



**INNOVATE**

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

**January 25, 2022**  
**10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.**

Arkansas Division of Workforce  
Services

*SOCIAL DISTANCING – COVID-19*  
*VIA Zoom or In-Person*

# Arkansas Workforce Development Board

## Full Board Meeting

# AGENDA

January 25, 2022

## ARKANSAS WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD FULL BOARD MEETING

10:00 a.m.

*Estimated Time: 1 hour 58 minutes*

Call to Order & Roll Call (3 min) ..... Tom Anderson, Chair

### Agenda Item 1: ACTION

Minutes of October 19, 2021 Full Board Meeting (3 min) ..... Tom Anderson, Chair

Report of Chairperson (5 mins)..... Tom Anderson, Chair

Report of Director (5 mins)..... Dr. Charisse Childers, Director  
Arkansas Division of Workforce Services

Report of Board Director (5 mins) ..... Chad Brown, Executive Director  
Arkansas Workforce Development Board

Report of Staff (5 mins)..... Eddie Thomas, Employment Assistance - Assistant Director  
Arkansas Division of Workforce Services

### Agenda Item 2: INFORMATIONAL

Stipend vs Expense Reimbursement (10 mins) ..... Chad Brown, Executive Director  
Arkansas Workforce Development Board

### Agenda Item 3: ACTION

Council Resolution 2022-1:

Board Member Stipends (2 mins)..... Tom Anderson, Chair

### Agenda Item 4: INFORMATIONAL

WIOA Title I Program Policy Process (15 mins) ..... Chad Brown, Executive Director  
Arkansas Workforce Development Board

Arkansas Division of Workforce Services  
Statewide Social Distancing – COVID-19  
VIA Zoom



**Agenda Item 5: INFORMATIONAL**

U.S. Department of Labor – Employment & Training Administration:

AR COVID Recovery Readiness (5 mins) ..... Eddie Thomas, Employment Assistance – Asst. Dir.  
Arkansas Division of Workforce Services

**Agenda Item 6: INFORMATIONAL**

Workforce System Evaluation

Findings and Recommendations (10 mins)..... Elroy Willoughby, WIOA Program Chief  
Arkansas Division of Workforce Services

**Agenda Item 7: ACTION**

Additional Assistance for High Concentration

Of Eligible Youth (5 mins)..... Eddie Thomas, Employment Assistance – Asst. Dir.  
Arkansas Division of Workforce Services

**Agenda Item 8: INFORMATIONAL**

REIMAGINE Arkansas Workforce (RAW)

Grant Update (10 mins) ..... Eduardo Lemm, Targeted Populations Advisor  
Arkansas Division of Workforce Services

**Agenda Item 9: INFORMATIONAL**

PY20 WIOA Titles I & III

Annual Summary (10 mins)..... Elroy Willoughby, WIOA Program Chief  
Arkansas Division of Workforce Services

**Agenda Item 10: INFORMATIONAL**

Western Arkansas Workforce Development Area

Area Update (10 mins)..... Sasha Grist, WAPDD Executive Director  
Dennis Williamson, WAPDD WIOA Workforce Director  
Western Arkansas Workforce Development Board

**Agenda Item 11: INFORMATIONAL**

Administrative Forms – New Year (5 mins) ..... Tyler Gibbons, Administrative Asst  
Arkansas Workforce Development Board

Board Open Discussion (10 mins)

- In-Person vs Virtual Meetings

Public Opportunity to Address the Board (3 mins)

Announcements (2 mins)

Adjournment

**For Consideration of the  
Arkansas Workforce Development Board**

**January 25, 2022**

**AGENDA ITEM 1 – ACTION:** Minutes of the October 19, 2021, Arkansas Workforce Development Board meeting.

**RECOMMENDATION:** It is recommended that the Arkansas Workforce Development Board approve the minutes of the October 19, 2021, Arkansas Workforce Development Board meeting.

**INFORMATION/RATIONALE:** Minutes of the meetings are attached.

**MINUTES**  
**ARKANSAS WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD**  
**October 19, 2021**

The Arkansas Workforce Development Board convened the Full Board meeting through electronic means on October 19, 2021, beginning at 10:06 a.m. The meeting was conducted in-person and remotely utilized Zoom and teleconference. Vice-Chair Scott Bull presided with the following members voicing their presence: Mr. Joseph Baxter, Mr. Len Blaylock III, Ms. Karen Breashears, Dr. Charisse Childers, Judge Brandon Ellison, Mr. Randy Finegan, Mr. Jeff Griffin, Mr. Randy Henderson, Ms. Abby Houseworth, Ms. Rebecca Ives, Ms. Candice Lawrence, Ms. Holley Little, Mr. Brian Marsh, Dr. Trenia Miles, Mr. George “Gan” Nunnally, Mr. Steve Sparks as proxy for Secretary Mike Preston, Ms. Julie Roberson, Mayor James Sanders, Dr. Cassandra Williams-Stokes, Mr. Robert Thorne, and Dr. Diana Wright.

Mr. Tom Anderson, Mr. Charles Johnson, Mr. Johnny Key, Dr. Maria Markham, and Mr. Kelley Sharp were unable to attend.

Chairman’s Opening Comments: Vice-Chair Bull called the meeting to order at 10:06 a.m. upon seeing a quorum. Vice-Chair Bull stated for the record that, the One-Stop Certification Document was tabled previously in previous 2020 and 2021 meetings due to COVID-19 delays and will continue to be tabled with the hope to revisit this item in the January 2022 Full Board meeting. On September 27, 2021, Governor Asa Hutchinson’s extended State public health emergency declaration has expired. However, although the emergency has passed, we are still in a pandemic.

**Agenda Item 1 – ACTION – Minutes of the October 19, 2021, Full Board Meeting:** Vice-Chair Scott Bull asked if there were any additional corrections or revisions to the October 19, 2021, Full Board meeting minutes.

**Hearing none, a motion to accept the October 19, 2021, Full Board meeting minutes with no corrections or revisions was made by Mr. Robert Thorne, followed by a second motion by Ms. Rebecca Ives. The motion carried unanimously with none opposed.**

The following votes were recorded and voiced by Board Members on a roll vote to Approve, Disapprove, or Abstain for no vote: Mr. Joseph Baxter – Approve, Mr. Len Blaylock III – Approve, Ms. Karen Breashears – Approve, Mr. Scott Bull – Absent, Dr. Charisse Childers – Approve, Judge Brandon Ellison – Approve, Mr. Randy Finegan – Absent, Mr. Jeff Griffin – Absent, Mr. Randy Henderson – Approve, Ms. Abby Houseworth – Absent, Ms. Rebecca Ives – Approve, Mr. Charles Johnson – Absent, Mr. Johnny Key – Absent, Ms. Candice Lawrence – Approve, Ms. Holley Little – Absent, Dr. Maria Markham – Absent, Mr. Brian Marsh – Approve, Dr. Trenia Miles – Approve, Mr. George Nunnally – Approve, Mr. Steve Sparks proxy for Secretary Mike Preston – Approve, Dr. Julie Roberson – Approve, Mayor James Sanders – Approve, Mr. Kelley Sharp – Absent, Dr. Cassandra Williams-Stokes – Approve, Mr. Robert Thorne – Approve, and Dr. Diana Wright – Approve.

Report of the Chairperson: Vice-Chair Bull informed the Board Members that Chairman Anderson could not attend the meeting; therefore, he would preside over the meeting. Updates will be given by Chairman Anderson in January at the next meeting.

Report of Board Director: Vice-Chair Scott Bull recognized, Board Director Chad Brown, and asked him to provide his report. Director Brown explained his goal with the Board is to figure out and align its roles based on the legislation provided. Firstly, with the assistance of Assistant Director Thomas, his staff, and Dr. Childers, Director Brown tried to create a place for all the information going over core partners, different programs, apprenticeships, job skills, and employment opportunities, for Board Members to take it back to their communities to better assist the underserved population. This was done in hopes of creating an understanding of the basics for all the programs provided and made available through the state. Secondly, Director Brown created a Facebook and Twitter page for the Arkansas Workforce Development Board with the intention of the page to provide the resources accessible

through the state. The account will promote events and information from core programs, such as Rehabilitation Services, to better spread the word of services available to the public. Thirdly, Director Brown discussed how he attended the 2021 Fall Workforce Symposium in Phoenix, Arizona, for three days with Assistant Director Thomas and Chairman Anderson. Director Brown explained the conference showed there are a lot of states with the same issues as Arkansas in terms of what they're board is trying to accomplish. Fourthly, the Fall 2021 Arkansas WIOA Partners Meeting convened, virtually, on September 21 – 23.

Director Brown turned it over to Board Member, Dr. Trenia Miles, to provide an overview of the Partners meeting and acknowledged the hard work she and the Executive Committee did in putting it together. Dr. Trenia Miles states the meeting was very successful and a great show of collaboration among the programs of the WIOA. Day 1 focused on an overview of the Title I core programs and TANF, the second day focused more on honing people skills with a motivational speaker present, and the last day mentioned Arkansas' participation in the National Governor's Association's for Workforce Learning, and they learned about the Governor's Ready for Life initiative. The last day ended with concurrent breakout sessions in which they focused on those with various employment transition so they can earn a living wage and engage in job skills. Three areas of focus were individuals with disabilities, ex-offenders re-entering the workforce, and those who are aging out of foster care. A result of the Partners Meeting was the decision to have a Communications Committee.

Director Brown addressed the upcoming State Plan update and the impending participation of members on an ad hoc committee as a design to analyze Arkansas' labor market information in effort to address workforce challenges. Secondly, Director Brown explained the question raised by Board Member Karen Breashears would be addressed at the next board meeting. Lastly, Director Brown and Chairman Anderson have been in discussion regarding future board meeting attendance potentially being in-person and for board members to be aware of these possible changes.

Report of Director: Vice-Chairman Bull recognized Board Member and Arkansas Division of Workforce Services (ADWS) Director, Dr. Charisse Childers to address the Full Board. Dr. Childers recognized the new Deputy Director of Internal Operations, Courtney Traylor. Deputy Director Traylor began her new role with the Department of Workforce services on July 5<sup>th</sup>. Previously, she served as Assistant Deputy Commissioner for the Arkansas Insurance Department and as Chief Financial Officer for the Arkansas Department of Commerce. Before her work with the state, she spent 15 years in the healthcare software industry at GE.

Dr. Childers addressed since the economy's re-opening, DWS has been working to shift the focus from unemployment to employment. With the unemployment in August at 4.2%, DWS has shifted its efforts to partner with all agencies and divisions to assist employers in recruiting employers and hosting job fairs. The mobile workforce centers have travelled to over 66 job fairs and other events across the state. Unemployment claims have dropped significantly, compared to this time last year, DWS received close to 6,000 initial claims for regular unemployment weekly. Now DWS steadies 1,000 initial claims weekly. DWS Adult Education continues to provide services in all 75 counties, since 2018 students have earned over 1,147 credentials and certifications through the Adult Education programs, including the CNA, OSHA Serve Safe and pre-apprenticeships. Arkansas ranks 4<sup>th</sup> in nation with a GED pass rate of 87% compared to 76% at the national level. During the 2021 program year, out of 2,381 GED test completers 2,066 examinees earned their high school diploma. Last year, ADWS Rehabilitation Services had served over 10,000 Arkansans with disabilities. ARS helped increase their employment drastically from the previous year, up to 62.9% in the fourth quarter from 38.6% in the fourth quarter previous year. ARS has helped 55.1% of these Arkansans with advancing employment through post-secondary training. ARS is strengthening recruiting efforts on apprenticeship strategies in healthcare fields and direct job placement strategies in healthcare manufacturing, forming partnerships in area businesses. The Division of Services for the Blind completed 301 vocational rehabilitation applications, closed 135 cases, rehabilitated and completed 212 applications for the older individuals, who are blind, during the pandemic. Median quarterly earnings for this period were \$7,116.69, DSB is currently serving 759 vocational rehabilitation consumers, 66 potentially eligible consumers, and 261 OIB consumers. DSB recently issued approximately 156,000 of federal relief restoration funds as part of the federal stimulus package for the Randolph Shephard Program to offset wages during the pandemic.

Dr. Childers concludes by encouraging board members to visit with their local offices and local boards to truly appreciate and understand the hard work put in to better serve the community at large.

Report of Staff: Vice-Chairman Bull recognized Board Staff Mr. Eddie Thomas to address the Full Board. Mr. Thomas stated the Department of Labor with five local areas along with the state to assess the state's readiness in terms of COVID and how we are working to address re-employment issues. During these consultations, they asked questions on how the state would handle influx of additional funds, service delivery strategies, and other questions for re-employment. An assessment report from DOL will be provided in November. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act program will be working with local are to set up consultations with their Chief Elected Officials and local Workforce Development Board chairpersons to understand any challenges being faced. Additionally, governance trainings are being put in place to better assist those areas in need. The Reimagine Arkansas Workforce Program, a Department of Education grant providing short workforce training to individuals effected by COVID, has currently enrolled 124 students through the grant. The goal of this program is to serve 3,000 individuals over three years, currently running on it's second year. Mr. Thomas states Arkansas was one of five states selected to participate in DOL's WIOA Peer Cohort Evaluation. During this cohort, members of a state led team, all the core partners, and Department of Information Services, will be looking at how the WIOA systems are evaluated. Speakers from the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville will cover the WIOA systems and the One-Stop Systems during their presentation. A state team of evaluators will be Dr. Miles, Deputy Bassett, Dr. Stokes, Commissioner Baxter, Director Brown, Assistant Director Harris, Mr. Robert McGough from DIS, and Mr. Eddie Thomas. Mr. Thomas announced Arkansas is participating in ACT Work Ready Communities, 29 of Arkansas' 75 counties are currently participating in an initiative to make sure workforce skill gaps are being addressed and there are continued economic efforts for the state to prosper. Counties will sign on to participate and address these skill gaps in the National Career Readiness Certificate, where individuals can earn credentials in different areas to address employer needs. Two phases that are involved: A certificate certification phase, where counties must reach certain goals and then moving into a maintaining phase where they achieve the same goals with included criteria. Part of this maintaining phase is involvement in the Work Ready Community curriculum, where individuals have access to earn Career Readiness Certificates through a series of training making them more employable. ACT has agreed to offer .5 credit to those maintaining goals, putting counties one step closer to reaching their goals.

Report of Committees:

Since the first quarter of 2020, each of the Board's standing committees decided to discontinue Committee Meetings in support of the Governor's Executive Orders.

**Agenda Item 2 – Information – Camp Connect Kiosk Demo:** Vice-Chairman Bull recognized Judy Bergstrom to present to the Full Board. Ms. Bergstrom explains Camp Alliance has been around since 2010 and maintains the mission to connect all of Arkansas' military veterans with community resources to support readiness in the state. The Camp Alliance platforms target military families, service members, military veterans, and children in those families. The Camp Connect platform was put in place seven years ago to bring in job and career expos on drill weekends and health assistant periods to assist service members and their families at home with services in their communities. Kiosks and mobile adaptations have been made to address the difference COVID has made in the community for the previously held events. This was made available through CARES Act funding and the Department of Health's Mental Health Initiative. There are over 200,000 military veteran dependents, so these kiosks are placed in these communities to best help them find resources. Resources are updated bi-monthly at each kiosk throughout the state. One goal was to get at least one kiosk in every county in the state, so agency partners have successfully collaborated to make this happen through Department of Motor Vehicles, Workforce Centers, Veteran Service offices, airports, courthouses, etc. Confronting the kiosk provides multiple options regarding careers, health wellness, family, and service assistance. The kiosk gauges the user's current mental status, their military status, their branch of service, and then their home zip code. The next step provides multiple avenues for career opportunities through already vetted resources, such as Arkansas Job Link. A feedback option has been provided to text the exact link to their phone so they may resume their progress if they must leave the kiosk. In the last 90 days, enough funding was received to put 65 units out in the community, over 7,000 users, 73% of the 7,000

are repeat users, and a ton of feedback has been giving to better the resource. Soon an explore tab for leisure and discounts will be added per popular request. Cards are provided at the front of the kiosk to write down the link for all around utilization and further information. Two counties, Garland and Hot Springs County, have been identified for the Governor's Challenge to address suicide and mental health among service members and will have these services provided to help the community.

Director Stokes from the Division of Services for the Blind asked Ms. Bergstrom if the kiosk is accessible to blind and/or visually impaired veterans. Ms. Bergstrom explained the next software feature will work to assisting those who are blind and/or visually impaired in an application format.

Board member Blaylock stated it is exciting to see these kiosks reach out to community members in rural areas that are typically left out in these efforts.

A member of the board participating online questioned if Camp Alliance is affiliated with the vocational rehabilitation through the Veterans Administration through the nonprofit group programs. Ms. Bergstrom states the program works closely with the state military department and they are influential with their state efforts in the program.

**Agenda Item 3 – Informational – WIOA Systems Evaluation:** Vice-Chairman Bull states federal WIOA regulations require states to conduct evaluations of their WIOA Title 1 core programs to promote continuous improvement, test innovative services and strategies, and enhance the achievement of high levels of performance and outcomes. ADWS contracted with the University of Arkansas to conduct these evaluations. Vice-Chairman Bull recognizes Dr. Brent Williams and Dr. Keith Vire with the University of Arkansas to update the board on where WIOA programs stand in achieving their goals.

Around 11am, technical difficulties were experienced during Dr. Williams and Dr. Keith's introduction.

Dr. Williams states 30 copies of the presentation were made to provide to members interested. Dr. Williams states the first thing done was a local integration study. Sample Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act Comprehensive Centers for the 3 local areas were selected for sampling, interviewing of staff, and reported case studies on effectiveness of identifying closing Skill-Gaps. Sampled QIOA Title 1 and Title 3 participants for the local areas to determine if, based on the participants information in the Case File, the participant might have been eligible to receive services under the required partners. For each local area selected, leadership was interviewed to identify partner programs and non-profits that collaborate with the Workforce Centers. Contractors reported on the existence of memorandums of Understanding between the programs/entities; Referral Procedures; training for partners regarding services provided or alternative print material to assist in collaboration; OR an alternative method to refer clients between the partners effectively. Resource mapping was utilized to see what resources exist to support local Workforce Boards. Dr. Williams claims resource maps are vital to the local boards, with a rough estimate of 20-30% turnover just within six months as seen from their time performing the evaluations. The study conducted a report looking at referred to or co-enrolled participants in other programs and services, reviews of centers compared to the State's certification policy and applicable laws/regulations and conducted statewide customer service surveys for business customers of WIOA Title 1 and Title 3 receiving services over the most recent 12 months available. For all programs identified as (WIOA), Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service programs, and Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) programs, the evaluators were asked to identify, from a sample participant list, whether customers were referred or co-enrolled in other programs. Completion of the asset mapping, contractors evaluated State Workforce Agencies, 10 Local Workforce Development Boards, and the centers that offer services across the states to determine best practices for utilizing these resources as a workforce development strategy. A Skills Gap Analysis was conducted of a broad swath of business leaders, industry associations, chambers of commerce, state agencies, working with the staff of the boards to identify gaps in occupations, levels of employment, and the skills themselves, done as a sample to see if there were regional differences and particular trend lines. The evaluators were charged with developing case studies on effectiveness of identifying and closing



Skill-Gaps. Evaluators interviewed workforce center staff for examples of skills-gap identification on either the occupation level, the demand level, or the skill-level. Employer interviews were completed to gauge interaction between employers and workforce center staff and to determine the services that were provided to address the skills-gap. The ADWS WIOA Business Survey, conducted by the Center for Business and Economic Research at the Walton College of Business explored how Arkansas businesses felt about their experiences with the WIOA program. This survey included 845 individual businesses and produced an overall response rate of 9.9%. Overall, 5 individual local workforce development areas had a response rate greater than 10% and 8 local workforce development areas had a response rate greater than 8%. The ADWS WIOA Customer Survey, also conducted by the Center for Business and Economic Research at the Walton College of Business, explored how Arkansas job seekers feel about their experiences with the WIOA program. The Customer Survey contacted 60,668 individuals with valid emails as of October 9, 2020. The survey produced an overall response rate of 11.8%. All individual local workforce development areas had response rates of at least 10%. Dr. Williams explained the findings and state they can be found on page 159 of the full report and recommendations can be found on page 168. For levels of Co-Enrollment in partner programs: results of customer reviews in the three selected workforce areas confirmed a range of 2.5% co-enrollment to a high of 16.6% for these individual partner providers, with an overall average rate for all reporting providers of 7.34%. Dr. Williams stated this is not an optimum rate of co-enrollment. He stated the evaluators find that the rates of co-enrollment in partner programs during the most recent reporting period is not acceptable. Dr. Williams stated the number of partners listed by the three selected workforce areas were thirty-six in the Central Arkansas Planning and Development District, fifteen in the Northeast Arkansas Workforce Development Center, and ten in the Western Arkansas Planning and Development District. The discrepancy in these numbers is significant, and it is the opinion of the evaluators that other potential partner programs are available in at least two of the three workforce areas. Dr Williams explained referral procedures are in place for the three assigned workforce areas. All three managers reported that referrals are also received via email and telephone as an alternative when necessary. Referral procedures and customer support are well laid out and well documented at all three selected workforce areas. The evaluators find that the three selected workforce areas are in substantial compliance with this requirement. Dr. Williams stated regarding training services, the three selected areas provide training concerning available services as necessary. The evaluators find that the training opportunities are, in many cases, insufficient to meet the needs of the workforce customer base, and that, while the requirement to provide training is met at a minimal level in the three selected workforce areas, more should be done to ensure understanding by all the ADWS customers. Dr. Williams stated regarding Skills-Gap Identification and Amelioration, strategies for identifying skills gaps clearly demonstrated significant differences among the centers. The evaluators find that, while two of the three selected centers are heavily engaged in identifying and addressing skills gaps in their regions, more work is clearly needed. The tools for identifying skills gaps are available in equal measure to all 28 workforce centers in Arkansas; however, the quality of skills gap analysis is not equivalent across all centers. Dr. Williams stated regarding assessing the effectiveness of Skills-Gaps Interventions, all three of the selected workforce centers reported using “repeat/continued business with employers’ as one measure of the effectiveness of services provided. Other measures are employed by each of the three workforce centers. It is the finding of the evaluators that standard protocols for measuring the effectiveness of ameliorating skills gaps should be developed and shared with all workforce centers. Dr. Williams stated regarding compliance review, the evaluators reviewed a sample of six Arkansas Workforce Centers approved by Arkansas Workforce Development Leadership and the Arkansas Workforce Development Board, against the State’s certification policy and applicable laws and regulations. All six centers reviewed meet or exceed minimum requirements established by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) for physical accessibility. Additional information is provided in the expanded findings section of the full report, but no findings are reported. Dr. Williams stated the survey of business partners was conducted for this evaluation by the Center for Business and Economic Research at the University of Arkansas’ Walton College of Business. Overall, the report finds that WIOA recipients display a moderate degree of satisfaction with the WIOA program and the ADWS. Some areas of concern were reported, however, and these findings are reported in the expanded findings section of the full report. The customer survey showed a 62% overall satisfaction rate with WIOA programs and a 68% satisfaction rate with Workforce Center staff. The survey found that, “many” respondents reported “poor customer service”, “a rude attitude”, “inattentive staff”, or “uninformed staff”. Despite the high overall satisfaction rating with the program, the fact that “many” respondents cited these issues, the evaluators found that a critical need

exists for additional training in customer service for all local workforce center staff. In addition, the evaluators found that the current phone system does not appear suited to surge demand of ADWS or WIOA services. Dr. Williams stated the evaluators recommended that Arkansas Workforce Development Leadership and the Arkansas Workforce Development Board and area managers develop data collection methods to effectively track and monitor rates of co-enrollment. Dr. Williams stated the evaluators recommended that Arkansas Workforce Development Leadership and the Arkansas Workforce Development Board work with all workforce areas to identify and engage additional community partners, and to provide training and assistance to those partners in data collection techniques. Dr. Williams stated it is recommended by the evaluators that ADWS address each of the concerns expressed in the survey, including: less than half of WIOA recipients (42%) reported receiving the majority of services needed to address workforce needs; Many respondents described Workforce Center staff as “unresponsive” or “inattentive;” Many comments brought up the difficulty of posting job openings through the ADWS or the employers’ website; Several comments noted a lack of interaction between workforce center staff and businesses. The evaluators recommended that additional training programs be established to improve staff/customer relationships. The customer survey showed a 62% overall satisfaction rate with WIOA programs and a 68% satisfaction rate with Workforce Center staff. Comments referring to “rude behavior” and “poor customer service” by staff, however, leads the evaluators to strongly recommend additional training in customer service for all local workforce center staff. In addition, the survey found that, “The current phone system does not appear suited to surge demand of ADWS or WIOA services.” The evaluators highly recommended the phone system be evaluated immediately and, if the problems continue post-COVID, the system be upgraded as soon as it is feasible. The evaluators made no recommendations for change regarding compliance review. Dr. Williams stated it is highly recommended that ADWS establish methods for high performing center and workforce areas to provide training for other centers.

