every customer will receive an appropriate level of facilitation to be comfortable while accessing services.

Through HIRE, all job seekers have self-service access to jobs, training opportunities and workforce information at any location that has Internet access. Job seekers can access facilitated self-help services through the Center Resource Areas. Staff assisted services are available for those job seekers, including veterans who need additional assistance.

LWDB 14 and Wagner-Peyser have successfully streamlined services through the complete integration of staff within the Centers. This includes the sharing of resources from both agencies which has enhanced and increased the efficiency of service delivery. These agencies have written and signed MOU's and Cost Allocation Plans in place that are reviewed and adjusted as necessary on a quarterly basis. These plans outline the sharing of resources among partner agencies.

Intensive Services

Intensive services may be provided to adults and dislocated workers who are unemployed and unable to obtain employment through core service, if the Center staff determines that the individual is in need of more intensive services. Adults and dislocated workers who are employed, but who are determined to be in need of intensive services to obtain and retain employment that allows for self-sufficiency, are also eligible for services. An individual must receive a core service in order to receive intensive services.

Training and Supportive Services

Training services, to the extent feasible, will be provided to adults and dislocated workers through the Individual Training Accounts, customized training, on-the-job training, occupational skills training, programs that combine workplace training and related instruction, including registered apprenticeship, training programs operated by the private sector, skill upgrade and retraining, entrepreneurship training, job readiness training, adult education and literacy training, etc. This system maximizes customer choice in the selection of training activities. These funds can also be used to support adult basic education training,

including English as a second language. The Skills Development and Recruitment and Placement team members will be primarily responsible for identifying individuals for enrollment in training activities.

Every effort possible is made to provide information, access and opportunity to clients, through core and intensive services and use of cohort groups, based on availability of activities and funding.

The LWDB 14 will provide supportive services and needs-related payments to support the employment and training needs of participants. Supportive Services may include, but not be limited to transportation, child care, dependent care, housing, and other services that are necessary to enable an individual who is unable to obtain the services from other programs to participate in activities authorized under WIOA. Needs-related payments may be provided to adults who are unemployed and do not qualify for or have ceased to qualify for unemployment compensation for the purpose of enabling such individuals to participate in programs of training services.

Coordination of all funding streams will occur in order to avoid duplication of services and ensure that funds are spent appropriately.

Eligible Training Provider List

An eligible training provider list is maintained on the internet through HIRE. Display information includes state approved training providers, contact information, course offerings, tuition and relevant information. Scorecard information is in the system.

The process for providing customer access to the statewide list of eligible training providers and their performance information is accomplished through use of the list of the eligible training providers available from the LDOL computerized listing that provides names of the approved training institutions and their relevant information. The Skills Development teams will assist customers in accessing and understanding the ETPL.

This process will help increase education and training enrollments and capacity as well as allow the LWDB 14 in collaboration with education entities to quickly design training to fit the needs of the job seeker and employers.

Individual Training Accounts (ITAs)

LWDB 14's policy for ITAs is offer training services to WIOA eligible adults and dislocated workers based on assessed need. These services are provided through selection of an eligible provider in accordance with an Individual Training Account (ITA) and LWDB 14 policy as well as applicable federal/state requirements. Training providers must continuously work with trainees to meet WIOA performance standards, and there is a periodic review of providers to determine compliance with existing standards. There are established requirements and funding limits for ITAs, with a maximum of \$5,000 per trainee, subject to

lower amounts based on availability of WIOA funding levels. A trainee may be limited in time of participation based on individual circumstances. To expedite the process, referral and payment systems are in effect for LWDB 14.

The ever-growing technological requirements of business and industry demand a workforce empowered to grow and expand with these needs. Job seekers and current workers must continually seek educational and skill training opportunities to remain competitive in the job market; employers must constantly search for skilled workers in a constantly changing work environment. To meet these needs, it is necessary to employ innovative training strategies.

The LWDB serves as a mechanism to encourage collaboration between business and public sectors to develop the best training and workforce development practices. The Region I Workforce Partnership works hand-in-hand with the local chambers of commerce and the business sector. Partnerships, consisting of business, industry, training institutions, technical colleges, community colleges and traditional colleges and universities, collaborate on design and redesign of curriculums to meet labor market needs, including, when feasible, shorter courses, more hands on experience and state-of-the-art equipment to provide workers the resources needed to acquire skills to meet employer demand. LWDB 14 and partners sponsor capacity building training, which is available to partners and staff.

