

**WESTERN ARKANSAS
LOCAL WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD PLAN
PROGRAM YEARS 2012 – 2016**

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**WESTERN ARKANSAS
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The Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998, as amended, requires that the local workforce investment boards submit a Local Plan to the Arkansas Department of Workforce Services that outlines a five-year strategy for its workforce investment system. Local Workforce Investment Boards must have approved local plans in place to receive formula allotments under WIA. (WIA Section 112(a), W-P Section 8 (a).) This document represents the five-year strategic plan for the Western Arkansas Workforce Investment Board for the period of July 1, 2012 through June 30, 2016.

I. LOCAL WORKFORCE STRATEGIC PLAN

Describe the Local Workforce Investment Board's (Local Board) strategic vision for its local workforce investment area (local area) and the Board's overarching goals. Rather than simply compiling data from various sources, base this section on a thorough understanding of the economic strengths and employment needs of the workforce area.

Boards must review *Governor Beebe's Plan for Economic Development* (<http://www.arkansasedc.com/arkansas-edc/the-governors-strategic-plan.aspx>) and the *State of Arkansas Integrated Workforce Plan PY 2012–2016* (<http://dws.arkansas.gov/AWIB/pdfs/stateplan/PY%202012-2016%20Arkansas%20State%20WIA%20W-P%20Plan,%20FINAL,%2011-2-2012%20low%20res.pdf>) to ensure that their plans follow the same strategic direction. Consistent strategic direction among Board Plans will aid further integration of the Arkansas workforce system.

Five Goals for Economic Development (Arkansas Strategic Plan 2009)

1. Increase the incomes of Arkansans at a growth pace greater than the national average.
2. Expand entrepreneurship, focusing on knowledge-based enterprises.
3. Compete more efficiently in the global marketplace for new businesses and jobs, and create a business retention strategy to reduce closures.
4. Economic development will meet the special needs and take advantage of the extraordinary assets of various areas of the state. It will not be a one size fits all.
5. Increase the number of workers with post-secondary training so they are prepared when they enter the workforce and equipped for new jobs in the future.

AWIB Strategic Objectives (Arkansas Integrated Workforce Plan 2012-2016)

- Serve the Range of Job Seekers
- Serve the Range of Employers
- Serve the Range of Economies
- Increase the effectiveness of local WIBs
- Gain efficiencies across the system
- Re-imagine Learning and Work
- Diversify and Link Resources

A. LOCAL BOARD VISION AND GOALS

Local board plans must identify the key issues, challenges, and opportunities that are expected in the next five years and that have an impact on the workforce system. Identify the goals and objectives for the workforce area. The plan must specifically address the following. *[WIA §117(d)(1)], [WIA §118(a)]*

In an effort to ensure continuity with the governor's Plan for Economic Development and the State of Arkansas Integrated Workforce Plan PY 2012-2016, The Western Arkansas Workforce Investment Area is participating in the preparation of a statewide Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) with the Arkansas Association of Development Organizations (AADO), the Institute of Economic Advancement at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock (UALR), and the Economic Development Administration (EDA). The primary objective of the Arkansas Statewide CEDS is to become a vital document for addressing economic development issues, challenges, and opportunities by creating broad economic development strategies that can be utilized by Arkansas' communities and regions. The planning process involves city/county elected and appointed officials as well as leaders from the private sector, banking, chambers of commerce, economic development, two/four year universities and colleges, K-12, utilities, and health care. The top four issues and challenges submitted by the Western Region are:

1. Shift away from Manufacturing being a vital job creator
2. Lower wage service jobs are replacing lost manufacturing jobs
3. Business recruitment/retention
4. Educated Workforce/Available Workforce for higher wage service jobs

The top four issues determined through a statewide survey are:

1. Retaining and Creating Jobs
2. Educated and Skilled Workers and Leaders
3. Physical Infrastructure (with broadband as highest priority)
4. Healthy Communities, Affordable Housing, Quality of Life/Place

Regional meetings are currently being scheduled to present the survey findings and solicit reactions and further input. Future plans include development of strategies, development of web portal, and initial draft CEDS preparation.

Preliminary findings indicate cohesiveness with the Governor's five goals for economic development, the Governor's five components of economic development, and the vision and mission of the Arkansas Workforce Investment Board. The preliminary findings will be honed and developed into goals, objectives, and strategies for the Western Region with the assistance of the Workforce Investment Board and will be adopted by the board once they are finalized.

- The vision for the local workforce investment system and how the local system will appear at the end of the five-year period covered by this plan.

The vision of the Western Arkansas Workforce Investment Board is to create an accessible and responsive workforce development system creating a path for job seekers and incumbent workers to access training and skill development tools leading to higher skills and wages and providing employers and economic developers with a workforce to compete in a global environment.

- How the local workforce investment system will help achieve the state workforce investment goals.

The local area will align its goals with those of the Governor and the State Workforce Investment Board.

1. Increase the incomes of Arkansans at a growth pace greater than the national average.
Focus training in high demand areas that result in higher wage occupations.
 2. Expand entrepreneurship, focusing on knowledge-based enterprises.
Partner with local agencies and universities that foster entrepreneurship.
 3. Compete more efficiently in the global marketplace for new businesses and jobs, and create a business retention strategy to reduce closures.
Align with local Chambers and the Regional Alliance Economic Development Plan.
 4. Economic development will meet the special needs and take advantage of the extraordinary assets of various areas of the state. It will not be a one size fits all.
Partner with economic development and align WIA resources to assist in efforts to achieve their identified goals.
 5. Increase the number of workers with post-secondary training so they are prepared when they enter the workforce and equipped for new jobs in the future.
Continue to emphasize training in post secondary education and internships.
- Aligning efforts among workforce development partners to achieve accessible, seamless, integrated, and comprehensive service; and

In order to address workforce issues within the local area, the Local Board will utilize collaborative efforts with Workforce Center Partners and others to successfully align programs and services.

The Western workforce system is made up of many diverse components ranging from local business leaders, economic development organizations, education/training institutions, employment agencies, social services agencies, and community based organizations. These components are partnered and working together to address the needs of the Western WIA.

- How the local board will coordinate the workforce investment activities carried out in the local area with local economic development strategies and develop other employer linkages with these activities.

The local board will link with the Regional Alliance Economic Development Blueprint and Chambers of Commerce to determine best method to achieve local economic development strategies. Through this process, the local board will develop other employer linkages.

- How programs and activities described in the plan will support both the Governor's plan for economic development and the state's strategic plan for employment and training needs of youth and adults in the state.

The local board supports a system that provides education, job training, and career planning to job seekers and students in accordance with the Governors plan for economic development and the states strategic plan.

B. ECONOMIC AND WORKFORCE INFORMATION ANALYSIS

Local plans should include: *[WIA §117(d)(7); A.C.A §15-4-2212]*

- Identify the workforce needs of businesses, job seekers, and workers in the local area and how the local workforce system will address these needs.