Board Member Karen Breashears asked when the data was collected. Dr. Williams stated the process in 2019, however, was derailed because of COVID, so most of the data was collected during 2020 in the last three quarters. The survey data was cutoff mid-October of 2020.

Dr. Childers brought to the attention of all attendees that while required, the evaluation was not at an opportune time. COVID regulations hindered interactions and ability to service the public. Survey information is claimed to not be a surprise given the situation with COVID. Dr. Childers states during the pandemic, the highest week was 96,206 initial unemployment claims. The week prior to the pandemic, there were 1,382 initial claims. She stated during the recession, it was gradual loss of employment and Arkansas had time to adjust for preparation, however, everything was done in the agency’s power to be prepared. She claimed for the total year of 2020 there were 462, 896 claims, which was more claims in one year than in the previous 5 years combined.

Dr. Williams reiterated there is a lot to be proud of with the operation of ADWS especially given the circumstances, and Dr. Vire concurred.

Vice-Chairman Bull commented that training is a difficult endeavor to master, but it is worth the effort. He stated the communication between workforce centers and businesses has fault on both sides, however, the effort is always there to do better.

Board Member Blaylock asked if they are willing to steps forward to be a data driven organization. He further asked if there is a plan to maintain the data that was collected, so a pulse can be kept on how effective the centers are, and for Board Members to have visualization on progress.

Dr. Vire stated they setup the analysis so it may be longitudinal.

Board Member Henderson reiterated Mr. Blaylock’s comment on an annual analysis of these centers.

Dr. Williamson responded to Mr. Henderson by stating it is possible for continued analysis.

Vice-Chairman Bull addressed the Board by stating if members needed to leave at the set 12pm end time for the meeting that they should follow-up with Director Brown for a record.

**Agenda Item 4 – Informational – PY20 WIOA Program Performance Updates:** Vice-Chairman Bull recognized Mr. Elroy Willoughby to address the Board with the WIOA Title 1 and Title 3 information.

Mr. Willoughby stated Title 1 met the actual goal and/or met the 90% threshold for their measures. The United States Department of Labor (USDOL) considers performance success of states as meeting the goal outright or meeting the 90% threshold. Dislocated Workers and Adult Programs met these requirements as shown in the provided handout. WIOA Title 1 Youth Programs had a 71.57% of the 90% measure, so the threshold was missed, and other measures were not met outright. The Wagner-Peyser Title 3 program met the 90% threshold. Mr. Willoughby explained there was a decrease in their numerical services to their employers due to COVID. He stated there was a 64.34% retention with the same employer in the second four quarters after exit, however, there was a decline from last year. The second rate was employer penetration rate dropped to 3.63% from the past program year. Mr. Willoughby stated they have been monitoring their Youth performance and collaborating with their local workforce areas to develop Youth Academies to focus on performance issues, service delivery issues, and the collaboration will involve local workforce area staff to conduct the training with support from ADWS. This is scheduled to have its first session in November of 2021 and is currently scheduled out into March of 2022.

Dr. Miles stated during the 2021 program year, Title 2 Adult Education served 10,499 individuals. She stated there was an enrollment decline of 34% compared to previous years, with about 18,408 individuals to come through the program. The program exceeded their measurable skill gains, with a proposed target of 48% and an actual of 56%. In some areas, measurable skill gains increased as much as 23% and as low as 3%. She stated for the follow-up measures of 2020-2021, their target for employment second quarter exit was 44%, and the program made 40.92%, however, the 90% threshold was met. Employment fourth quarter after exit was the only benchmark not met with a target of 46% and only 20.82% was made. The target for median income earnings, based on second quarter exit, was \$4,200, exceeding the threshold. Those attaining any credential had a goal of 48%, but the benchmark was 45.32%, which was in the 90% threshold. Males had a 44% employment rate for employment second quarter after exit, while females were at 38.79%. Second quarter median earnings were stated to be \$4,512 for females and \$5,118.32 for males, both exceeding expectations. Employment rate for second quarter employment rate cohort was higher compared to the fourth quarter employment rate cohort, which did not meet expectations. Dr. Miles stated the median earnings cohort for 25-44, 44-54, 55-59, and 60+ met their goals, however, the <16, 16-18, and 19-24 credential rate cohort reported higher than the formerly mentioned. In terms of ethnicity, Dr. Miles explained everyone was within the 44% target range for the second quarter employment rate, but nothing alarming for the fourth quarter employment rate with the individuals falling within a 46% range. Ethnicity median earnings cohort were much higher, with three groups meeting the \$4,200 earnings target. Employment rate for ex-offenders was the only group to exceed the 44% employment rate as compared to the other assessed groups. Every group, except displaced homemakers, exceed the \$4,200 median earnings cohort by employment barrier. Single parents exceed the 44% with 48.12% for total participants exited. Dr. Miles stated GED pass rates for the past two years showed a 15% decline in passers comparing 2020-21 and 2019-20, but the pass rate increased by 87%. She stated even during the pandemic the numbers were still increased for certifications and credentials compared to 2018-29 year, however, still slightly declined from as compared to the 2020-21 year.

Ms. Lamas stated Title 4 Rehabilitation Services worked just over 10,000 individuals last year. Most of these individuals received career services with assessments on vocational barriers and job placements for 7,631 people, about 70% served. 5,345 people received training services through vocational rehab in program year 2020. Ms. Lamas stated their highest in-demand field is nursing along with the trucking industry. Compared to last year, 64% were successfully employed after second quarter after exit, with about 3,438 left and 2,205 were successful. In the fourth quarter, 62.9% of the individuals still had their jobs with about 2,066 people. Median earnings were up in second quarter after exit at \$5,648 as a total. They had 315 people complete degree or credentials in program year 20, at about 26% of the total. College rates were up at 55%.

Commissioner Baxter added the effects of the pandemic saw a difference in those helped through the program.

Dr. Lamb stated Title 4 Division of Services for the Blind served 882 participants of that 207 exited the program, and 139 of those participants were rehabilitated closures. They assisted 792 individuals with career services and 173 individuals with training services. Second quarter after exit they had 22.9% with 3.9% in fourth quarter after exit still employer. Retention with employer fourth quarter exit showed to be 46.2%. Median wages went up at exit at \$13.27 per hour, and second quarter after exit also went up to \$7,116.69 for the quarter. They reported a total of 57 skill gains with a target of 24% and a total of 38.3%, exceeding their goal target.

Board Open Discussion: Vice-Chair Bull asked board members for any additional items for discussion. Vice-Chairman Bull stated he was to discuss how the Board Members would like to carry out meetings moving forward. He followed-up by stating today's meeting was intended to be held both virtual and in-person, however, was almost entirely virtual with few in attendance at the ADWS building.

Board Members requested the Board offer both options. Vice-Chairman Bull deferred to the staff for a response in lieu of Chairman Anderson's absence.

Board Director Brown stated he finds it critical the January meeting be in-person, however, watch how things go moving forward.

Board Member Marsh stated for the foreseeable future that the meeting be offered with both options.

Board Member Dr. Stokes agreed the presence of both options being best for addressing Board Member concerns.

Board Member Roberson states she would like to see both options for the time being.

Vice-Chairman Bull stated he is in favor of having both options available given individual's comfortability in large groups. He raised to the Board the overall feelings of starting the committee meetings back up, whether virtual or not.

Board Member Blaylock asked the committee meetings to be reconsidered at the January meetings.

Board Member Breashears stated the committees play a vital role and should resume.

Board Member Houseworth agreed to virtual committee meetings.

Vice-Chairman Bull addressed the Board to inform them that Board Member Sharp has gone through two rounds of cancer treatments, and for the Board to keep him in their thoughts.

Public Speaking Opportunity: Vice-Chair Bull addressed members of the public attending the meeting through electronic means and extended the opportunity to speak before the Full Board. Unfortunately, due to technical difficulties the telephone line cut out and so no attending members of the public were able to ask a question. A recording of the meeting was made available to anyone who requested access.

Mr. William Dennison, who attended the meeting in-person, announced to the Board that for Apprenticeship Awareness Month coming up, Western Arkansas will do a social media blitz. He stated they would like to invite any companies who would like to participate and highlight that on their social media for their weeklong campaign. He can be reached at [westernarkansasworks.com](http://westernarkansasworks.com).

Assistant Director Thomas reiterated Mr. Dennison’s comment and that there will be several events across the state for those interested.

**Announcements:** Vice-Chair Bull announced the committee meetings of the Arkansas Workforce Development Board will convene “as needed” due to the COVID-19 pandemic and out of respect for Board Member’s schedules. He added the next Full Board meeting is set for January 25, 2022. Board Staff will keep everyone aware of any changes to the schedule or the type of meeting, whether virtual or in-person, as the State progresses through COVID-19 under the guidance of Governor Asa Hutchinson.

**Adjourn:** As presented, Vice-Chair Scot Bull adjourned the AWDB Full Board meeting at 12:43 p.m., on a motion made by Ms. Karen Breashears, followed by Mr. Len Blaylock III making the second motion. The motion carried unanimously with none opposed.

The following votes were recorded and voiced by Board Members on a roll vote to Approve, Disapprove, or Abstain for no vote: Mr. Joseph Baxter – Approve, Mr. Len Blaylock III – Approve, Ms. Karen Breashears – Approve, Mr. Scott Bull – Approve, Dr. Charisse Childers – Approve, Judge Brandon Ellison – Approve, Mr. Randy Finegan – Approve, Mr. Jeff Griffin – Absent, Mr. Randy Henderson – Approve, Ms. Abby Houseworth – Approve, Ms. Rebecca Ives – Approve, Mr. Charles Johnson – Absent, Mr. Johnny Key – Absent, Ms. Candice Lawrence – Approve, Ms. Holley Little – Approve, Dr. Maria Markham – Absent, Mr. Brian Marsh – Approve, Dr. Trenia Miles – Approve, Mr. George Nunnally – Approve, Secretary Mike Preston – Absent, Dr. Julie Roberson – Approve, Mayor James Sanders – Approve, Mr. Kelley Sharp – Absent, Dr. Cassandra Williams-Stokes – Approve, Mr. Robert Thorne – Approve, and Dr. Diana Wright – Approve.

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Scott Bull, Board Vice-Chair  
Arkansas Workforce Development Board

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Chad Brown, Director Workforce Development  
Arkansas Division of Workforce Services

*Minutes recorded by Tyler Gibbons  
Arkansas Division of Workforce Services Staff*

**For Consideration of the  
Arkansas Workforce Development Board**

**January 25, 2022**

**AGENDA ITEM 2 – INFORMATIONAL:** Board Member Expense Reimbursement

**RECOMMENDATION:** It is recommended that the Arkansas Workforce Development Board determine, via majority vote, whether to authorize expense reimbursement for each board member for performing official board duties.

**INFORMATION/RATIONALE:** Arkansas Code Annotated § 25-16-902 states:

*(a) Every state board may, by a majority vote of the total membership of the board cast during its first regularly scheduled meeting of each calendar year, authorize expense reimbursement for each board member for performing official board duties.*

*(b) The expense reimbursement shall not exceed the rate established for state employees by state travel regulations.*

Consequently, the Arkansas Workforce Development Board by a majority vote of the total membership of the board cast during its first regularly scheduled meeting of each calendar year, may authorize payment to its members for expense reimbursement while performing official board duties.

These expense reimbursements shall not exceed the rate established for state employees by state travel regulations.

The current state employees travel regulations are attached for consideration by the board.

## Title 19 | Chapter 4 | Subchapter 9

### SUBCHAPTER 9 - TRAVEL REGULATIONS

ACA§ 19-4-901. Rules and regulations generally.

The Chief Fiscal Officer of the State shall promulgate rules and regulations with respect to travel and travel allowances and prescribe the forms and procedures for reporting, approving, and paying such travel allowances for all officers and employees of the state government or for other persons who are authorized to carry out official duties in connection with the business of the state.

History. Acts 1973, No. 876, § 16; A.S.A. 1947, § 13-342

Authority, Chief Fiscal Officer, Rules and Regulations

#### R1-19-4-901 Rules and Regulations Generally

The Chief Fiscal Officer of the State is authorized by ACA 19-4-901 to promulgate rules and regulations with respect to travel and travel allowances and prescribe the forms and procedures for reporting, approving and paying such travel allowances for all officers and employees of state government or for other persons who are authorized to carry out official duties in connection with the business of the State. The Financial Management Guide covers the travel regulations at a high level. For more detailed information, please refer to the State of Arkansas Travel Regulations at the website address below:

#### Accounting Forms

19-4-902. Authorization for travel.

(a)(1) The responsibility for authorizing travel, or any expenses in connection therewith, shall be placed upon the board or commission in charge or upon the administrative head of each state agency. (2) No travel expenses shall be authorized or allowed without the approval of the board, commission, or administrative head of any agency.

(b) It shall be the responsibility of the administrative head of any agency to keep on file in the place of business of the agency, subject to audit, copies of all supporting documents and required receipts for expenses incurred in connection with the travel authorizations and allowances for persons traveling in behalf of the agency.

History. Acts 1973, No. 876, § 16; A.S.A. 1947, § 13-342; Acts 2001, No. 1453, § 24.

ACA 19-4-902 places the authority and responsibility of authorizing and approving travel expenses with the board or commission in charge or to the administrative head of the agency, department or institution.

R1-19-4-902 Responsibility and Accountability for Travel Authorizations and Disbursement

It shall be the responsibility of the administrative head of each agency, board, commission or institution to keep on file in the place of business of the agency, subject to audit, originals of all supporting documents and required receipts for expenses incurred in connection with the travel authorizations and disbursements for persons traveling on behalf of the governmental entity. The documents on file may be in the form (microform or electronic) prescribed under the provisions of ACA 19-4-815 (b) if approved by the Division of Legislative Audit.

In large governmental units, it may not be feasible for the administrative head of the agency, department, or institution to act as travel administrator. In this case, he or she may designate other responsible officials to act as his or her agent(s) and to be referred to as travel administrator. The approval of these designated agents will be considered to reflect the approval of the board, commission or head of the agency, department or institution. The designation of agents as travel administrators shall be made in writing and kept on file in the agency/institution.

19-4-903. Standard reimbursements and special authorizations.

(a)(1) Except for special authorization by the Chief Fiscal Officer of the State, reimbursement for meals and lodging while traveling on official business of the state shall not exceed the maximum rates as prescribed by the Federal Travel Directory published by the General Services Administration. (2) Requests for special authorization shall be limited to those rare occasions where unusual circumstances may cause the existing rates to be inadequate and shall be set out in writing in such detail as shall be required in the state travel procedures and shall be executed in behalf of each individual traveler for each special authorized occasion. Provided however, that requests for special authorization by employees of institutions of higher education shall be subject to the approval of the chief executive officer of the institution and not the Department of Finance and Administration.

(3) Under such emergency conditions as shall be determined by the Governor, the limitations of this subsection with respect to meals and lodging may be waived or modified.

(b)(1) As used in this subsection, "state-owned motor vehicle" means a motor vehicle purchased or leased by:

(A) The State of Arkansas;

(B) The office of a constitutional officer of the State of Arkansas;

(C) A constitutionally independent agency or commission; and



(D) A state-supported institution of higher education.

(2) (A) Unless otherwise provided for by law, reimbursement for the use of privately owned motor vehicles while traveling on official business for the state shall not exceed the allowable rate of the Internal Revenue Service per mile for business use of privately owned motor vehicles.

(B) A state agency director may authorize reimbursement for travel expenses for meals, lodging, and private automobile or airplane usage at amounts less than that established under the authority of this section.

(C) The Chief Fiscal Officer of the State may by regulation establish procedures and the rate for reimbursing individuals for the use of privately owned airplanes while traveling on official business for the state.

(3)(A)(i) Any employee of the State of Arkansas who utilizes, but whose job does not require the state employee to utilize, a state-owned motor vehicle for transportation to or from his or her permanent residence from or to his or her official station on a daily basis shall reimburse the fund from which the operating expenses of the state-owned motor vehicle are paid at the same rate authorized by the state agency director of the agency employing the state employee for reimbursements for private automobile usage under subdivision (b) (2) (B) of this section.

(ii) As used in subdivision (b) (3) (A) (i) of this section, "state employee":

(a) Means an employee of a state agency, board, commission, department, or state-supported institution of higher education; and

(b) Includes a constitutional officer and an employee of a constitutional officer.

(B) All state-owned motor vehicles or state-leased motor vehicles shall be for official business use only.

(c) The Chief Fiscal Officer of the State shall promulgate rules and regulations to implement the provisions of this subchapter.

History. Acts 1973, No. 876, § 16; 1974 (Ex. Sess.), No. 16, § 1; 1977, No. 462, § 1; 1979, No. 890, § 1; 1985, No. 365, § 7; A.S.A. 1947, § 13-342; Acts 1987, No. 81, § 1; 1991, No. 1222, §§ 1, 2; 1997, No. 795, § 1; 2011, No. 1021, §1.

#### R1-19-4-903 Standard Reimbursements for State Employees and Officials

Officials and employees may be paid travel expenses when required to travel away from their "official station" on State business. "Official station" is the geographic location or "address" where the employee normally reports for duty and/or spends the majority of his/her productive time and must be designated as such in writing by the employer. An employee's "residence"

shall be the city or town in which the individual has an abode or dwelling place. An employee whose resident city is a location other than his/her "official station" shall not be allowed mileage to travel between them except as provided for under Special Authorizations.

All employee travel reimbursement claims must be completed for payment to the individual traveler. One employee may not include on his travel payment request the expenses of another employee.

No expenses for meals or lodging will be allowed within the city or town of the employee's "official station" unless approved in writing by the agency head as a "special authorization," under ACA 19-4-903. The written justification must show the benefit to the State. Under no circumstances should the maximum daily federal per diem rates be exceeded.

State employees loaned from one state agency to another may be reimbursed for travel expenses by the agency benefiting from the travel.

#### Limits for Meals and Lodging

Please note that travel reimbursement is NOT a per diem and is to be claimed for ACTUAL EXPENSES FOR MEALS AND LODGING NOT TO EXCEED THE MAXIMUM ALLOWABLE RATES AS LISTED IN THE FEDERAL TRAVEL DIRECTORY PLUS APPLICABLE SALES TAX. (Sales tax rate must be stated on Travel Reimbursement (TR-1) forms or equivalent for lodging. The maximum allowance for meals INCLUDES taxes and up to 15% tip. Lodging rates per the Federal Travel Directory EXCLUDE room tax and should be exceeded only by the room tax amount unless special authorization is given in writing by the administrative head of the agency justifying the need to exceed the standard reimbursement rate.)

PLEASE NOTE: Special rates for reimbursement apply "county-wide". For example, when looking at Arkansas on GSA's website, the only cities listed are Little Rock (Pulaski County) and Hot Springs (Garland County) Special allowances in certain cities that exceed the daily "normal" or "state-wide" limits may be claimed in other locales of the County where the listed City is located. In other words, the special rates for reimbursement apply "county-wide."

#### Meals

Reimbursement for meals is allowed only in connection with overnight travel whether in- state or out-of-state unless "special authorization," under ACA 19-4-903, is given in writing by the agency head. Out of state travel in and of itself should never be the sole reason for "special authorization" under this section, rather as provided in ACA 19-4-903, requests should be limited to those "rare occasions" where, for example, an employee is asked to perform unanticipated duties outside of his/her normal work schedule that are official in nature, such as attending special board meetings.

The maximum full day meal allowance (including tax and up to 15% tip) cannot exceed the federal per diem rate depending on the destination location. For partial days, meals charged must be in proportion to the time in travel status and may not exceed the maximum for applicable meal(s) stated in the Federal Travel Directory for the location(s). Although receipts for meals are not required by this rule, the administrative heads of agencies, departments and institutions may require them. See the federal per diem rates at: <http://www.gsa.gov/portal/category/100000> .

PLEASE NOTE: The "IE" allowances as stated in the Federal Travel Directory are for incidentals. Incidentals are specifically defined and provided for and must be listed separately and explained on the Travel Reimbursement Request Form (TR-1). It is no longer necessary to subtract the incidental rate from the maximum meal allowance due to the law change that provides for tip reimbursement of up to 15% of the meal amount expended. The traveler is now eligible for actual expenses for meals up to the maximum meal allowance per the Federal Travel Directory.