LWDB 14 has processes for both competitive and non-competitive awarding of contracts for activities under Title I-B of WIOA.

Employer Based Training and Customized Training

LWDB 14 is committed to coordinate services across programs to prepare workers for high growth/high demand industries through programs such as EBT and customized training. To achieve this, LWDB 14 has developed partnerships among the public workforce system, business, education, training providers and economic development to form an understanding of the workforce challenges that must be addressed to ensure a prepared and competitive workforce. To provide more coordinated services to businesses, the Region 1 LWDBs have developed common EBT and customized training contracts and processes. This will provide an incentive to businesses to use these services.

LWDB 14 identifies EBT and customized training opportunities through a variety of methods, including, but not limited to: referrals through BSRs and industry sector representatives, partnerships with Chambers of Commerce, Economic Development, business and industry associations and presentations to various organizations, etc.

Region 1, in conjunction with its regional LWDBs, is identifying and targeting high growth/high demand occupations that are vital to the economy by:

- Analyzing economic indicators, labor market information, census and educational data and discussions with businesses;
- Developing strategic partnerships with agencies such as economic development entities, chambers of commerce, unions, industry groups, technical and community colleges to help identify industries that may benefit from EBT and/or customized training;

- Targeting and providing regional marketing to these identified industries; and
- Implementing regional business services activities

Through a regional strategy, the LWDB 14 is working with other critical stakeholders to identify and market to those industries with high growth, high demand occupations for potential EBT and customized training projects. Through these partnerships, the Region 1 LWDBs have been able to create integrated business services that will better meet businesses demand occupations in key industry clusters. As a region, the LWDBs have been able to identify the industries that will be targeted with WIOA funds.

The LWDB serves as a mechanism to encourage collaboration and joint planning between business and public sectors on the best training and workforce development practices that result in competency enhancement in the most practical length of time to achieve positive results for customers. The LWDB is guided by private industry, who concentrates on provision of activities that provide skill standards, which reflect industry needs, and on offering job development activities for adults, dislocated workers and incumbent workers that are consistent with market demands.

Veterans

It is LWDB 14's procedure to offer priority of service to veterans and certain spouses over non-veterans for all available services, based on assessed need and availability of funding. Veterans' representatives are located within the local Centers and work closely with WIOA to coordinate and offer a full array of networked and/or direct services for veterans.

When the Veterans priority is applied in conjunction with the Recovery Act's priorities for recipients of public assistance and low income individuals, veterans and eligible spouses who are members of the Recovery Act priority group will receive the highest priority within that priority group, followed by non-veteran members of the Recovery Act priority group.

Apprenticeship

LWDB 14 recognizes Apprenticeship Programs as an important component of our talent development strategies and has developed partnerships with this system in order to increase the quality of services to both employers and workers and enhance activities in support of current workforce system priorities. The LWDB 14 will educate center staff about Registered Apprenticeship in order to increase access to workforce education and training. Referrals to apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs will be routinely integrated into the career guidance and career exploration services offered through the local Centers, both virtually and as a part of staff-assisted services. In addition, centers will be encouraged to co-sponsor career fairs and other outreach activities with the Apprenticeship system, as well as market these opportunities to both employers and workers.

Rapid Response

The LWDB 14 participates with the LWC Rapid Response Unit to provide the necessary intervention services to affected employees when required. Designated staff from the Centers is available and knowledgeable in dealing with Rapid Response activities.

Upon notification of layoff from the Dislocated Worker unit with LWC, Business Solutions staff is directed to participate in the Rapid Response efforts. Staff members, in coordination with the Rapid Response team members, share the workload involved in the process. Intervention services/strategies are designed based on the immediate needs of the employer. Based on information from worker orientation meetings, the team begins assessing, coordinating and planning services, allowing for maximum flexibility in each layoff.

To accommodate worker schedules and enable more employees to access services, every effort is made to negotiate on-site services and company paid time-off. When possible, Worker Transition Centers are established on-site prior to lay-off date to provide the most convenient services.

