

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

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

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 2nd 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.

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

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.

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

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.

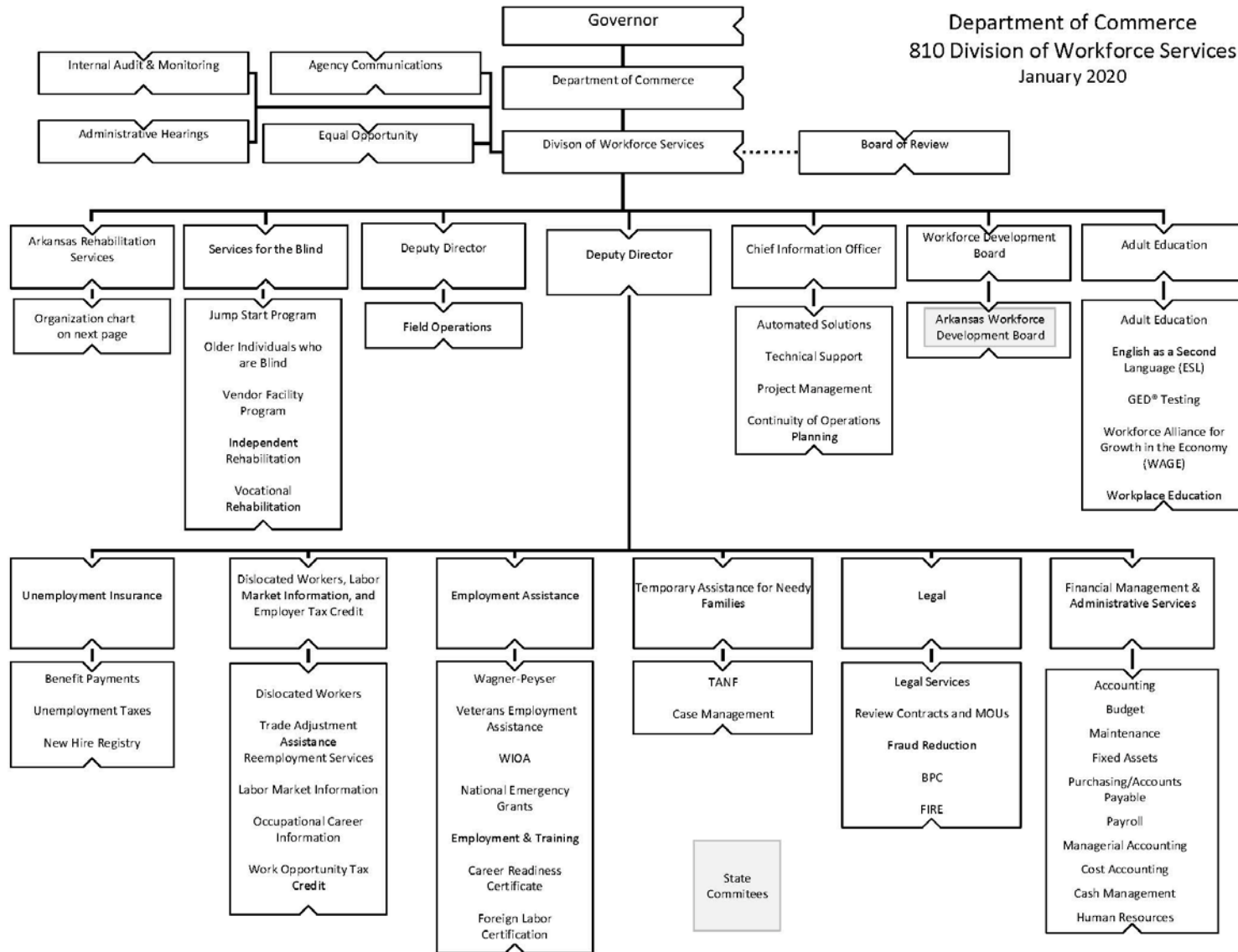
As the State began to loosen restrictions associated with the COVID pandemic, Employer Contact almost doubled from January – March 2021 to April – June 2021. During the same timeframe, staff assisted Job Orders Entered increased by approximately 30%.