#### Partial days' meal allowances

The traveler is only eligible for 75% of the daily allowance for meals on the first and last day of travel. The daily travel allowance at the destination location shall be used in the calculation of the limit for partial days. In accordance with the State travel regulations, actual expenses only are allowed, and the charges must be in proportion to the time in travel status not to exceed that allowed by the Federal Travel Regulations.

#### Meals Included in Conference Registration

Meal reimbursement requests must be reduced for meals provided as part of the conference registration by deducting the appropriate amount as shown under the Meals and Incidental Expenses (M&IE) breakdown at <http://www.gsa.gov/portal/content/104877>.

Allowances may be made in writing to allow the traveler to claim meal reimbursement if any of the conditions below are met:

1. The traveler is unable to consume the meal provided because of medical requirements or religious beliefs;
2. The traveler purchased substitute meal(s) in order to satisfy their medical requirements or religious beliefs;
3. The traveler was unable to take part in the provided meal due to the conflict of official business.

#### Complementary Meals

Meals provided by a common carrier or a complementary meal provided by a hotel/motel does not affect the maximum meal allowance per the Federal Travel Directory.

## Lodging

Reimbursement for lodging is limited to the single room rate. If a room is occupied by more than one person, the single room rate must be noted on the receipt. The maximum daily allowance will be limited to the federal per diem rate depending on the location for both in state and out of state travel. Room taxes are not included in the federal per diem rate and may be claimed for reimbursement. Lodging costs that exceed the rates listed in the Federal Travel Directory by more than room tax may not be paid without a letter of authorization by the administrative head of the agency and must include a justification as to why it was in the best interest of the State to exceed the standard reimbursement rate. Such letter of authorization must be filed in the agency files with the travel payment document for the trip for each occurrence of such overage. Except for institutions of higher education exempt under ACA

19-4-903 (a) (2), a report of these special authorizations in a format prescribed by the Department of Finance and Administration may be required. See the federal per diem rates at: <http://www.gsa.gov/portal/category/100000> .

## Transportation

Travel may be achieved by plane, train, bus, taxi, private vehicle/aircraft, rented or state-owned automobile whichever method serves the requirements of the State most economically and advantageously. Commercial airline tickets should be purchased at least 14 days prior to travel if possible. Airline tickets purchased with less than a 14-day advance shall be explained in writing to the head of the agency and approved by him/her in writing prior to purchase. Agencies may pay or reimburse the traveler for checked baggage fees for the first bag only. Fees for additional bags must be paid by the traveler and are not eligible for reimbursement.

Reimbursement for out-of-state travel will be the lesser of coach class airfare or the established rate of private car mileage based on map mileage (whether paper-based or electronic) when driven.

For trips where the destination is 400 miles or more from the employee's "official station", the minimum miles traveled per day to be eligible to collect a night's lodging must be 400 miles. The requirement to travel a minimum of 400 miles daily has no effect on in-state travel nor does it affect travel outside the state where the destination is less than 400 miles from the employee's "official station". The requirement applies to trips where the destination is 400 miles or more from the "official station". It addresses the period of time the employee(s) spends "en-route" or in "travel status" reaching the destination. Travelers by commercial air shall utilize coach accommodations, except in those instances where first class accommodations would be more economical for the State. Instances where first class fare is utilized will require detailed justification and must be approved by the travel administrator.

## Reimbursement for Use of Privately Owned Vehicle

ARKANSAS WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD  
AGENDA ITEM 3 – ATTACHMENT 1  
JANUARY 25, 2022

Private vehicle mileage shall be reimbursed and computed, using map mileage (whether paper-based or electronic), between the travel site destination and the employee's official station or residence, if leaving directly from the residence, whichever is less. Mileage reimbursement for official use of a private motor vehicle may be claimed, listed separately on the TR-1, within the vicinity of any locale.

When privately owned motor vehicles are used for travel on official business, the traveler may claim reimbursement at the rate per mile established by the Chief Fiscal Officer of the State in effect during the time the travel occurred. See [P2-19-4-903](#). The shortest major highway route (map mileage whether paper-based or electronic) will determine the maximum mileage allowed. The source for map mileage used by the agency personnel shall be designated by the administrative head of the agency and shall be used exclusively on all mileage claims.

The State will reimburse for official miles driven only. The State assumes no responsibility for any maintenance, insurance, operational costs, accidents or fines incurred by the operator of the vehicle while on official business for the State.

When a privately owned aircraft is used for travel on State business, the rate of reimbursement will be in nautical miles at the rate as established by the Chief Fiscal Officer of the State, under the provisions of ACA 19-4-903, during the time the travel occurred.

**For Consideration of the  
Arkansas Workforce Development Board**

**January 25, 2022**

**AGENDA ITEM 3 – ACTION:** Council Resolution 2022-1: Board Member Stipend

**RECOMMENDATION:** It is recommended that the Arkansas Workforce Development Board approve Council Resolution 2022-1 allowing board members to accept a stipend for reimbursement of expenses to attend meetings of the board.

**INFORMATION/RATIONALE:** Arkansas Code Annotated § 15-4-3704 allows the Arkansas Workforce Development Board by a majority vote of the total membership of the board cast during its first regularly scheduled meeting of each calendar year, the board may authorize payment to its members of a stipend not to exceed one hundred ten dollars (\$110) per meeting attended. The board members shall receive no other compensation, expense reimbursement, or in-lieu-of payments as provided in § 25-16-902.

A draft council resolution is attached for consideration by the board.

**ARKANSAS WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD  
COUNCIL RESOLUTION NUMBER 2022 – 1**

**WHEREAS**, the Arkansas Workforce Development Board (AWDB) conducts its matters as an entity prescribed by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA); and

**WHEREAS**, the AWDB serves the Governor of the State of Arkansas as a policy advisory entity in accordance with WIOA law; and

**WHEREAS**, it has been determined that the AWDB and its activities are encompassed by A.C.A. §15-4-3706; and

**WHEREAS**, A.C.A. §15-4-3704 (h)(1) and (2) states, “By a majority vote of the total membership of the Arkansas Workforce Development Board cast during its first regularly scheduled meeting of each calendar year, the Arkansas Workforce Development Board may authorize payment to the appointed members of a stipend not to exceed one hundred ten dollars (\$110) per meeting attended of the full Arkansas Workforce Development Board or its committees, and the Arkansas Workforce Development Board members shall receive no other compensation, expense reimbursement, or in-lieu-of payments except as provided by A.C.A. §25-16-902.” and “The stipend shall be paid from Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act funding awarded to the state and authorized for Arkansas Workforce Development Board activities.”

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Arkansas Workforce Development Board adopts as its official and stated policy the reimbursement of expenditures to its members in accordance with A.C.A. §15-4-3704 for the entire calendar year of 2022.

**For Consideration of the  
Arkansas Workforce Development Board**

**January 25, 2022**

**AGENDA ITEM 4 – INFORMATION:** WIOA Title I Program Policy Process

**INFORMATION/RATIONALE:** In previous meetings, Board Members expressed a desire to develop a process whereby WIOA Title I Program policies are developed and distributed to the Local Workforce Development Areas. Additionally, it was requested that the State Board be made aware of these policies.

The Arkansas Workforce Development Board Director has developed the attached process to address these concerns.





**Chad Brown**  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**Tom Anderson**  
CHAIRMAN

**Scott Bull**  
VICE CHAIRMAN

To: Arkansas Workforce Development Board (AWDB) Members  
From: Chad Brown, AWDB Director  
Date: January 25, 2022  
Subject: WIOA Title I Program Policy Process

Arkansas Workforce Development Board Member Karen Breashears requested clarity regarding which WIOA Title I policies should be reviewed by the State Board, and which should not.

The primary purpose of this question arises from the State Workforce Board's responsibility to support the Governor's vision for the ongoing development of the state's workforce development system.

Policy development and implementation is a critical aspect of managing organizational performance. The systematic identification of the need for policies, a structured policy development process, and a consistent approach for effectively communicating these policies is vitally important.

I believe that the first step in this process is identifying the two (2) primary types of policies that are commonly used in our workforce development system. These two policy types are: A) Strategic Policies and B) Administrative/Procedural Policies.

**Strategic policies** - policies which are visionary, directional statements that guide decision-making. These policies inform or clarify legislative policy or workforce system strategies. Strategic policies are adopted by the State Workforce Development Board.

**Administrative/Procedural policies** – policies that specify business rules, requirements, and processes related to the implementation and operation of workforce programs. These policies fall within the authority of the Arkansas Division of Workforce Services, the Governor's administrative entity. Administrative/Procedural policies are comparable to Administrative Rule for state agencies, but do not require adoption through the state government's rule-making process. Additionally, administrative/procedural policies are binding on the workforce system and are subject to audit and monitoring.

I believe that a consistent and formal communication process for both strategic and administrative/procedural policies to our workforce system stakeholders would address any existing issues.

Arkansas Workforce Development Board  
P.O. Box 2981 • Little Rock, AR 72203  
dws.arkansas.gov

*Equal opportunity employer/ program. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.*



**Chad Brown**  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**Tom Anderson**  
CHAIRMAN

**Scott Bull**  
VICE CHAIRMAN

Consequently, I have directed the ADWS Employment Assistance Unit to do the following:

1. Distribute **all** strategic and administrative/procedural policies to each Local Workforce Area Director, Local Board Chair, and Lead Chief Elected Official.
2. Distribute **all** strategic and administrative/procedural policies to members of the Arkansas Workforce Development Board, upon the member's request.
3. Include a list of and a link to **all** strategic and administrative/procedural policies developed on each meeting agenda of the Arkansas Workforce Development Board. This will provide an opportunity for Board Members to ask questions or gain clarity regarding these policies.

I believe these steps will assist the State Board and our Local Workforce system members in our collective efforts in achieving the Governor's priorities for Arkansas' workforce.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (501) 371-1022 or [chad.brown@arkansas.gov](mailto:chad.brown@arkansas.gov).



**Chad Brown**  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**Tom Anderson**  
CHAIRMAN

**Scott Bull**  
VICE CHAIRMAN

Arkansas Workforce Development Board  
P.O. Box 2981 • Little Rock, AR 72203  
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**For Consideration of the  
Arkansas Workforce Development Board**

**January 25, 2022**

**AGENDA ITEM 5 – INFORMATIONAL:** United States Department of Labor – Employment and Training Administration - Arkansas COVID Recovery Readiness

**INFORMATION/RATIONALE:** The Employment and Training Administration (ETA) of the United States Department of Labor (USDOL) conducted consultations with states and local workforce development areas to assess readiness for COVID recovery and reemployment.

The USDOL utilized a standard questionnaire to gain insight from leaders and staff of both ADWS as well as the following local workforce development areas in Arkansas:

- Little Rock LWDA
- Central Arkansas LWDA
- West Central Arkansas LWDA
- Southeast Arkansas LWDA
- Eastern LWDA

The purpose of these readiness consultations was to:

- Help state and local areas be ready to serve large numbers of jobseekers who need help finding jobs and employers who need help finding skilled workers;
- Receive feedback on implementation areas that ETA could support through technical assistance;
- Collect and share promising practices regionally and nationally; and
- Validate the national capacity to meet a higher demand for American Job Center services, and provide technical assistance in expanding capacity where needed.

An update regarding this initiative will be shared with the Board.



November 18, 2021

Dr. Charisse Childers  
Director  
Arkansas Division of Workforce Services  
2 Capitol Mall  
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201

RE: COVID Recovery and Reemployment  
Readiness Consultation

Dear Dr. Childers,

The Employment and Training Administration (ETA) conducted COVID Recovery and Reemployment Readiness Consultations with key leaders and staff from the Arkansas Division of Workforce Services (ADWS) on August 18, 2021. We also conducted consultations with leaders and staff from the following local workforce development areas (LWDA) between August 27, 2021, and September 16, 2021:

- Little Rock LWDA;
- Central Arkansas LWDA;
- West Central Arkansas LWDA;
- Southeast Arkansas LWDA; and
- Eastern LWDA.

The purposes of the readiness consultations were to:

- Help state and local areas be ready to serve large numbers of jobseekers who need help finding jobs and employers who need help finding skilled workers;
- Receive feedback on implementation areas that ETA could support through technical assistance;
- Collect and share promising practices regionally and nationally; and
- Validate the national capacity to meet a higher demand for American Job Center services, and provide technical assistance in expanding capacity where needed.

The enclosed assessments provide the results of each readiness consultation. Overall, we determined ADWS is ready in all of the 24 areas assessed. We also determined that the LWDAs are also ready, yet require technical assistance in key areas.

We will work with your team to coordinate the technical assistance needed at the state and local levels. The readiness consultations also identified lessons learned that we will use to assist other states and LWDAs in their recovery and reemployment efforts. The specific lessons learned are in the enclosed reports.

We also encourage you to review the responses to the consultation questions again, as you and your staff prepare for the upcoming state planning modification process. The events of the last couple of years, especially due to the pandemic, may have changed the strategic or operational activities of your state. These changes must be included in the state plan modification.

Please share the local area reports with the respective LWDAs, and express my appreciation to the state and local staff for their assistance in the consultations. We also recognize the hard work completed at the state and local levels in the midst of a global pandemic.

If you have any questions, please contact Frank Stluka, Office of State Systems Director, at 214-598-6283 or [stluka.frank@dol.gov](mailto:stluka.frank@dol.gov), or Felecia Blair, Federal Project Officer, at 972-850-4643 or [blair.felecia@dol.gov](mailto:blair.felecia@dol.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "N. Lalpui", followed by a horizontal line and the text "/for".

NICHOLAS E. LALPUI  
Regional Administrator

Enclosures

# #214

**COMPLETE**

**Collector:** Web Link 1 (Web Link)  
**Started:** Tuesday, November 09, 2021 9:39:10 AM  
**Last Modified:** Tuesday, November 09, 2021 10:18:45 AM  
**Time Spent:** 00:39:34  
**IP Address:** 152.180.11.41

Page 1: Location

**Q1** **State**  
 State or Local Area Consultation?

**Q2** **Arkansas (AR)**  
 State

**Q3**  
 1) What is the state/local area's vision for equitable and inclusive recovery and reemployment? What are community partners' roles in this vision? What major activities will American Rescue Plan (ARP) funds be used for in your state/local area? a) How much of this vision is accomplishable with current funding? What would depend on additional funds? b) What are the benchmarks by which the state/local area will know it has reached its goals? c) How did you communicate with and get buy-in on this vision and benchmarks from partners? d) How does this vision address equity and inclusion? e) How can ETA support you in this process? Readiness Looks Like... The state/local has a clear and specific vision for equitable and inclusive recovery and reemployment, including how it would use American Rescue Plan and other potential special appropriation funds to support system change. Goals to achieve the vision have been outlined. The vision and goals have been communicated to workforce system partners, economic development partners, local workforce system, and the public-at-large. The state/local area is poised to refine the vision and goals if needed to comply with new federal legislation.

	Ready?	TA Level Needed?	Promising Practice?
Rating	<b>Yes</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>No</b>

Readiness Comments, TA Needs, Promising Practices, and/or Lessons Learned:

Arkansas' vision includes targeted populations with equitability and inclusiveness built into its workforce strategy for economic growth. Strengthening that vision for individuals with barriers to employment through high quality workforce centers remains a priority. On May 19, 2021, Governor Asa Hutchinson led the first meeting of the Arkansas ARPA Steering Committee created to study and analyze the relief available to Arkansas, as well as identify priorities. The Governor's vision also includes continuing broadband development through the Rural Connect Program. Plans are underway for local and national consulting firms to assist the State with ARPA funding initiatives.

**Q4**

2) What policy guidance has the state updated and issued to reflect current labor market conditions? Alternatively, how does the state ensure policy guidance is up to date? a) In what areas has policy been updated based on new market conditions? b) Have the policies been revisited since the new CDC guidance on vaccinated individuals? Readiness Looks Like... Policy guidance is fully reflective of the current economic environment and labor market conditions. Policy is postured to effectively assist customers. And policy is well communicated across the organization.

	Ready?	TA Level Needed?	Promising Practice?
Rating	<b>Yes</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>No</b>

Readiness Comments, TA Needs, Promising Practices, and/or Lessons Learned:

Policies will be updated as needed only after a review of UI trends, data-related LMI, and service delivery to targeted populations. Other data considerations include demographics, UI information, and the number of individuals served. Program considerations have included discussions on virtual work experiences and case management policies. ADWS has a process in place to ensure timely policy guidance updates.

**Q5**

3) How has the State assisted local office staff, local workforce development boards (LWDB), and service providers to ensure that they have modified their service delivery strategies and services as the American Job Centers (AJCs) safely reopen? How has that assistance incorporated plans for serving individuals with disabilities, persons with limited internet access, and/or language barriers? a) What processes have been established to serve individuals with disabilities, persons with limited internet access, and/or language barriers? b) Are there areas of the state in which this will be a greater challenge and have you thought through those barriers? c) How are you meeting the needs of non-English speakers? Readiness Looks Like... There is a thoughtful strategy to safely and effectively deliver services to all individuals, reflective of the administration's emphasis on diversity, equity and inclusion of workforce services, and this strategy has been put into action across all LWDBs and service partners.

	Ready?	TA Level Needed?	Promising Practice?
Ratings	<b>Yes</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>No</b>

Readiness Comments, TA Needs, Promising Practices, and/or Lessons Learned:

Weekly, bi-weekly, and monthly meetings with LWDBs allowed for sharing of strategies and ideas during the pandemic. Local agendas included WIOA partner information and feedback from frequent state level communications with stakeholders and partners. ADWS directed LWDBs to use Workforce GPS resources to explore information including virtual service delivery tools. Services to individuals who require special accommodations have been provided through local office computers and mobile workforce unit computers. This includes JAWS and other software appropriate for customers with disabilities. Visual magnification is available for the visually impaired.



**Q6**

4) What actions have the state, LWDBs, and service providers have taken so that their offices, management information systems (MIS), and staff are ready to provide safe in-person and virtual services? a) How have IT systems evolved or been augmented since the pandemic to improve services? b) Have the service approaches been revisited since the CDC released new guidance on vaccinated individuals? Readiness Looks Like... The service approach has evolved to balance safe in-person and virtual services across all work streams and for diverse customer needs.

	Ready?	TA Level Needed?	Promising Practice?
Ratings	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Low</b>	<b>No</b>

Readiness Comments, TA Needs, Promising Practices, and/or Lessons Learned :

Arkansas implemented a virtual job fair system designed to connect job seekers with employers. LWDBAs host drive-through job fairs in partnership with employers and drive-through enrollment events to ensure continuity of services. Increased use of video conferencing features including Microsoft Teams, Zoom, and Go-to-meetings have been effective tools in providing virtual services. IT specialists are in place to support increases in the use of online self-service features since the pandemic. Other virtual capabilities include online events, job fairs, text messaging, appointment booking, document sharing, development of ISS/IEPs, and career counseling. TA: Arkansas has identified the need for additional funding to support MIS enhancements. The grant team recently submitted a proposal for a USDOL CAREER DWG.

**Q7**

5) How do local areas and service providers modify existing sub-awards and contracts when there is a need to expand the scope and delivery of additional services quickly, or adjust or shift services to adapt to changing demand? State: a) How long does it normally take to issue funds after receiving a NOO? b) If more than 30 days, are you prepared to use an expedited process for any new funds? c) What, if any, barriers exist to issuing funds in 30 days or less? d) Are WIOA and/or Wagner-Peyser funds subject to state legislature appropriation or approval? e) What assistance is needed to overcome the barriers of getting funds out in a timely manner? Local: a) Are your current one-stop operator, service providers, and training providers able to increase capacity if needed? b) Are current subawards & contracts written in a way that they can be modified to adjust or increase the funding and service levels? c) How long would such modifications take, and is there a way to expedite them? d) If you need to add new providers, how long does that normally take? e) If more than 30 days, are you prepared to use an expedited process for any new funds you might receive? f) What assistance is needed to overcome the barriers to expanding or adding additional contracts in a timely manner? Readiness Looks Like... The state has implemented a strategy that included input from all the principles involved in the process that clearly ensures the funds can be sent to the local areas within 30 days or less, as required by WIOA, without delays. The local area has consulted with one-stop operators, service providers and training providers and developed a strategy for quickly expanding the scope of existing subawards & contracts and/or developed a process for quickly identifying and soliciting additional services that is compliant with Uniform Guidance.

	Ready?	TA Level Needed?	Promising Practice?
Rating	<b>Yes</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>No</b>

Readiness Comments, TA Needs, Promising Practices, and/or Lessons Learned:

Local areas submit award modifications to the ADWS Grants Manager. Modifications include a description of the updated scope of work and or/delivery in the form of an updated Budget and Budget Narrative. Once modifications complete ADWS' internal review process, and are finalized with the Director's signature, copies are emailed to the LWDA and WIOA Accounting. The process takes up to two weeks. In addition, ADWS is exploring a grants management system--Dulles Technology Partners Inc (DTPi), which exclusively engages in the development and implementation of the web-based full-life-cycle through software solutions.

**Q8**

6) Has the State re-assessed the financial and performance risk of LWDBs, sub-recipients, and contractors to determine if they are still financially viable and will re-open? a) How do you manage and safeguard cash and protect your other assets so that there is adequate separation of duties over all aspects of a financial transaction? (e.g., one individual should not prepare and approve checks and reconcile the bank statement) b) Are procedures in place to ensure purchases and other financial transactions are properly authorized? c) Are IT systems secure from unauthorized access? d) Are internal controls periodically tested and modified if needed? e) Have you developed a method for assessing sub-grantees to identify any sub-grantees who may be at risk? Do you have a process or procedure for handling these to minimize potential risk? f) What is the strategy for addressing any financial activities and requirements of a special appropriation, to be included in the state's / local area's fiscal monitoring for the next three years? (life of any specially-appropriated funds). g) Are systems in place to ensure all necessary instructions, directives, and guidelines for financial and administrative activities are distributed to all appropriate staff and sub-grantees? h) What are the state's / local area's strategies for monitoring the use of any additional funds? Readiness Looks Like... Fiscal/administrative monitoring/audits have identified problems in these areas and they have been resolved. The state/local is able to provide policies that address each of these issues. The state/local conducts risk assessments of all subrecipients awarded to determine if they are able to safeguard grant funds in accordance with the Uniform Guidance. The state/local is able to provide a monitoring plan for any additional funds.