Business needs: Recruiting and screening services; job postings; highly trained and skilled workers; labor market info. (Demand occupations/wage info. /performance)

Job Seeker needs: Training; access referral to job listings; skills upgrades; (WAGE, KUDER, CRC)

Workers' Needs: Skills upgrades; continuing education

The local area will address these needs by referral/partnerships/training services/ community and regional economic development activities.

- Current and projected employment opportunities in the local area and the job skills necessary to obtain the employment opportunities.

Top Ten Growth Occupations, 2011-2013 Ranked by Net Growth

Occupation	2011 Base Employment	2013 Projected Employment	Net Growth	%
Customer Service Representatives	1,412	1,598	186	13.17%
Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food	1,762	1,861	99	5.62%
Personal Care Aides	965	1,036	71	7.36%
Meat, Poultry, and Fish Cutters and Trimmers	1,562	1,620	58	3.71%
Office Clerks, General	2,454	2,495	41	1.67%
Nursing Aides, Orderlies, and Attendants	1,950	1,990	40	2.05%
Registered Nurses	1,886	1,922	36	1.91%
Receptionists and Information Clerks	787	808	21	2.67%
Accountants and Auditors	568	587	19	3.35%

Insurance Sales Agents	310	328	18	5.81%
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**Top Ten Growth Occupations, 2008-2018
Ranked by Net Growth**

Occupation	2008 Base Employment	2018 Projected Employment	Net Growth	% Growth
Truck Drivers, Heavy and Tractor-Trailer	5,472	6,493	1,021	18.66
Registered Nurses	2,050	2,447	397	19.37
Nursing Aides, Orderlies, and Attendants	1,692	2,059	367	21.69
Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education	1,098	1,439	341	31.06
Customer Service Representatives	1,586	1,840	254	16.02
Personal and Home Care Aides	691	937	246	35.60
Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Vocational Education	935	1,152	217	23.21
Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food	1,727	1,927	200	11.58
Farmers and Ranchers	5,279	5,477	198	3.75
Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	1,251	1,445	194	15.51

- How local boards will work cooperatively with local economic development to identify local targeted industries that supports state identified targeted industries and the Governor's plan for economic development.

The local board will utilize the Regional Alliance Economic Development Blueprint to identify state targeted industries. The board will encourage job seekers to focus on training and gain skills that will allow them to be employable and become self-sufficient.

II. LOCAL OPERATIONAL PLAN

The local operational plan must present an overview of the workforce system in the local area.

A. LOCAL GOVERNANCE

- Identify the fiscal agent or entity responsible for the disbursement of grant funds described in WIA § 117(d)(3)(B)(i)(III), as determined by the chief elected official(s) under WIA § 117(d)(3)(B)(i). [WIA §118(b)(8); Act 1125 §12(b)(8); 20 CFR 661.350(a)(9)]

Western Arkansas Planning and Development District (WAPDD)

- Describe the agreement specifying the respective roles of the individual chief elected officials, including fiscal liability. [WIA §101(6)(B); 20 CFR 667.705(c); 20 CFR 661.300(e)]

The respective roles of the individual chief elected offices including fiscal liability are specified in the agreement between the Western Arkansas Consortium of Chief Elected Officials and

the Western Arkansas Workforce Investment Board for the Implementation of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998. A copy of this agreement is attached.

(ATTACHMENT 1)

- Describe the local workforce investment board. *[WIA §117(d)(4); Act 1125 §11(g)]*
 - How will the local board provide a leadership role in developing policy, implementing policy, and providing oversight for the local workforce investment system?

As required under the Arkansas Workforce Investment Act, the local board convenes at least three times per year to review and plan activities for the workforce system. The local board will oversee the development of local policies by the One-Stop Operator. The Local board, in conjunction with One-Stop Operator will review policies annually or as needed. Policies are implemented by the One-Stop Operator. Oversight of the system occurs through monitoring and guidance.

- How will the local board do this in partnership with the chief elected officials?

The Chief Elected Officials review and approve the actions of the local board.

- Attach a copy of the board by-laws.

(ATTACHMENT 2)

- Describe the youth council and its development of the portions of the local plan relating to eligible youth. *[WIA §117(h); Act 1125 §11(o)]; 20 CFR 661.335; 20 CFR 661.340(b)]*

The Youth Council is a non-voting sub group of the local Board. It makes recommendations for youth activities and providers to the Board. The Youth Council met and reviewed the policy relating to youth activities and the definition of the sixth barrier for the youth.

- Describe the local board's plans to provide administrative services. *[WIA §117(3) (b)(ii)(4); Act 1125 §11(e)]*

Administrative services are provided under contract with Western Arkansas Planning and Development District, Inc. (WAPDD)

- Identify any staff positions that will be hired directly by the board.

The local board does not hire any staff positions. The board contracts with Western Arkansas Planning and Development District, Inc.

- Describe the board's plans, if applicable, to contract for some or all of its administrative services (administrative agent).

Administrative services are provided under contract with Western Arkansas Planning and Development District, Inc. (WAPDD)

- Describe the local grievance procedure established in accordance with 20 CFR 667.600.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE/COMPLAINT RESOLUTION PROCESS

WHO MAY FILE A NON-CRIMINAL COMPLAINT AND WHEN TO FILE

Any person or organization alleging a violation of the Act, regulations, grant agreement, or other agreement regarding the administration of WIA Programs may file a non-criminal complaint. A complaint must be filed within 90 days (180 days if it is a discrimination complaint) of alleged violation with the following agency.

WIA Administrator
WAPDD, Inc.
P.O. Box 2067
Fort Smith, AR 72902

Any person or organization alleging a violation of the nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions of WIA Section 188.29 CFR Part 37 or the One Stop Delivery System should file a non-criminal complaint. The complaint must be filed with the following agency:

One Stop Operator
WAEDA
PO Box 1266
Van Buren, AR 72957

HOW TO FILE A NON-CRIMINAL COMPLAINT (CONTENT OF THE COMPLAINT)

Each complaint must include a statement disclosing whether proceedings involving the subject of the request have been commenced or concluded before any federal, state, or local authority and, if so, the date of the commencement or conclusion, the name and address of the authority and the style of the case, and the provisions of the Act, regulations, grant, or other agreements under the Act believed to have been violated.

Upon receipt of a grievance, the appropriate respondent representative shall send acknowledgment of the grievance by certified mail, return receipt requested. The acknowledgment of receipt of the grievance shall outline the steps to be taken to resolve the matter, notify all parties of the right to request a hearing, advise of attempt to reach an informal resolution, and provide a synopsis of issues to be decided.

ADMINISTRATIVE FACT-FINDING INVESTIGATION

If a hearing is not requested, the appropriate official shall conduct an administrative fact-finding investigation. The investigation shall include opportunities for all parties to submit an in-depth position statement, including documentary supportive data and/or records, access to a review of

appropriate official records, interview of principal parties, and an opportunity for all parties to offer rebuttal to information received, and a written decision. Written decisions, resulting either from a hearing or an administrative fact-finding investigation, shall be issued within 60 days from the date the complaint was received by the respondent representative.