To leverage the greatest number of resources, a variety of community partners are included in rapid response services. An array of core services and, as necessary, Trade Adjustment Assistance services are provided within the established Worker Transition Centers. These temporary centers are established on-site or at a convenient location within the community to meet the immediate needs of workers prior to layoff and continue to operate until the layoff is completed and all participants' needs are met. Services include: workshops tailored to the specific dislocation event, assistance filing U.I. claims, job search, career counseling, career assessment, job and training fairs, referrals to community and faith based resources.

To ensure seamless service delivery, the affected workers are transitioned to the local Centers as appropriate for additional services.

The Rapid Response functions are a part of the business services that are provide by the Regional LWDBs. This includes the partnerships that exist with important stakeholders, such as economic development agencies and industry groups. Every effort is made to match the affected workers with companies that are growing and/or in need of skilled workers. Rapid Response events are promoted through the local television and radio networks, local newspapers, brochures and presentations at business meetings and community job and education fairs.

Youth

The LWDB and educational institutions, along with other groups interested in youth, work in a collaborative effort to create a seamless system of knowledge and skill attainment for youth. Youth programs are designed to broaden and enhance youth's connection to comprehensive, integrated services which have as a strong focal point the completion of school through achievement of a diploma or HISET, the strengthening of basic skills, employment, internships, post-secondary training and beyond, as well as apprenticeships when feasible. Local technical and community colleges work in partnership with business to align their curriculum and teaching methods to adapt to the needs of the employers in the community.

LWDB 14's effort is exerted to work with special interest groups, such as homeless, runaway, foster children, pregnant or parenting teen, youth offenders and youth in single parent households, to provide guidance and mentoring services to influence entry into educational and skill training. The LWDB will require local centers to develop effective

relationships with local Juvenile Justice Systems to meet the needs of youth within that system.

WIOA strategies to promote collaboration between the workforce system, education, human services, juvenile justice and others to better serve youth who are most in need and have significant barriers to employment include a partnership of the above identified agencies as well as private sector members. This group participates in shared efforts to fashion youth activities designed to broaden and enhance youth's connection to educational and career opportunities, skill training, work maturity/work readiness, and additional guidance and mentoring services, all in an effort to create a seamless system that fosters acquisition of knowledge and skill attainment for youth. A plan for youth serves as the foundation for career preparation and post-secondary opportunities, with the intent of linking youth to education and training options leading to successful employment.

LWDB 14 assists youth in gaining access to skills needed to be successful in a career, which can ultimately result in contributing to the community's economy.

The youth programs are designed to provide objective assessment and include a review of the academic and occupational skill level, as well as the service needs of each youth. An Individual Service Strategy (ISS) is developed for youth registrants to identify career goals. Each registrant completes and pursues a plan to further educate and assist in an attachment to work. Through the development of MOU's with education, technical and community colleges, advance placement at the next level of education/training is available to registrants. Industry based certification may be achieved through a collaborative effort of educational entities and training providers. The One-Stop system provides a single point of contact for youth and employers, thus enabling employers to convey their needs and available opportunities to youth.

Through out-of-school and in-school and summer activities, youth can experience positive interactions with peers and knowledgeable, caring adults in a success-oriented environment. This fosters holistic educational, employment and leadership skills. LWDB 14's youth services offers the following program elements required:

- i. Tutoring, studying skills training and instruction leading to secondary school completion, including dropout prevention strategies;
- ii. Alternative secondary school offerings;
- iii. Summer employment opportunities linked to academic and occupational learning;
- iv. Paid and unpaid work experiences, including internship and job shadowing;
- v. Occupational skill training;
- vi. Leadership development opportunities, which may include such activities as positive social behavior and soft skills, decision making, teamwork and other activities;
- vii. Supportive services;
- viii. Adult mentoring, for duration of at least twelve (12) months, which may occur both during and after program participation;

- ix. Follow-up services; and
- x. Comprehensive guidance and counseling, including drug and alcohol abuse counseling, as well as referrals to counseling, as appropriate to the needs of individual youth.