	Ready?	TA Level Needed?	Promising Practice?
Ratings	<b>Yes</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>No</b>

Readiness Comments, TA Needs, Promising Practices, and/or Lessons Learned:

All ten local areas had monitoring reviews during the PY20. All areas were open and functioning using both in-person and remote services to participants. Two boards (Eastern and Southwest) are identified as high risk due to delinquencies in single audit submissions (two years), and issues with funds management. Both are making satisfactory progress towards resolution.

**Q9**

7) What has the state done to update policies and procedures regarding MOUs and infrastructure funding agreements to incorporate virtual service delivery, loss or gain of partners, or any other changes from the past year? a) Are there specific barriers to updating MOUs and IFAs? Readiness Looks Like... The state has thought through and modified policies and procedures in appropriate areas in response to COVID 19 realities and the services needed by customers.

	Ready?	TA Level Needed?	Promising Practice?
Ratings	<b>Yes</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>No</b>

Readiness Comments, TA Needs, Promising Practices, and/or Lessons Learned:

The state has not updated MOUs or IFAs, but it monitors the MOUs and has discussions with partners as needed.

**Q10**

8) If Congress appropriates additional workforce funds to help people get jobs or training, what steps would you be ready and able to take to ensure it could be obligated and expended timely, while maintaining expenditures on other funding streams? a) What is your fund utilization percent for formula funds? b) What is your fund utilization percent for COVID-DWGs or other DWGs? c) Is there a strategy to augment services rapidly while being thoughtful of the fund(s) lifecycle(s)?  
 Readiness Looks Like... State/local area has a proactive strategy for additional fund utilization, understands the urgency of the economic climate, knows which services are sound investments and can be ramped up to effectively meet customer needs, and is managing all funding streams to ensure effective use of all funds.

	Ready?	TA Level Needed?	Promising Practice?
Ratings	<b>Yes</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>No</b>

Readiness Comments, TA Needs, Promising Practices, and/or Lessons Learned:

ADWS's Grants Manager will ensure that the internal review process of new subawards is completed according to the 30-day requirement of funding accessibility. The Grants Manager will work with WIOA Accounting to ensure the FUR and budget to actual expenditures are being tracked monthly.

**Q11**

9) If Congress appropriates additional workforce funds, or if your state makes ARP or other funds available to your organization, what steps can you take quickly to modify state/local area reporting systems to capture additional financial or performance reporting requirements timely? What impediments might delay modifying reporting systems? a) What are the specific problems that will keep the state/local from reporting within a shortened time frame, or more frequently, if that is required?  
 Readiness Looks Like... The state/local area is prepared to review any new ETA policy guidance on performance and reporting, and to modify data systems to implement changes, test the system, and implement new edit checks to ensure data integrity. If needed, it will dedicate additional staff to reporting, tested the system, and has edit checks in place to ensure data integrity.

	Ready?	TA Level Needed?	Promising Practice?
Ratings	<b>Yes</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>No</b>

Readiness Comments, TA Needs, Promising Practices, and/or Lessons Learned:

The AWIS Financial System is the central web-based repository for financial transactions between ADWS' Financial Section and sub recipients throughout the state. AWIS controls and manages the distribution and tracking of federal funds received from USDOL.

**Q12**

10) What are the state/local strategies to identify, engage and enroll participants who may be unaware of the services available through the public workforce system? a) If strategies are not developed, when and how could you develop them? b) How have you ensured these strategies reach all populations, including marginalized and underserved populations? c) Have you begun to implement the strategies? If so, what have you accomplished to date? d) How can ETA help you with this? Readiness Looks Like...The state/local area has conducted research on how to outreach to and engage with potential participants who are unaware of the public workforce system. As a result of the research, the state/local area has created an outreach and engagement plan to make the public more aware of the available services of the public workforce system.

	Ready?	TA Level Needed?	Promising Practice?
Ratings	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Medium</b>	<b>No</b>

Readiness Comments, TA Needs, Promising Practices, and/or Lessons Learned:

Social media presence is enhanced on both the state and local levels. Best practices shared via monthly meetings include: Setting up booths at local food and backpack give-away community events; including WIOA information during public announcements (e.g., radio, tv, newsletters etc.); Participating in RESEA virtual workshops; and other DLW events. Concern: Arkansas continues to see a decline in the number of participants. TA: the state identified a need for training and best practices for effective participant outreach strategies.

**Q13**

11) How will partners, including non-traditional and community organizations, be engaged to improve access to services for all populations, including marginalized populations? Is this different for in-person vs. online services? a) What kind of analysis was conducted both at the state and local level to inform these strategies? b) What decisions were made regarding the capacity of the state/local level to provide remote and in-person services to marginalized populations? c) What connections with partners or community organizations have the state/local made to ensure the provision of remote and in-person services to marginalized populations? d) What challenges does the state/local anticipate in maintaining remote and in-person services? Readiness Looks Like...The state/local area has conducted a thorough analysis of its connections with partners, including community organizations, to ensure marginalized individuals/populations have access to remote services.

	Ready?	TA Level Needed?	Promising Practice?
Ratings	<b>Yes</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>No</b>

Readiness Comments, TA Needs, Promising Practices, and/or Lessons Learned:

ADWS hosted Spring and Fall 2021 statewide WIOA Partners Meetings, where core and non-core program representatives shared information regarding engagement of various populations within the workforce system. Both events were virtual with up to 300 participants. MOUs are in place with core and non-core partners. For marginalized populations, ADWS implemented a plan to utilize its' mobile workforce units to serve rural areas where local offices are

**Q14**

12) What actions has the state/local area taken to ensure eligible training providers have the capacity to meet the current and projected needs for additional training enrollments for in-demand courses? a) What kind of specific changes have been implemented or considered to address ETP training capacity or course offering to bring them in line with newly identified employer needs?b) What kind of specific changes have been implemented or considered to address ETP training capacity or course offering to meet projected needs for additional training enrollments?c) What role has LMI played in the analysis of regional economies?d) Does the state/local area anticipate any problems addressing the occupational training needs of its regional economy?e) In its review and update of ETP providers, did the state/local area experience decline or growth in course offerings?Readiness Looks Like...The state/local has completed an analysis of the projected needs for additional training enrollments and assessed the current capacity of its ETP list to meet the increased needs. LMI has also been updated to reflect current demand industries. The state/local has begun to expand the ETP list to meet the additional needs.

	Ready?	TA Level Needed?	Promising Practice?
Ratings	<b>Yes</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>No</b>

Readiness Comments, TA Needs, Promising Practices, and/or Lessons Learned:

ADWS transitioned to a new system -- AJL Provider Link. In December 2020, ETPs were notified of this transition to AJL ProviderLink. ADWS staff provided technical assistance and training to the ETPs which include video and screenshot instructions for setting up their user, training provider and program accounts, and setting up virtual meetings for courses or program assistance. As part of the Arkansas Economic Recovery Task Force's work, a statewide survey of Arkansas businesses was conducted by the Arkansas Community Colleges to identify hiring trends and training needs.

**Q15**

13) How has the state/local area gathered data to review eligible training provider (ETP) programs and their outcomes, particularly in the context of meeting the needs of diverse populations and changes in demand occupations? How has this review of ETP data led the state or local areas to adjust what programs or training providers are included? a) Is the data robust enough to determine whether all WIOA customers are enrolling in and being successful in ETP programs? b) Do the outcomes data, or other data, help determine where there might be differences in who has been able to access training, or who have successfully completed training and entered employment? c) What kind of specific changes have been implemented or considered to address ETP training course content to ensure they are diverse and equitably address the needs of all citizens?d) Who has the state/local consulted with in conducting the analysis of the course content? e) Does the state/local anticipate any challenges in reviewing the ETP course content?Readiness Looks Like...The state/local has analyzed the course content of Eligible Training Providers in the context of ensuring they are diverse and equitably address the needs of all citizens and in consideration of changes to in-demand occupations in the past year. The state/local has apprised the ETPs of changes that are needed in course content to ensure they are diverse and ensure access to quality training for all citizens, with an emphasis on traditionally marginalized populations.

	Ready?	TA Level Needed?	Promising Practice?
Ratings	<b>Yes</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>No</b>

Readiness Comments, TA Needs, Promising Practices, and/or Lessons Learned:

The state and local areas review ETP programs and ETPL in the Arkansas Consumer Report System monthly and annually. The state and local areas review the performance reporting in AJL. This review has led the state and local areas to adjust the programs; through Arkansas' review, management discovered the changes in demand occupations during the pandemic.

**Q16**

14) How has the state/local area expanded services to its UI claimants, including those in temporary pandemic-related programs? How will the state/local area respond to potential surges in demand resulting from changes in the UI program, such as the expiration of pandemic flexibilities and programs or changes to work search requirements? a) How does the state’s strategy ensure meaningful assistance (assistance with the claim process and work search or other UI requirements) is available to all claimants and includes integrity components, such as a feedback loop to the UI program to report any potential eligibility issues or other UI compliance concerns?b) What pandemic UI flexibilities/temporary programs are still in operation?c) Does the state have a plan for phasing out these flexibilities/temporary programs?d) Does the state's plan include a means of notifying and ensuring claimants' understanding of program changes /availability of work search and UI assistance?e) Do the strategies account for all UI claimants, not just those served by WPRS/RESEA or regular benefits?f) Does the state have a strategy to include rural areas not served by an AJC and resources for claimants with limited computer/broadband access?Readiness Looks Like...In addition to providing unemployment benefits, a core purpose of the UI program is getting workers back to suitable work. States that have not yet restored work search requirements should have in place or be developing a plan to respond to a potential surge in demand for reemployment services that will result following the restoration of work search requirements/termination of temporary UI programs. Strategies should be robust and account for all UI claimants and include partnerships with WIOA DW, ES, and other workforce partners.

	Ready?	TA Level Needed?	Promising Practice?
Ratings	<b>Yes</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>No</b>

Readiness Comments, TA Needs, Promising Practices, and/or Lessons Learned:

All program requirements are explained at the Initial RESEA review and workshops. Arkansas suspended the work search requirement during the pandemic. It was reinstated in July of 2020. The Federal programs stopped in Arkansas in June 2021. There are four mobile units that can be activated to help claimants with job search and filing unemployment. New resources include the creation of a statewide community resources portal in partnership with the Arkansas Department of Education. Also, the Governor's new "Ready for Life" web-based platform initiative, is designed to help jobseekers improve their skills or change careers as well as gather career and employment data from business and industry.

**Q17**

15) What UI reemployment programs is the state currently operating and how have they been integrated into the workforce system/ economic recovery efforts? Has the state fully reactivated operations of its Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessments [RESEA]\*?(Examples of UI programs include but are not limited to Worker Profiling and Reemployment Services [WPRS], Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessments [RESEA], Short-Time Compensation [STC]/Work Sharing, and Self Employment Assistance [SEA])\*Resources available at <https://rc.workforcegaps.org/> a) Is the state operating a statewide RESEA program? If no, or RESEA is not provided statewide, is WPRS provided (Note one of these programs must be operational and serving claimants identified as likely to exhaust benefits)?b) Once selected is the claimant's participation in RESEA and/or WPRS required? If not, why?c) Does the state operate any optional UI programs such as STC or SEA? If not, is the state aware of these programs and their benefits?d) Have these programs been modified in response to the pandemic/economic recovery efforts? If so, how?e) How are these programs integrated into the workforce system?Readiness Looks Like...In addition to UI benefits, the UI program offers a variety of required and optional programs that can assist economic recovery efforts. States must be providing services to claimants likely to exhaust via a RESEA or WPRS program. States not operating additional optional programs should be aware of these programs and their benefits.

	Ready?	TA Level Needed?	Promising Practice?
Ratings	<b>Yes</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>No</b>

Readiness Comments, TA Needs, Promising Practices, and/or

Lessons Learned:

Arkansas operates a statewide RESEA program. Participants in the RESEA program are obligated to meet various program requirements that include completing a Career Action Plan (CAP), conducting labor market research, tracking work search activities, providing a resume, and participating in ongoing reemployment services. During RESEA workshops, claimants are exposed to various WIOA services and programs that will assist individuals in achieving educational and career goals. ADWS' Labor Market and Dislocated Worker Taskforce Unit also has assisted employers with lay-off aversion strategies and other employer services, such as WOTC.

**Q18**

16) Is the state operating a Short-Time Compensation (STC) or Self-Employment Assistance (SEA) program as part of its economic recovery efforts? If not what are the obstacles to implementing STC and/or SEA programs? If the state is operating an STC program, is the program being used to support employers incrementally bringing back employees laid-off during the pandemic in line with UIPL 10-20? a) Does the state operate STC and SEA? If not, are they aware of the programs and their benefits? b) Is the state aware of the current grant opportunity (ends 12/23/23), for states with STC programs in their laws, for funding to implement or improve their STC program? c) Are STC and SEA integrated into the state's recovery efforts as both a layoff aversion and rehiring tool (STC) and reemployment tool (SEA)? d) Does the state have a plan to promote, educate, and provide assistance to employers regarding its STC program? e) Does the state have a plan to promote, educate, and provide assistance to self-employed individuals trying to return to work, and those aspiring to be self-employed (SEA)?  
 Readiness Looks Like... State staff should be aware of STC's potential use as both a lay-off aversion and rehiring tool and the availability of funding to bolster these programs. Context: STC (aka "work-sharing" or "shared work") was designed to help prevent layoffs by allowing workers to remain employed at reduced hours and still collect a portion of their UI benefits. STC is commonly known as a lay-off aversion strategy but it can also be used to help employers rehire already laid-off workers. For states operating an STC program, the CARES act provides for full federal reimbursement of STC payments through 9/6/21 and there is a current grant opportunity for states to obtain funding to implement or improve their STC program.

	Ready?	TA Level Needed?	Promising Practice?
Ratings	<b>Yes</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>No</b>

Readiness Comments, TA Needs, Promising Practices, and/or

Lessons Learned:

Arkansas has a Short Term Compensation/Shared Work program. There are no issues.

**Q19**

17) What is the state/local area's plan for increasing the volume of paid and unpaid work experiences, which may include summer and other employment, youth apprenticeship or pre-apprenticeship programs, internships and job shadowing, and on-the-job training? a) What is the state's strategy for making work experiences available to youth most in need? b) How does this strategy engage and meet the needs of all eligible youth, including those with disabilities or language barriers, and other marginalized or underserved populations? c) Does the state emphasize paid work experience and pre-apprenticeship? If so, how? d) How are those work experiences included in a broader service strategy that addresses all needs identified in individual needs assessments? e) Has the state/local developed specific goals for the number of youth to be served and types of work experiences to be provided?  
 Readiness Looks Like... The state/local has established a goal for the number of youth that they plan on engaging in work experience and the types of work experience they intend to offer. A thorough assessment of the youth will be conducted and matched to work experience opportunities. The local area has developed an outreach strategy to find worksites that will provide a meaningful work environment for the youth.

	Ready?	TA Level Needed?	Promising Practice?
Ratings	<b>Yes</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>No</b>

Readiness Comments, TA Needs, Promising Practices, and/or

Lessons Learned:

Arkansas promotes WBL (including virtual), and works to identify challenges through its statewide technical assistance.

Apprenticeship navigators will be placed throughout the state to help perform outreach duties with employers and community partners. The topic for October's Workforce Wednesday's was WBL. State, Local, and Federal apprenticeship experts shared information on how best to increase registered apprenticeship programs.



**Q20**

18) What is the state's/local area's approach to building and maintaining long-term strategic relationships with businesses in order to support reemployment and layoff aversion? What specific operational steps have you taken to support business relationships, such as communication methods, data systems including but not limited to customer relationship management software, coordination among programs, or anything else? a) Describe the process that is planned or in place to ensure and support those jobs being listed.b) Has there been any outreach to support the governor or state legislature mandating that all jobs created through the ARP or potential new legislation addressing jobs, infrastructure, or the environment be posted through the state's labor exchange system?c) Absent a legislative mandate to list these jobs, has there been any outreach to support this concept? d) What might keep this from happening?e) How do you ensure all job listings are bona fide jobs with legitimate employers (and avoid postings that are merely fishing schemes for PII or are from businesses that are out of compliance with state or federal employment law)?  
 Readiness Looks Like...An outreach strategy has been developed at the state and local level to ensure that all jobs created by the American Rescue Plan or potential new legislation addressing jobs, infrastructure, or the environment.

	Ready?	TA Level Needed?	Promising Practice?
Ratings	<b>Yes</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>No</b>

Readiness Comments, TA Needs, Promising Practices, and/or Lessons Learned:

The Arkansas Economic Recovery Task Force is an industry-specific platform, at [www.arkansasready.com](http://www.arkansasready.com), that provides information on how the Arkansas economy could recover from the effects of COVID-19. The information provided is based on science, data, and used by state leaders and industry leaders to make informed decisions. Arkansas' Economic Recovery Task Force delivered its Progress Report to Arkansas Governor Asa Hutchinson, which included specific recommendations. The WIOA Roundtable Executive Committee-Business Services subcommittees implemented strategies to contact hundreds of employers to gauge hiring needs.

**Q21**

19) What is the state/local area's strategy to review state job banks and job listing processes, to ensure as many new jobs and new employers are captured as possible? How has the state/local area adjusted how it shares job search assistance and job listings with workforce system customers? a) Describe the process that is planned or in place to ensure and support those jobs being listed.b) Has there been any outreach to support the governor or state legislature mandating that all jobs created through the ARP or potential new legislation addressing jobs, infrastructure, or the environment be posted through the state's labor exchange system?c) Absent a legislative mandate to list these jobs, has there been any outreach to support this concept? d) What might keep this from happening?e) How do you ensure all job listings are bona fide jobs with legitimate employers (and avoid postings that are merely fishing schemes for PII or are from businesses that are out of compliance with state or federal employment law)?  
 Readiness Looks Like...An outreach strategy has been developed at the state and local level to ensure that all jobs created by the American Rescue Plan or potential new legislation addressing jobs, infrastructure, or the environment.

	Ready?	TA Level Needed?	Promising Practice?
Ratings	<b>Yes</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>No</b>

Readiness Comments, TA Needs, Promising Practices, and/or Lessons Learned:

ES and VETS staff conduct weekly reviews of the job bank system. Steady increases in posted job vacancies indicate higher employer usage since the availability of the COVID-19 vaccinations. Increased social media presence and more outreach to employers are methods Arkansas has changed to increase promotion of job search assistance.

**Q22**

20) How does the state/local area help workers find work-based learning opportunities (including on-the-job training (OJT), pre-apprenticeship, and Registered Apprenticeships)? How does the state/local area help businesses host work-based learning? a) What changes did the state/local area make to work-based learning in the last year? b) When were policies last updated/were policies changed in response to the pandemic? c) How might the state/local area adjust work-based learning to align with current labor market conditions? d) Did the state consider potential changes to reflect the growing role of remote/virtual work? e) How do you document the learning, credentials earned, and skills gained through WBL? e) Does the state/local area have an outreach plan to further promote work-based learning to both employers and individuals seeking work/training, including youth, dislocated workers, current and former UI claimants, and individuals disproportionately impacted by the pandemic? f) Does the outreach plan include expanding opportunities in construction, healthcare, environmental and other industries to support the American Rescue Plan and potential Infrastructure and Jobs bills? **Readiness Looks Like...** A robust work-based learning strategy actively engages workers from diverse backgrounds, employers across different industries, institutions of higher education, and policymakers. Readiness includes well-defined policies that promote work-based learning opportunities as an earn-and-learn strategy and leverage available resources, such as WIOA funding and pre-apprenticeship and Registered Apprenticeship opportunities. Readiness also includes procedures to document the learning, credentials earned, and skills gained through WBL. States should be prepared to expand outreach to additional employers, especially those in industries targeted by broader recovery efforts.

	Ready?	TA Level Needed?	Promising Practice?
Ratings	<b>Yes</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>No</b>

Readiness Comments, TA Needs, Promising Practices, and/or Lessons Learned:

An NGA WBL committee led by Arkansas Senator Jane English and Governor Hutchinson is working to identify challenges with WBL and working to promote more WBL across the state. ADWS partners with the Office of Skills Development to contact employers directly and share information about WBL as well as initiate agreements and contracts. Arkansas uses different resources such as the app, Salesforce, and other methods to help participants find WBL/OJTs. Business services reps are a part of local strategies to increase WBL opportunities.

**Q23**

21) Rapid Response can be used to promote business engagement, support layoff aversion, and support rapid reemployment. How has the state adapted Rapid Response policies, practices, or use of LMI in the last year? What changes might the state make to ensure Rapid Response can be as flexible as possible, given the economic changes underway? a) If policies do not exist, when will they be developed? b) How often are existing policies reviewed and improved, and what information is used to make such improvements? c) What new policies or practices has the state/local area developed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic that will continue to be used to improve business engagement and Rapid Response activities in the future? d) How do RR policies prioritize business engagement, layoff aversion and reemployment? e) How are RR policies designed for flexibility, timeliness, and delivery of solutions to customers? f) How do you use LMI and other data to inform how you deliver RR services, and how is it used to help RR customers make informed choices about the services they use and the jobs they seek? g) What data other than traditional LMI do you use? Readiness Looks Like...Rapid Response policies exist, are frequently reviewed and potentially revised, and are understood and followed by all staff, that promote layoff aversion, reemployment, and business engagement as core elements. RR is part of a continuum of solutions for individuals affected by job loss. RR employs strategies to identify individuals who can be reemployed quickly and supports others who transition into workforce services. Rapid Response services are not a stand-alone set of activities but instead are part of a comprehensive response to job loss. Proactive planning for policy development or approach to services oriented to the evolved needs of the business community given the return to work posture of most states and regions.

	Ready?	TA Level Needed?	Promising Practice?
Ratings	<b>Yes</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>No</b>

Readiness Comments, TA Needs, Promising Practices, and/or Lessons Learned:

RR services have been provided remotely statewide with enhanced use of technologies. ADWS increased its' fleet of mobile workforce units and deployed them during the pandemic to adapt to the economic changes. Arkansas' strategy includes being more proactive, and learning from other states. RR services are available virtually and in-person, depending on employer needs.

**Q24**

22) What statutory provisions, if any, challenge your ability to quickly scale up services? What waivers, if any, have you considered requesting? a) What waiver/flexibility are you considering and how would it help you expand service capacity? b) Q for state only: Have local areas asked for flexibility the state wishes to give? Are those flexibilities a matter of updating (or communicating existing) state policies? Would any require a waiver from USDOL? c) If the state/local is considering requesting a waiver or other flexibility, when do you expect to officially submit a request? d) Are there other ways you can accomplish this if the Department cannot grant that waiver/flexibility? Readiness Looks Like...The state/local has considered waivers and other flexibilities and determined either that it does not need them, or is preparing a waiver request and expects to submit it within 30 days.