Written decisions shall be sent by certified mail, return receipt requested, and must contain the following: a statement assuring all steps included in the grievance procedure have been adhered to in accordance with provision of the Act, remedies being offered, if appropriate, summary, and advisement of the right to appeal the decision, by request, for review and/or hearing by the State, as appropriate.

HEARING PROCEDURES

The following hearing procedures shall apply to grievances at the local level. The administrative hearing shall be informal. Technical rules of evidence shall not apply to hearings conducted pursuant to these procedures. Hear-say evidence shall be admissible at the discretion of the hearing officer.

Hearings shall be held at a time and place determined by the hearing officers upon reasonable notice to the parties and the witnesses in selecting a place for the hearing.

The party requesting the hearing shall have the burden of establishing the facts and the entitlement to relief requested. The hearing procedure shall include: written notice of the date, time, and place of the hearing; the manner in which it will be conducted and the issues to be decided; opportunity to be represented by an attorney or other representative of the complainant's choice, opportunity to bring witnesses and documentary evidence.

The appropriate respondent representative shall cooperate in making available any persons under their control or employ to testify if these persons are requested to testify by the complainant to release requested documents relevant to the issue; and allow opportunity to question any witness of parties; ensure the rights to an impartial hearing examiner; keep a verbatim record of the proceeding; and issue a written decision by the hearing examiner.

This system provides that a hearing shall be conducted within 60 days of receipt of a grievance if requested by the grievant.

The remedies that may be imposed for a violation of any requirement may include: suspension or termination of payments under WIA Title I; prohibition of placement of a participant with an employer that has violated any requirement under WIA Title I; where applicable, reinstatement of an employee, payment of lost wages and benefits, and reestablishment of other relevant terms, conditions and privileges of employment and, where appropriate, to the other equitable relief.

If the grievant does not receive a decision at the local level within 60 days or receives a decision which is unsatisfactory, the grievant has a right to request a review of his or her grievance by the

State. Appeals must follow the Grievance and Appeals Procedures of the Arkansas Workforce Investment Board.

Certain grievances and complaints may be filed directly with the Arkansas Workforce Investment Board or with the U.S. Department of Labor. Information concerning these circumstances is also available in the State Grievance and Appeals Procedure.

NOTIFICATION OF NO JURISDICTION

The recipient of the complaint must notify, in writing, immediately upon determining that it does not have the jurisdiction over a complaint that alleges a violation of the Non-Discrimination and Equal Opportunity provision of WIA. Complaints of discrimination will be handled in accordance with the WIA §188(b), and the Department of Labor's nondiscrimination regulations implementing that section.

Questions about or complaints alleging violation of the nondiscrimination provisions of WIA §188 may be mailed to the Director, Civil Rights Center, U.S. Department of Labor, Room N4123, 200 Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20210. Nothing in this procedure precludes a grievant or complaint from pursuing a remedy authorized under another federal, state, or local law.

Note: The WAWIB Grievance/Complaint Procedures is subject to change at any time in response to changes and revisions to State and Federal laws and regulations.

DISCRIMINATION COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

PURPOSE

To establish procedures for all employees of WAEDA, and the Agency's subrecipients/contractors, to process discrimination complaints and to establish the workforce investment area's policies and standard procedures for accepting, handling, and processing resolution of complaints of discrimination filed by any applicant for participation, employment, funding, or by any applicant or employee of any WIA-funded entity against any entity receiving financial assistance under WIA.

BACKGROUND

The Workforce Investment Act prohibits any individual from being excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, subjected to discrimination under, or denied employment in any organization or program receiving financial assistance on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, political affiliation or belief, and for beneficiaries only, citizenship or participation in WIA.

SCOPE

This policy and the procedures issued hereunder apply to applicants for funding, participation, or employment, or to participants or employees of any WIA-funded entity (hereinafter called "covered individual") who wish to file discrimination complaints against any entity receiving financial assistance under WIA.

POLICY

It is the policy of the recipient to assure nondiscrimination and equal opportunity in the operation and administration of all programs, services, and activities funded in whole or in part with federal funds. The Equal Opportunity Officer is designated as the responsible individual for effecting compliance with this part. Any individual who believes that he/she has been discriminated against has the right to file a complaint within 180 days of the alleged discriminatory act(s) in accordance with the procedures described below.

Under 29 CFR 34, an individual has the option of filing a complaint either with the recipient of WIA funds directly, or with the Directorate of Civil Rights (DCR).

1. Should the complainant opt to file with the recipient, the recipient shall process the complaint within sixty (60) days.

Recipient is defined, for equal opportunity purposes, as any entity to which federal financial assistance under any title of WIA is extended, either directly or through the Governor, or through another recipient (including any successor, assignee or transferee of a recipient), but excluding the ultimate beneficiaries of the WIA-funded program or activity and the Governor. Recipient includes, but is not limited to: Job Corps Centers and Centers operator (excluding federally operated Job Corps Centers), State Department of Workforce Services Agencies, State-level agencies that administer WIA funds, Workforce Investment Area grant recipients, Substate grant recipients and service providers as well as National Program recipients.

Within the sixty (60) days, the recipient shall offer a resolution of the complaint to the complainant. If by the end of sixty (60) days, the recipient has not completed the processing of the complaint or has failed to notify the complainant of the resolution, the complainant or his/her representative may, within thirty (30) days of the expiration of the 60 day period or upon notification of resolution, file with DCR.

2. Should the complainant opt to file directly with DCR, recipient staff shall assist the complainant (if requested) in completing the Complaint Information Form. For those individuals not requesting assistance, but needing the forms, addresses, etc., recipient staff shall provide the necessary Complaint Information Form.

NOTE: Complainants will be notified by the recipient that filing time for all complaints initiated more than 180 days from the date of the alleged discrimination may be extended for good cause by the Directorate of DCR.

COMPLAINT AND INVESTIGATION

1. Upon receipt of a complaint or information alleging discrimination, the EO Officer of the entity receiving WIA funds shall:

- a. Promptly log and initiate a review or investigation of the complaint;
 - b. Provide notice to all parties of the specific charges;
 - c. Inform both parties of their right to representation;
 - d. Inform both parties of their right to preserve evidence;
 - e. Inform both parties of their right to rebut evidence presented by others;
 - f. Provide for a decision made strictly on the documented evidence.
2. The name of the complainant shall be kept confidential, to the extent possible. When consent has been provided for the release of complainant's identity, disclosure should be under the conditions which will promote continued receipt of confidential information.
 3. No person, organization or Agency may discharge, or in any manner retaliate against, any person because that person has filed a complaint, instituted any proceeding related to the Act, testified, or is about to testify in any proceeding or investigation, or has provided information or assisted in an investigation.
 4. The funded entity's EO Officer shall review the complaint for accuracy and completeness. From the date of receipt, the EO Officer has 30 days to attempt to resolve the complaint.