Youth program designs will conform to the Act's provisions and emphasize the following areas:

- to collaborate with education and training entities to provide academic learning opportunities with a solid academic core linked to career preparation;
- to recruit, and engage dropouts and out-of-school youths in pursuing those opportunities;
- to develop a career plan and/or Individual Service Strategy for every youth;
- to seek industry-based certification as a goal for every youth;
- to document youth/student progress through integrated MIS system; and
- to promote innovative and quality program practices through partnering for youth activities.

Career paths are developed through core services offered in the Centers. The activity is designed to focus on job related competencies, career plan development, job search assistance, building of motivation and self-esteem, personal counseling opportunities and post-employment services.

Local educational agencies refer out-of-school youth and students who are at risk of dropping out of school to the local Centers for services. Partnerships have been established to offer out-of-school youth an opportunity to acquire a HISET. The local Centers assist high school graduates in obtaining employment and training services and collaborate with technical and community colleges to serve graduates through skill training.

LWDB 14 plans to consider all older and out-of-school youth who are not returning to school following the summer months for other appropriate activities and training opportunities.

LWDB 14's process to award grants for youth activities consists of an RFP process and an evaluation by LWDB 14 staff of proposals based on four criteria: program design, demonstrated ability, budget and oral interview. The results of the evaluation are submitted to the Youth Council for review, followed by a recommendation to the LWDB. Upon approval by the LWDB, WIOA negotiates the contract with the service provider.

LWDB 14 has a Youth Council, which was established as a subgroup of the LWDB. The Youth Council offers expertise in youth policy and assists the Board in:

- ▶ Developing and recommending local youth employment and training policy and practice;
- ▶ Broadening the youth employment and training focus in the community to incorporate a youth development perspective;
- ▶ Establishing linkages with other organizations serving youth in the local area; and
- ▶ Reviewing a range of issues that can have an impact on the success of youth in the labor market.

The membership of the Youth Council is representative of youth services agencies. It may include representatives from educational agencies, various youth activity organizations, juvenile justice, local law agencies, community based organizations, LWDB members with special interest in youth, employers, and other individuals, such as parents, and youth, including former participants.

Business Services

The LWDB 14 uses a number of methods to determine the needs of businesses on both a local and regional basis. These methods include: 1) use of various labor information from LDOL and other national sources; 2) employer focus groups; 3) strategic regional partnerships with critical stakeholders including economic development entities and chambers of commerce. These methods provide Region 1 LWDBs with up-to-date information on job requirements, skill shortages and training needs, assistance in the development of training curriculum and a compilation of system needs and other services needed by businesses.

The LWDB 14 Partnership, in collaboration with LWC, develops services for employers and provides them with a single point of contact with the employment and training system, provided through the services available from the local Business Solutions Centers. The LWDBs are also coordinating with the regional BSRs for connecting employers to all workforce development services.

Innovative Services Delivery

LWDB 14 has been operating under an integrated delivery system model for the past three years. Services have been streamlined by the complete integration of partner staff. New and improved services and tools have been developed to enhance and increase the efficiency of service delivery in response to customer demand. In addition, LWDB 14, working with the regional LWDBs, has embarked on a strong collaborative effort to be more proactive in responding to business needs. The accomplishment of establishing a regional initiative reflecting a shared vision has been formalized in a Proclamation that defines the coalition's commitment to a regional working structure. This commitment is evident in the work that has been accomplished thus far. The LWDB 14 Partnership has and will continued to participate in joint projects where we have successfully leveraged HISET resources, provided a single point of contact for employers, and integrated processes, forms and requirements.

Special Populations and Other Groups

The LWDB 14 operates under the premise that its full range of core services, based on availability of funding and services, are accessible to everyone who enters the Centers. Intensive services, based on availability of funding and services, are accessible to any individuals who are assessed as in need of these services, regardless of their special population or group status. Training services, based on availability of funding and services, are accessible to any individuals who are WIOA eligible and assessed as in need of these specific services and demonstrate an ability to benefit, regardless of their special population or group status. All services are coordinated with relevant agencies.

Re-employment services available to worker profiling and reemployment services claimants include the full array of core, intensive and training services. Current job openings are reviewed and appropriate referrals made if possible. Claimants receive intensive placement services by core partners, when indicated by assessment. Intensive group activities and job clubs are an integral part of the service mix for worker profiling and reemployment services claimants.