	Ready?	TA Level Needed?	Promising Practice?
Ratings	<b>Yes</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>No</b>

Readiness Comments, TA Needs, Promising Practices, and/or Lessons Learned:

No specific statutory provisions have been identified that would affect the state's ability to scale-up quickly. Arkansas is interested in any other waiver requests being pursued by other states regarding Reversion- 2021. Trade related. A current issue exists with TAA because the new law removed the case management funding. Oregon and Massachusetts are used as role models for Arkansas. [https://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/attach/TEN/TEN\\_01-21.pdf](https://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/attach/TEN/TEN_01-21.pdf)

**Q25**

23) How has the state/local area identified which Adult/Dislocated Worker, and Youth services, including training services, were most effective in the last year? How has the state used administrative data or state or federal evaluations to identify which services (or a mix of services) should be prioritized in the future? a) How did you identify the effective services? What criteria were used to determine effectiveness? b) What services were identified? c) How are you making them a priority now or in the future? Readiness Looks Like... The state/local has considered waivers and other flexibilities and determined either that it does not need them, or is preparing a waiver request and expects to submit it within 30 days.

	Ready?	TA Level Needed?	Promising Practice?
Ratings	<b>Yes</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>No</b>

Readiness Comments, TA Needs, Promising Practices, and/or Lessons Learned:

The state has not identified any services, via data analysis or evaluations, that were more effective than other services. It is in the process of reviewing a recently issued report: Arkansas WIOA Systems Evaluation, Skills Gap Analysis, And Customer Service Assessment, conducted by the University of Arkansas, to make that determination.

**Q26**

24) What specific actions have you taken, or do you plan to take, to ensure equity, diversity, and inclusion in recovery and reemployment? What has and has not worked? How do you measure success? a) How have you increased your virtual services and outreach efforts to allow workforce services to reach a wider range of jobseekers, especially those from historically marginalized communities? b) How have you focused outreach campaigns to reach historically marginalized communities? c) How have you formed strategic partnerships, and contractual arrangements where appropriate, with community organizations or other entities to develop targeted efforts to identify and enroll eligible participants from priority communities? d) How have you expanded the availability of services and information in multiple languages, and/or interpretive services, to meet the needs of non-English speakers and individuals with hearing or sight disabilities? Readiness Looks Like... The state/local area has taken, or has specific plans to take, the following actions: Increased its virtual presence to allow workforce services to reach a wider range of jobseekers, especially those from historically marginalized communities; focused outreach campaigns designed to reach historically marginalized communities; formed strategic partnerships, as well as contractual arrangements where appropriate, with community organizations or other entities to develop targeted efforts aimed at identifying and enrolling eligible participants from priority communities; expanded availability of services and information in multiple languages, and/or interpretive services, to meet the needs of non-English speakers and individuals with hearing or sight disabilities.

	Ready?	TA Level Needed?	Promising Practice?
Ratings	<b>Yes</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>No</b>

Readiness Comments, TA Needs, Promising Practices, and/or Lessons Learned:

Arkansas' WIOA Roundtable, comprised of representatives of WIOA Titles I-IV, TANF, and SNAP E&T is in the process of addressing these issues. Representatives have a working knowledge of Older Americans, Migrant & Seasonal Farmworkers, Veterans, and other populations. Customer surveys are conducted by evaluators and internal and external monitors of the one-stop system. Required posters are in each AJC with the names, telephone numbers, of the EO Officer with email address, area WIOA EO Officers, and the address of the national Civil Rights Center. Success is measured through customer satisfaction surveys, performance and other reports.

**Q27**

25) What program adjustments have you made because of COVID, or in anticipation of the recovery, that you intend to continue beyond the COVID recovery period?

Drive-up job fairs, virtual job fairs, increased use of technology to conduct business virtually, and use of mobile units to provide services in underserved communities.

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**Q28**

26) Across any of the aforementioned functions does the state/local have two or three lessons learned from the pandemic that they want to share?

Be proactive vs. reactive. ADWS Core Values: Accountability, Discipline, Agility, Passion, and Teamwork. Never forget who we serve and why we serve. More active with community and local areas. Job sharing is a layoff aversion strategy in Arkansas.

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**For Consideration of the  
Arkansas Workforce Development Board**

**January 22, 2022**

**AGENDA ITEM 6 – INFORMATIONAL:** Workforce System Evaluation Update Findings and Recommendations

**INFORMATION/RATIONALE:** As required by 20 CFR § 682.200(d), States must use funds reserved by the Governor for statewide activities to conduct evaluations of activities under the WIOA Title I core programs in order to promote continuous improvement, research and test innovative services and strategies, and achieve high levels of performance and outcomes.

The University of Arkansas completed this project and presented the evaluation to the Board at the October 19, 2021 meeting.

Staff will provide a deeper dive into the Findings and Recommendations from this evaluation herein.

ARKANSAS WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM EVALUATION,  
SKILLS GAP ANALYSIS, AND CUSTOMER SERVICE SURVEYS  
FALL 2021

In partnership with the Arkansas Division of Workforce Services, the University of Arkansas Counselor Education Program and the University of Arkansas Walton School of Business conducted a comprehensive evaluation of the workforce systems directed and managed by the Division.

Dr. Brent Williams with the UA Counselor Education Program served as the Principal Investigator for the project, and Mervin Jebaraj, Director of the Center for Business and Economic Research, acted as Co-Principal Investigator. Dr. Keith Vire, with the Counselor Education Program was Project Director.

The findings and recommendations for this study are summarized below. The full text of the findings and recommendations are included in the official System Evaluation Report on page 159 (findings) and page 168 (recommendations).

**FINDING #1**

**CO-ENROLLMENTS:** Levels of Co-Enrollment in partner programs: Results of customer reviews in the three selected workforce areas confirmed a range of 2.5% co-enrollment to a high of 16.6% for these individual partner providers, with an overall average rate for all reporting providers of 7.34%. This is not an optimum rate of co-enrollment. The evaluators find that the rates of co-enrollment in partner programs during the most recent reporting period is not acceptable.

**RECOMMENDATION #1**

The evaluators recommend that Arkansas Workforce Development Leadership and the Arkansas Workforce Development Board and area managers develop data collection methods to effectively track and monitor rates of co-enrollment. Only by having accurate and up-to-date information concerning co-enrollment can ADWS begin to encourage and promote additional co-enrollment with WIOA partners.

**FINDING #2**

**PARTNER PROGRAMS AND AGENCIES:** The number of partners listed by the three selected workforce areas were thirty-six in the Central Arkansas Planning and Development District, fifteen in the Northeast Arkansas Workforce Development Center, and ten in the Western Arkansas Planning and Development District. The discrepancy in these numbers is significant, and it is the opinion of the evaluators that other potential partner programs are available in at least two of the three workforce areas.

**RECOMMENDATION #2**

WIOA places a strong emphasis on planning across multiple partner programs to ensure alignment in service delivery. Many organizations reported that while they are willing, they do not have data available to adequately partner with Workforce Centers. These organizations are

ARKANSAS WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM EVALUATION,  
SKILLS GAP ANALYSIS, AND CUSTOMER SERVICE SURVEYS  
FALL 2021

willing and even eager to partner with ADWS centers, but don't have processes in place to collect data and provide support and assistance. It is recommended by the evaluators that Arkansas Workforce Development Leadership and the Arkansas Workforce Development Board work with all workforce areas to identify and engage additional community partners, and to provide training and assistance to those partners in data collection techniques.

**FINDING #3**

**BUSINESS SURVEY RESULTS:** The survey of business partners was conducted for this evaluation by the Center for Business and Economic Research at the University of Arkansas' Walton College of Business. Overall, the report finds that WIOA recipients display a moderate degree of satisfaction with the WIOA program and the ADWS. Some areas of concern were reported, however, and these findings are reported in the expanded findings section of the report.

**RECOMMENDATION #3**

It is recommended by the evaluators that ADWS address each of the concerns expressed in the survey. These concerns are serious, and even though the overall results showed a "...moderate degree of satisfaction with WIOA programs..." the concerns must be addressed.

These concerns include: Less than half of WIOA recipients (42%) reported receiving the majority of services needed to address workforce needs; Many respondents described Workforce Center staff as "unresponsive" or "inattentive;" Many comments brought up the difficulty of posting job openings through the ADWS or the employers' website; Several comments noted a lack of interaction between workforce center staff and businesses. The evaluators recommend that additional training programs be established to improve staff/customer relationships.

**FINDING #4**

**CUSTOMER SURVEY RESULTS:** This survey showed a 62% overall satisfaction rate with WIOA programs and a 68% satisfaction rate with Workforce Center staff. The survey found that, "many" respondents reported "poor customer service", "a rude attitude", "inattentive staff", or "uninformed staff". In spite of the high overall satisfaction rating with the program, the fact that "many" respondents cited these issues, the evaluators find that a critical need exists for additional training in customer service for all local workforce center staff. In addition, the evaluators find that the current phone system does not appear suited to surge demand of ADWS or WIOA services.



ARKANSAS WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM EVALUATION,  
SKILLS GAP ANALYSIS, AND CUSTOMER SERVICE SURVEYS  
FALL 2021

RECOMMENDATION #4

This survey showed a 62% overall satisfaction rate with WIOA programs and a 68% satisfaction rate with Workforce Center staff. Comments referring to “rude behavior” and “poor customer service” by staff, however, leads the evaluators to strongly recommend additional training in customer service for all local workforce center staff.

In addition, the survey found that, “The current phone system does not appear suited to surge demand of ADWS or WIOA services.” Because it is possible that the increased demand on the phone system due to the COVID pandemic is at least partially responsible for the problems reported by customers, the evaluators highly recommend that the phone system be evaluated immediately. If these problems continue post-COVID, the evaluators recommend that the system be upgraded as soon as it is feasible. This upgrade, installed across all workforce centers in the state will no doubt be expensive, but quality services are dependent upon an effective and reliable communication system.

OVERALL RECOMMENDATION

**It is highly recommended that ADWS establish methods for high performing centers and workforce areas to provide training for other centers.**



**For Consideration of the  
Arkansas Workforce Development Board**

**January 25, 2022**

**ACTION ITEM 7 – ACTION:** Assistance to Areas with High Concentrations of Eligible Youth

**RECOMMENDATION:** It is recommended that the Arkansas Workforce Development Board approve the additional assistance to areas of high concentrations of eligible youth and to make allocations based on the previously approved allocation methodology.

**INFORMATION/RATIONALE:** Under Section 129(b)(F) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, statewide funds are required to be used to provide additional assistance to local areas that have high concentrations of eligible youth.

The recommended allocation methodology below will both define which areas are considered “high concentration” and provide a method for allocating funds budgeted for this activity to those areas based on their respective percentage of estimated eligible youth and their barrier to participant count within the Youth program for the previous year.

The current allocation methodology was presented to and approved by the Strategic Planning Committee on September 25, 2019. This Committee subsequently recommended approval by the State Board. The State Board approved this allocation methodology on October 15, 2019.



# **Funding Allocation Methodology for WIOA High Concentration of Eligible Youth**

Arkansas Workforce Development Board Meeting  
January 25, 2022



# WIOA High Concentration of Eligible Youth

**Purpose:** To award funding for assistance to the Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDB) for “Eligible Youth” found in the WIOA law, Title 1, section 129.

**Eligible Youth** are defined as individuals 16-24 years of age, who are considered low-income persons, and who have one or more of the following risk factors:



# Eligible Youth have one or more of the following risk factors:

- Deficient in basic literacy skills
- A school dropout
- Within the age of compulsory attendance, but has not attended school for at least the most recent complete school year calendar quarter
- Homeless, a runaway, or foster child



# WIOA High Concentration of Eligible Youth General Information

**General Information:** It is the Division of Workforce Services' intent to categorize and prioritize risk factors that can be documented with reliable data from the following:

- **2010 Census**
- **Arkansas Department of Education**
- **Arkansas Department of Human Services**
- **Arkansas Crime Information Center**
- **Arkansas Department of Health**



# ADWS Methodology to Define WIOA High Concentration of Eligible Youth for Additional Funding - Part One

Count the individuals for each county in each of the categories we have available data

Group the State's 75 counties into Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDA)

Add the total number for each county in the LWDA to determine the total number in each LWDA





# ADWS Methodology to Define WIOA High Concentration of Eligible Youth for Additional Funding - Part One continued

There will be individuals counted more than once because they fit more than one category, but that will serve to weight more heavily areas that have more individuals with multiple eligibility factors

In all category calculations for the City of Little Rock LWDA and Central LWDA, a percentage of Pulaski County totals are used

The percentage used for the City of Little Rock LWDA is the City of Little Rock Population divided by the Total Pulaski County Population

# ADWS Methodology to Define WIOA High Concentration of Eligible Youth for Additional Funding - Part One continued

Divide the LWDA's weighted number of "Eligible Youth" by the LWDA's total population to determine what weighted percentage of the LWDA's population consists of Eligible Youth.

We propose any area that has a weighted percentage of Eligible Youth, as compared to its overall population, that is equal to or greater than \*23% will be deemed as having a "High Concentration of Eligible Youth" for purposes of the funding formula.

## ADWS Methodology to Define WIOA High Concentration of Eligible Youth for Additional Funding - Part One continued

Each **LWDA** that has a weighted percentage of Eligible Youth equal to \*23% or more will share in the funds.

This is based on a formula of Total Eligible Youth divided by the total dollars available, and then uses that multiplier to determine each districts amount to be awarded.

# ADWS Methodology to Define WIOA High Concentration of Eligible Youth for Additional Funding - Part Two

Funding Per LWDB based on ADWS Youth High Risk Percentage



# ADWS HCY – Summary and Allocations Part 1 and Part 2

Version 1.0

<b>Allotment Amount</b>
<b>\$ 200,000.00</b>

<b>Part 1 - Summary and Allocation</b>						<b>Allotment Amount</b>
<b>Local Area</b>	<b>% of Estimated Eligible Youth</b>	<b>&gt; or = 23%</b>	<b>Factor</b>	<b>Percentage</b>		
					<b>\$ 100,000.00</b>	
Eastern	23.92%	23.92%	0.009235563	8.98%	\$	8,983.97
Northwest	24.67%	24.67%	0.016737662	16.28%	\$	16,281.70
Western	23.37%	23.37%	0.003695444	3.59%	\$	3,594.77
Northeast	24.31%	24.31%	0.01309863	12.74%	\$	12,741.80
Southwest	23.37%	23.37%	0.003695444	3.59%	\$	3,594.77
West Central	22.73%					
Southeast	22.49%					
Central	23.99%	23.99%	0.009878369	9.61%	\$	9,609.27
Little Rock	27.65%	27.65%	0.046459341	45.19%	\$	45,193.71
North Central	21.54%					
				171.28%	10.28%	100.00%
					<b>\$ 100,000.00</b>	

<b>Part 2 - Summary and Allocation</b>				<b>Allotment Amount</b>		
<b>Local Area</b>	<b>Barrier/ Participant</b>			<b>Percentage</b>		
					<b>\$ 100,000.00</b>	
Eastern	2.45			12.80%	\$	12,796.54
Northwest	2.70			14.09%	\$	14,088.50
Western	2.26			11.83%	\$	11,834.93
Northeast	2.76			14.42%	\$	14,416.03
Southwest	3.53			18.43%	\$	18,431.58
West Central				0.00%	\$	-
Southeast				0.00%	\$	-
Central	1.28			6.71%	\$	6,707.14
Little Rock	4.16			21.73%	\$	21,725.28
North Central				0.00%	\$	-
		19.14		100.00%	<b>\$ 100,000.00</b>	



# Total Allocations per Local Area based on total funds of \$200,000.00

100%	Total Summary and Allocation	Allotment Amount
	<b>Local Area</b>	<b>\$ 200,000.00</b>
	Eastern	\$ 21,780.51
	Northwest	\$ 30,370.20
	Western	\$ 15,429.70
	Northeast	\$ 27,157.83
	Southwest	\$ 22,026.35
	West Central	
	Southeast	
	Central	\$ 16,316.41
	Little Rock	\$ 66,918.99
	North Central	
	-	100.00%
		<b>\$ 200,000.00</b>



# Funding Deadlines and Restrictions

- All awarded funds must be expended by February 28, 2023.
- All expenditures must be in compliance with Uniform Guidance 2 CFR 200.
- Financial reports are due NLT the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month.
- Performance reports are due quarterly NLT the 15<sup>th</sup> of the monthly following the end of each quarter.



# Funding Allocation Methodology for WIOA High Concentration of Eligible Youth

# Questions?





**For Consideration of the  
Arkansas Workforce Development Board**

**January 25, 2022**

**AGENDA ITEM 8 – INFORMATION:** Reimagine Arkansas Workforce (RAW) Grant Update

**INFORMATION/RATIONALE:** The Department of Education Issued a Notice Inviting Applications (NIA) for the FY 2020 Education Stabilization Fund – *Reimagine Workforce Preparation Grants* program under the CARES Act, making available \$127.5 million. The Arkansas Workforce Development Board was one of eight State Workforce Boards awarded this funding opportunity open to all states, Puerto Rico, and the District of Columbia.

The partners in this grant are the Arkansas Workforce Development Board, Arkansas Division of Workforce Services, University of Arkansas Global Campus, Shorter College and iDatafy LLC.

Staff will provide an update regarding the implementation of this grant.

The U.S. Department of Education awarded a grant worth over \$13 million to the Arkansas Workforce Development Board and the Arkansas Division of Workforce Services to fund the Reimagine Arkansas Workforce Project.

This state-wide coordinated effort is intended to benefit Arkansans who have been economically impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Project partners include state agencies, U of A Global Campus Professional and Workforce Development, Shorter College, and iDatafy LLC.

The Reimagine Arkansas Workforce Project helps Arkansans enter or thrive in the workplace by providing free, short-term, job training online.

The first few months of the initial year of the Reimagine Arkansas Workforce Project was focused upon start up activities such as hiring personnel, advertising, recruiting and enrolling participants.

During the last half of the initial year, progress was made in the recruitment efforts and enrollments.

The Reimagine Arkansas Workforce Project has benefitted from a significant amount of media coverage as well as a high level of “word of mouth” from participants.

Both the U of A – Global Campus and Shorter College have placed a high level of emphasis upon targeting unemployment insurance claimants that are potentially at a higher risk to exhaust unemployment weekly benefits. Additional efforts have focused upon removing employment barriers in order to increase the rates of participant success.

In addition to UI claimants, the project has made concerted efforts to assist other populations, including the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Program participants, Veterans, Individuals previously attached to the Criminal Justice System, and Individuals living in rural areas. In fact, there has been an increased number of participants residing in the Delta Region of the state.

The Arkansas Division of Workforce Services continues to work very closely with the subrecipients, Shorter College and University of Arkansas Global Campus, by engaging them and networking with our WIOA Partner Programs, our ten Local Workforce Development Areas, and many more. Additionally, Labor Market Information, Job Fairs, and Job Vacancy information is shared with participants as they approach graduation.

During the first year, 124 participants were enrolled, with two participants completing training. After collecting and analyzing data for the first year of the project, we can plan better on how to serve the hard to serve populations and underserved communities.

**For Consideration of the  
Arkansas Workforce Development Board**

**January 25, 2022**

**AGENDA ITEM 9 – INFORMATION:** PY20 WIOA Titles I & III Annual Summary

**INFORMATION/RATIONALE:** The U.S. Department of Labor requires States to compile and submit an annual Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Program Titles I and III annual summary.

This report is being presented to the Board.

**STATE OF ARKANSAS**  
**WORKFORCE**  
**INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT (WIOA)**  
**TITLE I AND TITLE III**  
**ANNUAL STATEWIDE PERFORMANCE REPORT**

**PROGRAM YEAR 2020**

**ARKANSAS DIVISION OF WORKFORCE SERVICES**

## Executive Summary

This year, the Arkansas Division of Workforce Services faced unprecedented challenges. The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic left thousands of Arkansas workers dislocated or placed on furlough.

The Division of Workforce Services worked closely with its partners, adapting initiatives to meet these new challenges. During the program year, our offices focused on safely providing online and in-person services as well as creating job-training opportunities to help Arkansans skill up and get back to work.

The biggest barrier to increasing employment in Arkansas remains its shortage of skilled workers. Other challenges include job and wage growth acceleration in urban areas, often leaving poorer and less-educated rural communities behind.

Technology and increasing automation will continue to displace vulnerable populations. In many ways, the pandemic only exacerbated these challenges.

However, we redoubled our efforts to meet these challenges head-on, putting a heightened focus on job training and skill development to improve outcomes for all workers and meet the needs of employers statewide.

Even in the midst of this incredibly turbulent year, we believe that our efforts are yielding positive results. As the state's economy recovers, there is still room for improvement in credential attainment.

The Division of Workforce Services is confident that with its emphasis on helping workers find training opportunities to skill up, we are one step closer to improving the careers, opportunities, and lives of all Arkansans.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

In PY2020, COVID-19 opened a window of creativity and innovation for the state's workforce development system on both the state and local levels. Our Local Boards, One Stop Operators, and workforce partners agencies worked together to create new ways to serve and engage with participants and businesses.

Each LWDB experienced varying degrees of efficiency and effectiveness with virtual delivery. It's important to note that some of our rural areas experienced problems with connectivity due to lack of broadband access. COVID-19 forced each board to accelerate remote work from home for staff and partner agencies and pushed limits to address challenges of connectivity.

An area of improvement for all LWDBs is a need for focused work in continuous quality improvement and acceleration of work-based learning opportunities.

### A. Overview of Arkansas' Workforce Development System

The workforce system in Arkansas is a network of state, regional, and local agencies and organizations that provide many employment, education, training, and related services and supports. The workforce system includes services for the public and people with barriers to employment, including veterans, individuals with disabilities, dislocated workers, adults, and youth.

At the heart of the public workforce system, these Arkansas Workforce Centers are made up of one-stop career centers, affiliate, and connection sites. Arkansas Workforce Centers are the primary access point to qualified workers, as well as to a multitude of resources for businesses and job seekers. These Centers serve thousands of individuals who are seeking employment, changing jobs, reentering the workforce, or learning new skills. This makes them the ideal venue for workforce solutions for job seekers and businesses alike.

At our Workforce Centers throughout the state, individuals can open a claim for unemployment insurance, find job openings, receive other job search assistance, and attend workshops that can improve employability. Qualified individuals can find assistance with specific training in high demand occupations. Businesses can get help with workforce needs including recruitment, screening, employee training, layoff aversion, and employee retention.