WHO MAY FILE

Any person may file who believes that he/she, or any specific class or group of individuals, has been, or is being subjected to discrimination on the basis of race color, national origin, religion, sex, age, disability, political affiliation or belief, and for beneficiaries only, citizenship or participation in WIA may file a complaint. The complaint must be in writing and filed by the complainant or by an authorized representative.

WHERE TO FILE

The complainant may file a complaint with the recipient of WIA funds, or with the Arkansas Department of Workforce Services' Equal Opportunity Manager, P.O. Box 2981, Little Rock, AR 72203, Telephone (501) 682-3106, TDD: (501) 682-8031 or 1-800-264-2904. Or, the complainant may file a complaint directly with the Director, Directorate of Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Labor, 200 Constitution Avenue, N.W., Room N-4123, Washington, D.C. 20210, Telephone (202) 219-7026.

WHEN TO FILE

A complaint may be filed within 180 days of any alleged discrimination. Only the Director of DCR, for good cause may extend the filing time.

CONTENTS OF A COMPLAINT

Each complaint shall be in writing and shall:

1. be signed by the complainant or his/her representative;
2. contain the complainant's name and address (or specify another means of contacting him/her);
3. identify the respondent; or
4. describe the complaint's allegations in sufficient detail to allow the recipient to determine whether the complaint:

-falls under the recipient's jurisdiction / was timely filed / and has apparent merit.
This information may be provided by completing DCR's Complaint Information Form.

RIGHT TO REPRESENTATION: (Due Process Elements)

The recipient's complaint-handling process should provide for:

- notice to all parties of the specific charges and responses of those involved,
- the right of both parties to representation,
- the right of each party to present evidence,
- the right of each party to rebut evidence presented by others, and
- a decision made strictly on the documented evidence.

ELECTION OF RECIPIENT LEVEL

Coverage and Protection: This policy sets forth a three-level system which allows any person or organization to file a complaint at either the local level, i.e., Workforce Investment Area's EO Officer; the state level-State EO Manager; or federal level-Director of DCR. If the complainant elects to file with DCR rather than with the recipient, the recipient can assist the complainant in filling out DCR's Complaint Information Form and forward it to DCR.

If the complainant elects to file at the state level, the complaint will be referred to the proper recipient. If the complainant elects to file a complaint at the local level (Workforce Investment Area/WIA), the WIA EO Officer shall review the complaint for accuracy and completeness, and send a copy to the State EO Manager. From the date of receipt, the WIA EO Officer has 30 days to attempt to resolve the complaint.

All complaints alleging discrimination shall remain with the sub recipient for a period not to exceed 30 days. During this period, the subrecipient shall make every effort to resolve the complaint. Should the subrecipient fail to conciliate the complaint, it shall be forwarded to the State EO Manager by the end of the 30th day after the date of filing.

The State will conduct an investigation in accordance with WIA policy. The state will render a decision within 30 days.

If the complainant is not satisfied with the state's resolution, the complainant should be informed of his/her right to file with DCR within 30 days.

If the complainant elects the federal process, the complaint is immediately forwarded to DCR.

NOTIFICATION OF NO JURISDICTION

The recipient shall notify the complainant in writing immediately upon determining that it does not have jurisdiction over a complaint that alleges a violation of the non-discrimination and equal opportunity provisions of WIA.

NOTICE: Any employee of WAEDA, the Local Workforce Investment Board, subrecipient/contractor not satisfied with the outcome of his/her complaint resolution may contact the:

Equal Employment Opportunity Section
 Department of Workforce Services
 Post Office Box 2981
 Little Rock, Arkansas 72203-2981
 Telephone (501) 682-2389, or

Division of Equal Opportunity Investigations and Enforcement
 Directorate of Civil Rights
 Telephone (202) 219-7026

The necessary forms for filing complaints of discrimination may be obtained from:

Harold Wilson, EO Officer
 WAEDA Office
 Post Office Box 1266
 1500 East Main Street
 Van Buren, Arkansas 72957
 Telephone (479) 474-7061

- How will the local board ensure that the public – including persons with disabilities – has access to board meetings and activities, including information regarding the local board membership, the designation of One-Stop operators, the award of grants or contracts to eligible providers of youth activities, notification of meetings, and meeting minutes? Per Arkansas Workforce Investment Board Open Public Meetings policy, please provide the website where notices of meetings, board agendas, and minutes will be posted. [*WIA §117(e), AWIB Open Public Meetings Policy*]

Notifications and local meetings will be announced in local news papers, and by email notifications and WAPDD web site with portal to SWIB site for dissemination as needed. (www.wapdd.org) The state will provide a website where notices of meetings, board agendas and minutes will be posted.

- Include as a separate attachment a list of the board of directors, the by-laws, and an organizational chart (with names) for the fiscal agent, the administrative agent, and the major

entity responsible for providing core and intensive services.

(ATTACHMENTS 3 - 6)

- Also include an organizational chart (with names) for the local workforce investment board.

(ATTACHMENT 7)

B. ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM

- Describe the One-Stop delivery system to be established in the local area, including the location of comprehensive centers, satellite centers, and affiliate centers. *[WIA §118(b)(2); Act 1125 §12(b)(2); 20 CFR 661.350(a)(3); 20 CFR 662.100(e)]*

The Western One-Stop delivery system is provided through a Workforce Consortium consisting of the Department of Workforce Services, Western Arkansas Employment Development Agency, Inc., and Fort Smith Adult Education. The comprehensive workforce center is located in Fort Smith with affiliate centers in Van Buren, Mena, Booneville, Ozark and Waldron.

- Describe the process used for selecting the One-Stop operator(s), including the appeals process available to entities that were not selected as the One-Stop operator(s). *[WIA §121(d); 20 CFR 662.410; 20 CFR 670.667(b)(1)]*

The Local Board, with the agreement of the Chief Elected Official, designated and certified the Consortium as the One-Stop operator for the local area.

WAPDD will be responsible, in accordance with good administrative practice and sound business judgment, for the settlement of all contractual and administrative issues arising out of procurements. These issues include, but are not limited to source evaluation, protests, disputes, and claims. These standards do not relieve the grantee or subgrantee of any contractual responsibilities under its contracts. Federal agencies will not substitute their judgment for that of the grantee or subgrantee unless the matter is primarily a Federal concern. Violations of law will be referred to the local, State, or Federal authority having proper jurisdiction.

- Describe how the local board will terminate a One-Stop operator for cause. *[WIA §117(d)(2)(A)(ii); Act 1125 §11(a)(2)(B)]*

In accordance with the One-stop Operator Contract: The One-stop Operator will only be terminated in situations where the operator fails to uphold the role and responsibilities agreed upon by the partners and approved by the One-stop Committee. Performance outcomes of the One-stop Career Centers are the responsibility of all partners of the One-stop system and do not rest solely with the One-stop Operator.

The WAWIB and staff will provide technical assistance and support in order to ensure success of the One-stop system in the area. However, should performance not meet required standards, the WAWIB will require that the One-stop Operator take immediate corrective action and provide the WAWIB with a written plan of action. The One-stop Operator will be authorized to oversee the corrective action plan and report results to the WAWIB and staff. Additional monitoring and assistance as necessary will be provided during the period of corrective action, again to help the One-stop system achieve required performance.