The LWDB 14 integrates and aligns services to dislocated workers participating in Rapid Response and/or Trade Adjustment Assistance programs by transitioning the affected workers to the local centers as appropriate for additional services. Those services may include: core, intensive, and/or training activities depending on the need of the individual. TAA funded participants may be co-enrolled in the Dislocated Worker program based on need. This integration provides greater flexibility and maximizes limited resources to provide efficient services to job seekers, displaced workers and the employer community.

Priority use of Recovery Act funds will be for services to recipients of public assistance and other low-income individuals. The full array of services through core, intensive and training will be made available to these customers.

The LWDB 14 is working to develop strategies to overcome barriers to skill achievement and employment by special populations. Every effort is made to match these individuals with companies that are growing and/or in need of workers by offering on-the-job training, internships and/or customized training to employers. We continue to work closely with the technical and community college system to assist them in making available to businesses technical training programs that will not only meet industry needs, but also assist special population groups.

Each Center location is monitored for accessibility for individuals with disabilities and meets the requirements of ADA regulations. Every effort is made to accommodate individuals who have special needs and to offer One-Stop services to individuals who are assessed as in need of services and to coordinate available services between relevant agencies.

LWDB 14 continues to ensure all materials and delivery methods are appropriate to diverse cultures, languages and education. Program accommodations include, as appropriate, the provision of interpreters for individuals with hearing impairments who require such assistance in order to participate in center programs, large print materials and enlarged computer screens for individuals with visual disabilities, earphones with enhanced sound for individuals with hearing disabilities, etc

Each Center has identified staff and/or local contacts that can assist with service delivery for job seekers of other languages.

Professional Development and System Improvement

Ongoing training is provided to improve staff capabilities and technical knowledge, and to assist in the development and implementation of new methods and technologies to improve service to customers. Capacity building training is employed to facilitate cross agency/cross program team building and foster the coordination needed to provide integrated services and strengthen the services delivery system. Staff is trained to serve all customers, to be sensitive

to diversity, to focus on customer service and satisfaction, and to provide customers with information that allows customers to make decisions. On a weekly basis, center staff participation in workshops, training, and team building workshops for two hours.

The LWDB 14 has been providing all front-line staff with training. A major focus of the training undertaken includes:

- * Streamline services through complete integration of partner staff;
- * Development of new business and job seeker services
- * Improvement of Business and Career Solutions Center tools to enhance and increase the efficiency of service delivery;
- * Improvement of outreach efforts to all customer segments;
- * Implementation of meaningful system-wide performance measures; and
- * Establishment of a continuous improvement program to drive program.

Monitoring

To ensure the seamless delivery of effective and efficient services to customers, the LWDB monitors the operation of the LWDB 14's Business and Career Solutions Centers. This monitoring includes: compliance with WIOA law and regulations; performance measures, both WIOA and common measures; consistency and quality of services provided; and contracts written by the Centers with training providers, employers, etc. Monitoring is conducted on activities under all funding streams received by the LWDB 14.

D. Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA):

The LWDB 14 fully supports and embraces the TAA program as a required partner in the Career Solutions Center's service delivery system. The delivery of services and benefits under the Trade Act Programs will be coordinated with the WIOA programs and partners to improve services, maximize resources, avoid duplication, and enhance outcomes for all customers.

The reemployment services that are provided to trade-affected workers under the Trade Act programs also fall within the WIOA sequence of services of core, intensive, and training activities. The TAA program can provide valuable resources that trade-affected workers may access in order to facilitate training, job search, relocation assistance, and other resources. By utilizing the TAA funds for those eligible participants, the WIOA formula funds may then be leveraged to serve other non-eligible TAA individuals in need of our services.

Trade affected workers will access reemployment services in the same manner as other dislocated workers. They will be registered in H.I.R.E. and co-enrolled as WIOA Dislocated Worker participants. Center staff will complete all applicable forms and assessments and if training services are approved, the Trade Act program resources will be utilized to pay for the cost of training. LWDB 14 will administer the TAA program locally and submit monthly invoices to LWC's Fiscal Unit for reimbursement in the same manner as any other contract.