### B. The Arkansas Department of Commerce

The Arkansas Department of Commerce is the umbrella department for workforce and economic development drivers. Its divisions and regulatory boards include Division of Aeronautics, Waterways Commission, Wine Producers Council, Division of Workforce Services, Office of Skills Development, State Bank Department, Insurance Department, Securities Department, Economic Development Commission and Development Finance Authority. It was established July 2019 as part of Governor Asa Hutchinson's wide-sweeping efficiency and transformation efforts to reduce 42 cabinet agencies to 15 while maintaining services for all Arkansans.



### **C. Division of Workforce Services**

Under the Arkansas Department of Commerce's umbrella, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) core programs are found. The consolidation of the WIOA Titles I – IV programs, under the Division of Workforce Services ensures coordination among all the WIOA core partner programs.

The major evidence of our enhanced coordination is the activities of the WIOA Roundtable. The WIOA Roundtable is the leadership group of the State's workforce system and includes members from the Division of Workforce Services, Division of Services for the Blind, Rehabilitation Services, and Adult Education Section.

The WIOA Roundtable meets regularly and hosts bi-annual statewide WIOA Partners Meetings. The attendees of these statewide meetings include representatives of core, non-core, and ancillary workforce system partners. The agendas are developed jointly and provide an opportunity to share specific program information via plenary sessions as well as break-out sessions that provided opportunities to share ideas, best practices, and service delivery strategies.

The WIOA Roundtable Partners are committed to:

- Meeting regularly to discuss and develop ideas and strategies designed to improve the state's workforce development system.
- Developing common messaging across programs.
- Sharing and integrating learning across programs via bi-annual conferences and meetings as well as promoting quarterly partner meetings in all regions of the state.
- Identifying opportunities to share and leverage resources to maximize efficiency and effectiveness (co-location, shared case management information, coordinated business outreach).
- Working through partnerships to balance the needs and the assets of job seekers and employers in the public and private sectors.
- Creating a data-driven environment resulting in integrated strategies that are higher quality and strengthen life-long education, training, and work-based learning experiences.

Despite the onset of the COVID pandemic, the WIOA Roundtable continued the tradition of hosting a Spring and Fall WIOA Partners Meeting. In Fall 2020 and Spring 2021, these meetings were conducted virtually and attended by approximately 300 state and local workforce development system stakeholders.

These WIOA Partners Meetings included individual program information as well as strategic partnership development sessions. The intent of these virtual meetings was for staff to learn ways to enhance their ability to provide seamless and integrated services.

### **D. State Board**

The Arkansas Workforce Development Board (State Board) has worked with the Division of Workforce Services and other state agency initiatives to engage employers, education providers, economic development officials, and other stakeholders to help Arkansas' public

workforce system achieve the purpose of WIOA and the State's strategic and operational vision and goals.

During the program year, the State Board re-emphasized efforts to engage with Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) through Local Board, Local Chief Elected Official and Local Board Director training. This training included a focus upon governance and provided opportunities for strategy development and forward-thinking initiatives. These efforts supported the State Board's renewed attention on aligning a more effective job-driven workforce development system that emphasizes worker skill development and getting more Arkansans in the workforce.

### **E. WIOA Titles I – IV Program Descriptions**

Through the Combined WIOA State Plan, Arkansas shares in the understanding of the workforce needs across the state and seeks a more comprehensive and streamlined approach for addressing the needs of businesses and job seekers. Core partners and various community stakeholders, including youth, come together to prioritize, strategize and to create goals that would lead to a more competitive and responsive workforce

#### *WIOA Title I Youth Program*

**Who is served:** Youth must be between 14 and 24 years old, low income (WIOA allows for a 5% exclusion) and meet other criteria described in the WIOA, such as a need for additional assistance to complete an educational program or to secure and hold employment. Due to our request for and receipt of an Out-of-School (OSY) waiver, additional emphasis was placed upon outreach to this population.

**Program description:** The program prepares low-income youth ages 14 through 24 for success in school and the world of work. Eligible youth may receive counseling, tutoring, job training, mentoring or work experience. Other service options include summer employment, study skills training and instruction in obtaining a GED or equivalent.

#### *WIOA Title I Adult Program*

**Who is served:** Basic services are available to all adults with minimal eligibility requirements. Basic, individualized or training services are authorized for unemployed individuals unable to find jobs. In some cases, these services are available to employed workers who need more help to reach self-sufficiency.

**Program description:** The program prepares individuals 18 years and older for participation in the labor force by providing basic services and access to job training and other services. Services are coordinated through the state's workforce center system. Basic services include skill assessment, labor market information, consumer reports on training programs and job search and placement assistance. Individualized and training include more intensive assessments, work experiences and occupational skills training. Priority is given to veterans and eligible spouses as well as those individuals with barriers to employment.

### WIOA Title I Dislocated Worker Program

**Who is served:** Dislocated workers are people who lost jobs due to plant closures, company downsizing or some other significant change in market conditions. In most cases, eligible workers are unlikely to return to their occupations because those jobs are no longer economically viable, and they must be eligible for (or have exhausted) unemployment compensation. Other conditions can lead to eligibility for services, such as separating military service members and eligible spouses of military service members, being self-employed but not working as a result of general economic conditions or being a displaced home maker.

**Program description:** The program tailors' employment and training services to meet dislocated workers' needs, establishes early intervention for workers and firms facing substantial layoffs and fosters labor, management, and community partnerships with government to address worker dislocation. Dislocated workers are also eligible for basic services including skill assessment, labor market information, training program consumer reports and job search and placement assistance. Individualized and training include more intensive assessments, work experiences and occupational skills training.

### WIOA Title II Adult Education Program

**Who is served:** There are hundreds of Arkansas adults who lack high school diplomas and the skills and knowledge to succeed in the twenty-first century workforce. This impacts every community in Arkansas. It's devastating to the adults who want to fulfill the American dream of a better life for themselves and their families.

**Program description:** The program is designed to provide adult learners with the tools to improve and refine their academic skills, attain the General Educational Development® Credential, and the life skills that prepare the citizen for self-sufficiency and improvement in the quality of life. Adult learners can access Adult Basic Education (ABE), English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), Workplace Education, Correctional/Institutional Education (C&I), Workforce Alliance for Growth in the Economy TM (WAGE), Learning Disabilities Screening, GED Testing Services, the Arkansas Adult Learning Resource Center (AALRC) and Family Literacy.

### WIOA Title III Wagner-Peyser Program

**Who is served:** Career services are available to anyone who is legally entitled to work in the United States no matter one's age or employment status. Through Title III, basic and individualized career services are offered. A veteran or his or her eligible spouse has a priority to receive such services.

**Program description:** The Wagner-Peyser Act of 1933 established a nationwide system of public employment offices, known as the Employment Service. The Employment Service seeks to improve the functioning of the nation's labor markets by bringing together individuals seeking employment with employers seeking workers.

Basic services include skill assessment, labor market information, consumer reports on training programs and job search and placement assistance. Individualized services include career and vocational counseling.

### WIOA Title IV Rehabilitation Services Program

In Arkansas, the WIOA Title IV Rehabilitation Services Program is accomplished via two (2) distinct units, *Arkansas Rehabilitation Services* and the *Division of Services for the Blind*.

**Who is served:** *Arkansas Rehabilitation Services* increases opportunities for individuals with disabilities to engage in competitive integrated employment and to live more independently.

The *Division of Services for the Blind* is dedicated to the independence of Arkansans who are blind or visually impaired.

**Program description:** *Arkansas Rehabilitation's* Field Services include career and technical education and training, transition from school to work or postsecondary education, on-the-job training, and ancillary support services that clients may need for successful employment. *Arkansas Rehabilitation's* Business Relations Services assist businesses in achieving a competitive advantage by offering qualified job candidates who are trained in a wide variety of skills and have the good work habits that employers value.

The *Division of Services for the Blind* provides a variety of services that are focused upon:  
Employment - To assist Arkansans who are blind or visually impaired to secure or maintain employment and consistent with their skills, abilities, and interests.

Rehabilitation Teaching - To assist Arkansans who are blind or visually impaired to live as independently as possible through the development of skills, accommodations, or adaptations that are necessary to perform all activities of daily living.

Prevention of Blindness - To assist in preventing blindness stabilizing vision, and, where possible, restoring vision.

### **F. Arkansas Workforce Centers**

The Arkansas Workforce Centers are the gateways to job services and workforce development programs in our state. With 30 Arkansas Workforce Centers located strategically throughout the state as well as a fleet of Mobile Workforce Centers, representatives are available to help employers and job seekers find the best resources and services to meet their needs.

The Arkansas Workforce Centers represent Arkansas' version of the American Job Centers. They are designed to provide universal access to an integrated array of services so that workers, job seekers, and businesses can find the services they need in one stop, and frequently under one roof.

All Arkansas Workforce Centers offer a consistent line of resources for employers and job seekers. However, the full menu of services may vary from center to center, as each site can tailor the additional services it offers to meet the specific needs of employers and job seekers in their community.

At the Arkansas Workforce Centers, customers receive services on three levels:

- Self-service in the resource rooms
- Staff-assisted Intensive services and career counseling
- Training, skill-building, and supportive services for those who qualify

Customers can search and apply for jobs online in the AWC resource rooms. These rooms are equipped with computer stations, Internet, printers, copiers, fax machines, phones, and staff to assist as needed. With an Arkansas JobLink account, job seekers can search for employment opportunities, apply for jobs, and post their resume, skills, and other credentials to a profile viewable by employers.

### **G. Impact of COVID-19**

With the rise of the COVID-19 pandemic in early Spring 2020, unemployment increased significantly in Arkansas. As Arkansas' initial unemployment claims surged, all available staff was rapidly trained to assist claimants, triage claims, answer claimant questions and confirm claimant wages. This allowed Unemployment Insurance (UI) staff to focus on more complex claims.

Arkansas' Workforce Centers were closed to walk-in services as staff shifted quickly to remote and use of virtual technologies such as ZOOM and Microsoft Teams. Staff quickly adapted to meeting with each other and clients both virtually and in-person, one-on-one. Like most states, Arkansas' leisure and hospitality industry were hampered by travel restrictions and COVID-19 safety protocols. Sectors such as healthcare and social assistance experienced significant losses, as women made up a larger portion of the workforce in these sectors. An additional concern was the number of women who left the workforce due to the lack of available daycare or the increased need to look after children as schools moved to remote learning for K-12 students.

### **H. Arkansas Virtual Job Fairs**

Arkansas Virtual Job Fair (VJF) is an innovative way of providing opportunities for employers and job seekers to connect while allowing for the safety of all as we deal with COVID-19. As an online event, Employers and Job Seekers meet in a virtual environment and use various tools such as: chat rooms, webcasts, training/workshop videos, webinars and employer online hiring sites. Utilizing a VJF eliminates geographical barriers and enables more accessibility to the event for the job seekers and employers (citizens can connect at any location with internet, without transportation and distance issues).

Arkansas Workforce Center staff assists Employers in completing an online virtual job fair request. The VJF Coordinator will work with local workforce center partners to offer additional support such as posting your job openings in our system, which is accessed by thousands of Arkansans. Additionally, the VJF Coordinator sets up a webpage for each individual employer on the VJF website that allows a more local market approach or employers can leverage the state's comprehensive job fair which is promoted statewide.

The VJF Coordinator can work with employers to provide the information necessary to "go live" with Job Fair. When the Fair starts there will be a dedicated website where Job Seekers

will come to view information about available jobs, and times which the employer(s) will be available to chat with potential candidates

### **I. Safely and Responsibly Opening Arkansas Workforce Centers**

While Arkansas never officially closed its Arkansas Workforce Centers, we did reduce the number of visitors by restricting serving Arkansans via electronic means. The Division utilized CARES Act funding to modify the Arkansas Workforce Centers to comply with CDC guidelines to protect customers and staff from COVID-19. These modifications included providing facemasks and sanitizer, high-touch surface cleaning; health screening for all people entering the centers, the installation of Plexiglas, and the provision of other necessary personal protective equipment.

### **II. ARKANSAS LABOR MARKET**

The virus known as COVID-19 entered the country from abroad in early 2020 and quickly began spreading. By the beginning of Program Year 2020, efforts undertaken throughout the country to contain the virus brought the longest economic expansion to an end. Before then, job growth had been steady and labor markets had been tight.

The 2021 Arkansas Labor Market and Economic Report, released in September 2021, provided some insight into the impacts of COVID-19 upon the State.

Arkansas declined in population in 2020 by 6,262 from 2019; but added a total of 21,132 new residents from 2016 to 2020. Of Arkansas's 10 Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDAs), Northwest Arkansas saw the largest increase in population, adding 20,888 in 2020. The Eastern, North Central, Southeast, Southwest, West Central, and Western Arkansas LWDAs saw decreasing populations in 2020.

Between 2019 and 2020 the state's labor force decreased by 8,346 and employment decreased by 41,946. Labor force and employment mostly declined across the LWDAs. The state's unemployment rate raised to 6.1 percent in 2020, an increase of two and six-tenths percentage points since 2016. The unemployment rate steadily declined in 2021, ending the month of July at 4.3 percent. The unemployment rate fluctuated across all LWDAs in 2021 and through July 2021.

Short-term employment projections for 2020 to 2022 showed a decrease in the Arkansas job market with a loss of 11,096 jobs, equivalent to a 0.78 percent decline in employment.

Goods-Producing industries are estimated to see a net loss of 1,237 jobs, while the Services-Providing industries are forecast to decrease employment by 6,833. Arkansas' self-employed ranks are estimated to experience a net loss of 2,102, a decrease of 1.79 percent.

Jobs requiring a bachelor's degree are estimated to add more jobs than any other education level with 3,488 jobs between 2020 and 2022. Occupations requiring a master's degree are expected to grow by 495. Arkansas' per capita personal income increased over the 2016-2020 period to \$47,109; however, the state's per capita personal income in 2020 remained below the United States' per capita personal income of \$59,729.

Nearly a million Arkansas workers earned at least \$11 or more an hour in 2020, with the mean annual wage for all employer sizes estimated at \$44,778. Of the six states surrounding Arkansas, only Mississippi had a lower overall average hourly and average annual wage for all occupations. Of the surrounding states, Texas had the highest average annual wage.

### III. WAIVERS

On May 29, 2020, we received conditional approval for the following WIOA Title I waivers:

1. **Waiver of the obligation of eligible training providers to collect performance data on all students in a training program. WIOA Sections 116(d)(4)(A) and 122, and 20 CFR 677.230(a)(4) and (5) and 20 CFR 680.**

This waiver has expired. Moving forward, the State will leverage the annual Arkansas Economic Security Report to assist us in providing information related to all students' performance, including the non-WIOA clients. Additionally, Arkansas began implementing a new system, AJL ProviderLink, that will assist us in the collection of performance data. Finally, in early 2021, our IT System contractor deployed a new reporting system, TABLEAU, that will assist us in establishing a baseline of performance data.

2. **Waiver to allow the State to lower the local area and statewide reserve out-of-school youth expenditure requirement to 50 percent. WIOA Section 129(a)(4) and 20 CFR 681.410 and Waiver to allow the State to calculate the out-of-school youth requirement at the State level only WIOA Section 129(a)(4) and 20 CFR 681.410.**

This waiver has expired. However, the state issued operational guidance on how local areas can implement this waiver. To date, two local areas are moving forward with establishing lower limits against PY20 funds but have not implemented the change. Due to the impact COVID had on ISY and OSY activities, these local areas were unable to fully utilize this waiver and the state plans to request this waiver be extended to PY21 and 22 funds.

The State experienced an increase in the percentage of ISY served, compared to the total number of youth served from 20% in PY19 to 27% in PY20. Additionally, the Median Earnings and Credential Rate for ISY improved in PY20, when compared to PY19.

3. **Waiver to increase on-the-job-training reimbursement up to 90 percent for businesses with 50 or fewer employees. WIOA Section 134(c) (3)(H)(i) and 20 CFR 680.720 (b).**

While the state issued operational guidance on how local areas can implement this waiver. The local areas have not had an opportunity to do so as this strategy was also severely hampered by COVID.

The state hopes to gauge the benefits of the waiver better through June 30, 2022, the current end date, and will consider an extension request later this year.

**4. Waiver to allow flexibility in the use of funds reserved by the Governor to provide disaster relief as permitted under Dislocated Worker Grants for disaster relief, including temporary work. WIOA Section 134(a)(2)(A), WIOA Section 134(a)(2)(B) and WIOA Section 134(a)(3).**

This waiver was granted without the flexibility to refund Statewide under Title I after a pending DWG was granted. Although there was one disaster under which the state might have been able to fund the activities earlier, the projected budget for Statewide had already been reduced due to increased activities in COVID-related Rapid Response.

The State will continue to request this waiver, but as currently approved, will only be well positioned to utilize it when our Fund Utilization Rate is low at the same time a disaster is declared. This is the only scenario where Statewide has available budget to incur additional costs, and therefore, the state will request reconsideration regarding the refund of Statewide funds. Pre-award costs can be approved by a Federal Awarding Agency, so there is a basis for authority to grant such a waiver, especially considering the standard “efficient and timely performance of the scope of work” stated in 2 CFR 200.458 for granting such waivers. During disasters, it is important to release funds to operators as quickly as possible.

#### **IV. EVALUATIONS**

During the program year, the University of Arkansas Counselor Education Program and the University of Arkansas Walton School of Business completed a comprehensive evaluation of the state’s workforce system. This report may be found at:

[https://www.dws.arkansas.gov/src/files/WIOA\\_Systems\\_Evaluation\\_Report\\_11\\_02\\_2021.pdf](https://www.dws.arkansas.gov/src/files/WIOA_Systems_Evaluation_Report_11_02_2021.pdf)

This system evaluation included a Local Integration Study, which included three (3) of the state’s Local Workforce Development Areas. The study included sampling, staff interviews and report case studies on the effectiveness of identifying and closing skills gaps.

WIOA Title I and Title III participants’ case files in these three workforce areas were reviewed to determine if the participants may have been eligible to receive services from other partner programs. The results of these reviews found that a range of 2.5% co-enrollment to a high of 16.6%, with an overall co-enrollment average of 7.34%. This is not the optimum rate of co-enrollment.

Additionally, leadership from each of the three local workforce areas were interviewed to identify partner programs that collaborate with the workforce centers. The number of partner programs ranged from thirty-six in one local area to only ten in another local areas. The discrepancy in these numbers is significant and it is the opinion of the evaluators that other potential partner programs are available in some of these local workforce areas.

Referral procedures are in place for these workforce areas as all reported that referrals are received via email and telephone, as an alternative when necessary.



The availability of training opportunities is a concern as there appears to be an insufficient number to meet the needs of the workforce customer base.

Finally, there strategies are for identifying skills gaps demonstrated significant differences among the centers. While two of the workforce areas are heavily engaged in addressing skills gaps in their regions, more work is clearly needed.

## **V. CUSTOMER SATISFACTION**

During the program year, the University of Arkansas Counselor Education Program and the University of Arkansas Walton School of Business completed a comprehensive evaluation of the state's workforce system. This report may be found at:

[https://www.dws.arkansas.gov/src/files/WIOA\\_Systems\\_Evaluation\\_Report\\_11\\_02\\_2021.pdf](https://www.dws.arkansas.gov/src/files/WIOA_Systems_Evaluation_Report_11_02_2021.pdf)

This system evaluation included customer satisfaction surveys of both program participants and businesses.

The customer survey showed a 62% overall satisfaction rate with WIOA programs and a 68% satisfaction rate with Workforce Center staff. These results led the evaluators to strongly recommend additional training in customer service for all local workforce center staff.

Additionally, the current telephone system is not suited to surge demand, primarily due to the COVID pandemic. If these problems continue post-COVID, the evaluators recommend that the system be upgraded as soon as it is feasible.

The survey of business customers showed a moderate degree of satisfaction. Less than half of the respondents (42%) reported receiving most services needed to address their workforce needs. Many respondents brought up the difficulty of posting job openings through the online job bank and the lack of interaction between their businesses and workforce center staff. The evaluators recommended a more proactive relationship with employers to have the most accurate information about job openings and employers' needs.

## **VI. WORKFORCE DATA QUALITY INITIATIVE**

On June 23, 2021, the U.S. Department of Labor awarded Arkansas a Workforce Data Quality Initiative grant in the amount of \$2,510,575. This grant is designed to improve the delivery of training and employment services and to measure their effectiveness by supporting the development and expansion of workforce longitudinal databases and enhance their ability to share performance data with stakeholders.

Arkansas' objective is to expand and enhance the longitudinal data systems around the needs of two complementary strategies for promoting continuous learning and improvement in workforce and education. The first strategy is to help state leaders and service providers continuously improve programs and services and align resources to the evolving needs of citizens to deliver better workforce and education outcomes.

The second strategy is to facilitate continuous learning and collaboration through shared standards and governance, analytic capacity building, coordinated research and data

products, and interagency, interstate, and cross-sector collaboration to support improved policy outcomes and an engaged community of practice.

## **VII. ACTIVITIES PROVIDED BY STATEWIDE FUNDS**

Due to the onset of the COVID pandemic, activities provided by statewide funding was negatively impacted. However, we continued working of the following projects:

- Contracting with the University of Arkansas to complete an evaluation of the Workforce System- emphasis on business services and asset mapping. COMPLETED
- Eligible Training Provider Reporting System conversation from the Arkansas Consumer Reporting System (ACRS) to America’s Job Link Association’s Provider Link for purposes of ETP reporting improvement. Complete system conversion is expected by September 2021. FINAL PHASES
- Regional Planning and Sector Strategies subawards to Local Workforce Development Boards. REIMPLEMENTED IN PY21
- Additional local funding to Local Areas with High Concentrations of Eligible Youth. REIMPLEMENTED IN PY21
- Business-focused services including: State-funded Work Based Learning Activities, Career Readiness Certificate programs, and piloting a state administered Virtual Job Fair platform. ONGOING
- Other required activities such as monitoring and technical assistance. ONGOING.

## **VIII. NATIONAL DISLOCATED WORKER GRANTS**

### **Disaster National Dislocated Worker Grant– AR-30**

In June 2019, the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency declared storm impacted counties within the Little Rock and West Central regions as federal disaster areas. ADWS received a total award of \$1,803,765 to fund temporary employment and recovery assistance for storm debris removal and repairs. Disaster NDWG AR-30 ended on March 31, 2021.