If the One-stop Operator fails to take the necessary corrective action measures needed to achieve goals, or is unable to achieve the necessary performance, the WAWIB will meet with the One-stop Operator to review all corrective action steps taken and other extenuating circumstances which might reasonably have kept the One-stop Operator from achieving performance requirements. The WAWIB may then vote to take action against the One-stop Operator, either in the form of probation, suspension or termination for cause. Unless the performance problem identified rests solely with the One-stop Operator, the WAWIB will communicate directly with the partner organization leadership to request that similar corrective action measures be taken with local partners.

Should this serious action be necessary, the WAWIB will have an alternate One-stop Operator identified so that no service to customers is disrupted.

The One-stop Operator will have the opportunity to challenge any action it feels is not justified through the WAWIB Grievance Policy.

- What programs and funding streams will support service delivery through the One-Stop system? How will services provided by each of the One-Stop partners be integrated and made available in the local One-Stop system? What optional partners will be included?

All required partners listed under 20CFR part 662.200 and section 121(b) of the WIA will support service delivery through the One-Stop system.

Services will be integrated and made available through a menu of services, referral process, cross training of partner staff, and dissemination of literature and information.

Optional partners may include: TANF, AARP, and DHS.

- Attach a copy of each memorandum of understanding between the local board and each of the One-Stop partners concerning the operation of the local One-Stop delivery system. *[WIA §118(b)(2)(B); Act 1125 §12(b)(2)(B);20 CFR 662.310(b)]*

(ATTACHMENT 8)

- Typically, what information and services will be provided and how will customers access them? How will the goal of universal access be achieved?

Information about partner and community services, labor market information, training provider information, and financial aid information will be provided through a menu of services, and direct referral. Center services such as Core services, customer recruitment, orientation, outreach and eligibility determination, assessment, customer referral, counseling, and follow up services will be provided on site and by referral. UI services, labor market information and access to job listings and the resource room is available on site.

The goal of universal access will be achieved in the resource room and at key connection points throughout the LWIA by accessing partner services through the dissemination of information. Orientation to services is provided by the staff. Signage is located throughout the centers (menu of services).

- What is the local plan for delivery of core and intensive services?

Core services are offered through the resource rooms at the workforce centers. Intensive services are frequently program specific and are provided by program staff such as case managers or workforce specialists.

Customers will have access to core and intensive services at the local One-stop center level and/or the Arkansas Job Link system.

- Describe and assess the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the local area. *[WIA §118(b)(4); Act 1125 §12(b)(4); 20 CFR 661.350(a)(5)]*

Customers will have access to job postings, internet based searches, local classified listings, and referrals through the AJL system. If employment that leads to self sufficiency is not obtained at the core and intensive level, the customer may receive training services. Training activities such as OJT, customized training, skills upgrades, occupational skills training (including training for nontraditional employment), adult education and literacy activities, and institutional training in accordance with the occupational demand list will be provided through Individual Training Accounts (ITAs). These services will be provided in accordance with the Arkansas Consumer Report System (ACRS) and the eligible training provider list requirements. In addition, these services are documented on the customer service checklist and Individual Employment Plan (IEP) that is maintained in the customer file. When training services are determined to be needed, an ITA will be issued to the eligible training provider on behalf of the WIA customer.

- How will the local board promote the participation of private sector employers in the statewide workforce investment system and ensure the effective provision, through the system, of connecting, brokering, and coaching activities, through intermediaries like the One-Stop operator in the local area or through other organizations to assist the employers in meeting hiring needs. *[Note the limitation on use of funds in WIA §181(e).] [WIA §117(d)(8); Act 1125 §11(k)]*

The local board encourages the participation of private sector employers in the workforce investment system by making presentations to service organizations, at community meetings and chamber of commerce events, and by referring businesses to the system through the efforts of the business liaison team.

The local board will also promote the participation of private sector employers by ensuring that services such as; recruitment, assessments, testing, screening, job fairs, and meeting space is provided to fulfill the business needs of employers.

The local board is business driven with a majority private business membership.

C. SPECIAL TARGET POPULATIONS

The local operational plan must describe how all workforce system partners will work together to ensure that customers who need a broad range of services receive them. This is an opportunity for the local area to describe how the workforce center services will address more specific needs of targeted sub-populations.

Describe how the local system will meet the needs of the following groups:

- Services to the Unemployed, to include:
 - How will reemployment services to Unemployment Insurance claimants be coordinated

In addition to core, intensive and training services, Unemployment Insurance claimants will be offered counseling and referrals to services designed to meet their individual needs and address barriers that cannot be resolved through WIA services alone.

- How will services to Trade Adjustment Assistance customers be coordinated and how will these customers be co-enrolled in these programs

TAA customers are assessed and co-enrolled with WIA when appropriate. Workforce partners have met and designed a system specific to TAA customers to address the individual needs of the customer and to avoid duplication of services. Western has a long history of coordinating case management and funding with TAA.

In addition to Rapid Response activities, core, intensive, and training services, Trade Adjustment Assistance customers will be offered counseling and referrals to services designed to meet their individual needs and address barriers that cannot be resolved through WIA services.

- Low-Income Individuals – Include how Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) services will be further integrated into the workforce center system and how services to TANF customers are coordinated within the workforce centers

TANF is co-located in the comprehensive Workforce Center and individuals are co-enrolled as appropriate. All resources and activities in the Center are utilized to assist these individuals.

In addition to core, intensive and training services, low-income Individuals will be offered counseling and referrals to services designed to meet their individual needs and address barriers that cannot be resolved through WIA services.

- Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers – please specify what outreach activities the local area will make to reach this population

The Arkansas Human Development Corporation (AHDC) is co-located in the Comprehensive Workforce Center where migrant and seasonal farmworkers are co-enrolled as appropriate. Information and referral to the Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers program occurs in all local Workforce Centers.

In addition to core, intensive and training services, migrant and seasonal farmworkers will be offered counseling and referrals to services designed to meet their individual needs and address barriers that cannot be resolved through WIA services. Staff members at the Workforce Centers collaborate with the AHDC to assist these customers and their families to attain greater economic stability by helping them acquire new job skills in occupations that offer higher wages and a more stable employment outlook.

- Veterans Services – include how the Veterans Priority of Service will be implemented in the local area

Local policy assures that priority of services will be implemented at the point of intake in accordance with TEGL 10-09. Veterans Priority of Service follows Department of Labor guidance and all staff members have been trained to ensure Veterans Preference. Services for veterans are integrated within our delivery network through a variety of means. Primarily, veteran staff is co-located at the local Comprehensive Workforce Center and is an integral part of the employer outreach team. This assignment also makes them available to directly provide assistance to veteran clients that may have other serious barriers to employment such as offender status, physical disability, or those that are educationally disadvantaged. In addition to these activities, veteran staff conducts outreach to and network with local veteran service organizations both as a means of developing additional referral contacts for services outside the scope of employment, and promoting available services targeted to veterans.