XIII. WIOA TITLE I & III PERFORMANCE

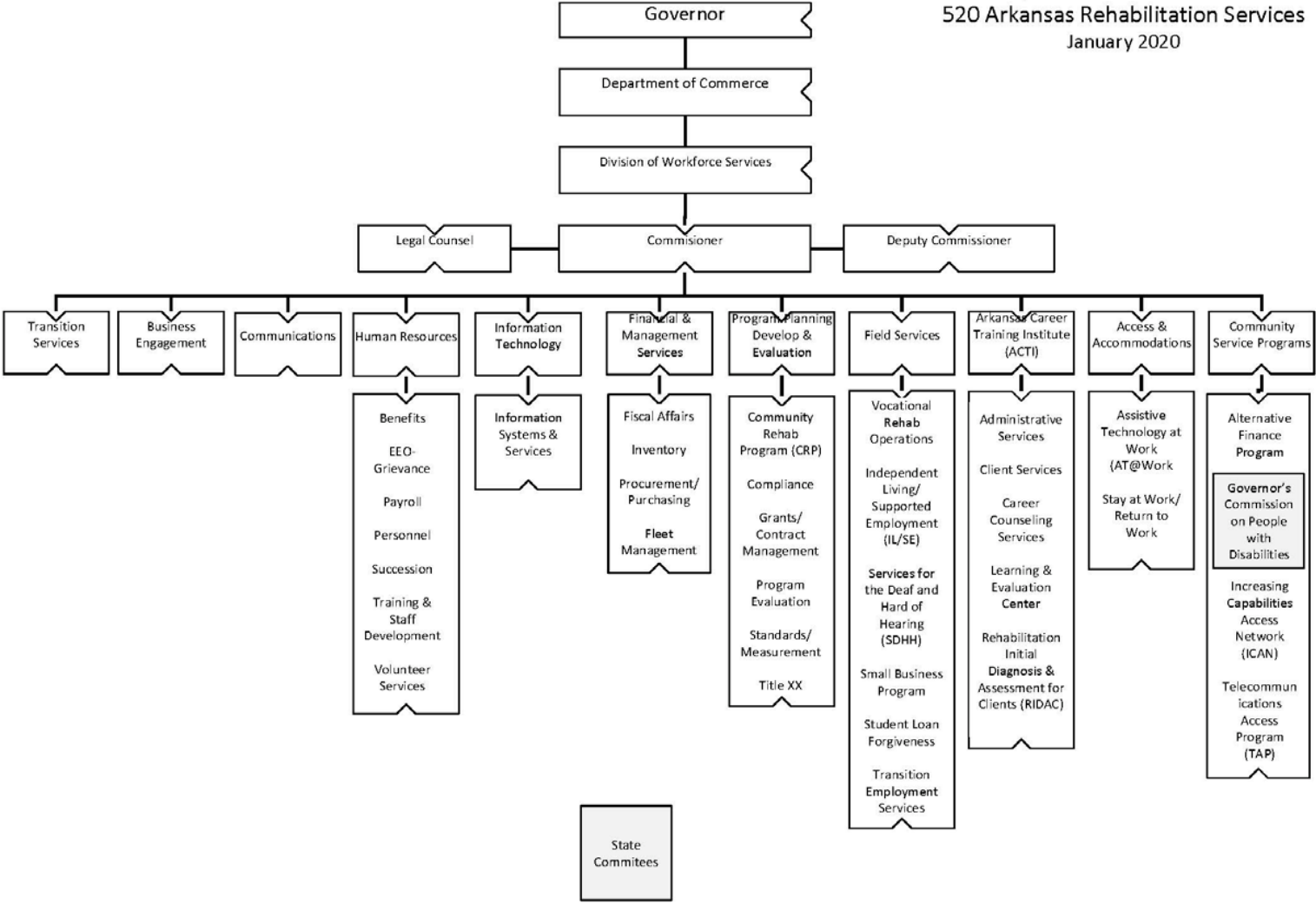
WIOA TITLE I - ADULTS													
	Total Participants Served Cohort Period: 07/01/2020 - 06/30/2021	Total Participants Exited Cohort Period: 04/01/2020 - 03/31/2021	Employment Rate (Q2) (Cohort Period: 07/01/2018 - 06/30/2019)		Employment Rate (Q4) (Cohort Period: 01/01/2018 - 12/31/2019)		Median Earnings (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	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	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
Total Statewide	6,961	4,561	Target	44.00%		46.10%	\$4,200		48.00%	
			Actual	40.92%		20.82%			45.32%	

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

2020-21 Performance

Title II Measurable Skill Gains

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

**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

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

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

Title II Follow-up Measures

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

Entering Educational Functioning Level	Total Number of Participants	Total Attendance Hours for all participants	Total number of POPs in which Participants achieved at least one EFL gain	Total number of POPs in which a SSD was attained	Percentage of POPs with Measurable Skill Gains
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%
ABE Total	7,774	539,790	2,225	1,417	46.60%
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%
ESL Total	2,720	225,777	1,315	10	48.20%
Grand Total	10,494	765,567	3,540	1,427	47.00%

Appendix I
WIOA Title IV Performance
PY20-21

Title IV Total Performance Measures

Program and Summary Information

Rehabilitation Services

	Career Services	Training Services
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 nd Quarter After Exit	22.9%
4 th Quarter After Exit	3.9%
Retention with Employer 4 th Qtr.	46.2%
Median Wages At Exit	\$13.27 Hourly
Median Wages 2 nd Qtr.	\$7,116.69/Qtr. (14.83 Hourly)
Measurable Skill Gains	38.30%