### **Disaster National Dislocated Worker Grant– AR-31**

In September 2019, the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency declared storm impacted counties within the Northwest region as federal disaster areas. ADWS received a total award of \$467,540 to fund temporary employment and recovery assistance for storm debris removal and repairs. Disaster NDWG AR-31 ended on March 31, 2021.

### **American Apprenticeship Initiative (AAI)/Arkansas Apprenticeship Pathway Initiative (AAPI)**

The Arkansas Division of Workforce Services was awarded \$4 million under this initiative to create new or expand existing registered apprentices in its Arkansas Apprenticeship Pathways Initiative. The program will train 60 apprentices in targeted H-1B job growth industries of IT, Advanced Manufacturing and Healthcare to enable unemployed, underemployed, dislocated workers and underrepresented populations to receive job training while gaining college credit. Originally scheduled to end on September 30, 2020, this grant was extended to March 30, 2021, to provide additional opportunities for Arkansans.

## **Arkansas Expands Apprenticeship (AREA)**

In November 2016, the Arkansas Division of Workforce Services was awarded \$900,000 from the U.S. Department of Labor under the State Expansion Grant Funding Opportunity Announcement 16-13. Under the continuation of funding announcement, the State received an additional \$1,089,989 in 2<sup>nd</sup> round funding. The AREA grant is designed to assist the State in advancing Registered Apprenticeships as a workforce development strategy by engaging industries and catalyzing State innovations to significantly increasing apprenticeship opportunities. The AREA grant ended on April 30, 2021.

## **Reimagine Arkansas Workforce**

In October 2020, the U.S. Department of Education awarded the Arkansas Workforce Development Board and the Arkansas Division of Workforce Services over \$13 million to fund the Reimagine Arkansas Workforce Project. This statewide coordinated effort benefits Arkansans who have been economically impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Project partners include state agencies, University of Arkansas – Global Campus, Shorter College and iDatafy LLC.

The partners expect to serve 3,000 Arkansans who are unemployed, underemployed, are new to the workforce and/or have no work history, are a member of an underrepresented population, receive public assistance, reside in rural areas, are a veteran, are the spouse of a veteran, are homeless, are 55 years of age or older, previously incarcerated, have been paroled, or are on probation are encouraged to apply.

Training programs include business, construction, health care, manufacturing, project management, technology, veterinary, and more.

Those working with the program can help participants identify career pathways that may be best for them. They can also assist with resume services and connect participants with potential employers. This grant will expire on September 29, 2023.

## **IX. SUCCESS STORIES**

### **Debra**

Debra had been working as an independent contractor in the oil and gas field industry in North Central Arkansas. COVID-19 caused the collapse in demand and caused a stoppage of all leasing activity and production. Having been self-employed in this industry for 12 years, Debra found herself unemployed and unemployable.

Debra worked diligently to obtain her GED in Summer 2020 and wanted to enter an LPN program. She went to her local Arkansas Workforce Center and was enrolled in the WIOA Dislocated Worker Program, she was provided the necessary assistance to enter and complete this training program. Debra has attained her CNA license and is working towards her LPN license. She will graduate in Spring 2022.

## **Kierra**

Kierra, a single mother of three, worked as a phlebotomist prior to the onset of COVID. In February 2021, she opened her own business, Need-to-Know Testing, LLC, in Eastern Arkansas. As her business grew, Kierra needed an Office Assistant. She visited her local Arkansas Workforce Center and was introduced to an Out-of-School Program designed to assist participants by placing them in Work Experience while working towards their GED. One of these participants was placed at the Need-to-Know Testing, LLC.

To date, this participant has received training on customer service, processing invoices, and conducting COVID testing. Once the participant attains their GED, Kierra plans to make the participant the first full-time staff member of Need-To-Know Testing, LLC. Kierra believes that the assistance that she received from the WIOA Program in acquiring a great employee will lead to the ongoing success of her business.

## **Lorenzo**

Lorenzo visited his local Arkansas Workforce Center and applied for the Adult Program in August 2020, after having been laid off by the local horse racing track/casino due to the economic crisis created by COVID-19. The casino had ceased operations, along with live racing, and there were few employment prospects for Lorenzo in West Central Arkansas. Lorenzo realized that he needed a new career to earn enough to support himself. He was getting older and needed to do something less physically demanding.

After discussing his options, and completing assessments, he decided his best option was to attend the truck driving program at Diesel Driving Academy. He did very well in his classes and attained his CDL in December 2020. With the help of his case manager, Lorenzo began his job search by submitting applications and attending virtual job fairs. Lorenzo was able to get hired as a truck driver by the local Coca Cola distributor. He is now earning a sufficient wage to support himself and his family.

## **Lavon**

Lavon visited his local Arkansas Workforce Center and was enrolled in the WIOA Youth program in October 2020. Lavon needed work experience, training, guidance counseling, and public transportation. However, Lavon's most immediate need was income and employment to support his child.

After working on goal setting and career exploration with his WIOA case manager, he determined that the work experience program was a great fit for him. In November 2020, Lavon began working as an office assistant earning \$10.00 hourly for 240 hours of work experience. Some of his duties included, employee and client COVID-19 screenings, assistance with copy/printing duties, and compiling enrollment packets.

During his work experience stint, Lavon received great work evaluations. In December 2020, Lavon interviewed and was offered a full-time permanent position as a Family Community Enrichment Specialist. Lavon began his exciting new career on January 4, 2021, in Little Rock, Arkansas.

## **Deja**

Deja is a married mother of 4 children living in Eastern Arkansas and a Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), also known as Food Stamps, recipient. Deja's last employment was in 2019 and her husband had recently been discharged from his job when she went to her local Arkansas Workforce Center for assistance. She was in dire need of finding a career that would allow her to better provide for her family long term and not just day-to-day. Deja's career advisor assisted her in enrolling in the WIOA Adult program in December 2020.

Deja's previous work experience had consisted of Manufacturing and Fast-Food jobs, but her dream career was to work in an office environment. Deja was assigned to work experience on December 21, 2020, as an Office Clerk.

As a result of the work experience opportunity, she gained new skills and confidence in herself and her abilities. In May 2021, Deja accepted a Full-Time Administrative Assistant position with Arkansas Rehabilitation Services, making \$14.00 per hour, working 40 hours per week, with benefits.

## **Sebrina**

Sebrina found herself laid off after working twelve years with her employer. Sebrina had a family of three and losing her family's only source of income was scary. Sabrina visited her local Arkansas Workforce Center and was enrolled in the Dislocated Worker Program.

Sebrina felt that she needed a career change and was interested in training for a new career that would lead her and her family's economic security. With the help of her career advisor, Sebrina enrolled in the local two-year college's nursing program. The WIOA program assisted her with tuition, books, a stethoscope, and nursing apparel.

While in the nursing program, Sebrina's GPA never dropped below a 3.0. Due to her persistence and dedication, she graduated and found employment at the local hospital in North Central Arkansas that pays \$40 per hour.

## **Marquez**

Marquez always had a passion for children and wanted to pursue a degree in Early Childhood Education. However, he knew he could never accomplish this dream on his own. Marquez went to his local Arkansas Workforce Center in Southwest Arkansas to explore training and career options. Marquez was enrolled in the WIOA Youth Program and, with the assistance of his career advisor, immediately began addressing his basic skills deficiency.

After being referred to a WIOA program partner agency, Marquez was able to increase his basic skills in both reading and math. He then was able to enroll in a local four-year college.

Marquez recently graduated from with a degree in Early Childhood Education. He has obtained a full-time career at a local school and began fulfilling his lifelong dream of being an Early Childhood Educator.

## **Johnathan**

Johnathan decided it was time for him to change his life by finding a job after having had time to reflect on the direction he wanted to take with his future. While Johnathan had some of the desirable skills, Johnathan also faced many challenges in his life due to his disability. However, he was determined to reach his goals of finding better employment.

He went to his Local Arkansas Workforce Center in hopes of finding assistance that would result in employment. His career advisor enrolled him in the Career Preparation Training Activity where he learned skills including Resume Building, Interviewing Skills Training, and Dressing for Success. He was then placed in work experience at a Central Arkansas worksite, as a Stock Clerk.

Unfortunately, the lack of reliable transportation became a challenge and Johnathan could not get to work every day. Multiple worksite partners were contacted by the Arkansas Workforce Center Manager and a local employer, located closer to Johnathan's home, welcomed him as a stock clerk in order for him to continue growing and developing his job skills.

With the help of the WIOA Youth Program, he was able to develop excellent work skills and recently acquired his first full-time job at Walmart.

## **Brandi**

Brandi had longed for a better life, due to a toxic family situation. One day, she decided that it was time for a change for her and her children. She visited her local Arkansas Workforce Center and sought assistance in making this necessary change. With the help of her career advisor, Brandi enrolled in training. The WIOA program assisted her with tuition, transportation, and childcare. With the removal of these barriers, Brandi was able to complete her training at a Western Arkansas training provider. In fact, Brandi had already acquired a job at a local hospital as a Surgical Technician before attaining her certification.

Brandi believes that none of this would have been possible without the assistance provided by the WIOA program.

## **Khalia**

Life in Northeast Arkansas was difficult for Khalia, a single parent who lost her job in March 2020, due to COVID. Khalia struggled to find new employment on her own, so she visited her local Arkansas Workforce Center. After completing various assessments, her career advisor determined that Khalia lacked the necessary job skills to obtain employment that paid a self-sufficient wage.

Prior to becoming unemployed, Khalia had completed one semester of a Respiratory Care program at a local institution. She was enrolled in the WIOA Dislocated Worker Program and received tuition and fee assistance to continue her training. In April 2021, Khalia graduated with an Associate of Applied Science Degree in Respiratory Care. Additionally, she attained licensure in June 2021 and accepted a full-time position at a local hospital earning \$23.00 per hour. Khalia is very happy with her job and is very appreciative of the assistance provided by the WIOA program.

## Edward

Edward first visited the local Arkansas Workforce Center in February 2021 looking for assistance in obtaining a CDL license to become gainfully employed. He had been laid-off from his previous employer in October 2020, due to the COVID pandemic.

Although Edward had been receiving Unemployment Insurance benefits, he knew that he needed a permanent solution to become self-sufficient. Initially, he was referred to the local Adult Education partner for TABE, and shortly thereafter, Edward started his CDL training.

While he experienced some family issues that required him to miss portions of this training, Edward refused to be dissuaded from reaching his goal. With encouragement and support from his career advisor, he resumed his training. Despite failing to pass the driving portion of his CDL test during his first two attempts, Edward remained steadfast in his resolve. On May 14, 2021, Edward passed and received his certificate and license from the State of Arkansas. He has since accepted one of his many job offers and is gainfully employed. We are proud of his accomplishments and wish him the best for his future.

## John

John had experience in mechanical services but had never completed any formal training which would provide employment retention security nor employment advancement. John received a recommendation to visit the local Arkansas Workforce Center to enhance his skills. After conducting an initial assessment, John was referred to Adult Education to improve his reading and math skills. Upon completion, his career advisor began working with John to enter a CDL Academy in Western Arkansas.

With the assistance of the WIOA adult program, John was able to enter and complete his training, earning his CDL certificate in June 2021. John accepted employment with a local trucking company shortly thereafter.

John knows that this assistance changed the direction of his life as well as his career. John is grateful for the assistance provided by the WIOA partners.

## Michael

After being deeply impacted by the Covid pandemic, Michael says **“WIOA Changed My Life!”** Michael visited his local Arkansas Workforce Center with the intentions of becoming a Commercial Truck Driver.

Michael met with a career advisor and was enrolled in WIOA. His career advisor assisted him in setting specific goals to achieve his dream. The strategy was implemented and with the provision of supportive services and support, Michael was enrolled in CDL Truck Driver training.

Michael said, *“My career advisor’s calls, and follow-up encouragement motivated me every step of the way. Even when unexpected obstacles came about, she was always accessible and ready to troubleshoot any problematic situation. She believed in me, always declaring “You got this!”*

Michael completed his training in April 2021 and accepted a full-time position grossing \$5,000 per month. Michael is enjoying his new career and says that another perk of his job is being able to travel, see this beautiful country, and get paid for it. Recently, Michael was selected as a recruiting spokesperson for the trucking company.

## **X. ADDITIONAL PROGRAMS**

### **A. WIOA Title II – Adult Education**

The Arkansas Division of Workforce Services - Adult Education Section provides Adult Basic Education (ABE), Adult Secondary Education (ASE), and English Second Language (ESL) services to all eligible adult education and literacy programs in Arkansas. Using the thirteen considerations, sub awardees were determined eligible for funding in the 2020-2024 Request for Proposal, as stated in “Distribution of Funds for Core Programs” using the previously stated competitive processes.

Eligible provider’s activities include reading, writing, speaking, mathematics, and English language acquisition instruction delivered by the eligible provider and are based on the best practices derived from the most rigorous research available and appropriate, including scientifically valid research and effective educational practice. In addition, adult education and literacy providers work collaboratively with other agencies to enhance services.

For example, Arkansas Rehabilitation Services use federal funding to provide services to Adult Education participants with disabilities. The Arkansas Division of Workforce Services provide funds to those individuals seeking to enter or retain employment or receive specialized training after completing basic skills acquisition through Arkansas Adult Education.

All providers receiving state and/or federal funding from the Arkansas Division of Workforce Services, Adult Education Section will be required to provide adult education and literacy services in year one, which include: English language acquisition, integrated English literacy and civics education, workplace education, workforce preparation activities or integrated education and training. Details of these activities are provided in each program’s proposal.

### **B. WIOA Title IV – Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ARS)**

The Designated State Agency for General Vocational Rehabilitation in Arkansas is the Arkansas Division of Workforce Services - Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ARS). Title IV of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

Similarly, the Arkansas Division of Workforce Services - Division of Services for the Blind is the designated State Agency to provide services for rehabilitation and social services to blind and severely visually impaired persons aged 14 and above in Arkansas.

The Arkansas Division of Workforce Services - Arkansas Rehabilitation Services provides vocational rehabilitation services to people with disabilities. Currently, there are significant barriers for people with disabilities in relation to attaining employment. A 2008 study (StatsRRTC[1]) indicated the employment rate for people with disabilities was 33.9 percent when compared to 79.1 percent for people without disabilities.



The Arkansas State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) is a key partner with Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ARS) in the administration of the State's Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Program. The Arkansas SRC is a citizen advisory council, appointed by the Governor, to provide guidance to ARS to help individuals with disabilities, including individuals with the most significant disabilities, to obtain, maintain and regain competitive integrated employment, promote full inclusion and integration into society, and to maximize independence and economic self-sufficiency. Its membership helps ARS to develop and operationalize the VR State Plan, develop and operationalize ARS' state goals and priorities, shape, and review policy, engage in strategic planning, evaluate the effectiveness of the VR Program, analyze consumer satisfaction, and provide guidance, including development and review of cooperative agreements.

### **C. Division of Services for the Blind (DSB)**

Historically, there are significant barriers to the inclusion of people with disabilities into the overall strategy for economic development in Arkansas. ARS in partnership with the Division of Services for the Blind (DSB) are leading the charge for providing targeted training and education for people with disabilities for them to develop the skills and abilities needed to attain competitive integrated employment in Arkansas.

The DSB Director and the senior leadership of DSB provide oversight and coordination within the constraints of state and federal laws to fulfill its mission through the following goals:

- Employment - To assist Arkansans who are blind or visually impaired to secure or maintain employment and consistent with their skills, abilities, and interests.
- Rehabilitation - To assist Arkansans who are blind or visually impaired to live as independently as possible through the development of skills, accommodations, or adaptations that are necessary to perform all activities of daily living.
- Prevention of Blindness - To assist in preventing blindness stabilizing vision, and, where possible, restoring vision.
- Field Services personnel provide the local level coordination and facilitation of all general vocational rehabilitation services for individuals with blind or visual impairment issues. This includes, but is not limited to, vocational rehabilitation counseling, vocational case management, eligibility determination, individual employment plan development, transition services, and job placement.
- Business and Technology personnel provide assistance to educate consumers to develop management and business ownership within the Vending Facility Program (VFP). The Vending Facility Program Services are available to eligible blind persons who are interested in and have the necessary skills to manage snack bars

Through the Governor's Executive Order 10-17, DSB coordinates with other state agencies to increase employment of Arkansans with disabilities. The order also aims to focus consumer services first toward the goal of self-sufficiency through employment.

#### **D. Rapid Response/Layoff Aversion**

The Dislocated Worker program is designed to help workers get back to work as quickly as possible and overcome barriers to employment. When individuals become dislocated workers as a result of job loss, mass layoffs, global trade dynamics, or transitions in economic sectors, the Dislocated Worker program provides services to assist them in re-entering the workforce.

One such service is Rapid Response. Rapid Response is a pro-active, business-focused, and flexible strategy designed to respond to layoffs and plant closings by quickly coordinating services and providing immediate aid to companies and their affected workers. Our Rapid Response team works with employers and any employees to quickly maximize public and private resources to minimize disruptions associated with job loss. Rapid Response can provide customized services on-site at an affected company, accommodate any work schedules, and assist companies and workers through the painful transitions associated with job loss.

Rapid Response is conducted in partnership with the Arkansas Workforce Centers (AWCs). Rapid Response for Laid-Off Workers provides access to a comprehensive range of direct services, benefits, training opportunities, and income support. Assistance may include drafting résumés and letters of application, interview skills workshops, career counseling, job search assistance, skills upgrading, and job training. Rapid Response also provides multiple benefits to Employers including information about a variety of layoff aversion options which may be available. Rapid Response may also facilitate access to incumbent worker training programs and to skilled job seekers.

Our Dislocated Worker program manages a fleet of Mobile Workforce Centers. Each Mobile Workforce Center has full internet connectivity and is equipped with computers, printers, copiers, and fax machines. All the Mobile Workforce Centers include a computer with access to Jobs Application with Speech (JAWS) software, and most mobile units are handicapped accessible. Mobile Workforce Centers may be transported to supplement local resources, as needed.

#### **E. Shared Work Unemployment Compensation Program**

The Shared Work Unemployment Compensation, Workshare or Job-Sharing Program provides an alternative for employers faced with a reduction in workforce. It allows an employer to temporarily reduce employees' hours and divide available work, or hours of work, among specific groups of employees in lieu of layoffs. It allows the employees to receive a portion of their unemployment benefits while working reduced hours to partially replace their lost wages.

To qualify for benefits under the Shared Work (SW) Program, employees must be regularly employed by an employer whose plan to stabilize the workforce has been approved in advance by the state administrator of the program or an authorized representative. Workshare programs benefit businesses, workers, and states. Businesses retain their trained workforce for easy recall to full-time work when economic conditions improve. Workers keep their jobs instead of being laid off.

While not fully replacing the lost wages, the unemployment benefit supplements a worker's income until they are recalled to full-time work. States save money by paying only partial unemployment claims, instead of paying full benefits to laid-off workers.

While not fully replacing the lost wages, the unemployment benefit supplements a worker's income until they are recalled to full-time work. States save money Advantages:

- Production and quality levels are maintained.
- Rapid recovery to full capacity is possible because of the retention of an experienced work force.
- When the economic climate improves, administrative and training costs of hiring new employees are minimized.
- Affirmative action gains are protected.
- Employee morale is maintained.
- Employees retain their skills and advancement opportunities.
- Public assistance expenditures may be lessened.

#### F. Career Readiness Certificates (CRC)

Arkansas is pleased to promote and offer the Career Readiness Certificate (CRC). Successful completion of the ACT WorkKeys assessments can lead to earning a CRC, which demonstrates workplace readiness in possessing basic foundational skills which are portable and necessary in today's workplace.

Employers are constantly seeking a competitive edge. Employers need employees who possess the foundational skills necessary that set them apart as **workplace ready**, and employers know that by hiring individuals who have acquired a **Career Readiness Certification (CRC) certificate**. Employers understand this can be a reduction in hidden costs associated with lost production time, turnover rate, and on-the-job training.

#### G. Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC)

The Work Opportunity Tax Credit is a federal tax credit that encourages employers to hire workers from targeted groups. The tax credit is designed to help job seekers gain on-the-job experience and move towards economic self-sufficiency, as well as help employers reduce their federal income tax liability.

The employer must hire from among the following groups of job seekers to qualify for the WOTC (subject to verification and compliance with additional eligibility criteria).

- Qualified IV-A recipient: This target group refers to an individual who is a member of a family receiving assistance under a state plan approved under Part A of Title IV of the Social Security Act relating to Temporary Assistance for Needy Families.
- Qualified veteran
- Qualified ex-felon
- Vocational rehabilitation referral
- Qualified summer youth
- Qualified food stamp recipient

- Supplemental security income (SSI) recipient: This target group refers to any individual who is certified by the designated local agency as receiving supplemental security income benefits under Title XVI of the Social Security Act for any month ending within the 60-day period ending on the hiring date.
- Long-term family assistance recipient
- Unemployed veterans
- Long-term unemployment recipient

## XI. EFFECTIVENESS IN SERVING EMPLOYERS

WIOA implemented a pilot performance measure to determine the effectiveness in serving employers. States were requested to select two of the three DOL pilot measures and could include additional state-defined employer measures. The state of Arkansas has chosen for the pilot period to report on the following for the *Effectiveness in Serving Employer* performance indicator:

- Retention with the Same Employer
- Employer Penetration.

The first chart details the specific services provider to Employers, by service type, during the program year.

<b>Effectiveness in Serving Employers</b>	
<b>Employer Services</b>	<b>Establishment Count Cohort Period: 7/1/2020-6/30/2021</b>
<b>Employer Information and Support Services</b>	<b>574</b>
<b>Workforce Recruitment Assistance</b>	<b>3,703</b>
<b>Engaged in Strategic Planning/Economic Development</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Accessing Untapped Labor Pools</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>Training Services</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Incumbent Work Training Services</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Rapid Response/Business Downsizing Assistance</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Planning Layoff Response</b>	<b>0</b>

The chart below details the actual achieved performance for the two pilot measures, Retention with the Same Employer and Employer Penetration, during the program year.

<b>Pilot Measures</b>	<b>Numerator/Denominator*</b>	<b>Rate</b> <b>Cohort Period:</b> <b>7/1/2020-6/30/2021</b>
<b>Retention with Same Employer in the 2nd and 4th Quarters After Exit Rate</b>	<b>44,182/68,665</b>	<b>64.34%</b>
<b>Employer Penetration Rate</b>	<b>3,891/107,072</b>	<b>3.63%</b>
<b>Repeat Business Customers Rate</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>State Established Measure</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>N/A</b>

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the business relations teams transitioned to virtual service provision to support and meet the needs of employers. This included using online platforms to host job fairs and workshops, along with providing employers with individualized consultation sessions related to the pandemic. In addition, the business relations teams continued to develop innovative strategies to assist businesses in response to the economic impact of COVID-19.