Services to veterans through the Gold Card Initiative are available at the local Workforce Centers. The **Gold Card** Initiative provides unemployed post-9/11 era veterans with the intensive and follow-up services they need to succeed in today's job market. The Gold Card initiative is a joint effort of the Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration (ETA) and the Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS).

An eligible veteran can present the Gold Card at his/her local workforce center to receive enhanced intensive services including up to six months of follow-up. The enhanced in-person services available for Gold Card holders at local workforce centers may include:

- Job readiness assessment, including interviews and testing;
- Development of an Individual Development Plan (IDP);
- Career guidance through group or individual counseling that helps veterans in making training and career decisions;
- Provision of labor market, occupational, and skills transferability information that inform educational, training, and occupational decisions;
- Referral to job banks, job portals, and job openings;
- Referral to employers and registered apprenticeship sponsors;
- Referral to training by WIA-funded or third party service providers; and
- Monthly follow-up by an assigned case manager for up to six months.

The local area also stands ready to provide employment services to veterans that have been enrolled in the Veterans Retraining Assistance Program (VRAP). The VRAP program offers up to 12 months of retraining assistance to Veterans who meet all the following criteria:

- Unemployed
- At least 35 but no more than 60 years old
- Have an other than dishonorable discharge
- Not eligible for any other VA education benefit programs (e.g., the Post-9/11 GI Bill, Montgomery GI Bill, Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment)
- Not in receipt of VA compensation due to Individual Unemployability (IU)
- Not enrolled in a federal or state job training program

In order to promote both the Gold Card Initiative and VRAP services, the state has modified the management information data system to place notifications to all staff members as they log in, notifying them of those programs and providing a live link for more details. This same message is also provided to all veteran job seekers each time they log into the system. Additionally to aid in identifying and reaching out to Gold Card eligible veterans, the state has set up a questionnaire as the first step after logging into the system, asking if they have served on (or since) 9/11 as well as if they are aware of the Gold Card Initiative.

The state also has active partnerships with a number of community-based organizations relating to veterans that provide or coordinate an array of services. Some of these are targeted specifically to homeless, while others, such as ARVets, Inc. (Arkansas Veterans) is an organization with state level support that has been positioned to serve as a "clearing house" to provide veterans across the state with a "one stop shop" that can refer them to a specific organization or agency which can provide them with services they seek, based on their needs and eligibility. Fundamentally, the partnership should remove many of the obstacles veterans face when seeking help for a specific issue from an agency or provider that does not offer those specific services.

- Limited English Proficiency

Individuals who have limited English proficiency are served by bi-lingual staff, if available, and interpretation is available to individuals upon request. In addition to core, intensive and training services, limited English proficiency customers will be offered counseling and referrals to services designed to meet their individual needs and address barriers that cannot be resolved through WIA services.

Through partnerships and collaborative efforts involving faith-based and community organizations, economic development officials, educators, and employers, individuals with limited English proficiency can access English as a Second Language (ESL) classes, Vocational ESL (VESL) classes, and job search assistance. Additionally, the Arkansas Career Readiness Certificate KeyTrain© curriculum is available in Spanish at the local Workforce Center.

- Ex-Offenders

In addition to core, intensive and training services, ex-offenders will be offered counseling and referrals to services designed to meet their individual needs and address barriers that cannot be resolved through WIA services. Case management staff works with employers to solicit openings for ex-offenders and encourages ex-offenders to utilize the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) program as an incentive to market themselves to potential employers. The WOTC provides a tax credit to employers for hiring individuals from several target groups, ex-offenders being one.

- Mature Workers

The local WIA Title I provider partners with the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) to assist in the provision of services to older workers. In addition to core, intensive and training services, mature workers are offered counseling and referrals to services designed to meet their individual needs and address barriers that cannot be resolved through WIA services. In the local workforce centers, participants of the SCSEP are providing part-time staffing assistance in the resource rooms or receptionist desk.

Experience Works is co-located in the comprehensive Workforce Center as well as the affiliate site in Van Buren.

- Services to Individuals with Disabilities – Include how the local system will ensure non-discrimination and equal opportunity, as well as compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. *[WIA §188(a)(2)]*

All centers and offices are ADA compliant and the public is made aware of the Equal Opportunity Act and Non-Discrimination policies through signage and customer handbooks. Customers acknowledge this information in the AJL system. The JAWS system is provided for customers who are visually impaired. Youth with disabilities are encouraged to apply for WIA youth services by outreach through the school systems.

The One-stop Operator ensures that all center staff members are trained in ADA regulations and laws.

- Youth Services – include the local area’s design framework for the youth program and the local area’s definition regarding the sixth youth eligibility criterion. Describe and assess the type and availability of youth activities in the local area, including an identification of successful providers of the activities. Also, include how the services for youth will be connected to the workforce center.

Youth are enrolled in the year-round youth program and out-of-school youth program. Preparing youth for the world of work through work experiences, post-secondary education, leadership development, and accessibility to the ten elements, continues to be a successful model.

The Youth Council and the WAWIB ensures that the Ten (10) Required Program Elements are made available to youth in the local area. The elements are provided through a collaboration of the Title I Program Provider/One-Stop Operator, local partner agencies, or sub-contractors when deemed necessary. Current challenges for serving greater numbers of youth most in need, including out-of-school youth are low funding levels and finding appropriate job training sites.

Both WIA and non-WIA youth have access to the resource rooms within the local Workforce Center and affiliate sites. This provides area youth with access to such services as job search, resume building, labor market information, etc.

As part of the youth program design framework, each WIA youth will be provided an objective assessment of their academic level, skill level and service needs. Based upon this assessment, the WIA youth will have an Individual Service Strategy (ISS) which will identify a career goal. Based upon this career goal, the youth will be referred to the Workforce Center partner agencies and/or subcontractors or training utilizing the youth enrollment form. Services needed are determined from the information gathered in the ISS. A career interest inventory is administered to youth based upon individual need. The assessment tools are available to youth through the resource system. The purpose of the interest inventory is to expose youth to the concept that a career should be chosen on the basis of aptitudes, interests, values, and abilities. Workshops and orientations are conducted to cover such topics as time management, career planning, leadership skills, employability skills, study skills, soft skills, teamwork, communication skills, pre- and post employment skills, and other specific occupational skills.

WIA clients are exposed to the business community through summer employment and year-round work experience. These opportunities allow the youth to develop valuable work related skills to ensure employability in the future.

The Western Arkansas Workforce Investment Board remains committed to providing services to the youth of the local area that will improve their academic and work-readiness skills and enable them to successfully enter the workforce.