## XII. STATE'S PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM

### A. Common Exit Policy

Arkansas has a Common Exit policy mandating common date of exit for participants across the WIOA Title I, WIOA Title III, and Trade Adjustment Assistance programs. Consistent with ETA guidance, participants enrolled or co-enrolled in one or more of the foregoing ETA programs remain as participants in all programs in which there is a common period of participation until the participant has not received a service in any Common Exit program for ninety days. After ninety days elapse without receipt of a service in any of the Common Exit programs, the participant will exit all programs, retroactive to the date of the last service received in any enrolled or co-enrolled program.

### B. Data Validation

Arkansas' approach to data validation has been formalized to ensure data integrity is an ongoing priority. Quarterly data element validation is conducted to ensure the data elements and participant records are accurate to maintain system integrity, ensure completeness of data and to identify and correct specific issues associated with the reporting process.

According to TEGL 7-18 and TEGL 23-19, updated data validation checklist templates have been developed and staff training completed. This process includes quarterly reviews to monitor for data errors, missing data, out-of-range values, and anomalies.

Although we utilized a manual sampling process during PY20, Arkansas is working with our data management system contractor to develop mechanized sampling method that will become available in PY21.

### C. Performance Table Narratives

The Program Year 2020 (PY20) performance outcomes are contained herein. Arkansas has not initiated any state-specific measures at this time. The final adjusted performance results for program year 2020 will not be fully known until adjustments are made using the federal statistical model.

Due to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, Arkansas experienced a slight decline in its WIOA Title I Youth Program performance as it did not meet or the exceed the 90% threshold for the Credential or Measurable Skills Gains measures. The state has already begun providing technical assistance to the ten (10) local workforce areas to improve service delivery and performance in these categories.

The WIOA Title I program experienced decreases in overall participants, however, the actual performance results in Adults and Dislocated Workers only slightly decreased. The Median Earnings increased for Adults, specifically for those Exhausting TANF, Ex-Offenders, Homeless Individuals/Runaway Youth, Long-term Unemployed, Low-Income, and Single Parents.

Similarly, the WIOA Title I Dislocated Worker program experienced increases in overall Median Earnings, especially for English Language Learners, Ex-Offenders, Homeless Individuals, and Single Parents.

The WIOA Title III program experienced a slight decrease in staff assisted registrations, dropping

from 109,880 to 105,559. Likewise, staff assisted individuals receiving services dropped from 106,984 the previous year to 83,785. Surprisingly, the median earnings for these participants increased over the previous year, including Displaced Homemakers, Low-Income Individuals, and Single Parents.

As the State began to loosen restrictions associated with the COVID pandemic, Employer Contact almost doubled from January – March 2021 to April – June 2021. During the same timeframe, staff assisted Job Orders Entered increased by approximately 30%.

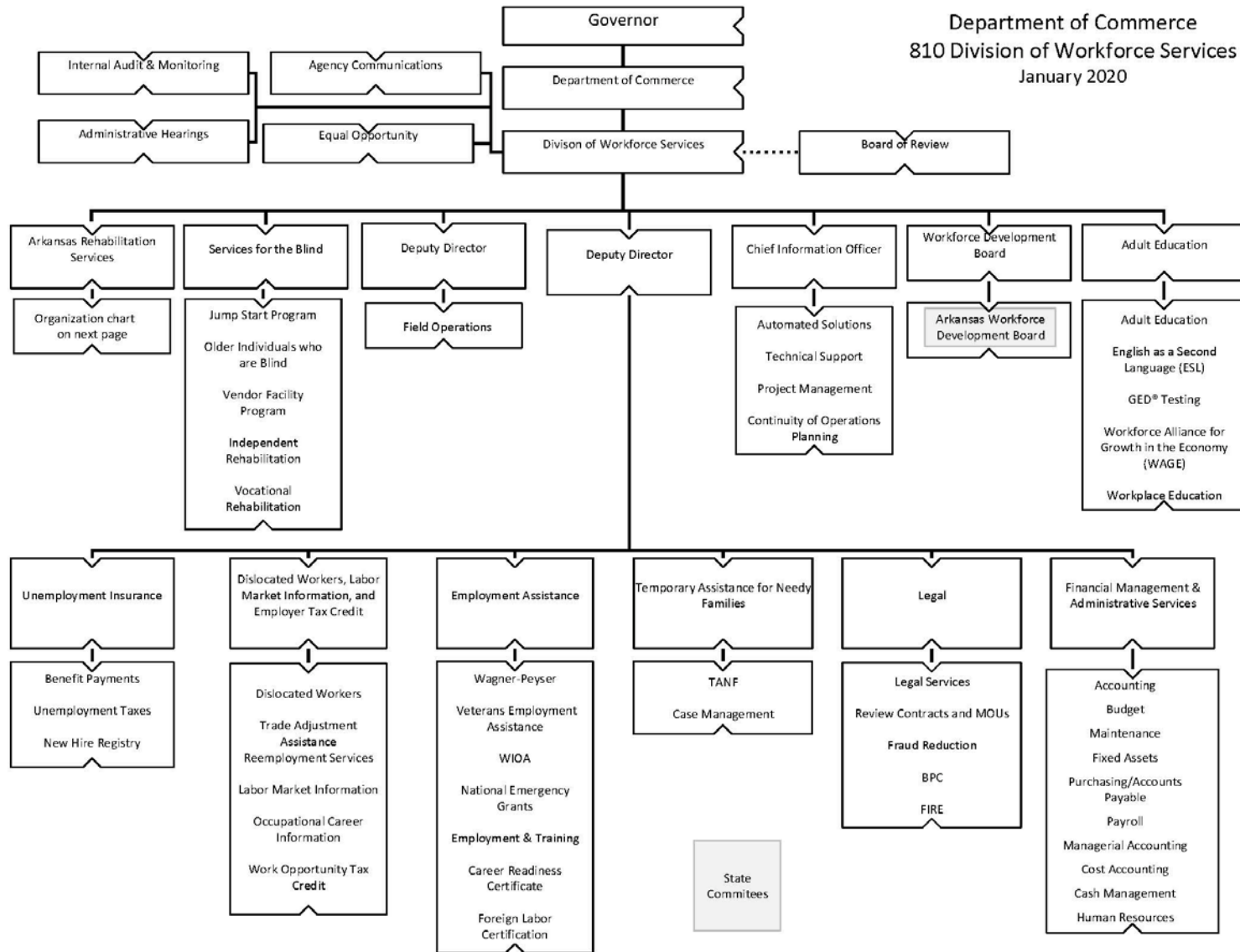


### XIII. WIOA TITLE I & III PERFORMANCE

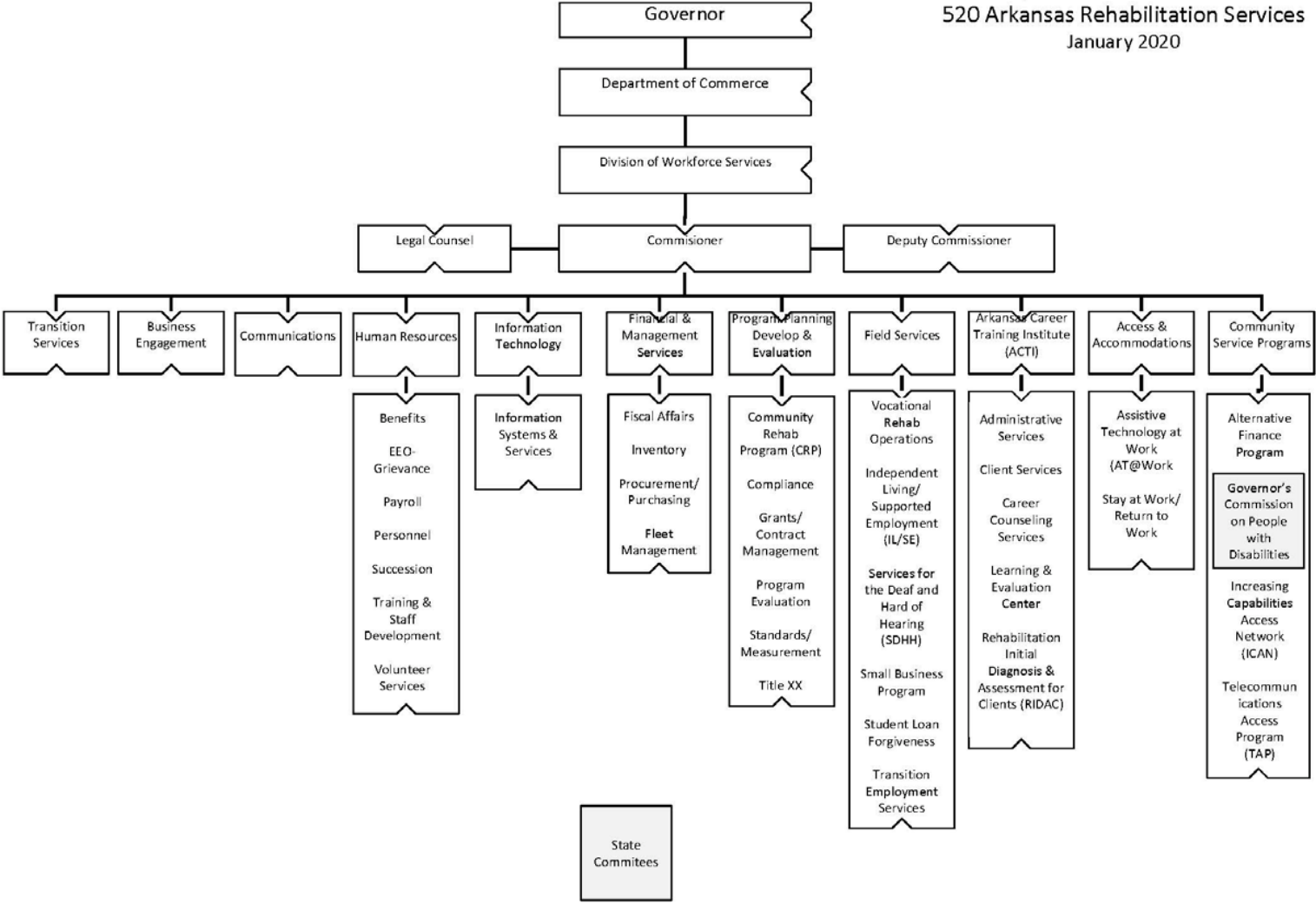
WIOA TITLE I - ADULTS													
	Total Participants Served Cohort Period: 07/01/2020 - 06/30/2021	Total Participants Exited Cohort Period: 04/01/2020 - 03/31/2021	Employment Rate (Q2) (Cohort Period: 07/01/2018 - 06/30/2019)		Employment Rate (Q4) (Cohort Period: 01/01/2018 - 12/31/2019)		Median Earnings (Cohort Period: 07/01/2018 - 06/30/2019)	Credential Rate (Cohort Period: 01/01/2018 - 12/31/2019)		Measurable Skill Gains (Cohort Period: 07/01/2019 - 06/30/2020)			
				Rate		Rate	Earnings		Rate		Rate		
Total Statewide	951	645	Target			91.10%		85.80%	\$6,281.00		74.20%		NA
			Actual	Num.	559		648	\$7,002.00	561	78.68%	471	68.66%	
Denom.	706	79.18%		825	78.55%	713	686						
WIOA TITLE I - DISLOCATED WORKERS													
	Total Participants Served Cohort Period: 07/01/2020 - 06/30/2021	Total Participants Exited Cohort Period: 04/01/2020 - 03/31/2021	Employment Rate (Q2) (Cohort Period: 07/01/2019 - 06/30/2020)		Employment Rate (Q4) (Cohort Period: 01/01/2019 - 12/31/2019)		Median Earnings (Cohort Period: 07/01/2019 - 06/30/2020)	Credential Rate (Cohort Period: 01/01/2019 - 12/31/2019)		Measurable Skill Gains (Cohort Period: 07/01/2020 - 06/30/2021)			
				Rate		Rate	Earnings		Rate		Rate		
Total Statewide	318	177	Target			91.00%		85.50%	\$7,000.00		76.10%		NA
			Actual	Numerator	157		175	\$7,485.25	124	80.52%	155	67.39%	
Denominator	189	83.07%		209	83.73%	154	230						

WIOA TITLE I - YOUTH												
	Total Participants	Total Participants		Placement Rate		Placement Rate		Median Earnings	Credential Rate		Measurable Skill Gains	
	Served	Exited		(Q2)	(Q4)	Cohort Period:	Cohort Period:	Cohort Period:				
	Cohort Period:	Cohort Period:		Cohort Period:		07/01/2019 - 06/30/2020	01/01/2019 - 12/31/2019	07/01/2020 - 06/30/2021				
	07/01/2020 - 06/30/2021	04/01/2020 - 03/31/2021		07/01/2019 - 06/30/2020	01/01/2019 - 12/31/2019							
				Rate	Rate	Earnings	Rate	Rate				
Total Statewide	684	405	Target		80.00%	80.00%	\$3,024.00	73.00%	61.00%			
			Actual	Numerator	355	388	201	184				
				Denominator	496	537	339	369				
				71.57%	72.25%	\$3,585.05	59.29%	49.86%				
WIOA TITLE III - WAGNER-PEYSER												
	Total Participants	Total Participants		Employment Rate		Employment Rate		Median Earnings	Credential Rate		Measurable Skill Gains	
	Served	Exited		(Q2)	(Q4)	Cohort Period:	Cohort Period:	Cohort Period:				
	Cohort Period:	Cohort Period:		Cohort Period:		07/01/2019 - 06/30/2020	01/01/2019 - 12/31/2019	07/01/2019 - 06/30/2020				
	07/01/2020 - 06/30/2021	04/01/2020 - 03/31/2021		07/01/2019 - 06/30/2020	01/01/2019 - 12/31/2019							
				Rate	Rate	Earnings	Rate	Rate				
Total Statewide	76,193	78,167	Target		73.40%	74.50%	\$4,750.00	NA	NA			
			Actual	Numerator	70,149	65,499	NA	NA				
				Denominator	103,527	98,146	NA	NA				
				67.76%	66.74%	\$5,456.12	NA	NA				

# XIV. ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



Department of Commerce  
 520 Arkansas Rehabilitation Services  
 January 2020



**Appendix  
WIOA Title II Performance  
PY20-21**

**XV. APPENDIX**

**Title II Adult Education PY20-21 Performance**

	Total Participants Served Cohort Period: 07/01/2020 - 06/30/2021	Total Participants Exited Cohort Period: 04/01/2020 - 03/31/2021		Placement Rate (Q2) Cohort Period: 07/01/2019 - 06/30/2020		Placement Rate (Q4) (Cohort Period: 01/01/2019 - 12/31/2019)		Median Earnings Cohort Period: 07/01/2019 - 06/30/2020	Credential Rate (Cohort Period: 01/01/2019 - 12/31/2019)	
					Rate		Rate	Earnings		Rate
<b>Total Statewide</b>	6,961	4,561	<b>Target</b>	44.00%		46.10%	\$4,200		48.00%	
			<b>Actual</b>	40.92%		20.82%		45.32%		

**Appendix  
WIOA Title II Performance  
PY20-21**

***2020-21 Performance***

**Title II Measurable Skill Gains**

<b>Entering Educational Functioning Level</b>	<b>Total Number of Participants*</b>	<b>Percentage of Measurable Skill Gains Target</b>	<b>Percentage of Measurable Skill Gains Achieved</b>
<b>ABE Level 1</b>	228	44%	53.01%
<b>ABE Level 2</b>	1,555	43%	47.14%
<b>ABE Level 3</b>	2,074	47%	50.35%
<b>ABE Level 4</b>	1,298	55%	69.13%
<b>ABE Level 5</b>	300	54%	73.08%
<b>ABE Level 6</b>	21	52%	61.90%
<b>ESL Level 1</b>	657	46%	55.00%
<b>ESL Level 2</b>	268	52%	62.80%
<b>ESL Level 3</b>	266	53%	55.71%
<b>ESL Level 4</b>	122	52%	63.41%
<b>ESL Level 5</b>	81	45%	58.53%
<b>ESL Level 6</b>	15	30%	53.33%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>6,885</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>55.73%</b>

*\*Participant in Adult Education between July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021*

**Appendix  
WIOA Title II Performance  
PY20-21**

**Title II Measurable Skill Gains by Barriers to Employment**

	<b>Measurable Skill Gains (07/01/19 - 06/30/20)</b>	
<b>Displaced Homemakers</b>	50	50.51%
<b>English Language Learners, Low Levels of Literacy, Cultural Barriers</b>	3,880	55.74%
<b>Exhausting TANF within 2 years (Part A Title IV of the Social Security Act)</b>	6	42.86%
<b>Ex-offenders</b>	327	50.86%
<b>Homeless Individuals / runaway youth</b>	64	55.65%
<b>Long-term Unemployed (27 or more consecutive weeks)</b>	236	50.97%
<b>Low-Income Individuals</b>	1,506	53.92%
<b>Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers</b>	15	44.12%
<b>Individuals with Disabilities (incl. youth)</b>	182	48.66%
<b>Single Parents (Incl. single pregnant women)</b>	272	42.97%
<b>Youth in foster care or aged out of system</b>	27	72.97%

**Appendix  
WIOA Title II Performance  
PY20-21**

**Title II Follow-up Measures**

<b>Primary Indicators of Performance</b>	<b>Number of Participants who Exited</b>	<b>Total POPs</b>	<b>Total Number of POPs Participants Achieved Outcome or Median Earnings Value for All POPs</b>	<b>Percentage of Participants in All POPs Achieving Outcome Target</b>	<b>Percentage of Participants in All POPs Achieving Outcome Achieved</b>
<b>Employment Second Quarter after exit* (<i>All Exited Participants excluding Corrections</i>)</b>	8,035	8,113	3,320	44%	40.92%
<b>Employment Fourth Quarter after exit** (<i>All Exited Participants excluding Corrections</i>)</b>	8,611	8,841	1,841	46%	20.82%
<b>Median Earnings Second Quarter after exit*</b>	3,287	3,320	\$4,438.08	\$4,200	N/A
<b>Attained a Secondary School Diploma/Equivalent and Enrolled in Postsecondary Education or Training within one year of exit** (<i>Entry at ASE</i>)</b>	400	401	44		10.97%
<b>Attained a Secondary School Diploma/Equivalent and Employed within one year of exit** (<i>Entry at ASE</i>)</b>	400	401	161		40.15%
<b>Attained a Postsecondary Credential while enrolled or within one year of exit** (<i>Dual Enrollment</i>)</b>	286	287	139		48.43%
<b>Attained any credential (unduplicated)**</b>	682	684	310	48%	45.32%

\*Exited 07/01/2019 - 06/30/2020

\*\* Exited 01/01/2019 - 12/31/2019



**Appendix  
WIOA Title II Performance  
PY20-21**

**Title II 2019-20 Table 4**

<b>Entering Educational Functioning Level</b>	<b>Total Number of Participants</b>	<b>Total Attendance Hours for all participants</b>	<b>Total number of POPs in which Participants achieved at least one EFL gain</b>	<b>Total number of POPs in which a SSD was attained</b>	<b>Percentage of POPs with Measurable Skill Gains</b>
ABE Level 1	326	26,870	142	0	43.40%
ABE Level 2	2,431	190,128	887	82	39.60%
ABE Level 3	2,908	197,777	774	569	45.90%
ABE Level 4	1,662	99,895	331	661	56.60%
ABE Level 5	400	22,001	84	143	56.40%
ABE Level 6	47	3,117	7	12	40.40%
<b>ABE Total</b>	<b>7,774</b>	<b>539,790</b>	<b>2,225</b>	<b>1,417</b>	<b>46.60%</b>
ESL Level 1	1,261	88,485	547	1	43.10%
ESL Level 2	633	56,481	329	3	52.00%
ESL Level 3	428	41,658	233	2	54.10%
ESL Level 4	238	22,839	12	2	53.90%
ESL Level 5	134	13,617	67	2	50.40%
ESL Level 6	26	2,696	10	0	38.50%
<b>ESL Total</b>	<b>2,720</b>	<b>225,777</b>	<b>1,315</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>48.20%</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>10,494</b>	<b>765,567</b>	<b>3,540</b>	<b>1,427</b>	<b>47.00%</b>

**Appendix I**  
**WIOA Title IV Performance**  
**PY20-21**

**Title IV Total Performance Measures**

**Program and Summary Information**

Rehabilitation Services

	<b>Career Services</b>	<b>Training Services</b>
Participants Served	7,631	5,345
Participants Exited	4,578	2,177
Funds Expended	\$3,235,967	\$7,079,927
Cost Per Participant Served	\$416.84	\$1,631

Services for the Blind

Participants Served	882
Participants Exited	207
Rehabilitate Closures	139
Career Services	792
Training Services	173
2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter After Exit	22.9%
4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter After Exit	3.9%
Retention with Employer 4 <sup>th</sup> Qtr.	46.2%
Median Wages At Exit	\$13.27 Hourly
Median Wages 2 <sup>nd</sup> Qtr.	\$7,116.69/Qtr. (14.83 Hourly)
Measurable Skill Gains	38.30%

**For Consideration of the  
Arkansas Workforce Development Board  
Executive Committee**

**January 25, 2022**

**AGENDA ITEM 10 - INFORMATIONAL:** Western Arkansas Workforce Development Area

**INFORMATION/RATIONALE:** Arkansas Local Workforce Development Areas serve as jurisdictions for the administration of workforce development activities and the execution of Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth funds as designated by the Governor in consultation with the State Workforce Development Board and Chief Elected Officials under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). Under the duress of COVID-19, the Local Workforce Development Areas continue to evolve workforce development activities and stakeholder engagement through innovative processes and policies to continue to serve communities across the state.

The Arkansas Workforce Development Board will hear from the Western Arkansas Workforce Development Area regarding what is thriving, what issues or difficulties the area may have, and provide the board with contingency points in which the board may best be able to assist the Western Workforce Development Area.

**For Consideration of the  
Arkansas Workforce Development Board**

**January 25, 2022**

**AGENDA ITEM 11 – INFORMATION:** Administrative Forms – New Year

**INFORMATION/RATIONALE:** With the onset of the new calendar year, the members of the Arkansas Workforce Development Board must complete a new Statement of Financial Interest as well as a new Board Member Personal Data Form.

Staff will provide direction and assistance in the completion of these forms.