Sixth Youth Eligibility Criteria - The LWIB has defined “an Individual who requires additional assistance to complete an educational program, or to secure and hold employment” as: someone who lives in a rural-remote area where training and employment are almost non-existent; is at risk of falling into a lifestyle that could include substance abuse, poverty, crime, physical or mental abuse; is from a single parent family; is a member of a family receiving Food Stamps, TEA, or SSI; has not held a fulltime job for more than three consecutive months; has been unemployed for eight consecutive weeks and is looking for, but unable to secure a job; has physical or mental limitations; is eligible for the free school lunch program; lacks work-readiness skills necessary to secure and retain employment; is not computer literate; or is at risk of dropping out of school.

D. GRANTS MANAGEMENT

- Describe the process for developing a budget for the purpose of carrying out the duties of the local board. In answering this question, indicate how allowable administrative funds will be divided between the local board and the One-Stop operator(s). [*WIA §117(d)(3)(A); Act 1125 §11(a)(6)*]

The local board develops the budget for the purpose of carrying out the duties of the board based upon historical data and anticipation of future needs. The administrative funds are divided between the local board and the one-stop operator based upon this historical data and actual costs. No more than 10% of funds will be spent on administrative costs.

- Describe the competitive process to be used to award grants and contracts in the local area for activities carried out under WIA Title I, Subtitle B, including the process to be used to procure training services that are made as exceptions to the Individual Training Account process as described in WIA §134(d)(4)(G). [*WIA §118(b)(9); Act 1125 §12(b)(9); 20 CFR 661.350(a)(10)*]

The Request for Proposal/Request for Qualifications (RFP/RFQ) process for open competition includes advertisement by newspaper, website, and notices to bidders list, meetings, and word of mouth. The RFP/RFQ is then distributed to interested parties, the RFP/RFQ is submitted and opened in public, and reviewed by board members (or youth council first if for youth providers). Provider is selected by the board with approval by the chief elected officials. A contract is then issued for services.

The WAWIB reviews the services that are available and determines if there is a need for additional services. The Executive Committee spends time studying how the workforce system is currently functioning. If there is a need for contracting additional services, such a recommendation is made to the full board. In order to ensure full and open competition, the WAWIB will utilize a RFP/RFQ process when necessary to award grants and contracts in the local area for activities carried out under WIA Title I. The RFP/RFQ package will contain specifications, conditions, and evaluation criteria in as much detail as possible.

Notice of the RFP/RFQ and deadline for submittal will be published in the legal section of newspapers serving our local Workforce Investment Area and at least one (1) newspaper having

general circulation in the State. This notice will be made at least one (1) time and at least five (5), but no more than thirty (30) days prior to the due date. Additional media sources may be used.

Each RFP/RFQ submitted will be evaluated using criteria to be established by the Executive Committee. Results of all evaluations will be provided to the WAWIB for review.

The Executive Committee will consider all information available in order to measure the effectiveness of potential program deliverers. Areas of consideration may include past performance, fiscal accountability, reasonableness of cost, duplication of services, accessibility of the services, the need for the proposed training, the ability of the proposing agency to provide the proposed training, etc. In addition, the State and Local WIBs will gather information regarding performance indicators and will use this information in evaluating the continuous improvement of the grantees and the future awarding of grants and contracts.

The Executive Committee will make recommendations to the WAWIB regarding funding of proposals. The final decision will be made by the WAWIB with the approval of the CEOs.

The WAWIB reserves the right to reject any or all requests for WIA funding. It further reserves the right to fund only a portion of the proposed training and to request modifications to the proposals prior to funding.

The WAWIB will review the need for contract services on an as needed basis.

- Describe the criteria to be used under 20 CFR 663.600 to determine whether funds allocated to a local area for adult employment and training activities under WIA sections 133(b)(2)(A) or (3) are limited and the process by which any priority will be applied by the One-Stop operator. *[20 CFR 661.350(a)(11)]*

The board has determined that funds allocated for the adult program are limited for training services and priority is given to economically disadvantaged individuals. Under limited funding conditions, the LWIA will serve the most in need such as low-income and/or recipients of public assistance. Customers meeting the lower living standard guidelines will be deemed most in need of services in order to achieve self-sufficiency. Self-sufficiency is defined as obtaining employment that will provide cash resources necessary for a family to meet its basic needs and be self-sufficient. The local area has determined that employment which pays 200% above the lower living standard income level is considered to be self sufficient.

- Describe any current plans to solicit grants and donations from sources other than WIA funds. *[WIA §117(d)(3)(B)(iii); Act 1125 §11(f)]*

Currently there are no plans to solicit grants but as opportunities arise for application to grants and other funds the WAWIB will take advantage of these, including National Emergency Grants and others.

- How will funds received under the Workforce Investment Act be used to leverage other federal, state, local and private resources to maximize the effectiveness of such resources and expand the participation of business, employees, and individuals in the local workforce investment system? *[WIA §112(b)(10)]*

Funds received under the Workforce Investment Act are used to leverage resources in the form of co-enrollments with partner agencies to share costs and eliminate duplication of services.

- Describe the ITA system and the procedures for ensuring that exceptions to the use of ITAs, if any, are justified under WIA §134(d)(4)(G)(ii) and 20 CFR 663.430. *[20 CFR 661.350(a)(5)]*

An ITA is a mechanism used to fund customer training. Before an ITA can be issued, the occupation must be considered in demand and the training provider for the program must be listed on the ACRS. Limitation of dollar amount and duration of ITAs will be based upon individual client need as established by their WIA case manager.

The exception to the use of ITAs would be in the case where an eligible training provider was not available to meet a unique or specific training need for a special population, or when the local board determines that there are an insufficient number of eligible training providers.

Other than through ITAs, training services will be provided through the competitive method of procurement except for in the cases of the following, which will use contracts: *OJT, and customized training*. The Board reserves the option to contract for training special populations, such as second language barriers, multiple barriers or offenders, when there is a Community Based Organization (CBO) or other private organization which has a special and proven effective training program that meets the special needs identified. Such procurements will be assessed for cost reasonableness and cost effectiveness.

- Describe any limits on ITAs as established by local board policies, in accordance with 20 CFR 663.420. *[20 CFR 663.420(c)]*

Although, the WAWIB has not established a limit on ITAs, the dollar amount and duration of ITAs will be based upon individual client need as established by their WIA case manager.

- If the local board has determined that there are an insufficient number of eligible providers in the local area to accomplish the purpose of a system of ITAs, describe the process to be used in selecting the providers under a contract for services. This process must include a public comment period for interested providers of at least 30 days. *[20 CFR 663.430(a)(2)]*

The local board has not determined that there are insufficient numbers of eligible providers in the area.

E. COORDINATION AND NON-DUPLICATION

- Describe how the local board will coordinate workforce investment activities carried out in the local area with statewide rapid response activities, as appropriate. *[WIA §118(b)(5); Act 1125 §12(b)(5); 20 CFR 661.350(a)(6)]*

One-stop operator staff will attend all local rapid response planning meetings and Governor's Dislocated Worker Task Force workshops. Customers are enrolled in WIA services as appropriate.

- Describe how coordination with Job Corps, Youth Opportunity Grants, and other youth programs in the local area will occur. *Note the limitation on use of funds in WIA §129(c)(6)(B). [WIA §112(b)(18)(C)]*

Coordination with Job Corps, Youth Opportunity Grants, and other youth programs in the local area will occur through referrals and co-enrollments.

- Workforce Center staff are continuously working to strengthen ties and enhance awareness of the Job Corps' mission and the kinds of programs/services available
 - Workforce staff participates in pre-orientation activities and tours of the Cass Job Corps Center. Workforce staff has toured CASS Job Corps Center to become more familiar with its resources and thus be better able to continue planning future collaboration
 - Workforce staff refer youth who will benefit from the unique services available through the Job Corps residential training program
 - Workforce Centers make Job Corps information and brochures readily available to customers by keeping material in resource rooms
 - Job Corps representatives use workforce office space to interview candidates and conduct orientation for new recruits
 - Workforce staff works with Job Corps graduates who are returning to their local communities following the completion of program.
 - Workforce staff and Job Corps collaboration provides at-risk youth with additional opportunities to pursue training in a variety of in-demand occupations.
 - Job Corps staff serve on the local Youth Council and Workforce Investment Board
- Describe the local plan for avoiding duplication of services. *[WIA §112(b)(8)(A)]*

In a further effort to avoid the duplication of services, the local area will cross train workforce center partners to ensure that customer needs are met through available services. By using the Arkansas Job Link (AJL) system, case managers are able to see services that area being provided by partner agencies. Core and intensive activities are coordinated in each office to avoid duplication of services and to co-enroll when appropriate.

- Describe the business service team and how the team will be used to coordinate services to employers.

The local business services team will consist of partner representation within the workforce center. The team members will not represent their individual agency, but will represent the business services team of the workforce center.

The business services team will coordinate services that meet employer/business demands in an easily accessible, transparent way.

F. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND SYSTEM IMPROVEMENT

- Describe how the local board will ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers of services through the system and ensure that such providers meet the employment needs of local employers and participants. *[WIA §118(b)(2)(A); Act 1125 §12(b)(2)(A); 20 CFR 661.350(a)(3)(i)]*

Because of the waiver to extend initial eligibility requirements, exempt providers are not required to submit performance data. Non-exempt providers must meet the State minimum eligibility requirement for performance. Those that do not meet minimum requirements are not added or will be removed from the eligible training provider list.

The local area will coordinate with the ADWS to develop a list of local occupations that are in demand. The list will be developed according to the local area need for future employers and customer needs.

- How will the local board determine the satisfaction of users of the workforce system?

During local WIA monitoring, administrative staff query customers about their satisfaction. Issues are reviewed and resolved. A new customer satisfaction survey tool will be developed after the State has identified new indicators.

- How will the board develop and implement a continuous improvement plan based on customer feedback?

The local board will develop a continuous improvement plan using feedback provided from the new customer satisfaction surveys and information gathered by the business services team. Feedback from these sources will be given to the local board on a regular basis and issues will be addressed as they arise. Customer service training will be provided to frontline staff based upon this feedback.

- Provide a staff development plan for each classification of staff working in the workforce center to include professional development goals, priorities, and training needs. Describe the plan for cross-training of partner staff.

Priority will be given to the cross training of local staff. Partners will develop a cross-training manual and a representative from each partner agency will train other partner program staff concerning its program services.

The local Workforce staff will also participate in the State’s training programs, Department of Labor workshops, Workforce3one webinars, and state webinars as needed. Ongoing Career Development Facilitator training will be attended by registered staff.

G. PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY

- Describe and provide specific quantitative targets for the local levels of performance negotiated pursuant to WIA §136(c), to be used to measure the performance of the local area and to be used by the local board for measuring the performance of the local fiscal agent (where appropriate), eligible providers, and the One-Stop delivery system, in the local area. *[WIA §118(b)(3); Act 1125 §12(b)(3); 20 CFR 661.350(a)(4) 20 CFR 661.350(c)]*

The One-Stop delivery system is currently under negotiated WIA performance measures. The local area will use these negotiated performance measures. Performance of the local fiscal agent is not appropriate. The collection and provision of eligible provider’s performance is currently waived.

WIA Requirement at Section 136(b)	PY 2012 Performance Goal
<p>Adults: Entered Employment Rate Employment Retention Rate Average Six-Months Earnings Certificate Rate</p>	<p>84.0% 88.0% \$13,080</p>
<p>Dislocated Workers: Entered Employment Rate Employment Retention Rate Average Six-Months Earnings Certificate Rate</p>	<p>88.0% 93.0% \$14,114</p>
<p>Youth Common Measures: Placement in Employment or Education Attainment of a Degree or Certificate Literacy and Numeracy Gains</p>	<p>81.7% 81.5% 77.9%</p>

H. WAIVER REQUESTS

Will the local area be requesting any waivers in accordance with WIA sections 117, 189, or 192 as part of this plan? If so, waiver plans should be developed in accordance with 20 CFR 661.420(c) that includes the following information for each waiver requested:

The Western Area is not anticipating requesting any waivers at this time.

- Statutory and/or regulatory requirements for which a waiver is requested.

N/A

- A description of the actions the local area has undertaken to remove state or local statutory or regulatory barriers.

N/A

- A description of the goals of the waiver, how those goals relate to workforce plan goals, and expected programmatic outcomes if the waiver is granted.

N/A

- A description of individuals impacted by the waiver.

N/A

- A description of the processes used to monitor implementation and ensure meaningful public comment, including comment from business and labor.

N/A

I. PLAN DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION

- Describe the plan development process, including a discussion of the process used by the local board, consistent with WIA §118(c) to provide an opportunity for public comment – including comment by representatives of business and labor organizations – and input into the development of the local plan, prior to submission of the plan.

The local plan development was a coordinated effort between local board staff and One-Stop Operator with local partner input. The plan was submitted to the Chief Elected Officials and Local Board for comment, review and approval. Availability of the plan for a thirty day (30) public review and comment period was announced through local news media, administrative entity/ fiscal agent website, State Board website, and local One-Stop website. The announcement of the plan provided the public viewing hours and location for interested parties and contained instructions and timeframe for providing comments.

- What other organizations were involved in the development of the local plan, visions, and goals, and how were they involved? *[WIA §118(b)(7); Act 1125 §12(b)(7); 20 CFR661.350 (a)(8)]*

The local board and youth council were surveyed, issues were discussed and input was provided into the development of the local plan at their February 21, 2013 meeting.

- What was the role of the chief elected official(s) (CEOs) in developing the Plan? *[WIA §118(a)]*

The chief elected officials reviewed and approved the plan prior to submission.

- Describe the method used to make copies of the local plan available through such means as public hearings, the local news media, and via the Internet. *[WIA §118(c)(1)]*

The public announcement of the plan will provide the viewing hours and location for interested parties and will contain instructions and timeframe for providing comments.

- Attach any public comments received. How were these comments considered in developing the local plan? *[WIA §118(c)(3); Act 1125 §12(c)(3); 20 CFR 661.345(c)]*

If any comments are received they will be attached to the local plan with a plan of action addressing any issues as needed.